

# Rugby Coaching Manual

Under 6 to Under 12

Updated 2017





# Contents

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction.....                              | 3  |
| Club History .....                             | 4  |
| Club Contacts.....                             | 6  |
| Important points for coaches.....              | 8  |
| Key Skills list .....                          | 11 |
| Under 6 .....                                  | 12 |
| - Objectives and Summary .....                 | 12 |
| - Session Structure and Plans... ..            | 13 |
| Under 7 .....                                  | 14 |
| - Objectives and Summary.....                  | 14 |
| - Session Structure and plans... ..            | 15 |
| Under 8 .....                                  | 16 |
| - Objective and Summary .....                  | 16 |
| - Session Structure and plans.....             | 17 |
| Game Illustrations Under 6,7 and 8 .....       | 18 |
| Under 9 .....                                  | 33 |
| - Objective and Summary .....                  | 34 |
| - Session Structure and plans.....             | 35 |
| Under 10 .....                                 | 36 |
| - Objective and Summary .....                  | 36 |
| - Session Structure and plans.....             | 37 |
| Game Illustrations Under 9 and Under 10.....   | 38 |
| Under 11 .....                                 | 47 |
| - Objective and Summary .....                  | 47 |
| - Session Structure and plans.....             | 48 |
| Under 12 .....                                 | 49 |
| - Objective and Summary .....                  | 49 |
| - Session Structure and plans... ..            | 50 |
| Game Illustrations Under 11 and Under 12 ..... | 51 |

Appendix 1 – ORRFC Child Protection policy

Appendix 2 – RFU Rules and Regs Under 7 and Under 8

Appendix 3 – RFU Rules and Regs Under 9 and Under 10

Appendix 4 – RFU Rules and Regs Under 11 and Under 12

Appendix 5 – IRB Coaching Booklet



## Introduction

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This coaching manual has been put together specifically for the Old Reigatians Rugby Club and is designed to offer new coaching members an introduction to the club and existing coaches an introduction to their new age groups with tried and tested session structure and games.

The manual has been put together with the help of current coaches from Unde6s through to Under 12s and builds on experiences shared. It aims to help coaches consider the main objectives they need to be focusing on throughout the season whilst setting realistic levels of expectation within the group. There is general information relating to RFU rules and regulations for each age group, suggested structure of sessions and some examples of games and drills. There is a shortened key skills section and a list of important points for all coaches to consider.

We are part of a fantastic club in a great community and it is essential that this manual is just the starting point for the sharing of useful information and best practice. It is by no means the definitive guide to coaching and it is essential that every year we share our experiences and it becomes a working document for future generations to come

Please throughout the course of the season keep a note of your progress and feedback at the end so this document can be updated every season.

The coaching document is supported by appendix that covers the clubs child protection policy, the most up to date RFU rules and regulations for every age group and the most recent IRB coaching guide full of basic skills and coaching tips.

Fun should be at the forefront of every coach at every level. Rugby is a physical and competitive game but this should not take away from the club and its coaches providing a fun, dynamic and inclusive environment for all to take part and prosper.

If you have any questions relating to the content of the manual please contact Max on 07722007331

Happy Coaching!



## Club History 1927 - 2011

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Founded in the 1927/28 Season by the Old Boys of Reigate Grammar School, who had recently been introduced to the "Game for hooligans - played by gentlemen" when their School, along with Guildford RGS and Caterham G.S., as well as many others, replaced soccer in favour of rugby in the School's curriculum. This was an ingenious attempt to meet the requirements of an Education request from the Government of the time for an increase in the number of boys taking part in team sports. At one stroke the playing field which had provided only 22 players with an introduction to the "beautiful game" were utilised to give 30 boys the opportunity to legally fight with each other.

The Club initially used a field adjoining the then School playing field in St Albans Road. A year later a ground was secured on the site which at present is used by Reigate Hill Golf Club as a practice ground. First the Feathers Hotel in Merstham and then the Jolliffe Arms provided the pre-match changing facilities and the post match teas and entertainment! I also understand that on occasions an A XV used the Reigate RFC ground (then somewhere off The Clears) in the lee of Colley Hill. These rather primitive arrangements continued until the 1939 - 1945 war brought a temporary end to the club's progress.

At the end of the war, the club was immediately reformed by a nucleus of pre-war players amongst whom Norman Holt and Geoffrey Knight were pre-eminent.

Once again the Reigate Swimming Baths provided the changing & washing accommodation, with after match teas provided by wives and girlfriends in one of the wartime Nissan Huts (still standing) to the rear of the Town Hall, in Castlefield Road. The White Hart in Church Street provided the after match entertainment thanks to the co-operation of the then landlord, Mr J.G.(Pat) Mundy, who had played his rugby for Old Cranleighans and allowed us to use his Lounge Bar as a club room. The search for a permanent home was finally successful, when through the generosity of Mr & Mrs (later Lord & Lady) Rank we were able to purchase the small plot off Park Lane on which we built our first and to date, our only real home.

In the following season, the Rugby Football Union gave us the opportunity of either accepting their new directives as to League Rugby or withdrawing from any form of competitive rugby altogether. We chose (not without some misgivings) to join the new League system and during the next 13 seasons the Old Reigatians Club played for 8 years in London 2 and for 5 years in London 3.

We ended our first year in London 3 on a high, finishing in third place. It is a well balanced League, with only bottom placed Weybridge Vandals narrowly failing to win less than half their games. Playing to well below our best form we lost the return games against both Effingham & Leatherhead and Chobham, which left us with London Irish Amateurs to beat for the opportunity to face Purley John Fisher for the vacancy in London 2. The Irish were well deserved winners of this final match. Happily Guernsey beat Camberley, in their final game, to stay out of the relegation zone. So we all got another trip to this lovely Channel Island.

We are still in London 3, though through more restructuring by the RFU, it is now called London 2. At this stage in the development of our Club we are proud to have at last produced teams at every age group from Under 5/6 to Under 18 in the Mini and Junior section, to this we can add under 19 & under 21 teams, under the direction of the Senior Club



## Club Contacts

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Please see the ORRFC website INFO page and individual team pages for contact information at:

<https://www.oldreigatianrfc.com/info>

<https://www.oldreigatianrfc.com/teams>



## Important Points for coaches

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### Starting Session

Start the session by taking players away from parents to a quiet area so you can get their full attention. Use the time to have a “catch up” with your group, re-capping on any skills from the previous session. Have a chat with the players about current situations such as any big games on the TV, asking what they learnt or noticed. Explain what you will be working on in that session and get everyone geared up and ready. Make sure the players understand what the objectives of the session are and tell them what you will be looking for and expecting of them.

### Demonstrations

Demonstrations are a vital part of coaching all age groups. From the complexities of teaching a 5 year old how to pass and catch through to contact training and set play such as scrummaging and line outs. Always demonstrate technique using existing players where possible and specialist positional coaches.

### Communication

Ensure you try and connect with the age of your audience. Players in the early age groups will require an entertaining group of coaches who can really get on the level of young children to engage and keep the sessions interesting. As the players start to get older they need to be given the freedom to express themselves on the pitch within an environment that is relaxed and still good fun. Coaches are role models and it is down to the head coach of each group to set the tone. Be generous in praise when it is deserved, never ridicule or shout at players for making mistakes. Do not over burden players with too much information and create a fun and enjoyable environment in which to train and play...the overall objective had to be enjoyment and fun regardless of ability.

### Key Skills

Key Skills are the basic skills we are looking to develop during each activity. Below is a list of skills/activities. Coaches need to follow the basic key skills when coaching different skills to children. It is recommended that at least three coaches in the group are qualified however the IRB notes attached are a good reminder of the key skills involved when carrying out certain activities.

### Structure of the session

Within this document each age group has a suggested structure for the session. Whilst the structure remains similar there is a certain amount of variety depending on the age group. We know that Under 6s and 7s need snappy sessions with multiple activities to prevent the players becoming bored and dis-interested. It's harder work for the coaches but more beneficial for the players. Similarly, Under 10s and Under 11s need a break from drill based activities to have fun and a laugh with their team mates. The enjoyment factor is the most important of all.

### Matchplay

Ensure at all times when representing the club that your coaching team conducts itself in the spirit of the game. It is the coach's job to instill respect, sportsmanship and fair play so lead by example. Remember that players are playing for fun and enjoyment and this takes priority over highly structured competition and a winning at all costs attitude. Develop player and team respect for the opposition as well as for the judgement of referees and opposing coaches.



### Managing the numbers

Some age groups will have a really big uptake, especially from Under 6 to Under 9s. It's the head coaches decision how to break down the sessions, if they want to use stations or have one big group that breaks off in to small groups with the coaches to do the same activities. This will depend on how many coaches the age group has. The same structure can be followed if you are doing stations as each station can carry out a game/activity. Ensure when running sessions with a big group that players are not standing around doing nothing for long periods. Make sure the games and activities (that allow it) are carried out in small groups.

### Core Values

Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship. Play to win – but not at all costs. Win with dignity, lose with grace. Observe the laws and regulations of Instruction. Respect opponents, referees and all participants. Reject cheating, racism, violence and drugs. Value volunteers and paid officials alike.

### Parents responsibility

Parents must be encouraged to feel part of the team and the club. Parents will be expected to volunteer for various things throughout the season and they are more likely to do so if they feel part of the club and your team. Ensure that you address the players and the parents at the end of each session to spread positive news about the session and pick out any individuals worthy of a mention. Do not always pick the best players but reward and praise players for effort and enthusiasm. Parents must always stay off the pitch, respect coaches and referees, encourage and applaud good rugby from both teams and support the club and the coaching team when required. Parents must remain on the club grounds at all times. If a parent wants to leave their child they will need to nominate another parent as responsible for their child in their absence.

### Child Protection

Ensure you have read the clubs child protection policy, appendix 1.

### Safety

It is very important that the head coach checks the pitch prior to parents and players arriving. Ensure the playing area is safe, free of any hard objects or faeces and is a big enough space to take a safe session. Ensure you have an attendance register with emergency contact details for parents. Ensure parents inform you if they are going to another part of the club. Ensure you have a fully stocked first aid kit and that you have a trained first aider in your group at every training session and match. Ensure players have all the correct kit, boots gum shields etc. Ensure that all of the equipment is safe and in good working order.

### Session Plans

Plan your sessions in advance and ensure that players off all ages have a good mixture of fun team building games with skill based games. Repetition is necessary to hone certain skills however vary the sessions in order to keep players interested. Players of all ages will learn quicker and take a keener interest if they are having fun. There are lots of different games that focus on the same skill so do your research and plan well. You can join the IRB passport programme which has a multitude of online tutorials. Don't be afraid to push your players and don't be put off when they make mistakes, it's how they will improve.



### Coaching team

Ensure you have enough resource at the start of the season to cover all the training sessions, festivals and club matches. This includes, coaches, referee's and first aiders. Head coaches need to delegate certain responsibilities and each coach needs to understand their role. Make sure you have enough time before the session to explain to the coaches what you are doing and the aims of the session. Encourage a pre-season coach-the-coach session so everyone is involved.

### Use the club

Don't be afraid to ask for help. A coach that thinks they know it all is normally the coach who has a weakness. Speak to other age groups, engage with the senior sides and Junior section. Have regular meetings with your assistant coaches, ask what they think is going well. Engage with the parents to gain feedback to see if the children are having fun and speak fondly of rugby at home. As the children get older look for specialists in backs/forward to help with sessions and use all of the equipment at your disposal.

### General Environment

Create a fun and inclusive environment for all. Remember at all times children are playing for enjoyment and fun. Ensure that all sessions are engaging for the players. Vary the games within your set structure so they do not get bored and make the sessions relaxed and friendly. Instill discipline and respect in the players along with the importance of hard work but continue to do so in a friendly welcoming manner. Most importantly, enjoy it.

### Whole-Part-Whole

A coaching technique that involves the player gaining understanding of the overall goal (Whole) and breaking the skills required in to component parts (Part) for training purposes and then putting together in a game based situation (Whole). This requires the breakdown of the game situation to put forward the points. E.G If you are trying to teach Under 7/8s to spread out in attack and you have told the players the importance and the reasons and worked on it in the session and in the game the players start to bunch you must freeze them and talk through the situation. Very often a skill can be easily forgotten in the heat of a game environment and this coaching technique will ensure players understand and can visualise the importance of the point.

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## Key Skills List

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### **Warm Up**

1. Raise body temperature
2. Warm up muscles ready for session/games
3. Prepare mentally for session/games

### **Basic Catching**

1. Hands out in a position ready to catch the ball (changing from “bread basket” for the Under 6 to Palm’s facing as the ability allows)
2. Keep focus and eye contact on the ball all the way into hands.
3. Call for the pass clearly when in the correct position

### **High Ball Catch (no Jump)**

1. Point hands up towards the ball, arms together
2. Keep focus and maintain eye contact on the ball
3. Track the ball and take a firm stance slightly side on so if dropped the ball goes backwards.

### **High Balls Catch (Jump)**

1. Check surrounding players before committing
2. Call clearly for the ball with eyes fixed on the target
3. Point hands towards ball with slightly bent elbows, slightly side on raise one knee towards waist and catch ball in mid-air and pull in to body landing on feet

### **Passing**

1. Two hands on side panel of the ball and Look at target before pass – aiming at target created
2. Move the ball from one side of the body to the other keeping it between waist and chest area
3. Follow through the hands in the direction of the pass, fingers pointing towards target

### **Tackle**

1. Maintain head in the correct position by keeping eyes up and position head behind or to one side of the ball carrier. Use “cheek to cheek” to ensure the head is never in front of the ball carrier
2. Prepare for contact with a strong, stable and low body position
3. Make contact with the shoulder, head behind and hit and wrap arms very firmly around the ball carrier to bring them to the ground.

### **Kicking**

**Place Kick** – Move opposite arm forward and turn shoulder side on with non-kicking foot a hips width from the ball pointing towards target. Extend leg with head down and follow through with kicking foot towards the target.

**Punt Kick** – Start with a stable position with opposite should slightly forward. Hold ball in two hands with extend arms and elbows straight. Drop ball on to foot, keep head down, contact with laces and drive through in direction of the target.



## Under 6

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### **Objectives and Summary**

For the development and safety of the players avoid mixing under age players in with the Under 6 age group. If the numbers permit, a micro or under 5s session could be taken by a separate group of coaches. Under 6s will have just started back in year 1 at School.

There are no festivals at this level and it is advised in order to keep the players concentration training is limited to 1 hour 30 min's on a Sunday morning.

The Under 6 age group will be many players first experience of Rugby, especially outside in the elements within a club environment. As a result, the sessions need to be fun and entertaining as the overall objective of the season is to ensure players stick with it and parents are encouraged to tell their friends. Maintaining concentration at this age for 90 minutes is the biggest challenge and sessions need to be structured to ensure the players have a good mix of skill based activities with fun games.

Having fun and engaging with the players in an entertaining way does not mean we are not coaching them in the basic skills and these are the main objectives for the season:

- Develop core basic skills – catching, passing, general movement and understanding of teammate's positions and when to pass.
- Coach simple instructions – Two hands on the ball, pass ball backwards, look for space, call for the ball, make the easy pass, hands out ready.
- Follow Simple rules – Avoid "Evil" side lines, correct grounding of the ball over the line, tag/pass.

#### **Target by the end of the season**

- **Fun, light hearted sessions that Improve core skills of catch/pass, general handling**
- **Ensure the players have a basic understanding of the rules**
- **Maximum participation through fun sessions, keep them coming back**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's | Skill based activities - 20 min's | Team Relay - 20 min's | Team game/Kicking game - 15 min's | Final matches/Game - 20 min's

### **Under 6**

|                                     | <b>September</b>               | <b>October</b>           | <b>November/December</b>       |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | Jungle<br>Simple Try           | Monster Try<br>Scoop try | Bulldog                        |
| Skill based<br>Catching/<br>Passing | Pop pass<br>Grid2              | Pop Pass<br>Grid 4       | Pairs passing<br>Race the ball |
| Relay                               | Simple relay                   | Assault course           | Handling Relay                 |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Bomb the base<br>Kick together | Kick together            | Rob the nest<br>Dodgeball      |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match                          | Match                    | Match                          |

|                                     | <b>January</b>                    | <b>February</b>                      | <b>March/April</b>             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | Bulldog<br>Dodge/Ball Tag         | Racing cars<br>Pass tag              | League race<br>How many passes |
| Skill based<br>Catching<br>/Passing | How many passes<br>Threes passing | How many passes<br>2 V 1             | Turn and pop<br>2 v 1          |
| Relay                               | Relay 2                           | Handling relay                       | Relay 3                        |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Steal the bacon                   | Kick together<br>Cowboys and Indians | Kick together<br>Dodgeball     |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match                             | Match                                | Match                          |

The RFU continuum starts from Under 7. There are no festivals for the Under 6s and this is a great opportunity to introduce children to club rugby in a fun environment.



## Under 7

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### **Objectives and Summary**

The Under 7s is the starting point of competitive rugby and matches against other clubs. Throughout the season there will be a series of friendly festivals culminating in the end of season Surrey festivals. These festivals are non-competitive.

Continuing and building on the work done in the Under 6s the main objective for the Under7s is to create a fun, energetic and dynamic environment that ensures players of all levels and capabilities have fun and enjoy their time at the Club. Its four a side, played on a very small pitch and the players who are well organised defensively appear to have the advantage so this needs to be worked on in training and the game “defensive line” is a fun way to learn how to stay together and work as a team

This season we will place slightly more emphasis on developing hand eye co-ordination, increasing awareness of space, support and running with the ball, inspiring confidence and understanding the basic rules.

One of the worst habits to get into is to encourage your players to stop when tagged. The phrase “tag, TURN pass” is not the one to use. We do not want to stop and turn. Players need to be encouraged at this early stage to continue forward momentum once they are tagged and pass the ball whilst still facing and moving forwards. In order to do this you have to have the support runners, so a big part of this season needs to be focused on support. There will be more dropped balls as its higher risk rugby but learning to pass and catch whilst on the move will stand the team in good stead for the next few years. Ensure enough time is left at the end of each training session to have a good game. Ensure you are using the whole-part-whole coaching technique.

Main Coaching objectives:

- Develop core basic skills - catch, pass, running with ball, awareness of space on the pitch
- Coach rugby specifics – Two hands on the ball, pass ball backwards, look for space, call for the ball, make the easy pass, run in to space, support and do not stop when tagged. Develop knowledge of rules – Avoid “evil” side lines, correct grounding of the ball over the line, tag/pass 3 second rule, passbackwards

**Target by the end of the season**

- **The majority of players can catch and pass whilst continuing forward momentum.**
- **The players start to understand the importance of support play and calling for the ball**
- **The players understand the basic rules and can roughly keep a defensive line**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's | Skill based activities - 30 min's | Team Relay - 20 min's | Team game/Kicking game - 20 min's | Final matches/Game - 30 min's

### ***Under 7***

|                                     | <b>September</b>                                      | <b>October</b>                | <b>November/December</b>           |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | How many passes<br>Dodge tag                          | Bulldog<br>How many passes    | Stuck in the ruck<br>Pairs in grid |
| Skill based<br>Catching/<br>Passing | Turn and Pop<br>2 v 1 channels<br>(Staggered taggers) | Grid of 4<br>Threes passing   | Circle Score<br>Hands              |
| Relay                               | Handling relay  | Assault course/Hand.<br>Relay | Handling Relay                     |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Dodgeball   | Bomb the base                 | Rob the nest                       |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match   | Match                         | Match                              |

|                                     | <b>January</b>                 | <b>February</b>  | <b>March/April</b>             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | Monster try<br>How many passes | Pairs grid<br>Stuck in the ruck                        | Bulldog<br>Grid tag            |
| Skill based<br>Catching<br>/Passing | Fours passing<br>Circle wagon  | 2 v 1 Channels (stager 2<br>taggers)<br>Defensive line | Turn and pop<br>Defensive line |
| Relay                               | Relay 2                        | Handling relay   | Relay 3                        |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Dodgeball                      | Bomb the base  | Kick together<br>Dodgeball     |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match                          | Match  | Match                          |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play

1. Number of players – 4 a side
2. Pitch Size - 20 meters by 12 meters
3. At a free pass defending team must be 3 meters back
4. Play continues after knock on
5. 3 seconds to pass after tag
6. one step to score after being tagged
7. no diving or going to ground



## Under 8

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### **Objectives and Summary**

The Under 8s is the last season before contact rugby starts and it's the season to really focus on the speed of play. Up to this point the majority of the players should be able to follow and understand the basic rules and execute in a game situation. The game moves to 6 a side with a bigger pitch.

Continue to emphasise the importance of support play and ensuring that all players have the ability to catch and pass at pace. Work on the players who cannot, take them aside with other coaches and focus on this. Push the boundaries with games such as scissors and pass1234 and accept initially there will be some confusion and dropped balls.

The Under 8s is the age group to start to encourage players to run direct and hard. It is non-contact rugby however experience shows that a straight hard runner, with a very eager supporter on hand to take the offload after a tag is very effective. Running hard and direct will suck in the defenders to create space for others. Providing the players are not stopping when tagged and continuing momentum and the support is on hand calling for the ball. All the games within this document will help develop these skills. Encourage players to play with heads up and run in to space where possible.

With more players on the pitch you can start to focus more on defensive structure ensuring that the players see the benefits of defending as a team and maintaining their defensive line. Avoid sweeping and coach the children who tend to do it instinctively. Appoint a defensive captain and encourage them to take the lead in arranging the defence at every re-start. Note that the official space between attackers and defenders is 7 meters. This is designed to give the attacking team the advantage. In order to compensate you need to coach the defence to move forwards in a rush defence style. Failure to do this with a 7 meter gap will give the attacking team a huge advantage.

Main Coaching objectives:

- Develop core basic skills - catch, pass, running with ball, awareness of space on the pitch,
- Coach rugby specifics – Two hands on the ball, pass ball backwards, look for space, call for the ball, make the easy pass, run in to space, support, run hard and direct. Defend as a team.
- Develop knowledge of rules – Avoid side lines, correct grounding of the ball over the line, tag/pass 3 second rule, pass backwards

**Target by the end of the season**

- **In a game situation players can catch and pass whilst continuing forward momentum, no stopping after tag and can pass within three steps whilst at full tilt.**
- **The above works because players run supporting lines and know how to work as a team.**
- **The players can organise and keep a defensive line**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's / Skill based activities - 30 min's / Team Relay - 20 min's / Team or Kicking game - 20 min's / Final matches - 30 min's

### ***Under 8***

|                                     | <b>September</b>                               | <b>October</b>                               | <b>November/December</b>          |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | Pairs passing<br>4 v 4 touch                   | How many passes<br>(smaller pitch)           | Stuck in the ruck (smaller pitch) |
| Skill based<br>Catching/<br>Passing | Pop pass<br>Fours pass<br>Fours pass both ways | 2 v 1 (2 taggers<br>staggered)<br>Hands loop | Square catch<br>Scissors          |
| Relay                               | Handling relay                                 | Assault course/Hand.<br>Relay                | Handling Relay                    |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Dodgeball                                      | Musical Balls                                | Colour corners                    |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match  | Match  | Match                             |

|                                     | <b>January</b>                                  | <b>February</b>                    | <b>March/April</b>         |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Warm UP                             | Pairs passing<br>4 v 4 touch                    | Pairs grid<br>Stuck in the ruck    | Bulldog<br>Grid tag        |
| Skill based<br>Catching<br>/Passing | Pass decision<br>3 v 1 (stagger 2<br>attackers) | Channel attack<br>Defend in a line | Turn and pop<br>Pass 1234  |
| Relay                               | Relay/Assault course                            | Handling relay                     | Relay/Assault course       |
| Kick/Team<br>Game                   | Dodgeball                                       | Bomb the base                      | Musical balls with taggers |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match   | Match                              | Match                      |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play

1. Number of players – 6 a side
2. Pitch Size - 45 meters by 22 meters
3. At free pass defending team must be 7 meters back.
4. Players can go to ground when scoring
5. 7 tag turnover rule applies
6. 3 seconds to pass after tag
7. one step to score after being tagged,
8. offside enforced



## Game illustrations Under 6, 7 and 8 (Non contact)

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### Warm Up

#### Jungle

Set up

Coach: Standing in front of group

Players : Spread out on "Try line"

Equipment : N/A

#### **Instruction**

Ask the players to stretch out their arms like aeroplanes. Explain that space is very good in rugby so they should NOT be touching any other players. Tell the players that our aeroplanes have crash landed and we need to pretend we are the animals to get through the jungle. Explain they must put their hand up before they tell you "what animals are in the jungle" Make sure you relate some physical activity as well as the noise!) to each impression, such as:

- Elephant – Big foot steps/stamping feet
- Monkey – Low to ground/hand under armpits
- Giraffe – Running on tip toes with hands stretched up in the air
- Croc – Big snappy arms
- Zebra/Horse/Any 4 legged animal – Walking on hands and feet

#### **The Benefits/Progression**

Imaginative way of carrying out Warm up stretches and getting moving. There are lots of animals in the jungle.....!

#### Simple Try

Set up

Coach: Standing in front of group

Players : Spread out on line

Equipment : One ball each child

#### **Instruction**

Ask players to hold the rugby ball in two hands with hands placed on the side of the ball. Explain how we score a try on the ground over the "try line" with both hands placing pressure on the ball. Ask them to demonstrate how to score a try whilst standing on the line. Explain to the player that it's not just being the first over the try line but also scoring the try in the correct way. Ask them "what do we call the line where we score our tries"? or "what do we do over the try line"?

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Good to warm up body temp and encourage competition, look out for correct grounding of the ball. Insist on two hands on the ball, ensure correct grounding



### **Monster Try**

As above but with two coaches or parents attempting to tag or “catch” the player. Encourage the players to look for space on the pitch to avoid being tagged. Ensure all players keep heads up looking around especially before changing direction to avoid bumping in to other players. Ask the players “what do we look for on the rugby pitch?” (Space) and encourage them to change their speed and direction of running

### **Bull dog**

Players need to advance from one side of the pitch to the other without getting tagged. Once a player has lost both tags they become taggers. Make sure they avoid the “evil” side lines and score at each end. Coaches will need to start off the tagging,

### **Dodge Tag**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Standing in front of group  
Players : Teams of 6  
Equipment : Tags and 1 ball each

#### **Instruction**

Break in to teams. Mark out a square area that is not so large it allows full freedom of movement but allows the players to move safely. Two players are taggers. The rest of the players must dodge out of their way, holding ball in two hands and avoid being tagged. Players who get tagged must stand still, creating obstacles for other players to dodge around.

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Good for side step and special awareness. To progress reduce the size of the square and throughout the term introduce ball tag whereby the taggers have to tag with the ball.

### **Ball Tag**

As above but all players have a ball and tag by nudging a player with the ball

### **Pass Tag**

As above but only one ball per team and the ball has to be passed, the tagger can only tag the ball carrier



### **League race**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Standing in middle of the pitch  
Players : In Pairs on line  
Equipment : One ball at the front of each pair

#### **Instruction**

Ask the players to stand along the line in pairs, one player behind the other. Demonstrate with assistant coach how Player A at the front is going to take two steps forward and hook the ball back using their foot, between their legs to the player B behind them. Player B picks up the ball and runs in front of Player A to hook back. Continue this “Rugby League” to the other side of the pitch. Making sure you help the pairs who do not find it an easy task. Limit the forward steps to 4 to ensure the players do not run the length of the pitch and do one hook back.

#### **The Benefits/Progression**

Team work, Co-ordination, Competition

### **Pairs grid**

#### **Set Up**

Coach: Standing out the grid  
Players : In pairs  
Equipment : One ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

In their pairs the players are allowed to roam freely throughout the grid passing the ball to each other. The ball needs to be passed quickly, players need to be communicating, looking up, evaluating where the space is and making the correct decision on when to pass. The aim is to not drop any balls for as long as possible. As the time goes on make the pitch smaller and smaller giving the players less room to move.

#### **The Benefits**

Decision making, communication, spatial awareness and general ball skills



### **Stuck in the ruck**

#### **Set Up**

Coach: Standing out the grid

Players : In large grid (or split grids depending on numbers) with 25% of the players astaggers with bibs on

Equipment : Ball each

#### **Instruction**

Every player has a ball. The taggers need to tag the players in the grid by nudging them with the ball. Once a player has been tagged they have to stand with their legs apart and call for help. Only an on tagged player can release the tagged player by crawling through their legs and freeing them. Swap taggers to ensure everyone gets a go.

#### **The Benefits**

Gets all the players moving and warm, communication, teamwork. Vary by changing the way to release a player.



## **Skill based handling**

### **How may passes?**

Set up

Coach: Moving around grid

Players : In groups of 5 (or ten if a large group) in a grid

Equipment : 1 ball per group , mark out grids of ten.

### **Instruction**

Each team is to have one interceptor (or two or three if group bigger). The attackers are to pass the ball between themselves without the interceptor putting them off. The interceptor is allowed to pat the ball down as part of Instruction, get in the way, be a nuisance but cannot make contact with other players. No forward passes, ball can move in any direction. Coach needs to emphasize teamwork, movement to space and communication between players, lots of calling for the ball. Easy passes only. "Take players with you" to find space.

### **The Benefits/Progression**

Good for passing under pressure. Progress with smaller area, teamwork

### **Racing Cars**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Standing in front of class

Players : Spread out on line

Equipment : One ball each child holding like steering wheel

### **Instruction**

Ask players to hold the rugby ball in two hands with hands placed on the side of the ball. Explain how we are going to be driving our racing cars around the pitch using our balls to steer us but we must not crash in to other cars. When you blow your whistle the cars must all slam on the breaks and stay still. Vary this – do 5 press ups, star jumps, throw the ball high in the air and catch it....etc....Start your engines.....

### **The Benefits/progression**

Good to warm up body temp and balance. Make sure players are following the change of direction with their hands on the ball and not just running around aimlessly. To progress make area smaller and change on whistle.



### **Pop Pass**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Moving around  
Players : In Pairs  
Equipment : 1 ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

Ask the players to pop pass to each other. Once a pair have successfully completed one pass each ask them to take 1 step back. Continue until the ball is dropped. See who can make the most passes before having to step so far back they drop the ball.

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Good intro to skill. Once they can complete a string of passes, ask them to count to 5 passes before stepping back and then 10 passes and so on.

### **Grid of 2**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Moving around  
Players : Two single file lines with the 1<sup>st</sup> child of each line facing each other  
Equipment : 1 Ball, 1 cone

#### **Instruction**

Starting with one ball ask the first child to run to his opposite man and pass the ball. Continue from one side to the other. Progress this drill by asking the players to pass in the middle on the cone, place the ball down so the opposite man has to pick it up and put two balls in so there is more going on.

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Passing whilst moving. Progress with two balls/passing in the middle

### **Grid of 4**

As above but with four lines facing each other.



### **Pairs Pass**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Moving with pairs  
Players : In Pairs  
Equipment : 1 Ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

In pairs facing down a channel with one ball per pair. Ask the players to jog and pass the ball to each other whilst moving and score a try at the end of the pitch. The players may have to start off walking & handing it to each other before progressing to passing at a jog.

#### **The Benefits/Progression**

Good intro to passing whilst moving. Increase distance and speed of running. Turn in to a competition with two teams, relay style.

### **Three's Passing**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Moving with threes  
Players : In threes  
Equipment : 1 Ball per three

#### **Instruction**

In a line of three with one ball per three, run towards opposite try line moving the ball along the line and back. You may have to start off walking or jogging before increasing the speed. Encourage the player in the middle to take the ball, offering a target with hands out and move the ball across their body releasing as quickly as possible. Ensure everyone gets a go in the middle.

#### **The Benefits/Progression**

Good intro to passing whilst moving. Increase distance and speed of running. Ensure ball is going backwards. Do not stop to pass, keep the momentum moving forward. Swing the arms across the body

### **Fours passing**

As above with four in the lines

### **Fours passing both ways**

As with fours passing however with two teams going from opposite sides at the same time, head on. Encourage players to keep their heads up to see the "traffic". Encourage them to accelerate through the gaps and time the pass. If there is no easy pass, they go through the gap and pass afterwards.



### **Race the ball**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In circle  
Players : Form multiple circles of five  
Equipment : One ball per circle

#### **Instruction**

Players start by passing in one direction. Once the player has passed the ball they have to attempt to race the ball back to their starting point by running around the outside of the circle

#### **The Benefits**

Co-ordination skills & timing. Increase the size of the circle & run around the circle twice

### **Circle Wagon**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In circle  
Players : Form multiple circles of six with a player in the middle.  
Equipment : One ball per circle

#### **Instruction**

The player in the middle starts with the ball whilst the players in the circle start to jog around the player, maintaining the circle. The player in the middle passes and receives the ball to and from the players as they jog around in the circle. The player passing the ball has to call to the player he is passing to ensure they are ready.

#### **The Benefits**

Co-ordination skills, timing, Communication



## **2 V 1**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping players with pass and catch  
Players : In pairs  
Equipment : 1 Ball per pair

### **Instruction**

Ask two parents or coaches to stand in a staggered format equally spaced up a channel. Make sure the players understand how and why to draw the tackler before the pass. Starting on one side the player sets off up the channel. They must get as close to the defender as possible and pass the ball to the other player who must go on and do the same to the other defender.

### **The Benefits**

Good for understanding of when to pass and helping to continue momentum moving forward. Do not stop before passing. Progress with two staggered taggers and two staggered tacklers when Under 9s. At this stage the players make decision as to pass or take on the tackler.

## **Channel**

### **Attack**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : lines of 6  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 6

#### **Instruction**

Create a wide channel to fit all the players. Have an attacking team opposite the defending team approx. 20 meters apart. The defending team must be standing behind the try line and out of the game. The coach must stand with the defending team and kick the ball towards the attacking team who must pick it up and pass through the hands and score. Once completed the coach must ask one defender to join. The coach then kicks the ball towards the attackers who must beat the one defender. If the attacking team beat the defender another defender is added (and so on). If defending team gets a tag/tough/tackle then this counts as one strike. The attacking team is allowed three strikes before it's swapped around. Other strikes must be given for knock ons and forward passes. Every time the attacking team makes it through the defense their strikes go back to zero. The ultimate aim is for the attacking team to continue to beat the defenders so all defenders are being used

#### **The Benefits**

Great for replicating game situation



### **3 V 1**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping players with pass and catch  
Players : In threes  
Equipment : 1 Ball per three starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Stagger 3 defenders up the channel. With the ball starting in the middle the player sets off towards the first defender. It is the players decision which way to pass. Ensure they draw the defender and do not pass to early. The player receiving the ball needs to clearly call for the ball. Once passed continue to the second defender and do the same. Give the players the freedom to go eitherway but ensure they do something. If the pass is not on then they can take on the defender.

#### **The Benefits**

Good for understanding of when to pass and helping to continue momentum moving forward. Do not stop before passing. Progress with three staggered taggers and two staggered tacklers when Under 9s. At this stage the players make decision as to pass or take on the tackler.

### **Turn and Pop**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : Standing in one long single file line but going in fours  
Equipment : 1 Ball per team of four at the front.

#### **Instruction**

Line up players in one long line and arrange pitch with 4 points using coaches or cones to form a loop/circle back to the start line. With One coach standing at the start line to ensure that the players go off in a single file line in groups of four. Make sure the ball is with the player at the front. When the player with the ball reaches the first tackler/cone they need to turn and pass (or present depending on ability) to the second player. The second player then takes the ball to the next tackler and repeats whilst the player who passed the ball joins the end of the line. Make sure the ball goes the same way, start with passing on the outside of the ball carrier. The speed of this will depend on ability and age with the eventual aim to have all four players running hard, popping off the shoulder with support runner calling and coming through at pace

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Teamwork, communication, taking ball at pace



### **Circle score**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In circle  
Players : Form a big circle with minimum of 8 players  
Equipment : Two Balls per circle and hoop in the middle.

#### **Instruction**

Players pass the ball around a circle. On the coaches whistle the players holding the ball have to race to score in the hoop and return to the other players place in the circle. Increase the competition by having multiple circles racing against each other to get back and all sit down after the player has scored.

#### **The Benefits**

Co-ordination skills, timing and communication. Increase the size of the circle & run around the circle twice before sitting.

### **Hands**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Middle of the two teams  
Players : Standing in two teams half a meter apart facing each other with distance in between  
Equipment : 1 Ball per team. Two markers for each team

#### **Instruction**

Take two marker cones and place them in the middle of the pitch one meter apart. Ask the players to form two lines opposite/facing each other. Starting at the marker end give them a ball and upon the whistle instruct them to pass the ball down their line to the end. Stop at the end of the line, clap and cheer the team that won (and the team that came second) and Pass back in the other direction. Remember to move the place of the players on the end so everyone has a go in the middle of the line.

#### **The Benefits**

Team work, hand eye co-ordination, follow instructions – hands out, eye on ball, move across the body

### **Hands Loop**

As above but the players loop around to receive the ball at the end of the line and the winning team is the one to cross the opposite try line first



## **Defensive line**

Set up

Coach: With group

Players : In groups of 5 horizontal facing up the pitch

Equipment : Tag belts for holding

### **Instruction**

The coach needs to stand in front of the line of 5 players. Coach needs to shout go and start to run backwards (so facing the line of players). They keep running in the same direction until the coach shouts "Defend defend defend" and runs forwards (so towards the players). The players have to react and start running backwards (still facing the coach). Coach then shouts "go go go" and switches direction again so the players are again moving forward. Continue this three or four times and go in quick succession groups with one coach per team. Emulating a game situation where players have to react in defence but keep the line. The best team will be the one that holds its line the best during the switches. To start with the children can hold a tag belt between them to make the point.

### **The Benefits/Progression**

Keeping defensive line, reacting under pressure.

## **Relays**

### **Basic relay**

Use Cones for zig zag, score try and return

### **Relay 1,2 and 3/Assault course**

Introduce different equipment. Tackle bags for jumping, ladders, hurdles, tunnels, poles.

## **Handling Relay**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams

Players : In equal teams

Equipment : 1 Ball per team at the front.

### **Instruction**

Line up two coaches per team, equally spaced going up the channel, in front of each team. The ball starts with the first parent/coach. The first player runs out to the coach and calls for the ball. Without stopping the player receives the pass from the coach. The player continues to run to the second coach and passes the ball to the second coach (backwards). The player then continues around a marker and heads back to do again in reverse, receive the ball from the coach and pass back to coach number 1. The winning team is the first team to all get through the relay and be sitting down. Encourage big call from players, hands out, eye on ball.

### **The Benefits**

Taking and passing the ball on the run without stopping. Timing, communication, competition. Increase how strict you are with the rule on the ball going forward in the pass



## **Square Catch**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams

Players : In a large square or two if large numbers with Five players standing on each side of the square.

Equipment : 4 small marker cones making an area in the middle of the square with cones marking a big square big enough for 5 players on each side.

### **Instruction**

Give each player on each side a number from 1 to 5. Start with four balls placed in the middle of the square (In the markers). Once the coach calls a number the player who corresponds to that number on each side (so four of them) must run out to fetch the ball, run back to their side and pass and receive along the line to each player on their side. Once passed (and received) from every player, they must run back to the centre, place the ball back and run back to their team. The winner is the player back first. Hands need to be out ready to catch and players need to be communicating. Ensure that a proper catch pass is executed.

### **The Benefits**

Increasing handling skills, communication, competition and good fun



## **Decision Pass**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams and acting as defenders – two coaches in a small box on the right hand side 5 meters from start line and two coaches on the left hand side a further 5 meters up the channels.

Players : Facing coaches in front of their own channels – 5 channels.

Equipment : Marker cones to make channels (running track lanes) for each player

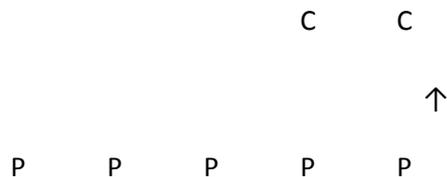
### **Instruction**

With the ball starting from the right the players have to run towards the coaches staying in their channels. The ball needs to travel through the hands from one side to the other before the players reach the coaches. The player with the ball may choose to take it up to the coaches and pass clear of them with a miss pass or may go through the hands early. Coaching the importance of when to make the pass and the decision making under pressure. Coaches have the freedom to move sideways slightly in the box to put the players under pressure.

### **The Benefits**

Increasing handling skills, communication, decisionmaking.

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### **Scissors**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team/channel. Parents or coaches standing as defenders.  
Players : In pairs with maximum of 3 pairs per channel  
Equipment : 1 Ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

Ball carrier sets off towards the defender, the ball carrier changes their angle of running to cross the defender whilst the other attacking player crosses behind the ball carrier. The supporting runner must call for the ball when they are in position and the ball carrier must pass the ball on their outside shoulder. To progress place another defender in and do another scissors/switch and finish with a pass before the last defender.

#### **The Benefits**

Decision making, passing skills

### **Pass 1234**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : In horizontal lines of 4  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 4

#### **Instruction**

Ball starts on the left. Give players a number from 1 to 4 from left to right. Players must pass in a sequence. Start the sequence as easy as possible and increase the difficulty. For example player 1 passes to player 3, player 3 passes back inside to player 2, player 2 miss pass back outside to player 4. Players must accelerate on to the pass.

#### **The Benefits**

Increasing handling skills, running lines, timing of run



## **Kicking/Team Games**

### **Bomb the base**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In the middle  
Players : Standing on two sides separated by a line of cones  
Equipment : Lots of balls and pitch marked out like a tennis court with a base line

#### **Instruction**

The idea of this game is to bomb the other teams base/side with balls by punting the ball from hand over the cones in the middle. The winning team is the team with least balls in their base when the whistle goes.

#### **The Benefits/Progression**

Encourage players to pick and kick quickly. Good for catching and evading balls. Progress and vary by doing conversions instead of punts. Just good fun, can be hazzadous with busy session

### **Rob the nest**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In the middle of the pitch  
Players : Equally split on four cones in corner of grid approx 20x20m  
Equipment : Balls in the middle of grid

#### **Instruction**

The overall object of the game is for the players to get as many balls back to their "nest" or corner. Start with all the balls in the middle and on the call rob the nest, players can run in and take a ball back to their nest. Once all the balls have gone from the middle they can start to rob other teams nests. The winning team is the team with the most balls.

#### **The Benefits**

Spacial awareness, competition



### **Steal the Bacon**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Standing in middle of teams, if two coaches 1 per team  
Players : Standing in two lines at opposite sides of a marked area 10m wide.  
Equipment : One ball in the middle of the pitch equal distance to both teams

#### **Instruction**

Each player is given a number, numbers must be the same for each team so they have a partner to run up against. Ball placed in the middle between the two teams. Coach shouts out a number.g. "Number 1" Both number 1's run to the ball, first to get to the ball has to touch the ball with two hands scoring a try.

#### **The Benefits/progression**

Competition, concentration. To progress - First player to the ball picks it up and attempts to score try on the opposite teams line without the opposing "Number 1" tagging them. Variation - to pick up the ball and return to own line to score a try without opposite number tagging. Variation – Add a ball and the players have to Run back to their own team and complete a pass with every player before returning to the centre.

### **Cowboys and Indians**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In front and facing the two lines  
Players : Standing in two single file lines facing coach  
Equipment : N/A

#### **Instruction**

Two teams standing 2ms apart facing each other. One team is cowboys and one is Indians. When you call a team they have to turn around and run to the try line behind them (10m) without being tagged by the opposing team.

#### **The Benefits**

Timing, co-ordination, balance

### **Kick Together**

All group kick at the same time to see who kicks the furthest. Place or puntkick

### **Dodgeball**

Insist that the ball has to be rolled and thrown in below shoulder height. Once hit the players join the attackers. Make sure the space is big enough for the players to run safely. As a bit of fun get parents running the gauntlet and players attacking.



### **Musical Balls**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In the middle of the pitch  
Players : In one big circle at least 10m  
Equipment : All the balls in the middle of the circle.

#### **Instruction**

Players must jog in big circle around the rugby balls. The circle must be big enough for the middle to be a good run in so approx. 10m in circ. Make sure you have enough balls for every player and place them in the middle of the circle. Like Musical Chairs – when the coach blows the whistle the players must run to the middle and find a ball to sit on. After first two goes the coach must start to take away balls. 3 or 4 at a time. Players who do not make a ball and therefore have to sit out must be encouraged to cheer on their team mates.

#### **The Benefits**

Reactions, agility, good fun competition.

### **Musical Balls with Taggers**

As above with a tier of taggers within an inner circle that our trying to tag the players as they move towards a ball.

### **Colour Corners**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In the middle of the pitch  
Players : All together  
Equipment : Four different coloured marker cones.

#### **Instruction**

Mark out a big grid, approx. 20m x 20m. and give each corner a different colour. On the coaches shout the players must run to the colour called. It's simple elimination for the last two or three to the corner. Try and trick the players by pointing to one colour but saying another, ensuring they are listening and paying attention. Encourage players eliminated to cheer on their teammates.

#### **The Benefits**

Reactions, speed, good fun competition.



## Under 9

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### **Objectives and Summary**

The new RFU rules ensure it is a very soft introduction to contact rugby. Whilst the ball carrier can run and dodge potential tacklers, the ball cannot be pulled out of the ball carrier's hands at any time and a tackle is deemed to be any contact below the arm pits of the ball carrier which results in a grip by the opponent of the ball carrier. Where the ball carrier remains on their feet the referee must call "tackle", allowing three seconds to establish whether the ball carrier is held. The referee will also call tackle if the player is taken to the ground.

When this is called the ball carrier, has three seconds to pass the ball to a supporting player either from a standing position or from the ground. There is no rucking or mauling, no guards allowed, just a simple 1v1 tackle situation. Due to these introductions it's important to continue the hard work completed in the Under 8s, focusing on speed of passing, support lines, forward momentum, direct running and creating space.

It is recommended that one or more of your coaches has been RFU trained in order to safely take the introduction to contact training sessions. Technique and timing are very important and need to be coached initially over power and engagement. **It is also very important not to over focus on tackling and forget the basic skills and ensure adequate time is still spent on basic handling games so that the core skills continue to improve.**

Main Coaching objectives:

- To continue having fun whilst giving players confidence in the tackle, continuing with the basics of handling, evasive running and attacking space. Do not become obsessed with tackling as basic skills need to still be developed however time **MUST** be spent developing the correct technique in the tackle.
- Coach rugby specifics – Two hands on the ball, direct running and supporting lines, speed of offloading and importance of support, decision making under pressure. Tackle technique, staying on-side and maintaining defensive line
- Develop knowledge of rules and understanding of gameplay situations

**Target by the end of the season**

- **All players can offload in the tackle to enable the play to continue, looking at both the ball carrier and their ability to offload and the supporting runner and their ability to pick a line and call for the ball.**
- **All players understand the rules and can confidently carry out an effective tackle in a game situation and have continued to improve basic handling skills and decision making under pressure.**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's / Skill based activities - 30 min's / Team Relay - 20 min's / Team or Kicking game - 20 min's / Final matches - 30 min's

### **Under 9**

|                                       | <b>September</b>   | <b>October</b>                                  | <b>November/December</b>           |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Warm UP                               | Pairs passing<br>4 v 4 touch<br>Forward rolls                    | How many passes<br>(smaller pitch)<br>Wrestling | 4 v 4 touch<br>Wheel barrow race   |
| Skills based<br>Tackle/Catch/<br>Pass | Hit the deck<br>Front on tackle<br>Side on tackle<br>Tackle Race | Front on tackle<br>take at pace<br>Switch Pass  | Scissors<br>Scissors with defender |
| Skill/Fun game                        | 2 V 1 (tackle)   | Assault course/Tackle bag<br>relay              | Elimination                        |
| Final<br>Match/Game                   | Match  | Match   | Match                              |
|                                       |  |   |                                    |
|                                       |  |   |                                    |

|                                      | <b>January</b>                 | <b>February</b>              | <b>March/April</b>                       |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Warm UP                              | Offload touch<br>4 v 4 Contact | Pairs in grid<br>Ball rip    | 4 v 4 touch<br>Wheel barrow race/fireman |
| Skill based<br>Tackle/Catch/<br>Pass | Pass 1234<br>Hit the bag       | Ground ball<br>Pass and loop | 3 V 1 tackle<br>Scissors with defender   |
| Relay                                | Relay/Assault course           | Hit the bag                  | Run the gauntlet                         |
| Final<br>Match/Game                  | Match                          | Match                        | Match                                    |
|                                      |                                |                              |  |
|                                      |                                |                              |  |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play – Under 9 “Transitional” Rugby

1. Number of players – 7 a side
2. Pitch Size – 60 meters by 30 meters
3. Tackle only – No Rucks, Mauls, lineouts or scrums
4. Tackle is deemed to be a player held and the referee will call “Tackle”
5. Tackled player must pass the ball from ground or standing within 3 seconds of call
6. Player cannot score once tackle has been called
7. More than one defender is allowed in the tackle
8. The supporting tackler can rip the ball but must pass immediately
9. A supporting player is allowed to pick up the ball after a tackle but must pass immediately



## Under 10

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### **Objectives and Summary**

The introduction in this age group of a small breakdown, with plus 1 tackler and plus 1 defender means that positional play starts to play a part in the game. Towards the end of the season Players must be encouraged by their coaching teams to play as a team and try and hold positions as much as possible. 3 man scrums are introduced however are set with the 3 nearest players on both sides. The fourth nearest player makes up the scrum half.

Rucking Mauling and Scrummaging will need plenty of time during every session especially in the early part of the season to ensure the correct technique is be used in the game environment. Coach correct ball presentation, body position, chin off chest etc.

Direct running, teamwork and understanding of phase play is important and should be worked on in training. In previous age groups teams may have relied on one or two players to score tries, over the next few seasons this becomes harder. Offloading before contact is something to work on during training and ensuring the team play as a team and supporters understand how to take the ball at pace from depth.

Continue with whole-part-whole coaching technique, interrupting Instructions for the benefit of the player's development. The sessions need to be fun and enjoyable for all and structured advice in a game based situation is vital for development. Keep practicing the basics.

Main Coaching objectives:

- To continue having fun whilst giving players confidence in the tackle, continuing with the basics of handling, evasive running and attackingspace.
- Ensure every player can execute the correct ruck, maul and scrum technique
- Coach rugby specifics – Two hands on the ball, direct running and supporting lines, speed of offloading and importance of support, decision making under pressure. Tackle technique, staying on-side and maintaining defensive line

**Target by the end of the season**

- **All understand and can demonstrate switching the direction of attacking play with supporting lines of running and can ruck and scrummage with the correct technique**
- **Players working as a team, support for offloads, not always taking tackles and keeping the ball alive in the games.**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 30 min's | Skill based activities - 35 min's | Team Fun – 15 min's | Final matches - 40 min's

### Under 10

|                                     | <b>September</b>   | <b>October</b>                       | <b>November/December</b>                                 |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Warm UP                             | Att Netball<br>Wrestling                                   | Attack Netball<br>Wheel barrow races | Simple jog<br>Touch                                      |
| Skill based<br>Catching/<br>Passing | Presentation<br>Scrum tech<br>Ruck away<br>Tackle Corridor | Line Ruck<br>Ground ball<br>Scissors | Scrum tech<br>Ruck 3<br>3 v 2 tackle pad<br>Turn and pop |
| Relay/Team<br>Fun                   | Assault Course   | Elimination                          | Run the gauntlet   |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match  | Match                                | Match  |

|                                     | <b>January</b>                    | <b>February</b>              | <b>March/April</b>                       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Warm UP                             | Jog<br>4 v 4 contact              | Jog<br>Offload touch         | Jog<br>Rugby league touch                |
| Skill based<br>Catching<br>/Passing | 4 v 2 tackle pad<br>Pass and loop | Tackle corridor<br>Flat Ball | Turn and pop<br>Switch pass with tackler |
| Relay/Team<br>fun                   | Relay/Assault course              | Hit the bag                  | Run the gauntlet                         |
| Final<br>Match/Game                 | Match                             | Match                        | Match                                    |
|                                     |                                   |                              |  |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play – Under 10 “Transitional” Rugby (Full rules attached)

1. Number of players – 8 a side
2. Pitch Size – 60 meters by 35 meters
3. Uncontested scrum - nearest 3 players
4. 1 v 1 contest for the ball
5. Introduction of ball carrier plus 1 and tackler plus 1
6. Tackle is contact below arm pits result in hold or grip – referee calls tackle
7. Mini maul consists of plus 1 supporting player joining, ref will call use it after 10 seconds
8. No hand off



## Games Illustrations Under 9 and Under 10

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### **Attack Netball**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping individual grids  
Players : 4  
Equipment : Balls

#### **Instruction**

Create as many grids as you need for 8 players in each grid. 4 attack and 4 defense. Players with the ball (attacking team) must try and tag the defending team with the ball on any part of their body. The attacking team is not allowed to run with the ball, only players on the attacking team without the ball can run. The defending team without the ball can run anywhere in the grid. Once a player is tagged they must leave the game. The coach must time how long it takes for all players to be tagged and announce the winner at the end. The main objective is for the attacking team to shut down the space by moving off the ball. Players must communicate and work as a team to shut down the space.

#### **The Benefits**

Team work and communication.

### **Hit the deck**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping individual players  
Players : In line  
Equipment : N/A

#### **Instruction**

Players need to learn how to fall properly, without placing arms or hands “out” to protect their fall. Ask the players whilst holding the ball and in plenty of space to fall, side on, to the floor. The players must go down impacting three parts of their body in the following order – Knees, Hips, Shoulders. It’s as important that the players learn how to fall as it is tackle. Move this on to a walk, so the players are walking out in a line and on your call they must hit the deck.

#### **The Benefits**

Players must get used to the contact of falling, correct way without any arms out – Progress in to a jog.



## **Front on tackle**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping individual players, one coach or helper to a pair  
Players : In Pairs  
Equipment : N/A

### **Instruction**

Once the coaching team are happy all that players are confident and comfortable falling to the floor its time to introduce them to the tackle. Gather the players around and explain the three main tackle scenarios, Front on, Side and Rear. Explain how there are two types of tackle, the passive tackle, using the momentum of the tackled players to complete or the aggressive tackle, that changes the direction of the tackled players. Once the players are in pairs, ask them to find plenty of space on the pitch and face each other with a 2 meter gap in between. Ask the tackler to drop to their knees and the ball carrier must walk towards to the tackler. Coaching points for the tackle:

- Head up, chin off chest looking at target
- Head to the side, contact with the shoulder
- Hit and grip with a strong hold around the legs
- Twist ball carrier using his bum as a cushion "Cheek to Cheek"

### **The Benefits**

Once players have progressed to standing in the tackle the tackler needs to adopt a strong stance and body position with knees bent creating a stable platform.



## **Side on tackle**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping individual players, one coach or helper to a pair  
Players : In Pairs  
Equipment : N/A

### **Instruction**

Once the coaching team are happy all that players are confident and comfortable falling to the floor its time to introduce them to the tackle. Gather the players around and explain the three main tackle scenarios, Front on, Side and Rear. Explain how there are two types of tackle, the passive tackle, using the momentum of the tackled players to complete or the aggressive tackle, that changes the direction of the tackled players. Arrange the players in pairs, with one player standing at a right angle to the other. Ask the ball carrier to jog towards the tackler, who is jogging in from the side. Coaching points:

- Head up, chin off chest looking at target
- Approach with wide arms BUT NOT FLAPPY ARMS, ELBOWS TUCKED IN.
- Make contact with the shoulder and get head behind the shorts
- Hit and grip and wrap arms whilst driving legs
- Soft landing "cheek to cheek"

### **The Benefits**

Progress from a run, jog to sprint.

## **Tackle Race**

### **Set up**

Coach: Helping group  
Players : In Pairs  
Equipment : 7 meter square with equally split players on two corners next to each other.

### **Instruction**

The attacker starts with the ball. On the whistle both players have to run around the cone opposite them, ie the opposite corner and then the ball carrier must run to the centre of the square to score a try before the tackler catches them and performs a side on tackle. Once tackled the player must go to the back of the line on the opposing side. Coaching notes:

- Head up, chin off chest looking at target
- Approach with wide arms BUT NOT FLAPPY ARMS, ELBOWS TUCKED IN
- Make contact with the shoulder and get head behind the shorts
- Hit and grip and wrap arms whilst driving legs
- Soft landing "cheek to cheek"

### **The Benefits**

Introduction to tackling at pace.



### **Ball rip**

#### **Set up**

Coach:           Overseeing group  
Players :        In Pairs  
Equipment :    One ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

Give one player the ball and show them how to hold on to the ball tightly against their body. The other player has to try and rip the ball from the players grasp. Demonstrate how use bodyweight and the shoulder to rip the ball. Competition to see who can maintain the grip on the ball.

#### **The Benefits**

Getting players used to contact and using their body weight effectively.

### **Offload touch**

#### **Set up**

Coach:           Overseeing group  
Players :        Equal teams  
Equipment :    One ball per team

#### **Instruction**

“Offload touch” is a good warm-up game to get your players into the mindset of always looking to offload. When the ball carrier is touched he must offload the ball within two seconds to a supporter within 2 metres of them (otherwise it’s a turnover). You can build up to scrage rugby. Again the ball carrier must offload within two seconds to a support player close to them. Finally play full contact games on a narrower pitch where offloads are likely to be an important attacking weapon.

#### **The Benefits**

Getting players used to offloading and understanding the importance of support

### **Ground ball**

#### **Set up**

Coach:           Overseeing group  
Players :        Equal teams of four in columns  
Equipment :    One ball per team

#### **Instruction**

Arrange a series of columns formed of four players. The first player in each column stands on the touchline with a ball in front. On your signal, this player picks up the ball, runs out 3 or 4 metres, and places the ball on the ground. They turn to become a defender about 2 metres beyond the ball. The next player in each column picks up the ball and either beats the defender or passes to one of the support players. The defender can try and disrupt the pass to test how strong the player’s body position is. The next ball carrier places the ball and becomes the defender and the exercise continues across the width of the pitch.



### **The Benefits**

Getting players used to picking up the ball and reacting to what is in front of them

### **3 V 1 tackle**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping players with pass and catch  
Players : In threes  
Equipment : 1 Ball per three starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Stagger 2 defenders up the channel. With the ball starting in the middle the player sets off towards the first defender. It is the players decision which way to pass or whether to beat the defender. Ensure they draw the defender and do not pass too early. The player receiving the ball needs to clearly call for the ball. Once passed continue to the second defender and do the same. Give the players the freedom to go either way but ensure they do something. If the pass is not on then they can take on the defender. The defender must try to perform a front on or side on tackle but can only move sideways

### **The Benefits**

Decision making, passing skills, tackle practise

### **3 V 2 tackle pad**

#### **Set up**

Coach: On tackle pads  
Players : In threes  
Equipment : 1 Ball per three starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Stagger 2 defenders up the channel. With the ball starting in the middle the player sets off towards the first defender. It is the players decision which way to pass or whether to take the contact. Ensure they draw the defender and do not pass too early. If they pass too early the defender must "tackle". If they take the contact the supporting players need to get the ball out quickly to player number 3. Ensure that when players take the contact on the pad they have a low stable body position.

### **The Benefits**

Decision making, passing skills, tackle practise





### **Scissors**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team/channel. Parents or coaches standing as defenders.  
Players : In pairs with maximum of 3 pairs per channel  
Equipment : 1 Ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

Ball carrier sets off towards the defender, the ball carrier changes their angle of running to cross the defender whilst the other attacking player crosses behind the ball carrier. The supporting runner must call for the ball when they are in position and the ball carrier must pass the ball on their outside shoulder. Once the first defender is beaten the ball carrier must now run towards the second defender, change the angle and carry out another switch/scissors. The original ball carrier should now have the ball back and to finish pass once more after the switch and score a try.

#### **The Benefits**

Decision making, passing skills

### **Scissors with defenders**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team/channel.  
Players : In pairs with maximum of 3 pairs per channel and two defenders  
Equipment : 1 Ball per pair

#### **Instruction**

Ball carrier sets off towards the defender, the ball carrier changes their angle of running to cross the defender whilst the other attacking support player crosses behind the ball carrier. The supporting runner must call for the ball when they are in position and the ball carrier must pass the ball on their outside shoulder. Once the first defender is beaten the ball carrier must now run towards the second defender, change the angle and carry out another switch/scissors. The original ball carrier should now have the ball back and to finish pass once more after the switch and score a try. Defenders are allowed to tackle and spoil but are not allowed more than one or two steps in any direction. This is designed to put more pressure on the attackers but the emphasis of the drill is still on the attacking play.

#### **The Benefits**

Decision making, passing skills



### **Pass 1234**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : In horizontal lines of 4  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 4

#### **Instruction**

Ball starts on the left. Give players a number from 1 to 4 from left to right. Players must pass in a sequence. Start the sequence as easy as possible and increase the difficulty. For example player 1 passes to player 3, player 3 passes back inside to player 2, player 2 miss passes back outside to player 4. Players must accelerate on to the pass.

#### **The Benefits**

Increasing handling skills, running lines, timing of run

### **Channel**

#### **Attack**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : lines of 6  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 6

#### **Instruction**

Create a wide channel to fit all the players. Have an attacking team opposite the defending team approx. 20 meters apart. The defending team must be standing behind the try line and out of the game. The coach must stand with the defending team and kick the ball towards the attacking team who must pick it up and pass through the hands and score. Once completed the coach must ask one defender to join. The coach then kicks the ball towards the attackers who must beat the one defender. If the attacking team beat the defender another defender is added (and so on). If the defending team gets a tag/tough/tackle then this counts as one strike. The attacking team is allowed three strikes before it's swapped around. Other strikes must be given for knock ons and forward passes. Every time the attacking team makes it through the defense their strikes go back to zero. The ultimate aim is for the attacking team to continue to beat the defenders so all defenders are being used

#### **The Benefits**

Great for replicating game situation



### **Flat ball**

#### **Set up**

Coach: one per group  
Players : In groups of five  
Equipment : 1 Ball per five starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Players start in a “que” formation with the player at the front holding the ball. Ask the players to jog slowly in this formation and when the coach calls left or right the players must fan out in that direction and move the ball through the hands. Encourages players to run at pace and the passer has no option but to pass flat and the ball has to move quickly to the outside. Repeat.

#### **The Benefits**

To add pressure give the players a target ie start them on the halfway line and challenge them to get the ball to the final player before they hit the 10m line. Develop with 3 defenders with tackle shields once this has been mastered.

Adding complexity to the passing movement increases the pressure. Get the first player to collect the final pass both inside and outside the last man. Get the last man to take the final pass whilst cutting back inside. Do this without a defence and then, when the players have succeeded a number of times, add the defence to increase the pressure. Add variations to this and, if successful, name them and use them in a game. Get the players to come up with their own variations



### **Pass and loop**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : In horizontal lines of 4  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 4

#### **Instruction**

With ball starting on one side, running up the channel, the ball needs to be passed down the line. Once the player has passed the ball they need to loop around to the end of the lines. Players need to pass at the right time and accelerate on to the pass.

#### **The Benefits**

Increase the speed, add defenders , add two lines facing eachother.

### **Take at pace**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Helping teams  
Players : In horizontal lines of  
Equipment : 1 Ball per 6

#### **Instruction**

Mark out two channel with cones, big enough for all players to pass along the line. Start the ball on the right hand side and running down the channel pass the ball down the line and back. Once it comes back to the last player on the right, the player must turn and return down the other channel where you must place either poles or coaches or tackle bags to draw the contact. Because the players on the far left will have further to run once it turns it will create natural depth and the players will be running on at pace.

#### **The Benefits**

Increase number of players

### **Hit the bag**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team and one on each bag  
Players : In teams lines up opposite bags  
Equipment : two bags per team, staggered up the channel with a coach per bag and a ball on top of each bag

#### **Instruction**

In pairs the players need to run out to the first bag, the first player hits the bag, headbehind, wrapping arms around in the tackle and dislodging the ball. As soon as the bag hits the floor the tackler needs to quickly get to their feet, retrieve the ball and pass to the second player. The second player takes the pass and whilst continuing moving forward passes the ball backwards to the coach. That player then tackles the second bag and they repeat the process.

#### **The Benefits**

Getting players used to getting on their feet quickly after the tackle. Progress with more bags and players.



## **2 Hit the bag**

### **Set up**

Coach: One per team and one on each bag  
Players : In line in front of first bag  
Equipment : tackle bags and poles or cones

### **Instruction**

Place two staggered tackle bags on in front of the other and 4 or 6 poles or cones staggered to the side of the last tackle bag. Players must take the contact on the first bag, if Under 10s players must ruck over and clear out the bag. Ball must be presented and passed and taken to the second bag to repeat the contact situation. Scrum half must pass and players must attack and draw the poles/cones and pass down the line.

### **The Benefits**

Replicates a game situation

## **Presentation**

### **Set up**

Coach: Looking at all players  
Players : In space  
Equipment : Balls

### **Instruction**

Players must be told how to lie and present the ball correctly. The body position must be straight and horizontal and the ball placed away from the opposition. Place the players in the middle of the pitch and give each side a number 1 to 4. Upon the coach calling the number the player must fall as if they are attacking that way. Attention to correct body position of the ball carrier before starting to ruck to avoid injury

### **The Benefits**

Must get this right before moving on



### **Ruck away**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team and one on each bag  
Players : In line in front of first bag  
Equipment : Bags balls

#### **Instruction**

First player must take the tackle on the bag and present the ball in the correct way. 2<sup>nd</sup> player in must ruck over the ball and third player pops to the fourth player.

#### **The Benefits**

Concentrate on the correct technique initially over power

### **Line Ruck**

#### **Set Up**

Coach: One coach per bag, 4 bags in a line  
Players: Teams of 3 in front of each bag  
Equipment: Bags and ball

#### **Instruction**

The first team on the right must go first with the player taking the contact a player rucking over and the third player passing to the next pod of players who must repeat. This must go all the way down the line and back so players are hitting with both shoulders and passing both ways.

#### **The Benefits**

Replicates the speed of a game situat



### **Ruck 3**

#### **Set up**

Coach: With each pod  
Players : In line in front of first bag  
Equipment : Bags balls

#### **Instruction**

Line up two tackle bags (one with a ball) and a ball. Players must start on their tummys facing the first bag in twos (in competition). The first bag the players must get to and form a standard ruck position to push their opponent over the bag, back to their tummys again and at the second bag (must have a ball in the middle) the first player their must get in to a jackle position with their hands on the ball with the competing player attempting to clear them out. Back on to their tummys and to end the first player to the ball must lie on their front over the ball and the competing player has to roll them away.

#### **The Benefits**

Concentrate on the correct technique

### **Scrum Tech**

#### **Set up**

Coach: With each pod  
Players : In teams of 6  
Equipment : Balls

#### **Instruction**

Uncontested scrums. Coaches must focus on:

- Body position, straight back, head up, power and bend in legs.
- Correct binding

#### **The Benefits**

Concentrate on the correct technique no pushing

REPLACE THE RUCK WITH MAULING FOR MAULING PRACTISE



### **Elimination**

#### **Set up**

Coach: One per team  
Players : In teams lines up opposite  
Equipment : One ball per team and cones for a jail

#### **Instruction**

Kick the ball up to the first player in the line. If he catches it he stays in the game and goes to the back of the line for another go. If the player drops the ball they must go to jail. The next player can then either A) Catch the ball which means the jailed player is out of the game or B) Drop the ball which keeps the jailed player in the game as this player then replaces them in Jail...and so

#### **The Benefits**

Good for catching and fun game to break up training.



### **Tackle Corridor**

Set up

Coach: Helping teams

Players : In groups of 5 to start

Equipment : 1 Ball per 5

### **Instruction**

The drill starts with a thin channel created in which a ball carrier will be tackled. 2 players stand side by side to tackle him numbered 1 and 2 and coach calls which one will make the tackle. Non tackler then responds to game situation to stay on feet and retrieve ball legitimately from the tackled player ie on feet through correct channel. Tackled player then recovers ball to do same again into another two players. Options are varied to increase numbers with an additional attacker in to compete for the ball but always keep defending numbers higher to prove they should win the ball when they have numbers there. Can also call for both players to tackle if necessary when strong ball carrier against weaker tacklers- good practice for gamesituation.

### **The Benefits**

increase awareness of being able to swiftly compete for possession when defending. They are often unclear about rulings in the rucks and miss opportunities to recover possession. Other benefit- less able tacklers have to get involved.

### **Run the Gauntlet**

Set up

Coach: One per group

Players : In team lining up with ball at the front of group.

Equipment : A column of 6 tackle pads staggered in a column of 20m in length and 5m wide

### **Instruction**

Player with the ball attempt to run to the other end of the channel without being pushed outside of the channel by a player with a tackle shield, Player with the shield can only move sideways. Vary the attempts to get to the other side – ie start of giving three attempts or push outs. Encourage players to run with the ball in two hands and use side steps and evasive running to avoid tackle pads. Decrease the size to make it harder for the attacker.

### **The Benefits**

Good for evasive running



## Under 11

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### **Objectives and Summary**

This year the game is played between teams having a maximum of nine players, three of whom will be forwards and form the scrum, with the remaining players forming the back line. Each side can have an agreed number of substitutes. Substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions may only take place when the ball is 'dead' or at half time and always with the referee's knowledge

Moving in to the Under 11s age group with 9 a side it is important that the players start to realise the benefits of playing as a team. The players who may have been used to taking the ball on may now be finding there is not as much space as before so the ability to keep the ball alive is vital. With less space, hard and direct running will be essential and coaching sessions will need to include plenty of practice with this element of Instruction. Players have to realise the importance of playing as a team and practise on supporting from deep and taking the ball at pace will help keep the ball alive.

The game becomes more physical as players develop and get bigger and faster. Mixing gameplay between forwards and backs and the ability to move the ball under pressure whilst hitting hard with direct running will create space and ensure a game plan to take on different teams.

#### Main Coaching objectives:

Continue to Develop core basic skills – Handling decision making under pressure, awareness of space on the pitch. Forwards and backs understanding positions, importance of breaking the advantage line.

Coach rugby specifics – Running straight and hard, Supporting from depth, timing and lines of running, mixing gameplay between forward and backs, make sure coaches are helping forwards understand how to run of the fly half if they are standing around the backline. Split backs and forwards for specialist coaching.

#### **Target by the end of the season**

- **In a game situation player's understand the importance of teamwork and have started to demonstrate this in their play.**
- **Players can successfully link phases together and use players at the right time to break the advantage line.**
- **For the majority of the time players are making the correct decision in a game environment.**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's | Skill based activities - 30 mins | Specialist - 30 | Final matches - 40 min's

### **Under 11**

|                   | <b>September</b>                                   | <b>October</b>  | <b>November/December</b>                           |
|-------------------|--|---|--|
| Warm UP           | Jog/stretch<br>Touch<br>Wheel barrow races         | Jog/stretch<br>Touch/ 5v5 Contact<br>Press up battles | Jog/stretch<br>Pairs passing<br>King of the ring   |
| Skills/Team games | Big Grid<br>Run the gauntlet                       | 5 pass game<br>5 player pad                           | Flat ball<br>Hit up                                |
| Handling/Defense  | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line    | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line |
| Final Match/Game  | Run through and match                              | Run through and match                                 | Run through and match                              |

|                    | <b>January</b>                                     | <b>February</b>                                    | <b>March/April</b>                                 |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| Warm UP            | Jog/Stretch<br>Offload Touch                       | Jog/Stretch<br>4 v 4 contact (small pitch)         | Jog Stretch<br>Rugby league touch                  |
| Skill/Team games   | Flat ball with defenders/ variations<br>Dummy Game | Diagonal 4 Grid<br>Run the gauntlet                | Hit up<br>Dummy game                               |
| Handling / Defense | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line | Mix of handling games/defending the advantage line |
| Final Match/Game   | Run through and match                              | Run through and match                              | Run through and match                              |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play

- 1 Number of players – 9 a side
- 2 Pitch Size – 60 meters by 43 meters
- 3 Drop kick to start the game
- 4 Rucks, Mauls, 3 man scrums and lineouts
  
- 5 Intro of contested strike at the scrum

Appendix.....RFU Rules.



## Under 12

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### **Objectives and Summary**

Under 12s moved in to Junior Rugby with 12 man teams and the addition of a full back and second row in the scrum. The RFU guidelines are the 5 nearest players to the scrum must scrummage however it seems very common for clubs and schools to be picking “forwards” for each scrum so you can start to work on set plays at training.

More emphasis this season will be placed on general fitness and communication with players fighting to win competition for positions as it becomes more apparent that the best players in each position need to be selected. Team work is vital as is the player’s ability to read and understand the game in order for them to make the correct decision in a game.

It is important that the coaches manage as much game time for the players as possible. Make sure the sessions are fun and recognise the fact that the players need to work hard and repeat certain tasks to develop and increase skills and ability.

Draw on the clubs network of players and coaches to help with sessions and try to make sure each area is coached by someone with experience of that area. More than one first aider is useful and ensuring that your first aid kit is stocked.

#### Main Coaching objectives:

Continue to Develop core basic skills – Handling decision making under pressure, awareness of space on the pitch. Forwards and backs understanding positions, importance of breaking the advantage line and turnover ball. Increase effect and power of forward play through development of technique and fitness.

Coach rugby specifics – Running straight and hard, Supporting from depth, timing and lines of running, mixing gameplay between forward and backs, make sure coaches are helping forwards understand how to run of the fly half if they are standing around the backline. Split backs and forwards for specialist coaching and work hard on backs moves to ensure they come off in a game situation.

#### **Target by the end of the season**

- **In a game situation player’s understand the importance of teamwork and have started to demonstrate this in their play.**
- **Team can bring in forwards and backs at the right time for maximum impact – set moves.**
- **The team demonstrated good communication on the field to help make the correct decision**



## Session Plans

Structure: Warm Up - 20 min's | Skill based activities – 30 mins | Specialist – 30 min's | Final matches - 40 min's

### Under 12

|                           | <b>September</b>  | <b>October</b>   | <b>November/December</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|
| Warm UP                   | Jog/Stretch<br>Off load Touch<br>Wheel barrow races               | Jog/Stretch<br>League Touch<br>Floor drags, fireman lifts        | Jog/Stretch<br>4 v 4 contact (small pitch)<br>Press up battle             |
| Skills/Team games         | Flat pass with defenders and variations of attack                 | Big grid<br>Hit up   | Team pass<br>Diagonal 4 grid  |
| Specialist forwards/backs | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of moves /defending the advantage line | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of moves/defending the advantage line | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of handling moves/defending the advantage line |
| Final Match/Game          | Run through/Match   | Run through/Match  | Run through/Match   |

|                           | <b>January</b>  | <b>February</b>   | <b>March/April</b>  |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|
| Warm UP                   | Jog/Stretch<br>Offload touch                                      | Jog/stretch<br>5 passes   | Jog/Stretch<br>Offload touch                                      |
| Skills/Team games         | Tackle Corridor<br>Kick golf                                      | Hit up<br>Flat pass with defender and variations of attack        | Jail break<br>Loop pass   |
| Specialist forwards/backs | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of moves /defending the advantage line | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of moves /defending the advantage line | Scrummaging/Lineout<br>Mix of moves /defending the advantage line |
| Final Match/Game          | Run through/Match   | Run through/Match   | Run through/Match   |
|                           |   |   |   |

### RFU Guidelines and Rules of Play

1. Number of players – 12 a side
2. Pitch Size – 60 meters by 43 meters
3. Drop kick to start the game
4. Rucks, Mauls, 5 man scrums and lineouts and contested strike
5. Hand off below the armpit
6. No limit on numbers in the ruck and maul

Appendix .....RFU Rules.



## Games illustrations Under 11 and Under 12

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### **Press up battle**

#### **Set up**

Coach: Per pair  
Players : In pairs  
Equipment : N/A

#### **Instruction**

Players face each other in the press-up position, keeping body rigid, balanced and focus on core stability. Players must attempt to quickly try and pull each other's standing hand away whilst attempting to move their own hands quickly enough to prevent themselves falling to the ground. Using example bouts of "best of three" can be deployed effectively.

#### **The Benefits**

Progress with players balancing on one leg.

### **Big Grid**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : On equal sides  
Equipment : Mark out big rectangle

#### **Instruction**

Mark out a big rectangular grid with two teams on the long side. Players in bibs. Call a number from one to attack and another number from the other to defend. Each group called has to go round the far corner to enter the grid, get aligned, and the coach must throw the attacking team a ball as they come in. Mix numbers up. 2 v 2, 5 v 3, 5 v 5. Players enjoy 1 v 1 and all v all. Develop game by calling in another number on each side to support. Can vary by throwing the ball to whichever team is round the corner and ready first.

#### **The Benefits**

Attacking alignment, decision making, passing under pressure, defence alignment, communication etc



### **Hit up**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : Two groups of 3 or 4.  
Equipment : Channels

#### **Instruction**

This is an integrated drill of two groups of three or four in a narrow channel with separate scrum halves in bibs. First 3 hit a pad set the ball, ruck or maul. 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 hit tackle bags, get up in time for the scrum half to pop hit a second bag for the 1<sup>st</sup> group to get in position for the next pop. Then open play with one or two tacklers to the end of the channel. Main focus was body position in setting ball up, running from depth, timing of run and calling.

#### **The Benefits**

Attacking alignment, running form deep

### **Dummy game**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : Two groups of 3 or 4.  
Equipment : Channels

#### **Instruction**

This is an integrated drill of two groups of three or four in a narrow channel with separate scrum halves in bibs. First 3 hit a pad set the ball, ruck or maul. 2<sup>nd</sup> 3 hit tackle bags, get up in time for the scrum half to pop hit a second bag for the 1<sup>st</sup> group to get in position for the next pop. Then open play with one or two tacklers to the end of the channel. Main focus was body position in setting ball up, running from depth, timing of run and calling.

#### **The Benefits**

Attacking alignment, running form deep



### **King of the ring**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : in circular ring 10-15m in diameter  
Equipment : Cones to mark out ring

#### **Instruction**

Wrestling based exercise, every player for themselves – each player must attempt to pin (with both shoulders on the floor) or push other players out of the ring whilst evading others themselves. Last man standing in the ring wins. Upper body offensive movement only, No lifting, fending only – no grappling.

#### **The Benefits**

Strength, speed, balance. Make sure the rings are separated by ability/size etc.

### **5v5 Contact**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : 5 a side  
Equipment : Small half size pitch

#### **Instruction**

Simple 5 a side game of contact. 1 plus tackle and 1 plus 1 support. Ball should not get stuck and the game needs to be quick fire. Make the pitch small to challenge the players and ensure they offloading and running in to space. This object is to avoid contact and use the contact situations to create space outside in other areas.

#### **The Benefits**

Support, decision making, running lines.



### **5 pass game**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : 16 – 8 a side  
Equipment : 2 balls, bibs, cones to mark pitch 15m by 15m.

#### **Instruction – Different variations.**

First team to complete five passes get a point. The team in possession must touch the ball on the ground before passing to another team mates (apply variations such as through to themselves, five press ups, ball around waist etc. Defending team must spoil the pass.

Ball carrier cannot move with the ball (variations can be applied). Players are free to move within the grid if they do not have the ball. Defending team must spoil or intercept the pass.

Ball carrier is not allowed to pass back to the player received from.

Ball carrier has to do a lap of the grid once passed the ball

#### **The Benefits**

Develop handling ability with a chaotic environment

### **6 player pad**

#### **Set up**

Coach: On tackle pads  
Players : In groups of five  
Equipment : 1 Ball per five starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Stagger 5 defenders up the channel. With the ball starting in the middle the player sets off towards the first defender. It is the player's decision which way to pass or whether to take the contact. Ensure they draw the defender and do not pass too early. If they pass too early the defender must "tackle". If they take the contact the supporting players need to get the ball out quickly to player number 3. Ensure that when players take the contact on the pad they have a low stable body position. Ensure the tackle area is quickly protected and secured and make sure the scrum half has the ball out within seconds. High pace, high intensity.

#### **The Benefits**

Decision making, contact training, support play



### **Flat ball**

#### **Set up**

Coach: one per group  
Players : In groups of five  
Equipment : 1 Ball per five starting in the middle

#### **Instruction**

Players start in a “que” formation with the player at the front holding the ball. Ask the players to jog slowly in this formation and when the coach calls left or right the players must fan out in that direction and move the ball through the hands. Encourages players to run at pace and the passer has no option but to pass flat and the ball has to move quickly to the outside. Repeat.

#### **The Benefits**

To add pressure give the players a target ie start them on the halfway line and challenge them to get the ball to the final player before they hit the 10m line. Develop with 3 defenders with tackle shields once this has been mastered.

Adding complexity to the passing movement increases the pressure. Get the first player to collect the final pass both inside and outside the last man. Get the last man to take the final pass whilst cutting back inside. Do this without a defence and then, when the players have succeeded a number of times, add the defence to increase the pressure. Add variations to this and, if successful, name them and use them in a game. Get the players to come up with their own variations.

### **Diagonal 4 grid**

#### **Set up**

Coach: one per group  
Players : In equal groups on corner of grid  
Equipment : Balls

#### **Instruction**

You may need multiple grids to ensure players are not standing still for too long. The aim is for all four players (one from each corner) to cross at the same time in the middle of the grid ensuring they have to side step and use evasive running to get through. The amount of balls can be varied. Start with one ball on two of the opposite corners and just cross with two players. Vary with a pass in the middle of the grid, a ball each, put down and pick up etc.

#### **The Benefits**

Awareness of space, passing in chaotic environment. Use variations to develop



### **Run through**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : In teams they will play in  
Equipment : Mark out full size pitch

#### **Instruction**

Bringing together forwards and backs place four or five coaches with defensive shields on the pitch. Run through set pieces and phase play using the tackle bags for the contact scenario. The shields are only to be used to set the ball for the next phase. Try and bring together multiple phases without any mistakes. Start to run the ball round the corner with support players switching the point of attack. After this go in to a full on match within the group.

#### **The Benefits**

Putting in to practise what has been learnt and attempt at bringing together multiple phases.

### **Team Pass**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : On equal sides of 6 or 8  
Equipment : Mark out big rectangle area and place ball at the end of each try line.

#### **Instruction**

Teams (6-8 people per side) face off at half way of a large area (60m x 30m) On the coaches call, both teams run to their own goal line and the outside player picks up the ball. The ball is passed along the line of players as they run towards the halfway line. The first team to pass the ball along the line and score a try over the half way line wins the race. The next two teams come and lineup for their race and the ball is returned to the end of the field.

#### **The Benefits**

Handling under pressure

### **Kick golf**

#### **Set up**

Coach: In group  
Players : Teams of 4  
Equipment : Balls and targets on different stations such as tackle pad, posts, tree.

#### **Instruction**

Teams go around the stations in teams of 4 and the aim is to try and hit the target in as few shots as possible. Each player needs to keep their own score. Each station will represent a different kick. Place kick, punt and grubber kick.

#### **The Benefits**

Bit of fun designed to help kicking technique and accuracy



### **Jail Break**

#### **Set up**

Coach: in group  
Players : groups of 10.  
Equipment : Mark out inner and outer square.

#### **Instruction**

Arrange 4 attacking players in the inner square with one ball. Arrange 6 defending players in the outer part of the square. Attacking players are to move the ball around the square in order to create space in the outer square for them to run through and score a try on the outside of the outersquare. Defenders need to communicate to cover the gaps as they cannot advance in to the innersquare.

#### **The Benefits**

Communication , develop with more balls and can be used with touch ortackling.