

## Defensive Back Play

### Ron Lambert – Illinois State

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## Secondary Play

Objective:     WIN

Purpose:

1. Prevent long ball/big plays (+15)
2. Create turnovers – dictate field position
3. Minimize opponent's offense output

Responsibilities:

1. Defend against an opponent's passing attack
4. Defend against an opponent's runs.
3. Defend against an opponent's inside plays by converging
4. Be great tacklers.

*The team that makes the fewest mistakes will win football games. However, the mistakes we make over the course of a game can be analyzed by their degrees of impact on its outcome. To eliminate mistakes we must maintain a high degree of focus and concentration throughout each and every contest. To be a great secondary, we must eliminate the big plays – through the air or on the ground. Our goal is to be the best in our conference. However, to be the best we must believe in our abilities to be successful. The way to success is through preparation. Don't settle for mediocrity; anyone can be average.*

*Successful teams overachieve; but more importantly, they never settle for less. To be successful we must give the extra effort. Winning teams know how to give that second and their effort – which must be us. In our effort to achieve "greatness" we must work hard and work with a common togetherness having the same goals in mind. To get to that next level we must mentally prepare ourselves to deal with the pressures and adversities of the game.*

**TO PERFORM LIKE A CHAMPION...  
YOU MUST PRACTICE LIKE ONE!!**

## Defensive Back Philosophy

1. **DESIRE:** You must have desire to give 100% at all times, which means giving it your all everytime the opportunity presents itself —off the field, in practice and in the game.
2. **KNOWLEDGE:** To be able to perform like a Champion you must have a thorough understanding of all assignments (i.e. know your coverages, alignments, and responsibilities).
3. **COMMITMENT:** To be committed you must combine your desire and knowledge and have the ability to put them into action. A fully committed player knows his assignments and carries them out 100% on each and every play. Commitment is also doing what is necessary, on your own time, to get prepared for your opponents (Ex. watching film on your on time).
4. **MOBILITY:** A DB has to be able to move quickly, fast, and in a hurry. You must be quick with your hands, feet, and your eyes. Also, you must have the speed to recover and get back in position. Most of you are in the secondary because you're quick and fast. To be a great secondary we must get quicker and faster.
5. **TOUGHNESS:** Football is 75% mental toughness and 25% physical toughness. You must be mentally tough to suck it up when you're tired and in pain. You're only tired if you think you are. Physically you must be able to bounce right back from little pains and aches. Don't let your opponent punish you; you should punish them every time the opportunity presents itself. You must prepare yourself mentally and physically for every practice and every game.
6. **CONFIDENCE:** Dare them to throw your way. As a DB you must build a confidence that is untouchable. You must want them to throw the ball into your area. Always believe in your ability to cover and that they cannot complete a pass in your zone. Do not let a completed pass break your confidence.

## Technique Progression

### A. Stance

1. Outside foot will always be up for corners, it may vary for safeties(stagger).
2. Feet are parallel, shoulder width apart with a bend at the hips (parallel).

Most important thing to remember is to always have a good base, shoulders over your toes and be relaxed. The two stances may vary according to position or ability.

### B. Start

1. Begins with good stance
2. Push off with your front foot (outside) and step back with back foot (inside).
3. First three steps are read steps come out to gain power and read QB for 3/5 step drop.
4. Allow shoulders to gradually come up, and stay in front of hips. When leaving stance, do not lean backwards.

### C. Back Pedal

1. Back pedal  $\frac{3}{4}$  speed of full potential. This will enable the DB to come under control, and break effectively in the direction the receiver breaks.
2. Reach back with each step and pull weight over feet. Just as running forward keep weight on the balls of feet.
3. Raise feet only high enough from the ground to have the cleats clear the grass. Speed is gained only when the feet are in contact with ground. Lifting feet too high is wasted motion (quick feet).
4. Do not overstride. Take small to medium steps.
5. Bend your knees. This allows the feet to extend past the hips.
6. Keep feet under and no wider than hips; waist should be bent and the shoulders slightly in front of hips.
7. Move the arms in a normal relaxed manner with elbows in and at sides in a 90 degree angle.
8. Stay in back pedal as long as possible.

### D. Keys

1. Always read ball to man in zone coverages.
2. When in doubt, read the nearest receiver.
3. In man coverage, play through the man to the ball.
4. In passing situations, read the QB for 3-5 step drop.
  - 3 step drop = quick game
  - 5 step drop = medium or deep ball

### E. Cushion

1. Vertical cushion: Vertical distance between DB and receiver. 4 yds.
2. Horizontal cushion: Horizontal distance between DB and receiver. Each defensive back must know his own limitations as to when his cushion is threatened to be broken. He must judge the speed of the receiver and when threatened he must open his hips and execute a 180 degree turn.

#### F. Weave

The weave technique will allow you to adjust your back pedal according to the receiver's release. By weaving the receiver will not be able to get you head up or turn you pre-maturely.

Elements of a good weave include:

1. Know the angle you need to take.
2. Utilize proper back pedal technique.
3. Push off foot opposite the desired direction.
4. Lead **with** your butt, keeping shoulders square.
5. Do not cross your feet.

#### G. Turn and Go

1. Punch elbow and point toe where you want to go (point toe to clear hips).
2. Keep shoulder level down to extend further.
3. Zone turn inside toward the QB when 4 yard cushion is broken.
4. Man turn toward man when 3 yard cushion is broken.

#### H. Directional Read of Quarterback

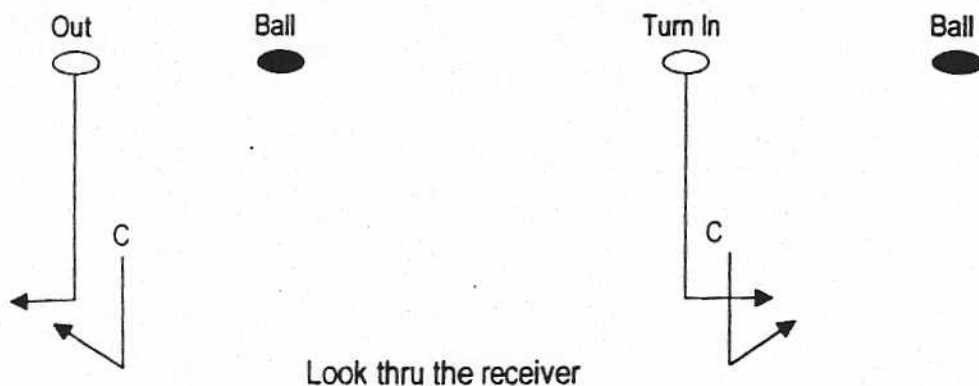
1. Read the front shoulder of the QB for direction and elevation.
2. Focus on the point of the shoulder as to what 1/3 of the field he is intending to throw to.
3. Key shoulder level trajectory
  - a. Parallel = short zone
  - b. Up = deep zone
4. When the QB's non-throwing hand comes off the ball, drive to interception point.

#### I. Plant and Drive

1. Keep feet underneath, narrow base, and pads over toes.
2. Keep hips down.
3. Shorten stride length (road runner).
4. Push off foot opposite the desired direction, point toe of lead foot and hips in the direction you want to go.
5. Drive for interception point.

#### J. Playing The Ball

1. In man to man coverage you must always see the man that you are covering as you look for the ball. Keep the receiver in your vision. Look through the receiver to the ball.



## Defensive Secondary Teaching Progression

### A. **Situations**

- Down and Distance
- Field Position
- Where's the ball
- Time in the game; but most important, how much time remaining in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
- Score: In the Lead-Use time  
Behind-Conserve time

### B. **Call and Communication Process**

Communication is an essential part of a successful secondary play. Whether it be recognizing formations, declaring the strength, or calling coverages, it is crucial that we are thorough in our communication.

Communication Responsibilities:	Strength-FS	Coverage-FS
	Motion-C/S	Route-CB
	LBAj.-C/S	Formations-C/S

### C. **Huddle**

This is where it all begins. We must be very attentive in the Huddle. The communication is important; particularly for the Apache. All talking should be at a minimum, the only person(s) who should be vocal is the MacLB and FS.

### D. **Thought Process**

When a call is made, we must go through our thought process. This enables you to think about your responsibility, as well as the situation. If you know your alignment, assignment, and technique you should have no problem with your responsibility.

### **Definition of Calls**

Fronts: we will use words to identify

Coverages: we will use #'s/words

### E. **Passing Strength Calls**

We will make strength calls to the 2 receiver side. In a 1-back balanced formation with a STAR look, declare to the star. Double star, declare to the left or to the field.

### F. **Run/Pass Keys**

Keys will differ according to position and techniques. Our basic run/pass keys will be ball to receiver. Formations will have an influence on your keys as well.

### G. Tackling Basics

**Gather-Fit-Uncoil-Wrap up-Follow through**

1. **Gather** = body control
2. **Fit** = hitting position, bend at waist and knees, eyes up and open, **bull neck**
3. **Uncoil** = attack through the chest, and drive the legs; make hit on the **rise**.
4. **Wrap Up** = connect arms once contact is made. Slide eyes across #'s.
5. **Follow Through** = Drive legs, stop momentum of ball carrier, and take **him down**.

**Coaching Points**

- **Don't reach** for ball carrier
- **Don't dive or jump** unless you have to.
- **Always attack** the ball going forward
- **Be under control** in the open-field.

### H. Plant and Driving on the Ball

We **must** be able to redirect and close on the ball as quickly as possible. We will use a "plant and drive" technique. It simply means that you will plant the foot opposite the direction you want to go (plant foot). The foot you step with should be directed at your target (directional foot).

### I. Types of Blocks

1. **Stalk** - High blocking technique used by WR. Do not get turned to the **sideline**.
2. **Low/Cut** - When the WR attempts the block a DB below the waist and **take his legs**.
3. **Crack** - Block used to get a blocking angle on an inside defender.

**Coaching Points:**

- **Always focus** on the head gear of the WR. You must defeat him before you can make a **play**.

### J. Pursuit Lanes

Lanes used to determine the proper path to the ball. Never follow the same colored jersey.

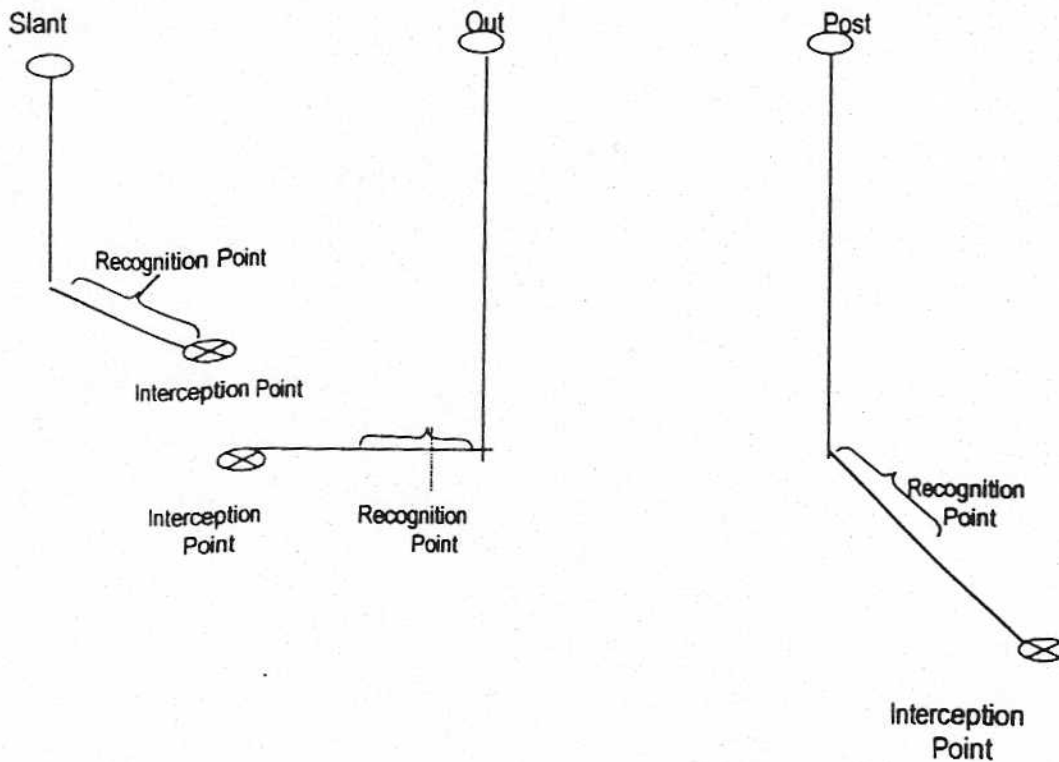
## K. Playing The Pass

### Recognition Point

1. The **instant** or spot at which the DB identifies the pass pattern being run.
2. Pass **Patterns** are categorized as either short (1-5 yds.), intermediate (6-15 yds.), or deep (16+ yards.). There are **only three things** a receiver can do at each level.
  - a. **Outside route**
  - b. **Inside route**
  - c. **Up field push**

Thus giving **9** basic patterns to defend

3. Receivers are taught three things when running a pass pattern
  - a. **Release from LOS:** DB should maintain his leverage
  - b. **Deceptive move:** DB should maintain concentration and proper cushion.
  - c. **The pattern:** DB should explode to interception point. Interception Point = The point where the pass will actually be caught and can be intercepted.
1. 6 yds. from recognition point for inside patterns and patterns coming to the ball.
2. 8-10 yds from patterns going away from the ball.
3. When driving to interception point, always see the man you are covering. Do not look for the ball until cushion has been closed (close on Up field shoulder).



If your receiver is going to catch the ball and you have no chance to intercept or deflect the pass, make certain that you tear away the Up field arm. This is the arm that is the farthest from the flight of the ball. Remember an incompleton is just the same as running a play that has failed to gain a yard.

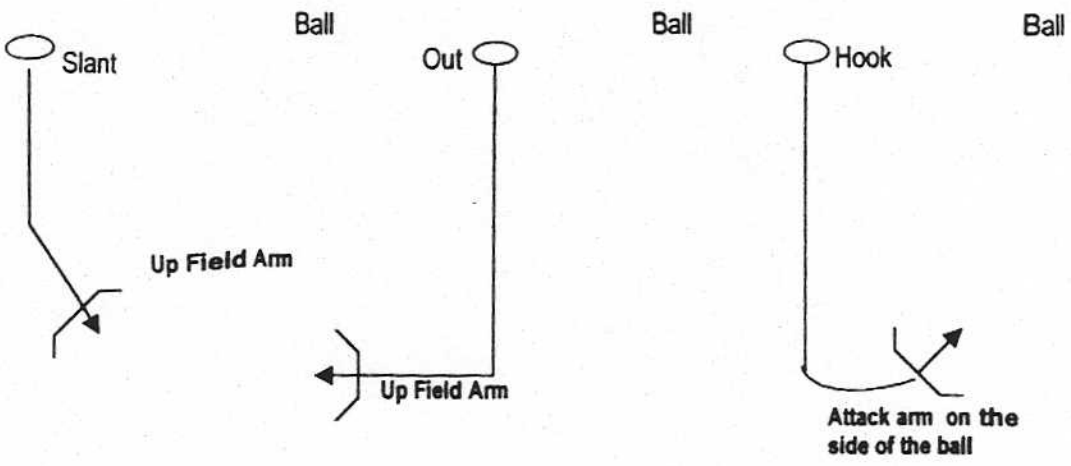


L. **Interception Point**

This the point where the pass will actually be caught and can be intercepted.

- A. **6** yards from recognition point for inside patterns and patterns coming to the ball.
- B. **8-10** yards from patterns going away from the ball.
- C. **When driving to interception point, always see the man you are covering. Do not look for the ball until cushion has been closed (close on Up field shoulder).**

\*If your receiver is going to catch the ball and you have no chance to intercept or deflect the pass, make certain that you tear away the Up field arm. This is the arm that is the farthest from the flight of the ball. Remember an incomplection is just the same as running play that has failed to gain a yard.



## CREATING TURNOVERS

- Emphasize getting ball back in 3 downs or less.
- Goals:
  - A. Interception: 2/ game
  - B. Fumble: 2/Game

### **3 Ways to Cause Fumbles:**

1. Accidental → C/QB Exchange
2. Knock loose → Proper tackling see ball (eyes on ball)  
} game tackling
3. Stripping ball → 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> player  
50% by QB

### **Recovering Fumbles**

- Know situation → Are you ahead, field position, time and score
- Cradle and Cover → Open Field
- Know where you are
- In crowd → Pile on until whistle

### **Interceptions**

- Develop a mentality → the ball is ours every time it is in the air.

### **Creating INTs**

1. Bad throw / great play → Must be in the right position at the right time.
2. Forced by pass rush / pressure
3. Good coverage → most come in zone defense
4. Big hits on WRs → Make them pay!
5. Break on ball until whistle blows

## Creating INTs to TDs

1. Block intended WR - - nearest defender after INT
2. Run to nearest sideline
3. Shortest distance
4. Reference point by design
5. Become a great blocker

## Drills to Build Habit

1. Tackling drills  
**cp:** Hit in soft spot (Shoulder pads in stomach)
2. 2 on 1 tackling
3. Strip Drills
4. Recovery drills → Open - field → 1 shot to scoop/score

## INTS

1. Tip drill - Indy
2. Zone Drop Drill - Drop to zone and react
3. Ball drills

## SIX IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR DEFENSIVE BACKS INVOLVING GOOD PASS DEFENSE

1. KEYS:

Always **read** your keys and never make a mistake. You cannot have your back turned to the offensive men that you are keying and you cannot have your eyes close or head down. You must perfect your keys in practice.

2. WORDS:

Be a talker as well as a good defender on pass defense. Never be the silent sister. You must yell. "Cross! Cross! Cross! Over! Over! Over!" When these situations develop. Always say to yourself before each play, "It is going to be a pass." This is only relative to deep defenders. If there is a Split End or a Flanker to your side, you should always say to yourself: First - "He can get deep and inside." Second - "he can get deep outside." Third - Always be aware of the hook and go. Keep your distance. Your rule on hook applies.

3. POSITION:

You must always have good position on the Receiver. This is the secret to a great Pass Defense... Your position on the Receiver. There is a proper position for every type of pass. This factor alone can kill you as a Pass Defender. Start movement with Receiver and slightly outside of him. Never get any closer than 5 yards to the side line. The side line is the twelfth man on your team if the Receiver catches the ball in this area.

4. ANTICIPATION:

Anticipate as to when the Passer will turn the ball loose. Every Passer will let you know when he is turning the ball loose. Study him - "Get a jump on the ball!" Never take fakes by Backs faking into line, and keep covering the Receiver.

5. INTERCEPTION:

Always have one thought in mind: Get That Football - time your jump - get after the ball with both hands - take the Outside Route, unless the Receiver is on the side line. Search the Receiver - Yell "Bingo" if you are intercepting. Always go for the ball once it is in the air. Play to intercept every pass thrown by the opposition. There is not a quicker way to kill their pass offense. Always intercept the ball as high as possible. Be sure to go through the Receiver to intercept it - Don't gamble by going in front or inside the Receiver unless the ball is low and you are sure of an interception.

6. PASS PATTERN RECOGNITION:

Study their favorite routes - you will work against them during the week. Be able to recognize the pattern when it unfolds. This is vital for every man on secondary - Reading the pattern. They will have favorite men to throw to also - every team does.

“DON'T GET BEAT DEEP!”  
BASIC CONCEPTS

1. Expect **the** opponents to pass every play.
2. Always **keep** on a 4 yard cushion. Don't let them get behind you.
3. Study **all** Backs and Receivers for give away, such as stance, pointing, glances, wetting fingers or leaning.
4. Invite **the** long ball. Be confident in your ability to intercept every pass.
5. When a ball is thrown, forget all Receivers and take the quickest path to the ball. You have just as much **right** to the ball as the Wide Receiver.
6. Always **go** for the interception at the highest point. Never sit and wait on it. Attack the ball.
7. Once **we** intercept, we are on offense. The nearest secondary man blocks the intended Receiver. Block above the waist.
8. Keep **all** running plays inside.
9. Never leave your feet unless it is to go up to intercept the ball at the highest point **OR** you are the last man between the goal line and the ball carrier.

## ELEMENTS OF PROPER PASS DEFENSE

- A. We **must** understand all the coverage concepts. When a coverage is called in the huddle, know **your** responsibility in both run and pass situations. Be aware of run-pass responsibility in all coverage called. Know where your help is.
- B. Know **Receiver** substitutions as they come into the huddle. Watch the offensive team break the **huddle** and check the formation.
- C. **Recognize** and call the strength of the formation and its direction. Know formation strengths or keys as to certain plays.
- D. When **defensive** huddle breaks call and repeat the coverage call. Make no mistake about the huddle call.
- E. Get and maintain proper position on your intended Receiver. Keep your hips and shoulders square for as long as you can with the receiver.
- F. Practice the ability to see the ball being thrown. Get proper position on the interception and play **only** the ball.

## QUICKNESS - REFLEXES

The quickness of hands, feet, and eyes are everything important in the physical aspects of pass defense. Quick reflexes are needed to react to a Receiver's routes. Foot quickness can be developed through drill work in practice. Eye and hand quickness are tougher to develop - but they can be by constantly putting yourself in test situations you can develop the intuition needed to increase this area.

## APPROACH AND POSITION

- A. A Hitch Route - force and attack the Receiver through his outside shoulder. Force him to the inside where your help is. Recognize this route immediately.
- B. An Out Route - drive to the Receiver's upfield shoulder. Go through the receiver from a top position. As you drive the receiver, mentally think of an Out and Up route. This will allow you to adjust much quicker.
- C. Blitz Situations - close your cushion down to the receiver. Anticipate the ball being thrown quickly. The pressure will force things to happen now.
- D. The best possible position to be in on any type of Receiver's route is look through the Receiver for the football. See the QB throw the ball.
- E. Maintain proper cushion on a Receiver. Do not allow a receiver to get close than 3 yards to your position in Zone coverage.
- F. We will position ourselves for the interception or the incomplection. By being in proper position on a Receiver, we will be close enough to strip or punch the football. Remember, you can reach across the Receiver's face by using your inside arm to contact the ball.

- G. Look for collisions. Believe that you can physically intimidate Receivers.
- H. Know **the** routes that you must defend against with and without help from another defender. When **you** have an outside position responsibility on a Receiver, don't go for an inside fake. With an **inside** position responsibility it is just the opposite.
- I. When **driving** on a football with a Receiver in front of you, keep one arm on each side of him and go **through** his shoulder blades to the ball. Try to punch the ball out while securing the tackle.
- J. To **properly** drive a quick "Slant" or "Post" route, drive down the line for a collision point. Drive **flat** at him and for the incompleting pass. Decrease or squeeze the angle for the route.
- K. Basic **Position** on a Receiver:
1. **The** basic position on a receiver will depend on the coverage call.
  2. **The** basic reference point is the Receiver's shoulder.
  3. **Vertical** depth is the most difficult to maintain. A defender is beat more by this factor than any other.
  4. **In** a Man to Man coverage situation you will be allowed to close your position to 3 yards vertically. Remember, you must react much quicker to a Receiver in this type of coverage.

## PLAYING THE FOOTBALL FOR THE INTERCEPTION

- A. You **must** aggressively close the distance on a football in the air. Catch the ball at its highest point.
- B. Total **concentration** must be on the football when it is in the air. Play the football, not the receiver.
- C. Catch **the** football out in front of you with both hands. Work in practice on catching the ball in front of you **wiht** your hands. This takes practice.
- D. When **contact** is made on the football and you cannot control the catch, knock it down to the ground, not in **the** air for a possible reception.
- E. You **must** see the QB throw the ball. This will allow your best jump on the ball.
- F. Stay **with** a ball that is overthrown. Interceptions are made this way.
- G. When **the** football is thrown in another zone across the field, drive to the ball. You will get there for a possible tip or to block for hte interception.
- H. When **making** a break in any direction, do it wiht a burst of speed. Practice a 5-step bust of speed in every **angle** break drill in practice. This is a great advantage.
- I. As a **general** rule, look through the Rec3eiver for the ball when it is thrown.
- J. Be as close to the football as you can get. You can work into position for a tipp[ed ball interception.
- K. By being aggressive you can learn to intimidate a player. Go through a Receiver's face amsk for a ball
- L. If you cannot go for the interception, then go for the incompletion. Punch the ball wiht either hand as you secure the tackle. The ball will come loose if the receiver has not put the ball away.
- .M. Learn to judge the long ball. This can only be done by practice. Watch the point of hte ball and use one extra step when judging the ball.
- N. Be ready to intercept a pass if it is deflected --- don't quit on the ball.
- O. Rembmer, you have equal rights to the ball once it is in the air so play rough, but alwasy play the ball not the man.
- P. The rule book states that "during a forward pass it must be remembers that defensive players have as much rihgt to the football as eligivle opponents. Any body contact, however severe between players who are making a simultaneous and bona fide attempt to catch or bat the ball, is not making interference.



## INTERCEPTIONS

- A. The **only** way to get an interception is to go after it. Concentrate **only** on the ball when it is in the air and **nothing** else.
- B. Catch **the** football with your eyes. Your hands will naturally grab the football. Eye **the** ball in.
- C. Yell "**OSKIE**" when in position or actually intercepting the football.
- D. Always **drive** for the interception and catch it above eye level. Any lower and the Receiver will have an **opportunity** to catch the football in front of you.
- E. When **making** an interception in a crowd, be sure to twist after you have controlled the intercepted pass. **You** will get the ball everytime.
- F. For **long** interceptions, concentrate on the nose of the football. Square your hips when in position for the **interception** and attack the football.
- G. After **most** interceptions, the intended receiver is taught to make the tackle. The nearest Defender is responsible for the block on the intended Receiver.
- H. When **the** ball is in the air you must think interception all the way, not just getting to the ball.

## ZONE

- 1. Be as deep as the deepest and as wide as the widest man in your zone.
- 2. Always keep your receiver far enough in front so you can see through to the passer.
- 3. Never break until the ball is thrown.
- 4. In Zone coverage, carry a Receiver approximately 5 yards and do so cautiously. Watch for a crossing man into your zone.
- 5. If two men come into one defensive man's zone, the defender is responsible for the deeper man of the two.
- 6. Don't worry about short passes being completed in front of you, they may bring first downs but the long ones will bring touchdowns.
- 7. Stop the "Home Run" pass. There is no reason for this type of pass being completed against a Zone.
- 8. Look through the Receiver into the passer on any zone defense.
- 9. Talk - Talk - Talk This will improve and allow for the necessary cohesion among the deep backs. Repeat everything three times and loudly so that it can be heard.

## ZONE ADVANTAGES

1. Provides for long ball security:
  - a. **C**ardinal rule of Zone is to never let a Receiver get behind the Defender. This helps stop the long TD pass
  - b. **D**rop-Back action of Zone Defenders makes it less possible than in other types of coverage.
2. The **Z**one defense is simple to learn because the Defender has:
  - a. **A**n area to cover rather than an individual.
  - b. **P**lays ball from the time it leaves the Passer's hand.
  - c. **N**ot distracted by Receivers action as much because of this.
3. The **D**efender in the zone has a clear picture up front which allows him to:
  - a. **D**iagnose running plays from pass plays.
  - b. **D**iagnose pass plays from running plays.
4. The **Z**one Pass defense has a good depth which helps keep secondary from committing themselves forward.
5. **I**nterceptions will be greater because of positions of Defenders on the field.
6. **E**liminate mismatches of Man to Man coverages.

## ZONE DISADVANTAGES

1. Higher % of short pass completions - can be offset by great hustle.

## ZONE COVERAGE PRINCIPLES

(Man - Ball)

1. Keep **your** eyes on the QB at all times.
2. Get to **the** middle of your zone.
3. Break **on** the ball when it is thrown.
4. Do not **chase** receivers out of your zone.
5. Keep **your** concentration.
6. Fly to **the** ball when it is in the air.
7. Use the proper leverage according to coverage.

## MAN COVERAGE PRINCIPLES

(Man - Ball)

1. Concentrate
2. Proper body position on Receiver.
3. Keep your eyes on the man at all times.
4. Play the man first and the ball second.
5. If you are playing man coverage with a Free Safety, force everything inside. C.P.; (Outside leverage)
6. If you are playing man without a Free Safety, force everything outside. C.P.; (inside leverage)
7. Play Receiver tighter than you would in Zone coverage.
8. When we play Man coverage we are usually coming after them with a hard pass rush or a blitz.
9. If you get beat dep, fix your eyes on the Receiver and spring to close the seam.
10. Do not get in a head up position with Receiver.

**DEFENSIVE BACK FOOTWORK,  
TECHNIQUE, AND BALL DRILLS**

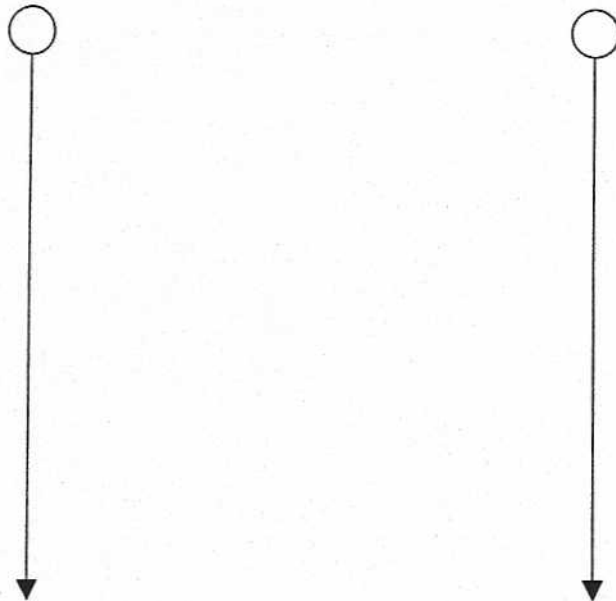
Ron Lambert - Illinois State University



# **FOOTWORK DRILLS**

## **BACKPEDAL**

*COACH*



1. On coach's command, backpedal under control for 10 to 15 yards.
2. Maintain good body position by keeping your nose over you toes.
3. As you backpedal, maintain a toe to heel interval to keep control of your body.
4. DB should pump his arms according to the speed of his backpedal.

**CP: The drill can be done any desirable pace. Use your on discretion.**

## SLOW/FAST



1. On coaches command, start to backpedal almost walking.
2. On the coaches whistle or hit, the player should change his pace to a full speed backpedal.
3. This should happen about 5 to 6 times up to 15 or 20 yards.

**CP:** There should be very little arm movement in the slow phase of the drill. Fast arm motion should be evident in the fast phase of the drill.

## TURN AND GO

COACH



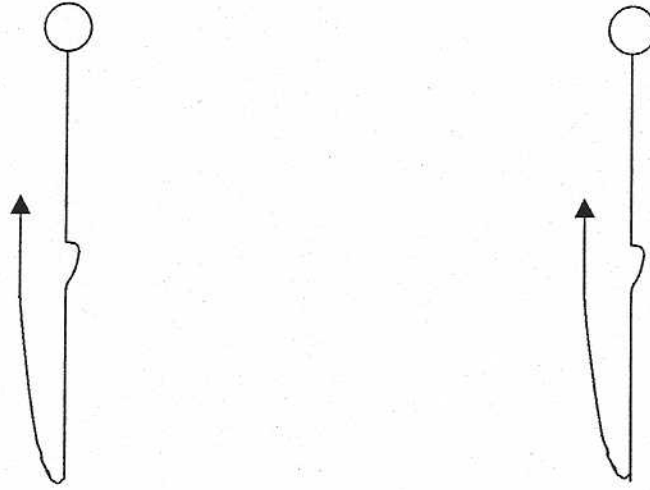
1. On coaches command, get into a full speed backpedal.
2. Maintain backpedal until the coach commands you to turn and go.
3. On your turn, pivot off of your front foot as you open your hips in the direction given by the coach.
4. After the pivot, take your up-field leg and point it directly up-field while maintaining your speed.
5. Accelerate up-field thru the designated finish.

**CP: Use the yard lines to insure proper turns. If the player is more than ½ yard from the line, he has used improper technique; therefore, losing up-field leverage on the WR.**



**OPEN AND DRIVE**

*COACH*

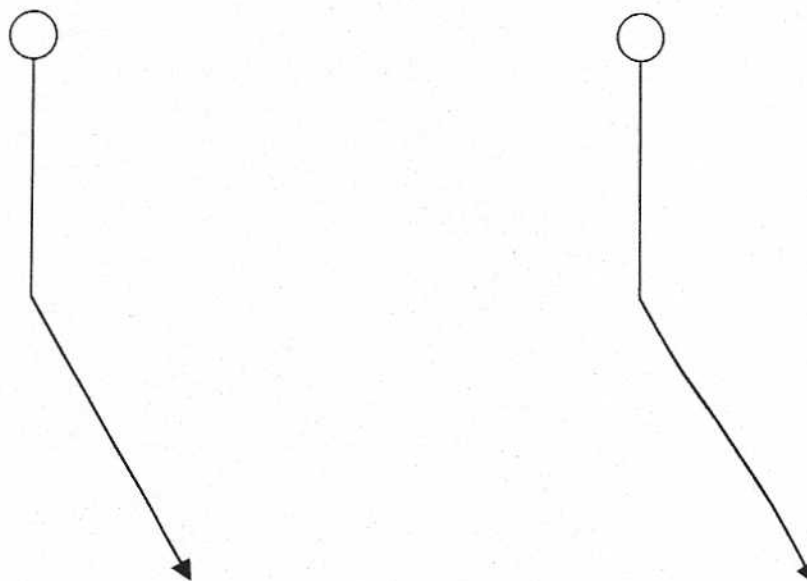


1. Repeat turn and go portion of the drill.
2. On command, plant your up-field foot and drive through the desired finish, which should be downhill toward the coach.

**CP: Make sure his hips stay low and he has good hip focus. Use a WR if necessary to see lowering hips as well as to redirect.**

POST

COACH

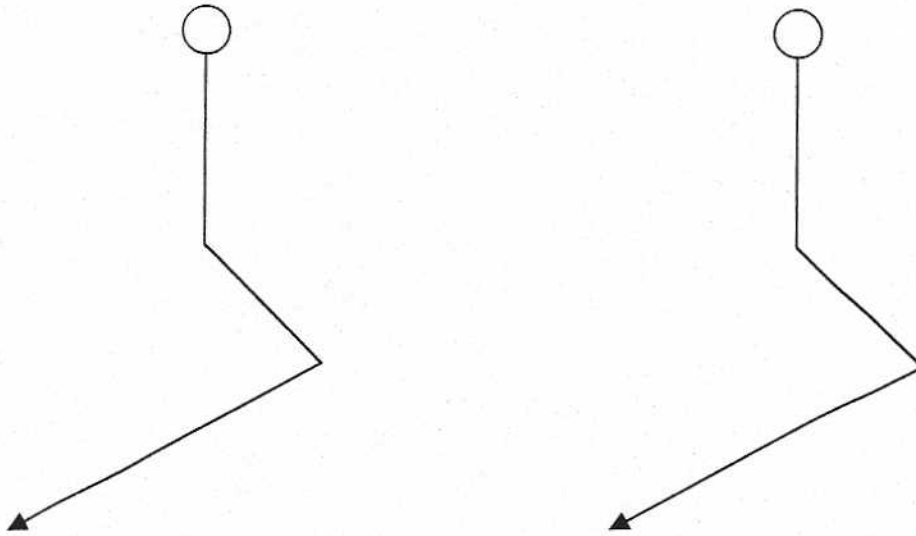


1. On coaches command, get into a full speed backpedal.
2. Maintain backpedal until the coach commands you to turn and break on the post.
3. On your turn, the DB should open his hips at a 45-degree angle up field.
4. Accelerate up-field with focus on an up-field target as you finish.

**CP: It is very important that the DB get up-field and not come out too flat on his turn. Always coach him to get vertical without being too flat or too straight up-field.**

## BAD (BASEBALL) TURN

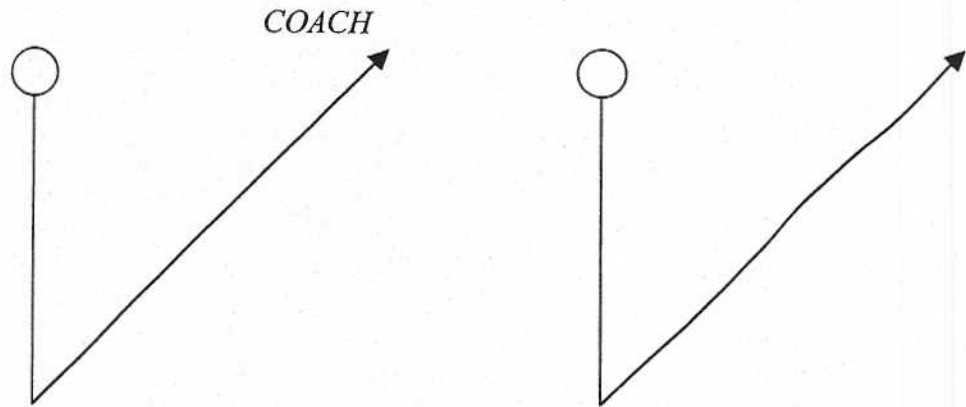
COACH



1. On coaches command, get into a full speed backpedal.
2. Maintain backpedal until the coach commands you break on the *post*.
3. Drive on the post up to 4 steps up-field or until the coach commands you to redirect.
4. On the redirection, stick your outside foot in the turf and quickly turn opposite the post. Get your head around in a hurry.
5. Accelerate up-field or flat depending on the desired finish.

**CP: Make sure the DB get his head around very fast. This will enable him to quickly acknowledge the route of the intended WR and determine where to accelerate.**

## PLANT AND DRIVE

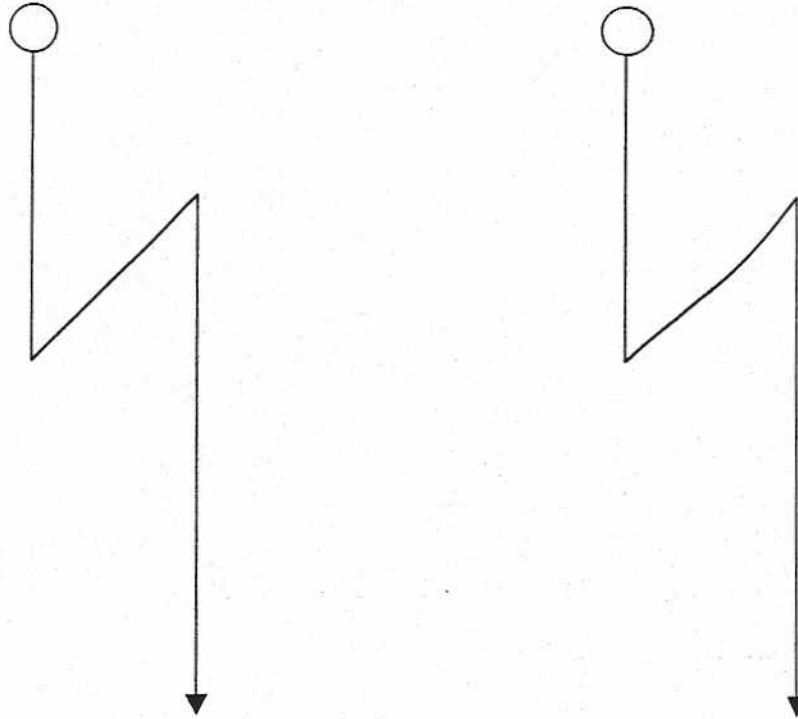


1. Begin to backpedal at half to below half speed with very little arm movement.
2. On coaches command, gather yourself by chattering your feet.
3. Once you have gathered, plant the foot opposite the direction you are instructed to go. (Ex: if driving to the right, plant your left foot)
4. Point your directional foot at your target or the direction you want to go.
5. Drive downhill at a 45-degree angle with your eyes on your target and finish through the line.

**CP: Make sure there is evident acceleration in the drive phase of the drill. It is equally important to make certain the DB is focused on the intended WR so that there are no wasted motions such as looking back at the QB. Make sure to get the directional foot on the ground as quick as possible.**

## PLANT, DRIVE AND GO

*COACH*



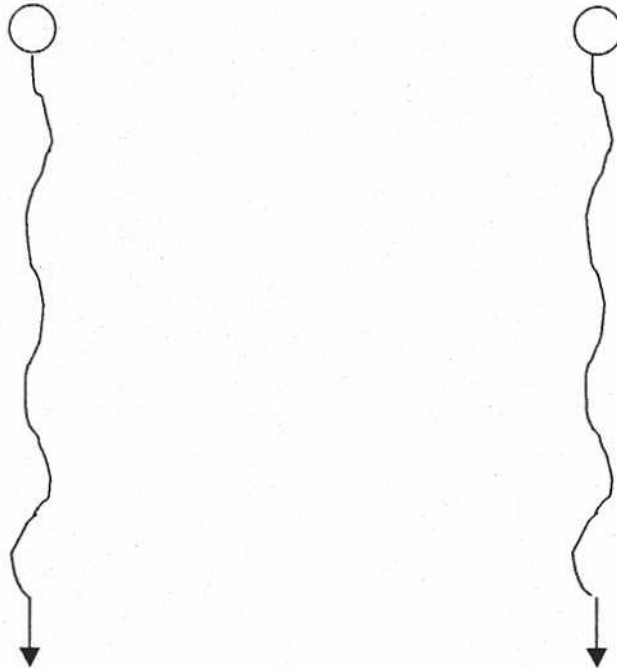
1. Repeat the plant and drive portion of the drill.
2. At the end of the drive phase, plant your front foot and redirect up-field by turning into the WR (out).
3. Roll into the WRs hip pocket.
4. Accelerate to the designated finishing point. Make that point at least 7 yards to insure the proper acceleration and finish.

**CP:** The same coaching point is necessary as in the plant and drive drill. The DB will not know when to redirect on a WR if he does not focus all of his attention on his hips and feet.

# **TECHNIQUE DRILLS**

## WEAVE

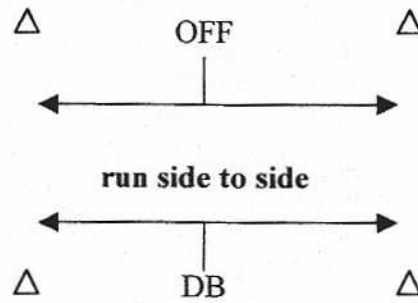
COACH



1. Begin to backpedal on command right at or below 50%.
2. As the coach commands you to change direction, maintain the same body posture in you backpedal as you fluidly change direction.
3. As you weave, stay vertical as much as possible.
4. Keep the same leverage (inside/outside) on the WR that you begin with. If you begin with inside leverage you should stay inside and vice-versa. (ONLY APPLIES WHEN A RUNNER IS INVOLVED)

**CP: Make sure the weaving is less than 1 yard from the straight line in which the DB is backpedaling. You may use a runner as the WR to simulate the weave.**

## MIRROR

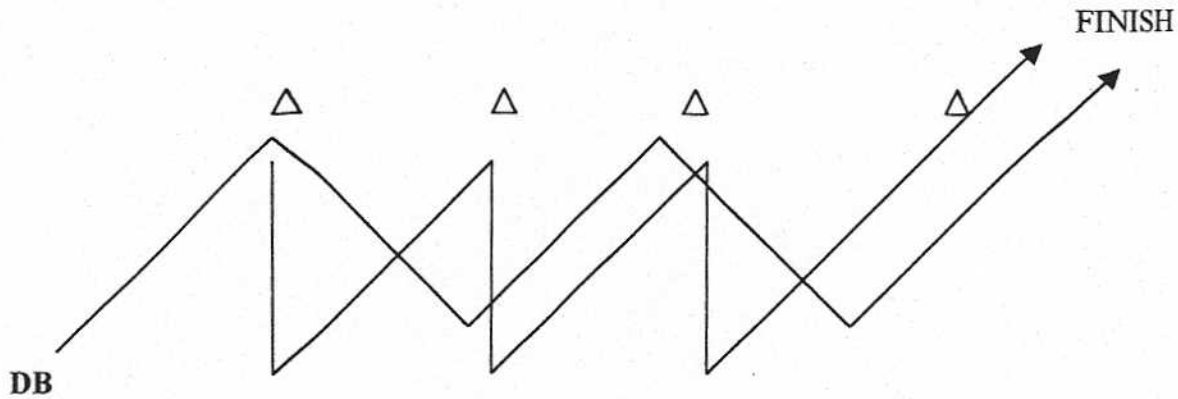


1. Start in a head up position against a partner.
2. The defender should keep his hands behind his back or to his side.
3. As the offensive guy moves side to side, the DB should try to maintain a head up position on the moving target.
4. End on the coach's command.

**CP: Maintain good eye placement on the hips or the feet. Only incorporate the hand if you want to involve contact in the drill.**



## M - DRILL



1. When you are ready, accelerate downhill to the first cone (*optional*).
2. Once you are at the desired cone, backpedal at an angle or straight back.  
-**Note:** BP should be about 50%!
3. Once you have gotten to the depth of the drill, accelerate to the cone.

**CP:** Pay close attention to the footwork in this drill. Look for acceleration off the plant foot and make certain the directional foot is pointed properly.  
There are two ways to do the drill – 1) Backpedal at an angle or 2) Backpedal straight back.

# **BALL DRILLS**

COME TO

*COACH*

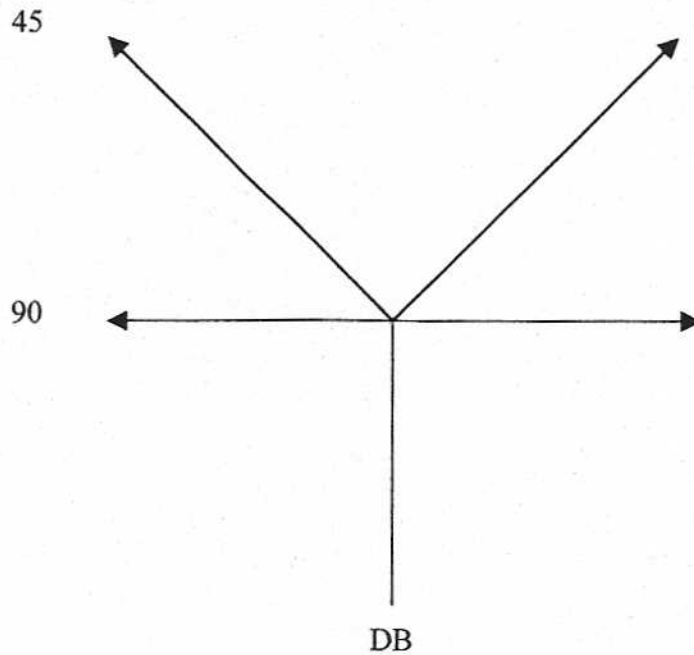


DB

1. DB aligns 15 yards away in front of coach.
2. Run full speed towards the coach.
3. Give a pass and a ball call.
4. Give an oskie (team word) call once you catch the ball.

BREAK AT 45/90

COACH



1. Begin *come to* portion of the drill.
2. On coach's command break right or left at 45/90 degrees full speed.
3. Run downhill/laterally without fading away from the football.

**CP: Remember to yell PASS! BALL! and OSKIE! You may benefit by not telling the DB when to break verbally. Give the DB a direction by turning right or left to throw the football.**

DEEP BALL (locater)

DB

COACH



1. DB run vertical without looking back.
2. Once a ball call is made by the other DBs turn your head and locate the ball.
3. Once the ball is located, adjust and catch the ball at its highest point.

**CP: COACHES, do not let your DB catch the ball over the shoulder unless he is past the WR and playing only the ball. Always attack the ball at the highest point!!**

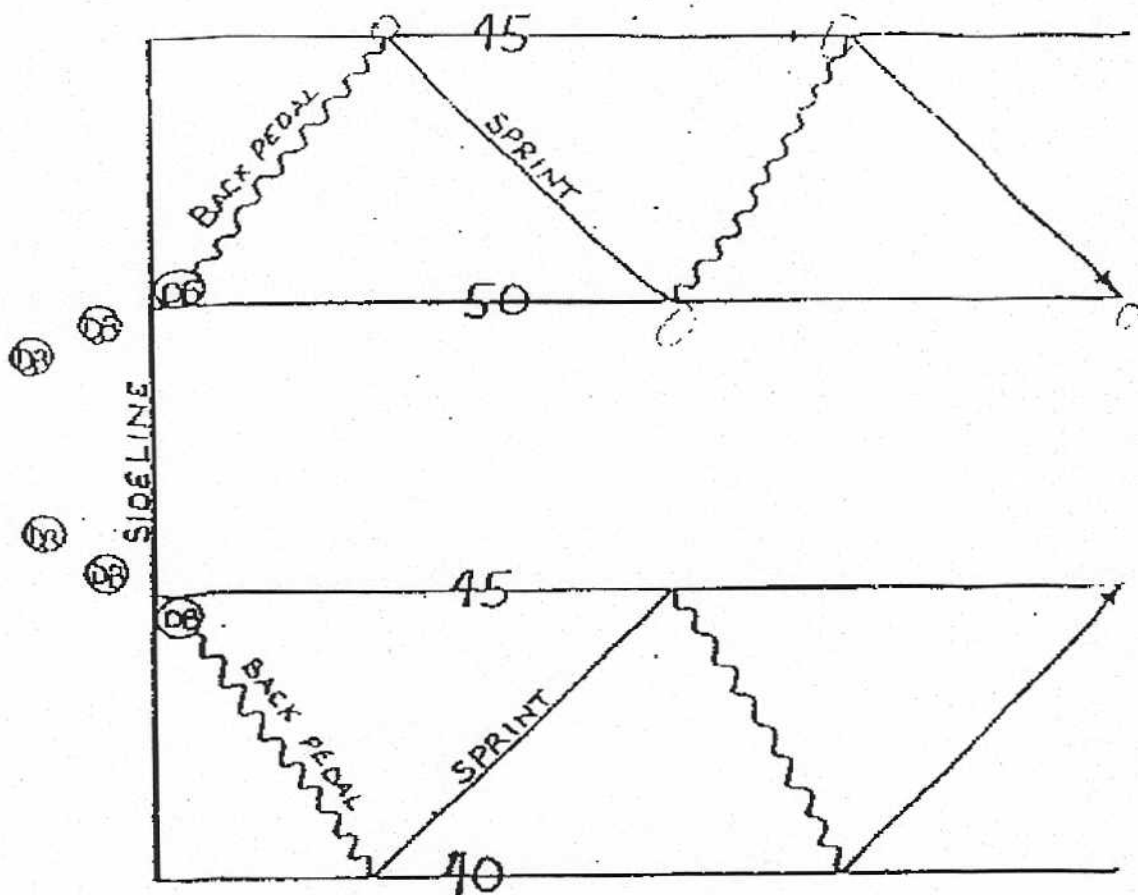
# X "W" BACKPEDAL - BREAK DRILL

Purpose:

To review proper backpedal technique and to develop great break on the ball.

Personnel:

All Defensive Backs.



Procedure:

Defensive Back begins backpedal at 45 degree angle. Once he hits the 5 yard stripe, he plants outside foot (throws arm and snaps head in new direction) and drives full speed to the original 5 yd. stripe. Repeat twice.

Once you have returned to the sideline, get in other line and perform drill starting in opposite direction.

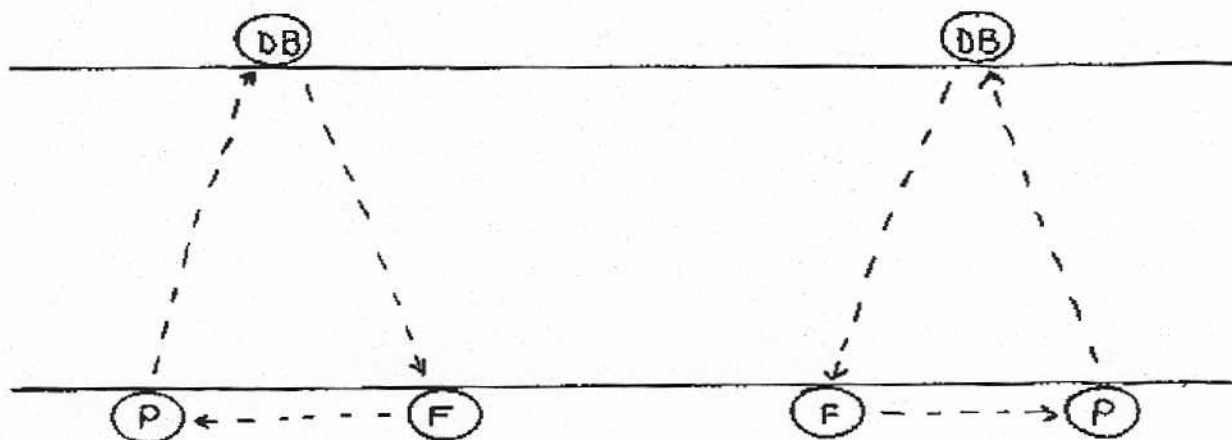
Coaching Point:

This is not a race, emphasize proper backpedal, then "break" to interception.

## PEPPER DRILL

**Purpose:** To experience catching balls coming quickly from different angles.

**Personnel:** Groups of 3 defensive backs.



**Procedure:** One player is designated the passer, one the catcher, and one the feeder. Utilizing 2 balls, the passer throws a pass to the catcher, lined up five yards apart while receiving another ball from the feeder. Immediately he throws that ball at a different spot on the catcher. Catcher gets ball back to feeder anyway he can. Rotate assignments every 30 seconds.

**Coaching Point:** Stress seeing ball into your hands.