

# Keenan Bailey Making Things “Uncomfortable” To Help Continue Cade Stover’s Development



When Ohio State tight end Cade Stover elected to return to the Buckeyes for a fifth season in Columbus, tight ends coach Keenan Bailey had a simple objective for Stover: get uncomfortable.

Stover is coming off one of the most impressive seasons by an Ohio State tight end in recent memory, posting 36 receptions for 406 yards and five touchdowns. But in deciding to come back for another season, Bailey and Stover wanted to ensure that the tight end would be able to continue his development as he prepares for the next level.

“It’s simple: get uncomfortable. I text him it all the time, I printed it out and put on his desk: get uncomfortable. What does that mean? It means if I put Cade in a drill that he could exhale because he knows he’s good at, shame on me,” Bailey said. “He should have went to the NFL. If I have him run a route at practice that he’s comfortable doing, shame on me. He’s not getting better. You don’t get better when you’re comfortable.”

Stover – who has appeared at defensive end, linebacker and tight end during his first four seasons at Ohio State – has seen a lot during his time in Columbus, but during this offseason and as fall camp has gotten underway, Stover is still experiencing new wrinkles, such as matching up one-on-one against defensive backs like Denzel Burke or Sonny Styles.

“(Bailey) does a really good job at that as far as making me feel like – there’s stuff I’m good at and there’s stuff that, hey, you’re good at this, you could do consistently at a high rate and high consistency,” Stover said, “but there’s also things that I have never done before that he constantly puts me in positions in way more than the comfortable positions.

“In practice and stuff, I’m doing stuff that a lot of times I’ve never done before in my life. Like, I run way more one-on-ones with safeties now than I ever have. Up until this year, I’ve never ran a one-on-one with a safety, just in a one-on-one drill, ever. Just little things like that, trying to make me uncomfortable and get better at those things just to broaden my basis of what I can do.”

These are new experiences for Stover, but it’s all in the name of making him a better tight end this

season for Ohio State. As the returning captain prepares to lead the tight end room again this season, Bailey has high expectations for Stover's continued growth.

"For Cade to come back, we put a plan together before he decided, right, and I said, 'I'm going to make you uncomfortable, because that's when you grow.' " Bailey said. "So it's drills, it's going up against corners, right? I mean, because if you could beat Denzel Burke at the line of scrimmage, you can beat a safety, right? So putting him in situations where he's constantly uncomfortable, and he might hate it at the time, but he's getting so much better."