WIDE RECEIVER PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Wide Receiver Teaching Progression and Drills
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THE WIDE RECEIVER PHILOSOPHY: “THREATEN AND ATTACK.”

- The wide receiver must vision himself as the “BIG PLAY position on every play. He truly defines a “skilled position.” Our philosophy is to make the defense feel threatened and to attack our opponent on every play. WE as wide receivers will take on the role of the aggressor. WE will set the tempo of the game on the first play from scrimmage. The wide receiver must be a threat to score each time he touches the ball. WE must have an attitude on every play. WE will dictate to the defender what he can and can not do.

- By attacking the defender on every play, WE create angles for our releases; pass routes, and running lanes for the backs. We need to attack the defender with the object that WE are going deep on every play. First, WE have to realize what the defender is taking away; and then WE have to attack him where he is vulnerable.

- WE have to have the idea that when the football is in the air it is OURS. This will happen by attacking the football at all costs and making the great catch. WE will make the defender pay for playing bump or press coverage. The ability to release off the LOS versus any coverage is vital. The wide receiver position is an offensive position – so be OFFENSIVE. Never play it with a defensive attitude.
ATTITUDE

As wide receivers WE have to believe that we are the best athletes on the field. WE will be mentally tough in all phases of the game. WE will do whatever it takes to carry out our assignment. Blocking, catching the football, disciplined route running, and running with the ball are the fundamentals we need to master at this position. This happens through preparation. WE will do the necessary things that will prepare us physically, mentally, and emotionally. These include: strength training, conditioning, film study, and specific skill work. These are all aspects needed to become a great player. WE will strive to be the best. WE will not settle for being just an average player. The player who is dedicated and committed to excellence will get the job done.
The illusion of speed is one of the most important parts of running a route. It is used to give the defender the impression that we are increasing out speed and going deep. This reality is that we are slowing down to make a cut. The basic idea is to get the defender out of his comfort zone. This means we need to get him on his heels or turn his hips in order for us to gain separation and make out break.

It is important to keep eye contact at all times. Never look down. You must make the defender think you are going somewhere other than the place you end up. You must lower your center of gravity. Your shoulders and head must be thrust forward. The arms must be bent and elbows must remain at the sides of the body while pumping them each time you step with the opposite foot. By doing this the defender will be forced out of his comfort zone. He will not want to get beat deep. Advantage goes to the receiver.
WIDE RECEIVER
OBJECTIVES

- If it’s to be, it’s up to me. Improve with every practice and meeting. Focus on one skill at a time and get better at it.

- You either get better or get worse each day. You never stay the same. Let’s get better.

- TEAMWORK = The offense can only function as one unit. Know the system and operate within it.

- Have a passion for the game. Enthusiasm is contagious. Actions speak louder than words.
WIDE RECEIVER
OBJECTIVES

- Be a competitor every day and every play.
- Production is the key; there is no room for selfishness.
- Demand perfection. Be detailed in all aspects of the game.
- Confidence. Believe in yourself and your team. You have the ability to succeed. BELIEVE IT!
WIDE RECEIVER
POSITION NEEDS AND TRAITS

- SPEED
- DESIRE TO BLOCK
- ABILITY TO RUN DISCIPLINED ROUTES
- ABILITY TO CATCH WITH THE HANDS
- BIG PLAY ABILITY
WIDE RECEIVER POSITION NEEDS AND TRAITS

- Quickness in and out of breaks.
- Ability to run after the catch.
- Free release off LOS.
- Intelligence to recognize different coverage and corner techniques.
- Consistent performance
WIDE RECEIVER
IT’S ALL ABOUT

THESE ARE THE FOUR KEYS TO SUCCESS OF BEING A SUCCESSFUL WIDE RECEIVER:

- THE RELEASE
- PLAYING VERTICALLY
- LEVERAGE AND SEPARATION
- PUTTING PERSONALITY INTO YOUR ROUTE
Wide Receiver Daily Musts

- Stance and Starts
- Releases
- Blocking Progression
- Footwork Drills (stick drills / plant and break / separation)
- Ball Drills
- Ball Security
- Individual Route Teaching Concepts (pre-and post-practice)
Wide Receiver Pre-Practice Drills

- Alignments and formations
- Splits and spacing
- Motions
- Individual route teaching concepts
- Agilities and warm-up drills
- Jugs machine and ball-handling
WIDE RECEIVER COACHING POINTS

- Always tuck the ball away from the defender. Always quick to the tuck after every catch. Every drop is 10 push-ups or up-downs.

- After all catches, burst up field for 5 yards and jog for 10 yards. If you fall after the catch, still get off the ground and burst for 5 yards and jog for 10 yards.

- Run your route like you are the only wide receiver on the field.

- Always run to the ball (just like defensive pursuit).
Alignments and techniques are critical. “Technique whips talent.”

When catching the ball, always look, catch, tuck, cover, and roll your head over the ball.

A complete wide receiver knows how to play with and without the ball. Be physical.

Effort and toughness (always mentally tough).
THE BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF WIDE RECEIVER PLAY

1. Alignment
2. Stance and Start
3. Releases and Footwork
4. Route Discipline
5. Catching the Football
6. Run After Catch
7. Blocking
8. Coverage Recognition
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
ALIGNMENT

- The wide receiver is given an exact alignment to put him in the best position for success.
- He must be precise in his alignments and know how they are affected by the position of the ball (hash marks).
- He has to know whether he is on or off the ball in all situations.
- **On the Line** – The WR should align his toes of the E.M.O.L.S.
- **Off the Line** – The WR should align his toes with the heels of the E.M.O.L.S.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
ALIGNMENT RULES

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<th>PRO SET</th>
<th>NUMBERS</th>
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<th>X</th>
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<td>split difference between Y and EMOL</td>
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Nicholas M. Felus
## Wide Receiver Teaching Progression

### Alignment Vocab List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WR Vocab List</th>
<th>Splits</th>
<th>On the Tracks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong>: Normal alignment which will be determined by the route</td>
<td></td>
<td>means on the hash</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plus</strong>: Adjust your split away from the ball due to ball placement or route concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minus</strong>: Adjust your split by moving in from the original alignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max</strong>: Adjust your split away from the ball. More than plus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nasty</strong>: This is a very tight split</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Split the difference</strong>: This means we want you to split two other players or landmarks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top of the Numbers</strong>: This means line up on the top of the numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bottom of the Numbers</strong>: This means line up on the bottom of the numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post</strong>: Means you line up on the upright of the goal post.</td>
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A proper stance is the key to a quick start and release off the ball.

An effective stance and start is the most fundamental component of being a complete wide receiver.

We will work stance and starts everyday.

**2 Basic Stances**

- **Base Stance:** This will be our fundamental stance. We will use this stance verses open access.

- **Bunch Stance:** We will use this stance verses press access or press-man coverage. You will slightly close your stance (60 front foot-40 back foot weight distribution) in order to achieve rapid foot-fire and bring the feet to a parallel position before releasing off the line of scrimmage.
Stance and Start

**Lower Body:**

- Feet should be slightly shoulder-width apart with either foot leading depending on the play call.

- Set your feet in a comfortable front and back stagger.

- Your feet should be wide enough to give you a strong base, but not so wide that you will false step.

- Our toes and shoulders should be pointed straight ahead if at all possible.

- Your weight should be on the balls of your feet.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
STANCE AND START

- Approximately 90% of your weight should be on your front leg and 10% of your weight on your back leg.

- When you release, you should drive off your front foot without lifting it (rolling start)

- Lean your chin over your front knee and your front knee should be slightly bent

- Sink your butt and hips to prevent high pad level. Always hide your numbers, keep your back leg flexed, and keep your shoulders down

- Hide your numbers as you release off the ball. RELAX and NO FALSE STEPS!
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
STANCE AND START

Upper Body:

- Keep a slight bend in the waist with your chin over your front knee.
- Keep your head up so you can survey the defense and watch the ball.
- We will always go on ball movement and not on the snap count.
- Keep your shoulders square to the LOS.
- Keep your arms in an attack position.
- This will allow you to use your hands to combat the defensive back when you are getting press coverage.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

Lower Body Footwork:

Single sick:

- Quick stick once with either foot and get up field.
- Make a hard head and shoulder fake opposite the direction you want to go.
- Get an edge on the defender.

Double stick:

- Quick stick twice with each foot (right/left/right or left/right/left) and get up field.
- Get an edge on the defender.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

THE RELEASE

Upper Body:

Quick swim:
- Use a strong upper body stroke and punch down on the elbow of the defensive back.
- You want to break his elbow and make his shoulders turn.
- You will then get skinny and quick swim by the defensive back making sure that you do not expose your ribs.

Quick rip:
- Use a strong upper body stroke and punch down on the elbow of the defensive back.
- You want to break his elbow and make his shoulders turn.
- You will then throw an upper cut and release through the defensive back.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

THE RELEASE

Vs. Open Access (Soft Corner)

Center DB

- Must be able to touch him in order to make you break or cut.
- This needs to be done whether the DB has inside leverage or outside leverage.
- Hips must be square to his hips. Giver yourself a two way go.

Shoulder Rule (Inside Route):

- If you are running an inside route you need to get you outside shoulder to the inside shoulder of the DB.
- Work across DB’s face to gain inside leverage at breaking point of route.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

**Shoulder Rule** (Outside Route)

- If you are running an outside route you need to get your inside shoulder to the outside shoulder of the DB before you make your cut or break.
- Work to get across DB’s face to gain leverage before you make your break.

**Expand Release**

- Working to get outside expansion to widen the DB.
- This means that in the last few yards of your route you need to get your inside shoulder to the outside shoulder of the DB.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

Vs. Closed Access (Hard Corner)

Slant Burst Release:

- Outside foot up in stance.

- Release inside in order to get away from the Corner and avoid contact, but if the corner is extremely physical you must get his hands off.

- Maximum of 2-3 yards inside (depending on route concept) then get back on your vertical stem.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

Must Outside Release:

- This release is used to get vertical and take top off the coverage.
- Must get DB’s hands off and be physical to get vertical.
- Use a move to make DB think you are going inside first. Hard jab inside or head and shoulder shake.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

THE RELEASE

Vs. Press Access  (corner is head up playing press man coverage)

- **Bunch Stance**. Bring in back leg in your stance and get you chest and head up. Must be able to make quick movements off the line.

- Always be moving forward. Never bucket step or take a step back.

- Attack what the DB is taking away first. Hands must be ready to fight.

- Execute effective moves with hands and feet to get off LOS.

- *(Stroke/ Stroke w/ Quick Swim, Stroke w/ Rip, One Step Shake, Two Step Shake, Jelly Roll – counter release, Freeze Technique.*

- Once you get even with DB you need to squeeze to get on top of him (Stack him)

- Once DB is stacked you need to wiggle him w/ hips and gain separation.
Release when you are inside receiver (get off re-route)

- You must attack up-field shoulder of S/S or OLB and skim underneath if you route dictates this.
- If you release outside squeeze and stack defender.
- Press his up-field shoulder and if he widens then you skim underneath.
- If he does not widen you need to use a shake and or stick to either get over top or work back inside depending on route concept.
- Do not get too close to defender before making your decision.
- Be an athlete and use the most effective move. Attach what the defender is taking away first.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

MUSTS OF THE RELEASE:

- MUST BE ABLE TO GET OFF LOS.
- MUST BE PHYSICAL.
- MUST WIN BATTLE OF THE HANDS AT LOS.
- MUST ATTACK THE TECHNIQUE OF THE DB.
- MUST USE YOUR MOST EFFECTIVE MOVE. DON'T GET FANCY.
- MUST USE QUICK, SUDDEN, AND EXPLOSIVE MOVEMENTS.
Release Variations

- **Slant burst release**: Your outside foot will be forward. Use a slight angle of departure inside on your immediate release and get up field. Get depth as you get inside.

- **Must outside (clear) release**: You must get the defensive back to turn his back to the ball or get width with your release.

- **Take it release**: Take the release that the defender is giving you. You could release inside or outside. Do not waste time.

- **Punch release**: Use a strong upper body stroke and punch the defensive back in the facemask to combat aggressive press-man coverage.

- **Stroke and Rip or Dip and Rip Release**: Use strong rip to create separation off the LOS.

- **Clean release**: Get vertical fast drawing both corners and safeties attention. Do not waste time.
Space Release:
- Release used downfield.
- The wide receiver must use his release techniques down the field in order to control collisions and reroutes by the defensive back.

Glide (bail release)
- Used when the defender is playing a soft (glide) press technique.
- As he bails, close his cushion and be ready to control the collision.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
THE RELEASE

**Jelly Roll (counter release):**

- Used when the defender is playing a heavy inside technique.
- Release outside 2-3 steps and make the defender turn his shoulders and run. Quick swim back inside and gain inside leverage.
- This release is great for running a slant route.

**Shake Release:**

- Use one step or two step stick move to get of press coverage. Freeze the defender.
Wide Receiver Fundamentals of Route Discipline

There are five imperative components to every route. To run precise and effective routes you must master the following:

1. Have a great release
2. Close the defenders cushion
3. Leverage
4. Separation
5. Route personality
Take off

- A great stance and start are crucial. No false steps.
- Eliminate all wasted movement.
- You need to push vertical up field, low pad level, and hide your numbers. Sink your hips to prevent high pad level.
- We must be able to release with either foot forward.
- You need to see and recognize the coverage structure and be able to read on the run.
- Your hands should always be in an attack position to win the battle at the LOS verses press coverage.
ROUTE DISCIPLINE

**Stem**

- You attempt to set up the defender and attack the defender vertically.
- Eye contact with the defender must be established at all times.
- Attack his technique with the shoulder to shoulder rule and gain the proper leverage.
- You need to close the defender’s cushion and make him feel threatened vertically.
- Force the defender to be uncomfortable in his initial technique and make him turn and run.
- Depending on the route and the defender’s technique, you may center him up, get his hips turned, step on his toes, and utilize a double move. Accelerate and work the defender.
- It now becomes one on one basketball.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

ROUTE DISCIPLINE

Breaking point:

- This is the apex of your stem which is either based on specific footwork or on specific yardage landmarks.

- You need to establish proper body position. Separation is a must.

- You must run in and out of your break quickly and efficiently

- Keep your arms moving to create an illusion of speed.

- Keep low pad level and have great forward lean.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
ROUTE DISCIPLINE

- Do not rise up and do not peak early for the football. Finish the route.
- Keep your chin out in front of your body. Defenders read your eyes, upper body, and feet to determine your breaking point.
- Anticipate route adjustments for man or zone.
- In zone coverage, find the windows and stay QB friendly.
- Verses man coverage, separate from the defender and lose ground to attack the football. Make the defender go through you to get to the ball.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
ROUTE DISCIPLINE

Coaching points:

- Free releases are a must. No false steps.
- Make the defender feel threatened. Eat up his cushion. Make him feel uncomfortable.
- Low pad level. Hide your numbers. Have great forward lean.
- Set up the defender in your stem. Eye contact is a must
- Use shoulder to shoulder rule to deceive the defender.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

ROUTE DISCIPLINE

- Separate from the defender at the apex of your route.
- Acceleration to your breaking point and acceleration out.
- Be disciplined in terms of split, depth of route, footwork, and adjustments.
- Be aggressive and control all collisions. Do not get re-routed.
Wide Receiver Fundamentals of Catching the Football

- As a wide receiver, we must have the mentality that when the ball is in the air, it is ours for the taking.

- There is no such thing as a free ball. We can never allow an interception and must compete with the defender at all times, especially when the ball is thrown.

- **Concentration** is the main component of being a complete pass catcher.

- A wide receiver can never catch too many balls. The more balls that are caught, the more natural you will become as a pass catcher.
A wide receiver must learn to look the ball into his hands.

Most balls are dropped in those last few inches before the ball hits the hands.

Always look, catch, tuck, cover, and roll your head over the ball.

Make the routine and difficult catches ALL the time.

Make the impossible catches MOST of the time.

Remember, there is no such thing as a bad throw; it is our job to make it a good one
Catching Fundamentals

- Relax your hands. Soft hands catch footballs.
- Catch the ball with your arms extended out in front of the body with a “slight” bend in the elbows.
- Keep the ball off your pads, except in certain cases where wet weather dictates otherwise.
- General rule: Balls above the chest, thumbs in. Balls below the chest, thumbs out.
- Put your chin on the ball so your eyes will follow the ball.
- Put your head and eyes on the same level of the ball.
To catch the high pass:

- Get head and eyes on the same level as the ball.
- Reach for the ball at the last second. Never run with your arms and hands outstretched. Utilize that last burst of speed.
- When catching the pass that floats over the wrong shoulder, turn and open your hips to the ball and make the catch at its highest point.
- Catch the ball at its top point. If you deflect it, the ball will come down to you.
To catch the low pass:

- Get the elbows underneath the ball and scoop the ball upwards.
- Get your eyes on the same level as the ball.
- Immediately get off the ground and sell the call to the officials.

To catch the pass behind the wide receiver:

- Turn and open your hips completely to the ball and extend both hands to make the catch.
- Take a picture of the ball with your belt buckle.
Coaching Points:

- Attack the ball. Frame the ball. Catch the ball with both hands.
- Secure the catch and quick to the tuck. Possession is important.
- Keep your head and eyes on the same level as the ball.
- Soften the ball with your fingers.
- Always keep your body between the ball and the defender.
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
RUN AFTER CATCH

- Secure the ball (ball security is a must)
- There should be four points of pressure when securing the football (Fingers, Forearm, Elbow, and Against the Ribs.)
- The ball is more important than you.
- Know the situation (need a first down, keep clock running, etc.)
- Get north and south. Score.
- Concentration leads to celebration
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION
BALL SECURITY

- We will always protect the ball at all costs.

- Ball security is a vital component of offensive success and fumbles lead to losses.

- We should never negate an explosive play with a fumble.

Coaching points:

- Secure the ball.

- There should be four points of pressure when securing the football (Fingers, Forearm, crux of the elbow, and against the ribs).

- The ball is more important than you.

- Know the situation (need a first down, keep clock running, etc)
WIDE RECEIVER TEACHING PROGRESSION

BLOCKING

- Blocking is an **attitude**. There are basic techniques that will help you to become a successful blocker. However, the most important factor is the **desire to block**.

- Most big plays result from receivers blocking downfield.

- Release off the ball hard every play. Make the defender feel threatened. Attack the defender. Set proper angles.

- Play low. Keep yourself between the defender and the ball carrier.

- Anticipate angles of defenders. Know where the play is going.

- Attack the defender.

- Finish on somebody. **BE PHYSICAL**.

- Never block back to or behind the ball.
Stalk block:

- Attack the defender. When he breaks down, you break down. Keep your feet buzzing with an athletic base.
- Keep your feet slightly more than shoulder width apart.
- Get into the defender and drive him backwards. Never allow separation.
- Keep your elbows and arms within the framework of the defenders body.
- Your aiming point for your hands should be on the numbers of the defenders jersey.
- Knees bent, back straight, head and eyes up. Never overextend and never drop your head.
- If you want to seal the defender inside, attack his outside shoulder.
- If you want to seal the defender outside, attack his inside shoulder.
Crack block:

- Do not alter your stance but you may have to adjust your split when cracking a defender in the box.
- It is illegal to crack below the waist so make sure you stay high.
- Run through the defenders near number and explode through him with your forearm and shoulder.
- This is a chance for the wide receiver to deliver a knockout shot.
- Make the defender run underneath you when he is pursuing the ball carrier.

Run-off block:

- Release outside the defender and make him turn his back to the football. Stalk rules apply
**Cut block:**

- The cut block is your friend. It is the equalizer.
- Cut early and often to set a physical mentality.
- Attack the defender and throw your body through him. Your take off point should be right before you step on his toes.
- Throw your head and shoulder through the defenders opposite thigh.
- Throw your eyes to the sky to keep your head up and prevent a neck injury.
- Make sure your head and shoulders are in front of the defender when making a cut block. Do not run the risk of penalty.
Most dangerous man block:

- Used to block primary run support verses two deep shells, drop safeties, and rotated coverage.

- Take a slant burst release and read the corner and over the top safety.

- When the force defender shows, attack his technique and engage in a stalk block.

- Be under control at all times and do not overrun the force defender.
# WIDE RECEIVER DRILLS ORGANIZATION

**WR Pre-Practice drills**
- Alignments and formations
- Splits and spacing
- Motions
- Individual route teaching concepts
- Agilitities and warm-up drills
- Jugs machine and ball-handling drills

**WR Ball drills**
1. Ball-Handling drills
2. Jugs with breaks
3. Partner catch with feet buzzing
4. Thru Its
5. High ball
6. Low ball
7. Ball in Pocket
8. Ball behind
9. Turn and locate
10. Fade and adjust
11. 45/90 degree to ball
12. Centerfield drill
13. Distraction
14. Hard to head
15. Back shoulder
16. Tight rope sideline
17. Sideline foot drag
18. Dive and catch on knees
19. Blaster catch
20. Elevator
21. Catch on the line (dig)
22. End routes
23. One hand catch
24. Catch and hit with bag
25. Goal Post Catch
26. Head Whip Catch

**WR Agility drills**
- Stick DTL (both legs)
- Hip warm-up
- Z-DRILL
- 5-10-5 Shuttle (summer camp)

**WR Stance and start drills**
- Stance on air (both feet)
- Stance and start DTL
- Slant burst
- Stance and start with ball key
- Chase drill
- 20. Elevator

**WR Release drills**
- Bags
- Partner releases (hand fights)
- Hoops
WR Blocking progression drills
- Stalk fit/Cut block fit
- Stalk fit and drive
- Mirror stalk fit
- Open field (3 steps) stalk (5 and 10 yards)
- Open field stalk at 45 degree
- MDM (most dangerous man)
- Shuffle, punch, and drive
- Live stalk with DB’s
- Screen drill
- Crack drill
- Sled

WR Footwork drills
- STEELER DRILL
- Box drill
- Star drill
- M drill
- Plant and break 90 degree/45 degree
- Curl, out, dig, corner with cones
- Site adjust off coach with bag
- Site adjust to coach
- 5. Goal Post Dril

WR Ball security drills
1. Blaster
2. Catch and rip
3. High and tight (strip drill)
4. High knees with tuck

WR Route fundamental drills
1. Shoulder to shoulder
2. Cushion eat verses zone turn
3. Cushion eat versus BP race
4. Trail
5. Break away (club and lean)
6. Throw by

WR Post-Practice drills
1. Deep balls
2. Route of the day
3. Red zone concepts
4. Corrections and adjustments