

# Coach T Newsletter

## Dedicated exclusively to youth football

June 2007

Let me take a moment and thank all of you for your support of the Coach T Newsletter. For those of you who have visited my web site at [www.coacht.tv](http://www.coacht.tv) to inquire about my DVD series **How to Coach Youth Football**, I thank you! I'm especially excited about the number of people who support youth football and find my DVD and my newsletter to be useful tools. Also, please feel free to request any of the Coach T newsletter back issues. You will soon be able to download them off the Coach T website.

This month's newsletter focuses on some drills to develop pass catching skills of the wide receiver. In a previous newsletter I went into great detail concerning basic blocking techniques. I have also included drive blocking as it pertains to the wide receiver position.

## Wide Receivers

The role of the wide receiver in youth football evolves dramatically from first grade through high school. At the earliest level, the wide receiver is used primarily as blocker. As the player moves on, his pass catching skills increase exponentially.

### **Catching the Ball**

It's vitally important that players learn to catch the ball with their hands and not their bodies. One very simple drill to re-enforce this concept is to position receivers behind the goal post and instruct them to catch the ball with the post in front of their body. This forces them to use only their hands to catch the ball.

The most important point to remember in pass catching at any level is to watch the ball into the hands. Most balls are dropped when the eyes stray away from the ball and the receiver starts to look up field. This skill must be mastered at the youth level if the player has any chance of playing in higher levels of football.

## **Lining up at the line of scrimmage**

There's never an excuse for receivers to be off sides or not up to the line of scrimmage at the snap of the ball (if he/she is suppose to be given the formation). If the receiver forgets the snap count, he/she can just look over and see when the ball is being snapped. If they don't know if they're up to the line of scrimmage, they just have to ask the referee. Get them in the habit of asking the referee on every play to avoid a penalty.

## **Route Running**

Route running has evolved greatly in the last 30 years. These changes are due to the greater reliance on the passing game at all levels of football. It used to be that you just ran a route... a hook, for example, 12 yards out, 2 yards back. Today's receiver must find a seam and adapt based on the position of the defender. In a future newsletter, I'll go through a standard route tree used for conformity and ease of memory.

## **Breaking Off the Route**

It is vital to the receiver's success to know how to break off a pass route. Why is this important? Imagine you spent an entire half having your wideout run a slant route. In a sense, you've trained the defender how to defend that route. Now that he gets a feel for that route, you break it off or square it out. The result is an open wide receiver.

## **Attacking the Technique**

In order to be a good wide receiver, the receiver must understand how the defensive back is coached. This is the first step in what is called "attacking the technique." For example, good coaching will cause the defender to take away the middle route of the receiver. How does the wideout respond to this? He utilizes stemming. Stemming is a counter move to the position the defensive back has been coached to take. The receiver would run an out route after having "sold" the slant route to the defensive back.

## **Drive Blocking**

The drive block is the first blocking technique to teach. It really is the foundation of all blocking techniques because other blocking methods branch out from the basics of the drive block. The drive block is used on running plays or play action pass plays when the defender is "on" the blocker, or head-to-head with the blocker. It's important that the blocker utilizes the power step, quickstep, making contact in a fit position, keeping

the feet going in short, choppy steps. Make sure that the contact is low on any block. Many young blockers feel it's important to "pancake" the defender. Stress that it's more important to engage the defender, tying up the opponent so that he can't make the tackle.

**Important! Remember to keep this chart handy as practices begin.**

HEAT INDEX CHART									
AIR TEMPERATURE (Degrees in Fahrenheit)									
Relative Humidity	70°	75°	80°	85°	90°	95°	100°	105°	110°
0%	64°	69°	73°	78°	83°	87°	91°	95°	99°
10%	65°	70°	75°	80°	85°	90°	95°	100°	105°
20%	66°	72°	77°	82°	87°	93°	99°	105°	112°
30%	67°	73°	78°	84°	90°	96°	104°	113°	123°
40%	68°	74°	79°	86°	93°	101°	110°	122°	137°
50%	69°	75°	81°	88°	96°	107°	120°	135°	150°
60%	70°	76°	82°	90°	100°	114°	132°	149°	
70%	70°	77°	85°	93°	106°	124°	144°		
80%	71°	78°	86°	97°	113°	136°	157°		Source:
90%	71°	79°	88°	102°	122°	150°	170°		National
100%	72°	80°	91°	108°	133°	166°			Weather Service

**APPARENT TEMPERATURE**

**Heat Index 90° - 100°:**  
Sun stroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion are possible with prolonged exposure and physical activity

**Heat Index 101° - 129°:**  
Sun stroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely. Heat stroke is possible with prolonged exposure and physical activity

**Heat Index 130° or higher:**  
Heat stroke or sun stroke are imminent

In my July newsletter, I'll include terminology for the offensive side of the ball. If I missed anything, please send comments to me by e-mailing me at [coacht@coacht.tv](mailto:coacht@coacht.tv). Also, send in your favorite resources for books, drills and plays. I'd love to share them with everyone on the Coach T network.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to share them with me. You can communicate with me through my web site at:

[www.CoachT.tv](http://www.CoachT.tv)

I'd love to hear from you!

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