

Life After Football: Reidel Anthony

Joe Kania - Buccaneers.com

Posted Feb 26, 2015

Reidel Anthony spent the first half of his life on football field under the Florida sun. If things go the way he's planned, he'll spend the second half doing the same thing.

Anthony was a wide receiver selected by the Buccaneers in the first round of the 1997 draft. He recorded 144 receptions for 1,846 yards and 16 touchdowns before retiring in 2001. He currently holds the record as the youngest player in NFL history (post-merger) to catch a touchdown pass.

Like Jorge Diaz, who was profiled earlier in February, Anthony arrived in Tampa at a turning point in Buccaneers history.

"Coach (Tony) Dungy had just started up," Anthony said. "They had just had a great draft the year before. Me and Warrick (Dunn) came in and we were trying to make a difference."

Coming from Steve Spurrier's pass-happy Florida Gators, playing for the Bucs' run-first offense was an adjustment.

"It was challenging at first," Anthony said, "coming from Florida and my junior year having 72 catches and 18 touchdowns and to come down here and buy into the system. They told me from day one, 'Hey, we're a run first and throw second offense,' and I had to buy into it. I just did my assignment, did my one-eleventh and when my number was called I just tried to make plays whenever possible."

Anthony hung his cleats up the year before the Buccaneers defeated the Raiders in Super Bowl XXXVII. The transition into the next phase of his life was seamless.

"Right after my career I coached Division II football," Anthony said. "I was the wide receivers coach at Valdosta State for two years. I did that, took a year off and then I ended up back at Ocala Trinity Catholic as a wide receiver coach up there. I actually got a state championship up there my last year. Then after that I went back home to Belle Glade and coached down there for two years also."

Following his career as a college and high school coach, Anthony moved into private

training. He has spent the past five years working with athletes of all ages alongside former teammates Booger McFarland and Yo Murphy at the Performance Compound in Tampa.

He has trained Sammy Watkins, Bruce Ellington and Nelson Agholor, just to name a few. In addition to his work at the Performance Compound, he started the Reidel Anthony Wide Receiver Academy where he trains up-and-coming wide receivers as young as 12 years old all the way up to players preparing for the NFL Draft.

"I always knew what I wanted to do," Anthony said. "I always took all the notes I could and paid attention to whatever situation football brought my way because I knew I wanted to get into coaching first and eventually start my own wide receiver academy eventually so I could just be hands on and teach what I know the way I want to teach it."

