

203 Drills for the TEX-BONE

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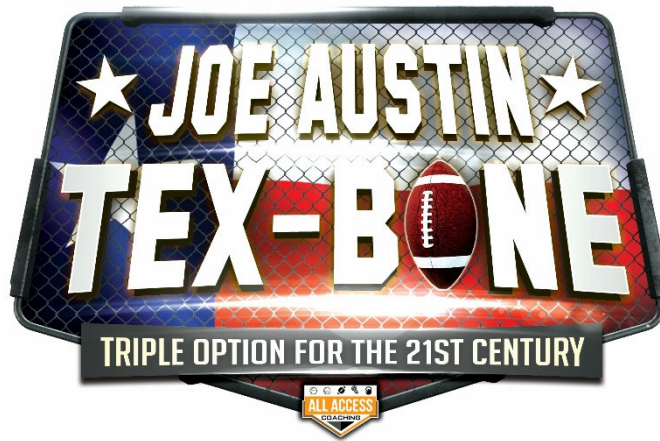


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WHY THE TEX-BONE DRILL BOOK?

The Tex-Bone is an offensive system that Tom Ross and I developed at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. It's triple option for the 21st century. We combined Tom's flexbone background and my spread background to create a new triple option system that features the shotgun, multiple formations and power as the foundational play. While this drill manual is grounded in how we teach the Tex-Bone it is certainly not Tex-Bone exclusive. The drills contained are excellent for offenses of all styles, and, there are sections that are about athlete development in general that are in no way tied to the Tex-Bone.

Look at it this way: **the Tex-Bone is a tool box for coaches.** Every week or year you might use a different tool, but the system never changes. If you have ever wanted a system that is hard to defend, moldable to your players and has all the answer built in the Tex-Bone is for you and these are the drills to teach it.

I have coached and instructed several different offenses during my 21 year career: power I, spread, flexbone, etc. and I have used elements of West Coast, Single Wing and Air Raid. In the course of doing so I have used every drill in this manual with my athletes.

When designing and selecting drills I think there are three specific things that must be considered and planned for.

- 1) The drill must teach specific skills, not just be activity for the sake of keeping players busy.
- 2) The drill must be applicable to the athlete's game performance. If the skill being taught in the drill won't translate to the game it is just activity and not a good use of time.
- 3) The drill must provide a system of feedback so that the player knows if they are on the right track. Feedback can be direct verbal communication or it can simply be trial and error where the players can attempt things and explore the techniques and skills of the drill with only gentle guidance in the right direction. My favorite way to guide players through the process of gaining skill via drill work is to give them a few key points that they can self-monitor to know if they are on the right track or not. The goal is for the player to be able to self-diagnose a mistake and to know what to do the correct any errors on the next rep. At the same time, players need to develop an understanding of what it "feels" like to do it right so they can develop muscle memory and recall.

Coaches also need to understand the concept of neuromuscular adaptation. This is a concept commonly considered by strength and conditioning professionals. Neuromuscular adaptation means that the more an athlete performs a movement pattern the more efficiently the brain and neurons will communicate and fire. The result of this can be large initial gains in competence at a specific skill. Coaches must be ready, and have a plan for, adapting to the slower rate of improvement that will occur once neuromuscular adaptation is pretty much maxed out. To address this, many drills in this book progress from one to the next and many have variations for advanced athletes that have achieved a high level of neuromuscular adaptation.

Another key aspect of quality drill design is that it simultaneously incorporates as many players as possible. In terms of drill work, there is nothing worse than when a coach has a position group of 14 players and his drill has two players taking a repetition with 12 players standing around doing nothing. I have observed a lot of practices and worked at a lot of camps. From this experience it has become clear to me that for many

coaches it is not intuitive to that getting players a lot of repetitions, where they can learn from trial and error, is more important than providing detailed feedback of each rep. Improvement comes from the repetitions that creates comfort and muscle memory. Striking the balance between quality and quantity is critical for coaches when instructing skills and implementing drills.

Most importantly, as taught to me by Tex-Bone co-creator Tom Ross, repetition creates faster reactions in players and this ties into the idea that drills are effective only if they improve game play. When a football player is in a game they are constantly given visual cues. After receiving the cue their brain must process this information and a reactionary movement must be planned and executed. The purpose of drills in the sport of football is to speed up the process of: 1) receive the visual cue, 2) think about what to do, 3) react physically. If the drill you have designed does not speed up the process of “see it, process it, attack it” the drill should be abandoned or redesigned.

Finally, because time is so precious in football training, cardiovascular conditioning should be an element in as many football drills as possible. When done intentionally, this is easy to do. Perhaps the easiest way is to incorporate enough players in the drill so that the players are working at a 1:4 or 1:5 work to rest ratio. This simulates the pace of a game. If a play lasts five seconds, players will typically have 20 to 25 seconds to rest and prepare for the next play; this is what is meant by a 1:4 or 1:5 work to rest ratio. Of course, drills do not have to be done at this pace, but coaches would be well served to remember that their individual skill development drills can be a very effective way to develop the desired game specific cardiovascular fitness of your players.

WHAT’S IN THIS BOOK

In this book are drills to develop individual players at all offensive positions. In addition, there are small group drills and drills for the entire offensive unit that teaches specific plays and game situations such as how to complete passes in scramble situations.

These drills are not exclusive to utilizing the Tex-Bone, however. These drills are largely universal and can be used to improve the execution of all systems of offense.

SECTION 1: Quarterback Drills

Perhaps no position in sport is as critical to the success of entire team as the quarterback in football. The first section of the book details quarterback fundamentals, footwork and passing mechanics. The finer points of the run game and pass are explained. Special emphasis is given to lower body mechanics – one of the most overlooked elements of quarterbacking.

SECTION 2: Running Back Drills

The Tex-Bone drill book is focused on developing running backs that will be successful in the run and pass game. An entire chapter is dedicated to ball security and these drills can be utilized with wide receivers and quarterbacks as well. Additional chapters cover the fundamentals of rushing, receiving and blocking.

SECTION 3: Wide Receiver Drills

Catching, footwork and blocking all receive a chapter's worth of drills. In an era where perimeter blocking has been deemphasized this book provides coaches with a resource to teach their players to succeed in the running game with strong perimeter blocking.

SECTION 4: Offensive Line Drills

Offensive line skill development begins with footwork and hand drills. Immediately following, play specific drills for all plays in the Tex-Bone system are discussed. This section also includes drills for executing combination blocks.

SECTION 5: Group Drills

The final section deals with group drills and includes:

- A complete plan for installing triple option with a progression of drills to train the dive phase and pitch phase.
- A chapter that details quarterback, running back and slot/wing operations for all non-triple option plays in the Tex-Bone system.
- A chapter dedicated to perimeter blocking as a group. Players must know who to block and this chapter outlines a simple system of identification.

The second half of Section 5 deals with physical conditioning by prescribing drills for:

- Warm-up.
- Cool down and static stretching.
- Core strength.
- Neck strength.