

CHAPTER 15: PERIMETER DRILLS

#129 SCRAMBLE DRILL

PURPOSE: The Scramble Drill involves all offensive players, except the offensive linemen. It teaches the perimeter group how to execute and complete passes when the quarterback is forced out of the pocket due to pressure from the pass rush.

SET-UP: With no defenders present, the offensive group will snap the ball and run a pass play. After taking the normal drop for the play the quarterback will escape the pocket, either to the right or the left. When the receivers (as well as any running back that are in the pass pattern) realize that the quarterback has been forced to leave the pocket they will adjust their routes to be able to match the quarterback's scramble.

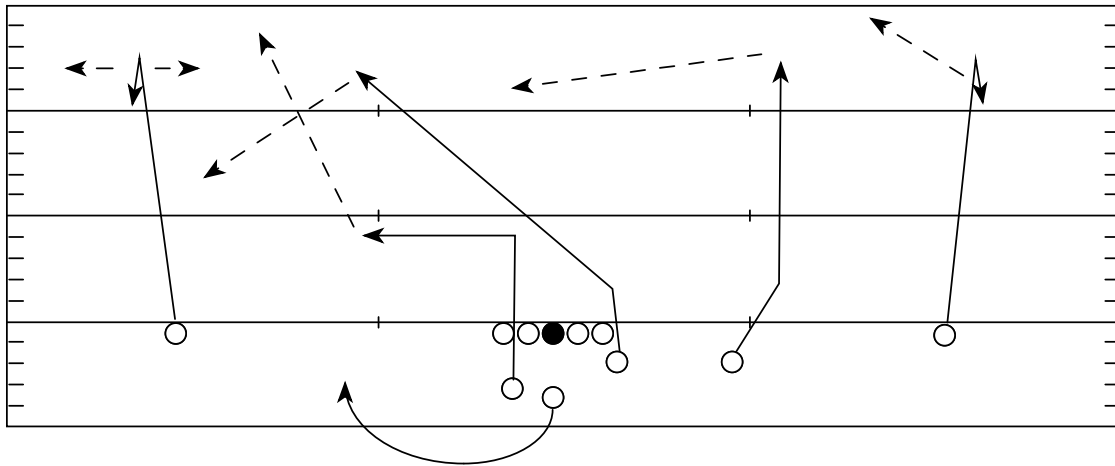
Scramble rules are:

1. Deep route: stop and run back toward the quarterback.
2. Short route: turn up field and run deep toward the endzone.
3. Intermediate route: stop and mirror the quarterback as he runs sideways from the pocket.

The quarterback's progression will depend on the amount of time and space they feel that they have. If the quarterback escapes the pocket, is working to the wide side of the field, and feels like they have a lot of time to throw, they will scan for an open receiver from deep to short. If the quarterback is forced to the short side of the field, or if they feel they have very limited time to throw, they will scan for an open receiver from short to deep. Throwing the ball away is always a good option. The purpose of escaping the pocket is to escape a sack and the subsequent loss of yardage. After escaping the pocket, and avoiding being sacked, the quarterback's first job is to ensure that no yardage is lost on the play. This makes legally throwing the ball out of bounds a highly preferable option to being tackled from behind. The final option, which is also a good choice, is for the quarterback to gain yards by running. Coaching point: When practicing scrambles, the quarterback must learn that Rule #1 is to never take a sack. To ensure this, teach them that once you start running you cannot stop running. To do so would likely lead to being tackled from behind. Being tackled from behind defeats the purpose of escaping from the pocket in the first place.

VARIATIONS: Rather than having the quarterback choose which way they will escape, or having the coach tell them which way to escape before the play starts, simulated pass rush pressure can be applied (see drill #21 Pass Rush Avoidance Drill for set-up instructions). Once the offensive group has practiced their scramble rules without a defense this drill can be executed in a 7 on 7 situation. Scramble calls can either be mixed into a normal 7 on 7 session, or a specific scramble session can be built into the practice plan. If running a specified offense versus defense Scramble Drill, the coach that is scripting the offense should mix in some plays in which the offense throws the ball with the normal timing of the pass pattern. This

ensures that the receivers do not adapt their routes early or that the defense cheats their depth in anticipation of a scramble.



#130 PASS ROUTES WITH READ SIMULATIONS

PURPOSE: Any pass play in the Tex-Bone is teachable by setting up a drill that simulates the reads the quarterback makes. In pass route drills with read simulations the quarterback will work with all the wide receivers involved in the read progression. If possible, it's useful to get the running backs with the quarterback so they learn to make play action passes look identical to run plays.

SET-UP: We generally use coaches or other players to simulate the defenders that are read. When drilling our Quick Flood play, for example, we assign a coach to play the role of the cornerback. If the corner sits near line of scrimmage to cover the out route, the quarterback learns to throw the ball to the vertical hole down the sideline between the corner and the safety. To teach this hole-throw we put another coach at the safety position. When the cornerback drops and runs with the vertical route down the sideline, the quarterback learns to throw the ball quickly to the out route.

