

Australian Rugby Union

Level I Coaching Manual





Level I Coaching Manual

by

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First Published 2003

Printed by IPG Print – Queensland.

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National Library of Australia.
Cataloguing-in-Publications Data
B P O'Shea and ARU.
Level I Coaching Manual.

Includes index,
ISBN 0 9585356 6 3

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Foreword

The Australian Rugby Union's national coaching scheme has been in existence since 1975 when Richard (Dick) Marks headed up the National Coaching Committee and produced the first Level II coaching course and manual.

The Level I course manual (Helping Youngsters to Discover Rugby) was first written in 1982, and was predominantly concerned with the coaching of the 8-10 year age bracket in the modified game of Mini Rugby. At that time the Level II manual concerned itself with grade rugby. There was a huge void between these groups.

In 1989 the ARU devised the Level 'S' course on a request from the Department of Education. This course was tailored for schoolteachers and focussed on the 13-18 year age bracket. This was a course that also highlighted the importance of safe practices in rugby. The Level 'S' course was so popular that it superseded the Level I course and reached a whole new group of coaches who were calling out for technical and tactical help.

In 1994 the Level I manual was rewritten by Dick Marks to incorporate the best of the previous two manuals. Soon after that the ARU decided to create two divisions of the Level I course – Pathway (for modified games) and Under 19 (for coaches of the safety laws). This served our purposes well, but with the evolution of the game in recent years, and especially since the advent of professionalism, coaches have been in need of new resources to develop their coaching skills.

For Rugby to grow, not only should it be a global game, but one that is evenly contested between a great number of nations. This is a challenge for the International Rugby Board (IRB). The ARU is aiding the development of overseas Unions by providing professional advice, and now, by making participation in our coaching scheme available to visitors from overseas.

The goal within Australia is to continually look for new techniques and practices so that we can keep at the forefront internationally. This will occur through innovative coaching and sharing of ideas on a national scale. Our coaching courses have changed over the years; however, they are still forged on the same principles that our first coaching committee set over twenty five years ago. Like them, we believe in a skill-based approach to coaching, both from a technical and tactical perspective, with attention to detail and provision of appropriate feedback. This will encourage players to play the game to their potential.

Our volunteer coaches are part of Rugby's fabric and their collective knowledge is something that must be nurtured so that our young teams can play a game that is entertaining to watch, and more importantly, enjoyable to play. We want all coaches to feel part of the Rugby community and to make a contribution both to the development of the game and to the players that they coach. The aim of every coach should be to make every player that they coach both a better player and a better citizen.

This manual is designed to meet the challenge of introducing players to the modern game. The chapters on "The Effective Coaching Process" and "Introducing the Technical Tasks of Rugby" have been extensively revised. Chapter 5 contains a number of miscellaneous resources that we believe will be useful for coaches either directly or in providing valuable information for players. This manual should be used in conjunction with other resources produced by the ARU including skills manuals, videos and website resources.

For the first time the manual will have a loose-leaf format and from time to time, as technical or tactical innovations occur and Law changes are made, replacement pages will be made available to coaches from the ARU website.



Warren Robilliard
ARU Coach Education Manager

CHAPTER I.

Overview of the Game and Manual

Introduction to the Game of Rugby

Rugby has gradually evolved into a game controlled by a complex group of Laws, which are applied on the field by the referee. The referee, assisted by the two captains, is responsible for the management of each match.

Rugby is an 'end zone invasion game' involving two teams of fifteen players. Game length will depend on the age of the participant; however, it ranges between thirty and eighty minutes. There are 22 major Laws under which the game is played and controlled by the referee, assisted by the two touch judges.

To play and coach the game well requires a thorough understanding of all elements that make up the game and subsequently how the elements are linked together so that a 'total game' of running, passing and support play is achieved. At this stage, however, it is sufficient to concentrate on gaining a grasp of the game's foundations and that is the purpose of this chapter.

The aim of each team is to gain possession of the ball, take it into opposition territory and to place it in the in-goal area (end-zone).

The ball can be carried through their territory or kicked into their territory but the players can only participate if they are behind the last person in their team who played the ball. This means that they may only transfer the ball to someone behind them and they may only chase a kick if they are behind the kicker. If the team in possession get to the in-goal area, and place the ball over the line, they score a **try**, which is worth five points. They also gain the bonus of being able to gain another two points by either place kicking or drop kicking the ball through the posts and over the cross bar.

The impediment to this process is that the other fifteen players can stop the (forward) movement of the ball by bringing the ball carrier to the ground thereby forcing a release and a new contest for possession or by intercepting it as it is being transferred among the attacking team members.

A released ball can be picked up by any other players on their feet. Alternatively players from each team can bind together from their own side and hold or push the opposition as they attempt to heel the ball back with their feet or move over and beyond the ball. This is called a **ruck**.

On contact with an opponent, ball carriers are often able to remain on their feet. If passing is not possible or a desired option, players from each team can surround the ball (carrier) from their own side and try to gain possession and to move it between players in close contact. This is called a **maul**.

When a mistake is made such as passing the ball forward, dropping it or putting the ball out of bounds (over the touchline) the game is stopped and restarted through a structured play. The touchline out of bounds situation is dealt with by a **lineout** where the ball is thrown down the middle of two lines as each team attempts to gain possession. Most other mistakes result in the non-offending team putting the ball into a **scrum** where two groups of eight forwards form up in a 3-4-1 configuration and attempt to heel the ball back to restart play.

When these interruptions of the free flow of play occur there are some restrictions on the non-participating players in rucks, mauls, scrums and line outs which requires them to remain behind an 'off side line'. In most cases this is the hindmost foot of your own players participating in the ruck, maul or scrum. In the case of the lineout it is ten metres back from where the ball is thrown in.

As the game is governed by a set of Laws and when a player breaks one of them, the referee will attempt to play **advantage**. This means that play is allowed to continue in order to see if the other team regains possession and are better off than if the referee had stopped play at the time of the first infringement. If no advantage occurs a scrum, free kick or a penalty kick will be awarded depending on the severity of the infringement. In the case of foul play, a player may be 'sin binned' for ten minutes, and in serious circumstances, the player may be expelled from the game.

The game begins with a drop kick from the centre of the field. That kick must travel 10 metres and then general play ensues. In the case where a team not in possession grounds the ball in their own in-goal (and not

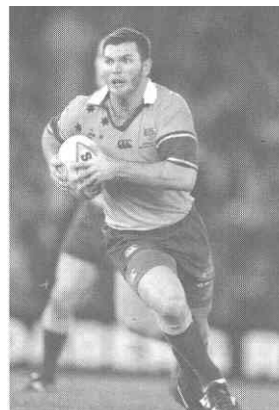
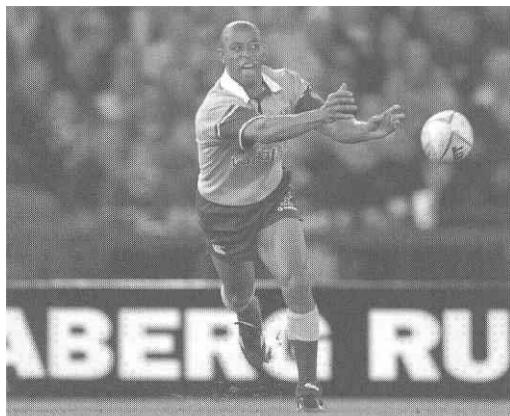
having brought it into that area) the game resumes with a drop kick from the 22 metre line. In this case the ball only has to travel across the line for play to continue.

In the senior game, the goal lines are 100 metres apart and the width of the field is 70 metres. These dimensions are reduced for younger aged players.

The Team Tasks Involved in Rugby

The following description is contained in the foreword to the Laws of the Game:

“The object of the game is that two teams of fifteen ... each, observing fair play according to the laws and sporting spirit, should by carrying, passing, kicking and grounding the ball, score as many points as possible, the team scoring the greater number of point being the winner of the match.”



This statement captures the essence of the game. From an operational point of view, it gives rise to four simple team tasks to follow to achieve success.

1. Win the Ball.

The ball may be won at a contest for possession or it may be surrendered to a team during general play, either by handling errors or poorly executed kicks. It may also be acquired when the opposition breach a law and a free kick or penalty kick is awarded.

In most games, teams gain as much possession from balls surrendered by the opposition as they do from winning contests for possession. Generally this is a result of poor technical or tactical skill of the other team, and of positive efforts on behalf of the team not in possession to recapture possession.

Coaches should emphasise the importance of winning contests for the ball as the only reliable source of possession that enables advance planning of how the ball may be used. A team that relies substantially on the opposition to give it possession develops a reactive rather than proactive attitude to the game. A skilful opposition will not concede a reliable source of possession.

2. Advance the ball towards the opposition's goal line.

The ball may be advanced towards the opposition goal line by carrying it in the hands or by kicking it.



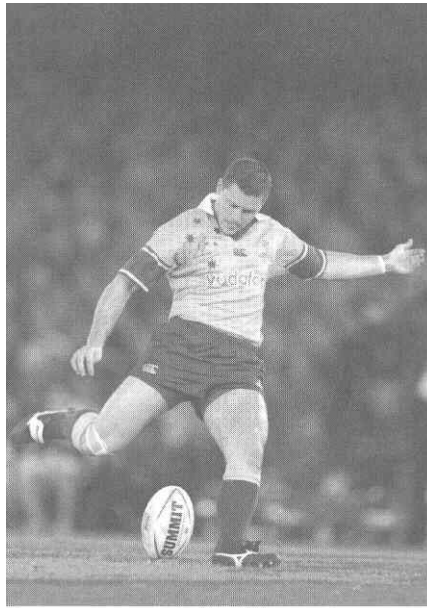
3. **Maintain possession of the ball** for as long as possible.

More than 50% of occasions the ball is in play for less than 25 seconds and fewer than three phases. It takes a very skilful and fit team to maintain possession for an extended number of phases.

4. When the opposition has the ball, attempt to **recapture possession**.

On average the opposition has the ball for 50% of a match and a team must have a strategy for, and practice how, to recapture possession. The key to success is to be able to put sufficient pressure on the opposition to force them into errors or poorly performed skills, and so makes the recapture of the ball an easier task.

A team must become competent at each of these four aspects of the game in order to gain success and satisfaction. Each of these aspects of the game will be examined in greater detail.



The Principles of Team Play

In achieving the four team tasks, it is essential that both the players and coaches understand and are committed to the following principles of team play:

1. **Go Forward.** Every time a player receives the ball they should perform an action which has the effect of taking the ball forward towards the opposition goal line. Often a team will gain possession and lose ground before the next breakdown. It is difficult to go forward if you start with poor quality possession from scrums and lineouts but the most common mistake made by the ball carrier in implementing this principle is that they don't run at the opposition but instead run away from them, across the field. If they approach the defence with commitment and a good body shape, they can continue to go forward after engagement, and make the ball available to their team.
2. **Support.** Each player has the ball in hand for a very limited period during the game, so what is done for the rest of the time is very important. The answer is to support the ball carrier and work to get into a position where you can re-involve yourself in the game. Good support provides options for the ball carrier, making it easier for the custodian to keep the attack going. Players should work to provide support on each side and particularly behind. Good support presupposes attitude (wanting to be involved with the game) and fitness.
3. **Continuity.** Once a side is going forward with support the only other attacking requirement is to keep the ball alive in order that significant territory gains can be made. To achieve continuity the players should possess skills of passing, catching, running, evasion, kicking and regathering, making the ball available, staying on their feet, rucking and mauling.
4. **Pressure.** In opposition the defence must deny the attackers time and space. Without being near enough to tackle, everyone can still move up to a position of expected attack, making it difficult for ball carriers to operate. In this way you are causing something to happen and not waiting for something to happen.

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Pressure can also be applied in a contest area making it difficult for the other side to acquire good quality possession.

For the majority of participants in rugby the rewards lie in the pleasure of participating. Satisfaction is largely derived from achievements other than the game outcome and this is heightened if players understand what they are doing and why they are doing it.

The ARU would like to make everyone's participation in the game of rugby a satisfying and rewarding experience. As coaches you will influence both the attitude towards and the understanding of, rugby to all of the players that you coach. Surveys have identified dissatisfaction with coaching as the single main reason why young players discontinue participation in Rugby.

This manual is designed to:

- Introduce coaches to technical aspects of the game and to provide them with ideas for practice and introduce the concept of game tactics ie how, when and where the technical elements of the game can be used to best advantage. It should prove particularly useful to people who do not have a sound rugby technical or tactical base or whose information may be out of date.
- Introduce coaches to principles of coaching including some basic advice on communication, people management and coaching ethics. This is designed to ensure that people who coach rugby teams understand and follow best practice in coaching.

The manual has been designed to service the Australian Rugby Union Level I Coaching Accreditation Course. The principal aim of this course is to provide coaches with the ability to identify and coach correctly the roles a player will perform in a match. The information in this manual primarily selected and presented to service the needs of coaches of school and junior teams. It is an introductory manual and coaches who wish to learn more about either coaching or the technical or tactical side of the game are advised to enrol in a level II coaching accreditation course. It is complemented by the participants' notes issued to attendees at these courses.

The Australian Rugby Pathway – Introducing the Game of Rugby to Children

The Australian Rugby Union believes that younger rugby union players should be introduced to the game gradually through its pathway programme. The Rugby Union pathway is based on research conducted into children in sport and development. It was concluded that modified pathways offer great opportunities for children to develop confidence in sporting performances.

The features of the Australian Rugby Pathway are:

- To provide children with a safe and enjoyable introduction to the skills and tactical principles of the game of Rugby Union.
- To allow young players to be introduced to skills at a pace appropriate to their age and physical development
- The essential feature of Rugby within the Pathway is one of **enjoyment**. Pathway rugby should be free flowing with the purpose of developing the skills of running, balance and ball handling and contact.
- Pathway games provide the basic skills and understanding of set plays through the modified scrum, maul and lineout situations.
- The desirable qualities of Rugby – **sportsmanship and fair play** – are positively rewarded with minimal emphasis on competition.
- At all times **safety** is a paramount consideration.

Walla Rugby, which is designed for 7-8 year olds, is a simple, non-tackling introduction to the game that concentrates on passing, catching and running skills. It is played on a smaller field with only seven players.

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Mini Rugby is the next progression and is designed for 9-10 year olds. It continues the theme of free flowing running and passing rugby action. However, most importantly, it introduces the young player to the elements of tackle, continuity, ruck and maul. The Pathway is completed by **Midi Rugby**, which is designed to service the needs of 11-12 year olds. It is the 12-a-side stepping-stone to the full game.

“The modified games are developmentally appropriate for the acquisition of skills through childhood, pre-adolescence and adolescence. The fundamental movement skills of running, leaping and jumping are regarded as important for lifelong enjoyment of physical activity. Fundamental movement skills also incorporate the manipulative skills of throwing, kicking and catching which are important in being in the game of Rugby.

Movement skills usually mature quickly through lots of practice. The nature of training changes during different developmental stages. For example, practice using imaginative activities with younger children, minor games in small groups with pre-adolescents, and more complex drills with adolescents. Checking the group for their understanding of what is expected of them before they perform the activity is a good idea at any stage”. (Prof. Geraldine Naughton)

Other variations include Sevens rugby which has all the contact elements of the full game. Tens Rugby has emerged in recent years and is an extension of Sevens, but has more structure and tactics than other modified games.

CHAPTER II.

The Effective Coaching Process

Teaching Youngsters

Introduction

“Issues of growth, development and maturation challenge coaches of many athletic populations. A better understanding of these processes can ensure that developmentally appropriate activities are provided.

The lifespan can be divided into eight chronological (age based) stages. These stages begin at conception and move through to older adulthood. It is important to note that chronological age may not necessarily reflect functional age.” (Prof. Geraldine Naughton)

In modern day life where we have Child Protection Acts, a litigious society, a duty of care and expanding communication systems, it is hard not to feel intimidated by the responsibility of coaching but this apparent burden can be lightened by proper explanation of the role. The Sport Education Division of the Australian Sports Commission provides ten basic steps to follow. They are:

- Provide a safe environment.
- Activities must be adequately planned.
- Athletes must be evaluated for injury and incapacity.
- Young athletes should not be mismatched.
- Safe and proper equipment should be provided.
- Athletes must be warned of the inherent risks of Rugby, especially as it is a body collision game.
- Activities must be closely supervised.
- Coaches should know first aid.
- Develop clear, written rules for training and general conduct.
- Coaches should keep adequate records.

Role of the Coach

In simple terms the role of the coach is to Plan – Act – Review. It is an ongoing and evolving process that is aimed at improving the qualities of the coach and the performance of the players. The basic qualities of an effective coach include:

- Teacher – reducing complexities into simplicities.
- Planner – annual integrated plan covering pre-season, competition, physical, technical, tactical, psychological, workload volumes and intensities etc.
- Motivator – including engendering player’s acceptance of own responsibility.
- Time Manager – planned sessions, equipment available, continuity of action, established routines, control, and clear demonstrations/explanations, feedback.
- Counsellor – empathy with players.
- Knowledgeable – understanding the game.

- Communicator – a two way process of verbal and non-verbal communication and listening.
- Goal Setter – making sure that goals are achievable, challenging and measurable.
- Creating a Successful Learning Environment – focussing on what you can control; recognising individual and group needs.

The coach is the role model so it is important to set a standard to everything you do. With this, mutual respect will be gained from all involved with the game. This not only refers to being knowledgeable about the game, but also has to do with coaching within the Laws, having respect for the abilities of opponents and the referee as well as abiding by the Code of Conduct. A coach that is punctual, organised and willing to provide positive feedback to players will improve the playing standard of the players at a rapid rate.

Coaching young people at this level should be about improving performance so that every player can aspire to a higher and more skilful level. It is not about winning, and definitely not about winning at all costs. It is important during the formative years that every player gets a game and that 'favourites' are not promoted beyond any other player. Every coach has the responsibility to improve the skill level of all of the players. If everyone in the team has a broad range of skills and is confident that they can perform them, they will enjoy participating more fully and the team will perform better.

The coaches of inexperienced players should concentrate on the principles of Rugby. The functional roles of players can be addressed later.

Coaching Philosophy¹

Coaches have a significant impact on both the quality of performance and the quality of enjoyment that participants achieve. They largely determine whether the experience in a sport is positive or negative, and whether the participants gain or lose self-esteem. It is important that coaches develop a general approach or philosophy towards coaching that will ensure a consistent, positive impact on their players. A coaching philosophy is individual and reflects both the coach's personality and objectives of coaching. However it should be reasonably constant over time and for different groups of players. The goals of each athlete or group may vary and the achievement strategies associated with those goals may also vary, but the underlying philosophy of coaching remains constant.

It is unrealistic to expect someone who is commencing coaching to have a clear philosophy to apply. The starting point for developing a philosophy of coaching centres on the concept of respect. Essentially:

- A coach must respect the athletes and provide all participants with equal opportunities.

A coach must encourage the athletes to:

- Respect the principles of fair play.
- Respect the opponents.
- Respect the officials and their decisions.

In developing a coaching philosophy the athletes must be the paramount consideration. The sport belongs to the athletes and coaches should have an athlete-centred approach. It is the coach's responsibility to assist athletes to set and to achieve goals. Coaching goals may be as simple as creating enjoyment or as demanding as striving to win. The coach should endeavour to ensure that the goals set by athletes are both achievable and in line with the overall coaching philosophy.

It may help coaches to clarify their coaching philosophy by writing it down. The content will be based on the values and beliefs that direct your coaching and from your experience. To help you to develop and articulate a coaching philosophy answer the following questions:

1. Why am I a coach?
2. Why are these athletes competing?

¹ The information in this section is influenced by Kidman, L. & Hanrahan, S. "The Coaching Process", Chapter 2.

It is not enough merely to have a coaching philosophy. A coach must also consider how the philosophy will be communicated to the athletes, the parents and the administrators. It is also reasonable to consider how to ensure that the coaching philosophy is followed and what you will do if your coaching philosophy is challenged. That is, how will you deal with the different values of other people?

How to Practice

The first thing to acknowledge is that the growing child is not a scaled down version of the adult. They don't look like adults, behave like adults, react like adults or reason like adults. Where possible, you should avoid imposing the pressures on beginners through excessive competition.

“Skill acquisition requires careful management of initial skills. Even in literacy the child learns to read by being able to first focus on a small amount of information and then simple skills are built into sequences in an ordered and managed way. Sports governing bodies seeking to promote enjoyment and longevity of young participants have an obligation to manage the environment in which young athletes learn skills. One of the ways to do this is to reduce the amount of information presented for decision making by the child. Modified rules that include reducing the playing field and a smaller number of players support this developmentally appropriate consideration. The ability to process information from visual prompts (eg know how fast a ball or an opponent is moving) increases through childhood and is developed by initially minimising the number of visual cues available to young players.”

(Prof. Geraldine Naughton)

It is important for young players to learn as many fundamental movements (gross motor) as possible in pre-adult life. The individual who has acquired a wide variety of movement patterns in early life is most likely to be able to execute complex movement patterns in later years. The best skill learning years are from 8 to 12 years but up to age 15 you should be primarily concerned with producing footballers and not specialists. Teaching all the individual skills to each player and interchanging their positions within the safety guidelines are essential in early development.

As rugby is a 'two-sided' game it is important to be able to catch, pass, evade using both sides of the body, and not just with their preferred/dominant side. The management of this requires some vigilance, as the tendency of the players will be to practice their strengths.

Movement patterns are best learnt by performing it and experiencing the action. It is difficult for coaches to contribute very much until they see the player in action. Practice drills become the basic method for teaching and mastering of technique.

We should also remember that a drill will expose the technique and a game, where decision making must take place will expose the skill and the tactic. Generally a drill should incorporate the following features:

- Small groups of participants.
- Restricted area of action.
- Line formations or circuits.
- Relay type of sequences to provide rest.
- Orderly intervention for feedback and remedial advice.

A small group drill should be expanded progressively into a game form later in the session. A game form is a competition where one group plays another under a special set of rules. It does not have to include rugby laws, but it is better if it requires rugby-related skills such as running, evading, kicking, catching and passing.

The game form segment has three distinct advantages. They are:

- It allows the players to expose their techniques to increased pressure.
- It takes the use of skills from a relatively 'closed' situation to a more 'open' environment of a rugby game. In this way players have to make decisions which may affect the ultimate outcome. It also gives them

experience in expanding and diminishing space, moving targets, areas of massed and spaced players and of changing support from team mates.

- It brings fun and enjoyment to each session.

“Cooperation and competition are considered to be two forms of social interaction. In a thesis from the University of Oregon (Garcia, 1993), it was reported that girls preferred to learn physical skills with a cooperative learning style. In contrast, boys enjoyed the learning of skills with a more competitive presentation.” (Prof. Geraldine Naughton)

Game Knowledge and Skill Analysis

A competent coach has to be familiar with the main features of the game of rugby. These include a basic understanding of:

- The principles of the game.
- The major tasks of the team.
- Division of personnel.
- The ingredients of individual and group skills, and
- The Laws of the game.

An attained level of coaching competency will allow the coach to identify unwanted outcomes from a team or a player and also to recognise the cause and enable the problem to be eliminated.

The best way to acquire this information is to dissect each of the components into **‘key factors’**, learn to recall them and understand why they represent such an important element of the skill or function. The key factor analysis will assist you with remedial work, which is the essence of good coaching.

As an example, if you observe a player fumbling the ball while trying to pick it up you would check:

- The approach
- The bending of the knees, and
- The actual contact with the ball or the pick up itself.

Any error will more likely come from these key factors, so coaching to correct a problem is simplified.

Organising Practice Sessions

This is one of the most, if not the most important sections of this coaching manual. As a part of effective coaching, coaches should follow the ‘Plan – Act – Review’ strategy, which will set them on the correct path. A frequently asked question is “what should I do at the first few sessions?”

A coach should begin with an activity that the players have little trouble mastering and that the players will enjoy. The combined elements of success and enjoyment will make the players more receptive to participate in a progression towards more complex activities.

As rugby is a contact sport with an inherent risk of injury, it is recommended that all players begin each year by learning or revisiting the contact elements of the game at training. They are:

- Preparation for contact.
- Tackling and falling with the ball.
- Scrum, including engagement.

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As stated earlier, coaching will be more rewarding for both coach and players alike if the session is planned. Coaches should document what they are going to complete at training. Not only will this crystallise their approach, but also it will demonstrate to the players that the coach is organised and ready. Another consequence of planning is efficient use of time at training. Time management is an important component of training. There is nothing worse than going fifteen to twenty minutes overtime because of poor management and planning. The last people a coach wants to antagonise are the parents who transport the players to and from training.

The components of training may include:

- Warm up jogging, stretching, joint mobility
- Individual Skills practicing skills including passing, evasion, lineout throwing etc.
- Game Forms like Rugby Baseball, Rugby Endball etc...
- Team Skills breakdown policy in front and behind the gain line
- Unit Skills scrum, lineout, restarts
- Team Skills team run, receiving penalty kick; drop outs etc...
- Warm Down reviewing session, stretching, and rehydration.

Coaches should not fall into the trap of sending players on a run of a few laps of the oval while they gather their thoughts as to what the training session will entail. Some coaches believe this is a good way to warm players up. Players can warm up in a number of ways, some of which are skill-based and fun. Running around picket fences is **not** fun and does nothing to improve the skill level of players.

Generally, practice time should be no more than the following:

- 7-10 Years sixty minutes
- 11-14 Years seventy-five minutes
- 15-18 Years ninety minutes

Practice should include a number of components listed above, remembering that at younger levels, game forms keep the players active and interested. The 'just average' players need and deserve equal time and it is not wise to have an unhealthy adulation of skilled performers. Essentially your activities will be organised around the numbers you expect, but it is advisable to have a plan for fewer or more players as they arrive to practice.

Practice sessions might also become more specific, and thus more intense as the season progresses. It is not advisable to train the players so hard during the first few weeks that they are muscle sore and unwilling to train or play. The correct volume and intensity is an area that should be given thought. If in doubt, show another coach your programme prior to the session so that they can advise you.

Demonstrations

The learning process involves all the senses. It is a recognised that listening to someone is the least effective means to learn. Seeing a demonstration is the second most effective way of learning and 'doing' if the most effective means of learning and remembering.

A coach should verbally identify the key factors or coaching tips and follow this up with a good demonstration or video to draw the picture for the player. Once the mental picture is clear the player should practice the technique. After the player has experienced the technique the coach should provide feedback. The coach should be positioned so that they have an uninterrupted view and coaching cues can be relayed to the player directly. It is important that feedback is specific and related to the performance provided by the player.

For feedback on the performance of a closed skill, the emphasis will usually relate to technical error correction or player confidence. For feedback relating to the performance of an open skill, which involves

decision making as well as technical performance, the coach may often pose a question to encourage the thought processes of the player and the development of tactical awareness.

Once there has been some success of executing the technique the coach should organise an activity that places the technique into a game-like situation so that decision making is involved. This will enable the players to convert the technique into a skill and eventually become proficient in its tactical use. Players can take months or even years to obtain proficiency, so the sooner they start, the better.

Progressions

Coaches should be aware that there are three stages of motor learning. (Identified by Fitts 1964 *Stages of Skill Acquisition Model*):

- **Cognitive stage.** Early or clumsy stage where errors are frequent and the player appears and feels awkward.
- **Associative stage.** Intermediate or refined stage where the player has enough skill to play, but normally has to think about how they are executing the skill.
- **Autonomous stage.** Advanced or fluid stage where the movements are automatic and can be performed well under pressure in a game situation.

The coach must firstly assess the players' standard. This can be simply done by having small groups catching and passing the ball whilst running. This is a simple exercise that some will find difficult and some will find easy. To make it more challenging, either place a time limit on the number of passes a group can make, reduce the space in which they are working or combine the strategies and count the number of 'laps' and passes a group can do in a set period. These strategies will automatically place more pressure on the players. Remember that young players can only process so much information at any one time so the coach must not overload their minds with numerous instructions. In general, one or a maximum of two points should be made at any one time. Learn to select what cues you want the beginners to attend to and make every effort to help the players to see what you want them to see. Coaches should recognise that a lapse of concentration has occurred when:

- Performance levels are impaired.
- The tempo of the activity being practiced slows or ceases altogether.
- The players resort to squabbling, or
- When players are seen looking elsewhere or 'into space'.

Modified games are challenging, and at the same time limit the options available to the players. These are very useful in the learning process.

A coach should always begin with a skill that players should have little trouble mastering. Once the simple things have become fluid, the coach should consider ways of making them more difficult, and importantly, related to the game.

An example of this is a backline practicing 'moves' against no one. The backline practices invariably travel up the field and make a final pass to a winger twenty metres over the advantage line. In reality, they would never have progressed as far, because the defending team would have tackled them prior to the advantage line. Therefore, it is important to practice the correct speed both up (vertically) and across (laterally) the field so that teams are not having 'unrealistic' training. The speed with which the ball moves will be determined by the angle and alignment of a backline, how well or indifferently each player transfers the ball across their body and how quickly the players pass and run.

Most rugby skills are used to regulate a constantly changing environment and demand an absence of stereotyped movements. Players must learn to anticipate objects (ball, team mates and opponents) in time and space and adjust their movements. Rugby skills should be practiced in situations that replicate the conditions in which they are used in a match.

In the modern game, about 65% to 75% of time is devoted to general play including the tackle, ruck and maul elements of the game. Generally, inadequate time is scheduled to practice these elements. In a one-hour

training session, a team should focus on this for at least thirty-five to forty minutes, either in attacking (with ball) or defensive (without ball) game-like situations. A simple way to practice is to play a game of 'odds' (those players numbered 1,3,5 etc.) versus 'evens' (those players numbered 2,4,6 etc.). The coach may have to include some special rules, like, the team in possession are going to keep it (basically non-contested) for ten phases after which the other team can compete for possession.

In the initial stages of learning a player will sacrifice speed for accuracy. Moving players closer together will remedy this. Too often young players try to emulate adults they observe on television and attempt (long) passes that are beyond their capabilities. Some players will react intuitively faster than others. The important thing here is reaction time of all players can be improved by placing players in modified games where they have to make decisions. If players only practice in drill situations, they are more likely to be poor decision-makers during a game.

Coaching Ethics

The coach of young people has a strong responsibility towards the players. The coach is acting in *loco parentis*, and must discharge the responsibility in an ethical manner. The coaches' code of conduct presented below provides important guidelines for coaches to adhere to. A fuller code of conduct has been developed by the Australian Rugby Union to regulate the behaviour of all people concerned with the presentation of the game this code is reproduced in chapter 5 of this manual.

Coaches' Code of Conduct

- You have the responsibility for your team and its supporters. EXERCISE IT.
- Be reasonable in your demands on the young player's time, energy and enthusiasm. Remember that they have other interests and demands on their time.
- Teach your players that the Laws of the game are mutual agreements that no one should evade or break.
- Ensure that all players get a game. The 'just average' players need and deserve equal time.
- Remember that young people play for the fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of it. Never ridicule or make fun of players for making mistakes or losing a game.
- The scheduling and lengths of practice times and games should take into account the maturity level of the players.
- Develop respect for the ability of opponents, as well as for the judgement of referees and opposing coaches.
- Follow the advice of a doctor in determining when an injured player is ready to play again.
- Remember that young people need a coach that they can respect. Be generous with your praise when it is deserved and set a good example.
- Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed on sound coaching principles and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- Encourage young people to develop basic skills and avoid over-specialisation in positional play during their formative years.
- Create opportunities to teach sportsmanship, just as you would in teaching the basic skills.

CHAPTER III.

Introducing the Technical Tasks of Rugby

This chapter examines in greater detail the four team tasks referred to in chapter 1. It also introduces some suggestions for using these areas of the game in a tactical way.

1. Winning the Ball

The game provides two main ways of acquiring the ball.

- Contests for possession of the ball, which include scrums, lineouts, kick offs and restarts. Post-tackle situations, including ruck and maul, also provide a contest for the ball. For the purposes of this manual, post-tackle situations are dealt with under maintaining possession of the ball.
- The opposition surrendering possession by kicking it to you, making mistakes and by infringing laws, which lead to the award of free kicks and penalty kicks.
- A team with a positive approach to the game will make sure that it performs competently at contests for possession rather than relying on the opposition to give it to them.

Contests for Possession

The Scrum

The purpose of the scrum is to restart play and in so doing, places sixteen players into a confined area. The scrum is both a physical and technical contest for possession of the ball. It is one of the few situations when players are entitled to exert physical force on members of the opposition team who are not in possession of the ball.

Summary of Scrum Law

- A team with a full complement of players must have eight players in a scrum at all times.
- When a permitted reduction occurs, eg a send off or a sin bin, the non-infringing team has the option of equalising scrum numbers or retaining eight players in their scrum. At all times there must be a minimum of five players in the scrum.
- Both the loosehead and tighthead props must grip the jersey (not the sleeve or arm) of the opposing prop. The loosehead prop is entitled to the inside grip.
- The number eight may not pack outside the flankers, who each must have one arm bound onto one of the locks.
- The scrum must be formed within the field of play and no closer than five metres from the touchline and goal line.
- The referee will call scrum engagement. For senior grade, the call will be “crouch, hold, engage”. For U19 Law, the call will be “crouch, touch, hold, engage”. The additional call of ‘touch’ for U19 players is to increase the safety component of engagement by ensuring that the two scrums are the correct distance apart. The call “hold” does not refer to the touch, which should not be continuous. It refers to the pause prior to engagement, which ensures stability of the scrum and the opportunity for players to sight their target area.
- The head and shoulders should be no lower than the hips.
- The scrum must not be wheeled intentionally and no player may ‘pop’ another player out of the scrum.

Coaching Scrumming

The forces generated in a scrum can be considerable and it is in the interests of all participants that they understand the correct techniques of generating force and of resisting force. The starting point for coaching scrummaging is to understand the individual body shape required of all participants. Essentially they need to have:

- A stable base, which is provided by placing the feet at approximately shoulder-width apart. If the feet are placed too close together the player will lack stability and if the scrum moves sideways, at best they will be unable to push effectively and more than likely they will be in danger of injury caused by falling over. If the feet are placed more than 10 cm wider than shoulders, there is a drastic reduction on the capacity to generate or resist force and this causes a similar risk of injury. It is essential that both feet are always behind the hip joint or the players are unable to generate a forward component in their push and thus unable to protect themselves from opposition push.
- A bend at the knees which provides an angle of approximately 110-115°, which permits power generation by the legs. This position is a “trade-off” between the generation of dynamic power and the length of push that can be achieved. If the bend at the knees is not adequate the distance gained by the push is hardly worthwhile. If the bend at the knees is too great the loss of mechanical advantage makes it difficult to be dynamic.
- High hips, which facilitate the use of the powerful gluteus muscles. For people in the front row and the locks this is very important because it also ensures that the players behind them have a near vertical surface on which to push. The hips should not be higher than the shoulders.
- A straight, flat back to transmit force from the lower body, where it is generated, to the opposition scrum. This is facilitated by adjusting both ends of the spine slightly. The chin should be kept up and the pelvis tilted to the back.

All players must be able to adopt the body shape described above and to maintain it during a variety of scrum activities including generating force, resisting force, moving sideways, forwards or backwards.

This body shape is fundamental to all aspects of contact and is essential for success in tackling, ruck and maul. It is recommended that considerable time be devoted to mastering the adoption and use of this technique, and exercises involving 1v1 will give much better long-term results than practicing a full scrum with players who have not yet mastered individual body shape

Building a Scrum

A team should have a set procedure for setting a scrum. The following order is recommended:

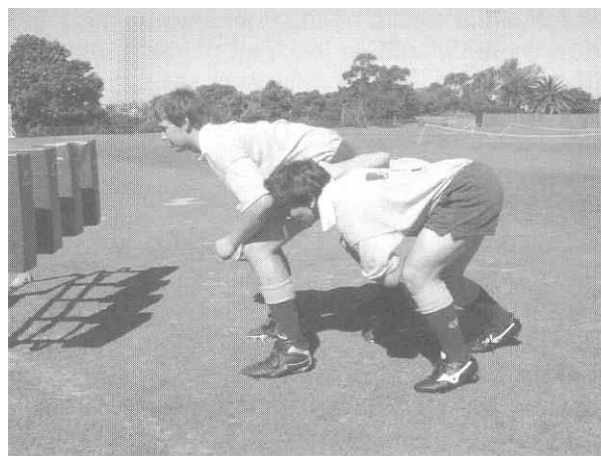
- The hooker, who is central to the scrum, should hurry to the mark and adopt the following setup for a loose head scrum. Feet shoulder-width apart with the right foot about 20 cm in front of the left (heel to toe). Knees slightly bent, backside out, back flat and arms either outstretched or hands behind head.



- The props if possible should approach from behind and setup from the bottom. Their first action is to place their inside foot near to the foot of the hooker and pointing straight upfield. The hips are then squared up and placed alongside of those of the hooker. The final step is to grip the hooker. The loosehead prop grips first at chest height whereas the tighthead prop grips the hooker at the waistband of the shorts. The front row setup is then completed by the hooker binding over the shoulders and under the armpits of the two props. It is important that when the front row adopt a crouched position they have hips that are square to the opposition thus when force is generated from behind them it will be transferred through their spines and not tend to push them outwards. Front row players should not assemble directly opposite their opponent but opposite the slot that they will move into during their engagement. This is referred to as 'offsetting', and this will enable the force generated by both scrums to be absorbed across the shoulders of the front row rather than through their necks.

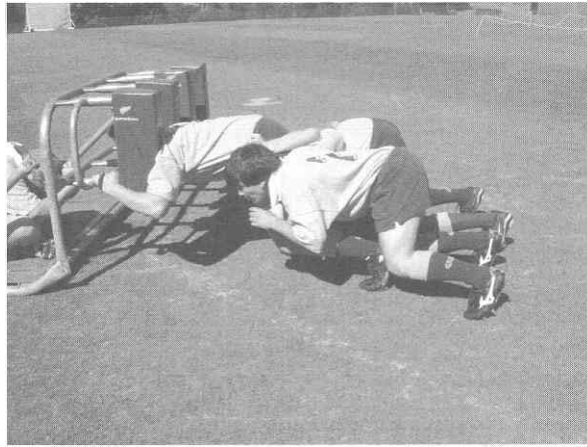


- The locks must achieve good shoulder contact with the backside of the prop. This is their primary task and must be their first objective. In order to achieve this the head should be thrust between the hips of the hooker and the prop and the shoulder position under the backside. If it is placed too high, the lock will be ineffective and will slip over the prop's back. If it is placed too low, the thrust is on the hamstring of the prop. This can best be done without putting knees on the ground, by maintaining high hips during the preparation phase. After the shoulder position is achieved the two locks can bind on one another. The position of the bind depends on their length of arm and should be down towards the waistband of the shorts.

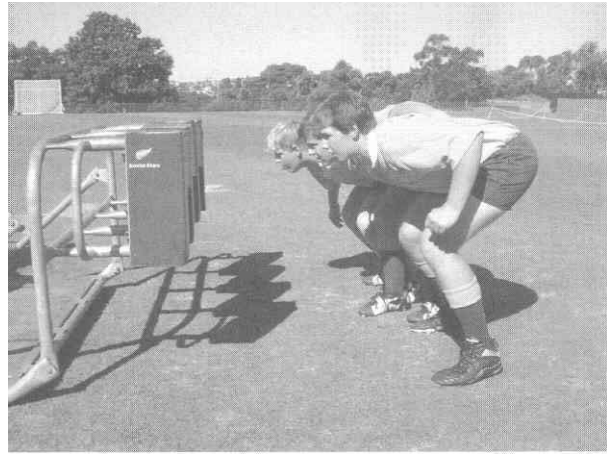


- The flankers have a similar priority to the locks in that firm and continual shoulder contact with the backside of the prop is achieved. They should be able to push parallel to the locks and a high backside during the preparation phase is desirable. Essentially the scrum consists of two units of three (prop, lock and flanker), bound together at the front by the hooker and at the back by the number 8.

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- The number 8 is the last player to join the scrum. They can use the time whilst the other players are forming up to observe the positioning of opposition players. If the locks have assembled with high backsides it is easy for the number 8 to join the scrum prior to engagement.



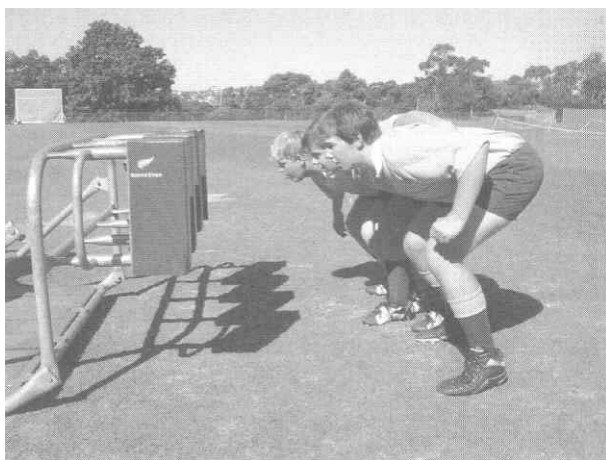
It is important that there is no forward pressure on the front row prior to engagement. The front row must be able to hold a crouched position with the weight on the front of their feet to ensure a short engagement that does not disrupt their scrum structure. If the locks and flankers setup with the high backside it is less likely to put forward force on the front row.

Common Faults

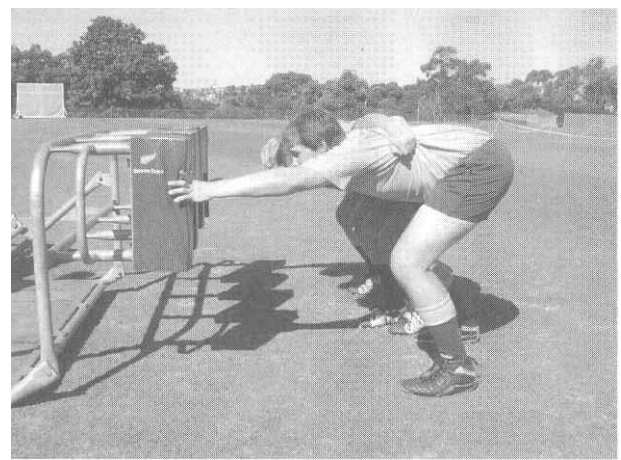
- Players over-extending. This means that they have placed their feet too far back and are in danger of collapsing. Players must be encouraged to adjust their feet position with short steps whenever a scrum moves.
- Failure to squeeze down with the hips when pushing with the legs. Unless a substantial effort is made in this regard the force generated by the legs will not be transmitted into the opposition scrum.
- Failure to keep the body square to the line of force. As a rule front row players are better off pushing into a force than by trying to avoid it by moving away from it.
- Failure to keep the chins forward and through.



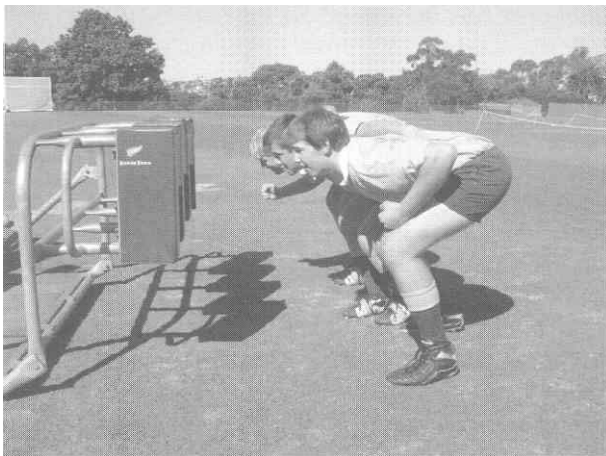
Scrum Engagement Sequence



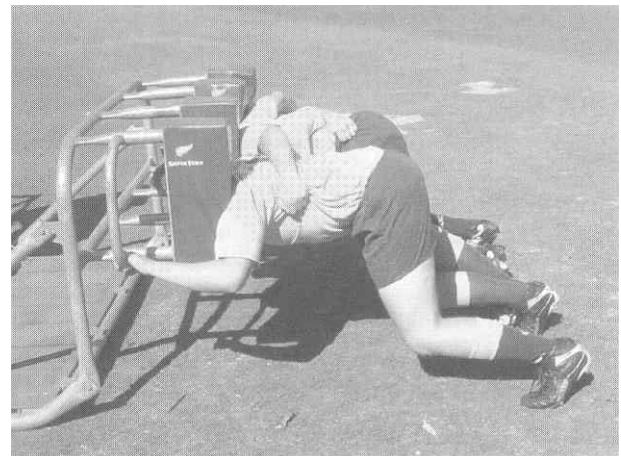
Crouch



Touch



Hold



Engage

- **Crouch.** The front row moves into a crouched position after all scrum members have joined. The front row should have the weight on the balls of their feet. A scrum that has adopted the crouch position is indicating that it is ready to engage and should not do so unless this is the case.
- **Touch.** (U19 laws only) the props touch the opponent on the upper arm to judge the distance for engagement. The touch should not be continuous but the arm should be brought down and the player concentrates on their engagement target by focussing with their eyes.
- **Hold.** This refers to holding the crouch still, thus ensuring that the scrum is stable prior to engagement. The front row concentrate on target area and 'chins up'.

- **Engage.** The back 5 in the scrum drive the front row firmly into the opposition maintaining good shoulder contact. Props take binds on the opposition and draw their opponents to them. A scrum should adopt a “hit and stick” approach with abdominal muscles on, to ensure no foot movement after engagement.

Scrum Law Variations for U19 Players

LAW 20 – SCRUM

- (1)(f) *In an 8 person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the Number 8) shoving on the 2 locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.*

Exception: *A team may have fewer than 8 players in its scrum when **either** the team cannot field a complete team, **or** a player is sent off for Foul Play, or a player leaves the field because of injury.*

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum.

If a team is incomplete, the scrum formation must be as follows:

If a team is without one player, then both teams must use a 3-4 formation (ie. no N^o 8.).

If a team is without two players, then both teams must use a 3-2-1 formation (ie. no flankers).

If a team is without three players, then both teams must use a 3-2 formation (ie. only front row and locks).

When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front-row positions and the two lock positions must have been suitably trained for these positions.

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

*Either they are not available, **or***

*A player in one of those five positions is injured **or** has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.*

In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting in the ball must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.

Front rows coming together. *Each prop touches the opponent's upper arm and then pause before the front rows meet. The sequence should be crouch, touch, hold, engage.*

No wheeling. *A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.*

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped.

Maximum 1.5 metres push. *A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponent's goal line.*

Ball must be released from the scrum. *A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player/or team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.*

Hooking the Ball on Own Scrum Feed

In a properly formed scrum the hooker should not have any force from behind channelled through the hips. They must be able to move the bottom half of the body freely. Prior to hooking the ball the majority of weight should be on the left foot. They should strike for the ball and sweep it back through the scrum with the far foot. The top half of the body should not rise up during the hooking process, as this will make it easier for the opposition to disrupt the scrum.



Safety Aspects of Coaching the Scrum

Scrum injuries tend to occur either at engagement or at a scrum collapse subsequent to engagement.

Engagement can be made safer by:

- Ensuring that the front row setup opposite their engagement slot rather than directly in front of their opposition. (offsetting)
- Ensuring that the scrum can hold a crouched position with front row weight forward, chins up and eyes on the engagement slot. This leads to a short, well-supported engagement.
- Ensuring that the members of the scrum only have to move forward and that there is no vertical component in the engagement.
- Ensuring that players have an appropriate physique to be selected in the front row and are properly trained in the requirements of the position before playing in a match. Avoid placing players with long necks in front row positions.
- The coach should be aware of the total volume of opposed work and that injuries are more likely to occur when players become tired. The coach should restrict inexperienced players to no more than ten opposed scrums at any one session. These should be done in groups with some advice from the coach after each 2-4 scrums.

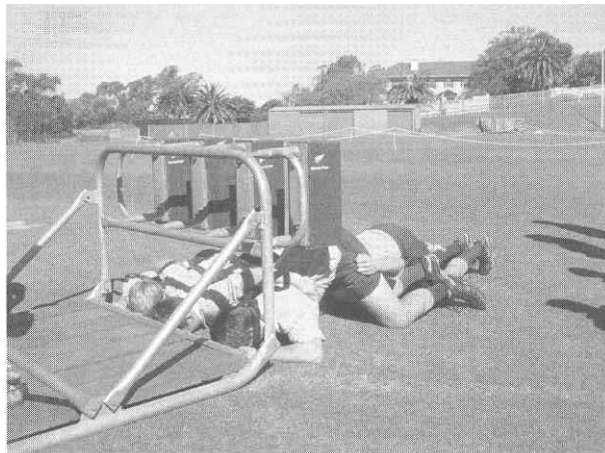
Scrum collapses can be minimised by:

- Ensuring that players have correct boot studs for the conditions.
- Avoiding over-extending by practicing “chasing the weight”. This means that players must become skilled at adjusting their feet if the scrum moves forward.

Scrum Mayday Procedures

Occasionally individuals in a scrum may find themselves in a situation where there is significant pressure on their neck. It will nearly always be either a hooker or a tight head prop. A mayday procedure has been developed to relieve this pressure quickly and safely. The process to follow is:

- The person in difficulty calls 'MAYDAY!'
- The referee should blow the whistle.
- The back five should immediately stop pushing and release pressure on the front row.
- All players remain bound except for the front row props, who release their grip on the opposition prop only.
- Everybody in the scrum then sinks to their knees in a controlled manner.
- Players do what is called a 'faceplant'. They keep their chin forward, their face pointing straight ahead and sink to the ground face first. Nobody should turn their head to the side, as this is potentially dangerous.
- The referee will ascertain which player called mayday by asking questions of the players on the ground.
- The scrum is then disassembled from the back. The referee will manage the process. First the opposition will move away, then the backrow, followed by the locks of the scrum that called 'mayday'. Considerable care should be taken to ascertain if the front row members are injured before they disengage from their binds.
- Any player who is suspected of being seriously injured must not be moved until medical attention arrives. Any other player bound to a suspected injured player should remain where they are until a medical attendant arrives.



If the Mayday procedure is applied, force will immediately be relieved from the player's neck and even if the opposition continues to push, they will slide over the top of the collapsed scrum. It should be emphasised that a mayday procedure cannot be implemented unless all players have both feet behind their hips. This is a crucial safety requirement for scrummaging.

How to Practice Scrummaging

Make sure that players are properly warmed up before practicing scrummaging. This may involve a general warmup and a scrum specific shoulders and legs warmup.

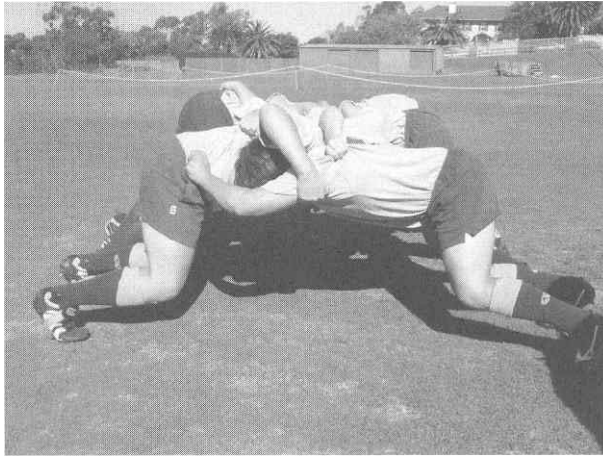
- 1v1 activities with emphasis on maintaining body shape.
 - a) Back packing or moving backwards whilst maintaining body shape.

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- b) Forward packing or moving forwards whilst maintaining body shape.
- c) Lateral packing or moving sideways whilst maintaining body shape.



- 2v2 activities and 3v3 activities as per 1v1 but emphasising bindings and coordination.



- 8v8 live scrummaging.

All opposed activities must be carefully supervised and be specific in what is to be achieved. If an 8v8 situation is used then the engagement must be controlled carefully and scrum should replicate match conditions by being short and having recovery time in between scrums. The recovery time can be provided by moving to a new spot for the next scrum.

The Use of a Scrum Machine

Scrum machines can provide considerable assistance in developing scrum technique, coordination and endurance. They can be used for any combination from individual engagements to a full eight. They do not provide the reality of opposed scrummaging and for this reason the more experienced and skilful a scrum becomes more emphasis should be placed on live scrummaging. A coach should not rely totally on scrum machine practice.

How to Use the Scrum Tactically

- Because the scrum permits physical force to be exerted on opposition players not in possession of the ball, it can permit a physically superior pack to tire the opposition pack and to reduce their capacity to function in general play.
- Because a scrum requires more than half of the team to assemble in a small area, it creates space in other parts of the field. When the ball is delivered quickly to the vacant space, good attacking opportunities are created.
- The scrum exerts a much greater influence on the game than merely being a source of possession. No team can afford to ignore sound, safe scrummaging principles. Generally a team that cannot scrum well creates pressures on other aspects of the game and both player confidence and team match plans fall apart.

The Lineout

The most significant points to remember about the lineout are:

- It is potentially the biggest single source of possession.
- It is a much more open contest than the scrum at all levels.
- The laws are more restrictive than in other contests.

Summary of Lineout Laws

Numbers.

- There must be a minimum of two players from each team to make a lineout.
- The maximum numbers are determined by the throwing-in team and are as many as you can fit into the 10 metre space
- The thrower and the immediate opponent must stay within five metres of the touchline, but may join the lineout after the throw or retire ten metres.
- One other player positioned to take the ball from the lineout is deemed to be part of the lineout.

Position

- The players in the line stand parallel to and approximately ½ metre from the line of touch.

Length

- Players in the line must be between the 5 metre line and the 15 metre line from touch.
- They may move further infield when the ball is thrown provided the ball goes to or beyond them.

Spacing

- Within the bounds of the lineout length can be of any distance and spacing need not be even.

Throw-in

- The ball is thrown in by an opponent of the player who put or carried the ball into touch except when a team is awarded a penalty kick and the ball is kicked into touch. The throw-in is then taken by the team that kicked the ball into touch. The throw-in must be at least five metres along the line of touch. If it is not straight the other team has the choice of a scrum or a lineout with their throw-in. A 'straight' throw is deemed to be between the inside shoulders of the players in each line, at the point in the lineout where the contest for possession takes place.

Beginning

- The lineout begins when the ball leaves the hands of the player throwing it in.

End

The lineout ends when the ball or player carrying the ball leaves the lineout. This includes the following:

- A ruck or maul is formed in the lineout and all feet of the players in the ruck or maul have moved beyond the line of touch, or
- A player carrying the ball leaves the lineout, or

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- The ball has been thrown, knocked or kicked out of the lineout, or
- The ball is thrown beyond a position 15 metres from the touch line, or a player takes or puts it beyond that line, or
- The ball, or a player carrying the ball, moves into the area between the 5 metre line and the touchline.
- The ball becomes unplayable.

Pre-jump Restrictions

Once the lineout is formed, players cannot leave the lineout until it ends unless it is in a peeling off movement.

The players in the line are not permitted to:

- Move into the 5 metre area.
- Push, charge, shoulder, bind or hold any other players in either team.
- Use assistance to jump.
- Move towards the line of touch other than in the act of jumping.
- Use the outside arm only in a one-handed jumping situation.

Post-jump Restrictions

After the ball has been touched, you cannot:

- Get in front of the ball unless trying to tackle from your side of the ball.
- Interfere with an opponent not holding the ball.

Ruck and Maul

- If a ruck or maul forms from a lineout, until that lineout is over players in it must join the ruck or maul or remain behind the last feet in that ruck or maul not further infield than 15 metres from the touchline.

Other Players Offside Line

- Players not in the lineout must remain back 10 metres until the lineout has been ended unless they advance for a long throw-in beyond the 15 metre line. In this case they cannot move within the ten metres until the ball leaves the throwers' hands and the ball must, in fact, be thrown beyond the 15 metres mark.

Peeling Off

- In any peeling off movement players cannot leave the lineout until the ball has left the hands of the thrower. They must stay within the area from that player's line of touch, to 10 metres from the line of touch, until the lineout ends.

Quick Throw-In

- A quick throw-in is permissible before a lineout is formed, provided that the same ball is used and that it is only handled by the player throwing it in. For a quick throw-in the 10 metre offside law is not applicable and any players who have not arrived at the forming lineout may leave it if they wish. A quick throw-in may be taken from anywhere outside the field of play between the place where the ball went into touch and the players' goal line. If the quick throw-in is not executed correctly the other team has the choice of a scrum or lineout where the mistake occurred. **Lineout law does not apply to a quick throw-in.**

Key Factors for Lineout Success

For a lineout to consistently win possession, the following four areas need to be mastered:

- **Throw.** Unless the ball is thrown accurately to the nominated position, the chances of winning the lineout are reduced.
- **Jump/Lift and Catch.** Control of the ball and quality possession are largely dependent upon good timing and coordination. Essentially, the jumping group consists of one jumper and two lifter/supporters, who must work in close coordination.
- **Support.** Everyone in the lineout has a responsibility to support the jumper. The two immediate supporters must closely assist the jumper to return to the ground whilst other players ensure that the quality of the ball delivered enables it to be used effectively.
- **Variety.** If the same routine is used all the time the opposition will quickly find counters. Variety can include variations in the number of players in the lineout, the positions it is thrown to and the delivery method. This can include delivering the ball from the top of the jump ("off the top") to catching the ball, landing safely and being driven forward by the support players ("down and drive"). The potential for variation in lineout play is endless, however this in itself can be a trap. It is recommended that lineout play is kept as simple as possible and that variations are part of a pattern. The variety available in lineout throws makes a system of calling or communication an essential part.

Technical Aspects of Lineout

The following is explained as per a full (7 person) lineout. One must consider that variation is now greatly influencing lineout play, however, the foundations must be sound prior to variations being introduced.

Jumpers

- Begin with the inside foot slightly ahead with both heels raised slightly. (ie body weight is on the balls of the feet.)
- Hands should be chest high with upper arms parallel to the ground.

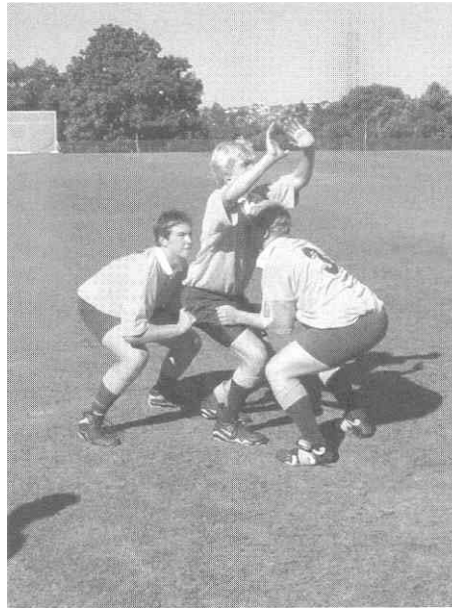


- Push off both feet simultaneously.
- Push chest through as you jump and keep hands in front of eyes.
- Extend arms and catch with 'soft hands'.
- Pull the ball down to deliver to the halfback.

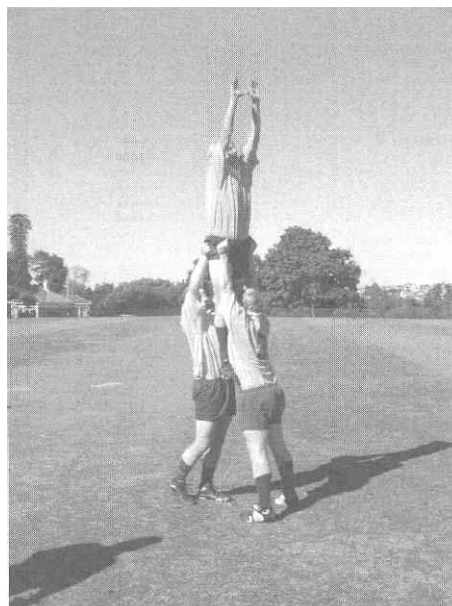
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Supporters

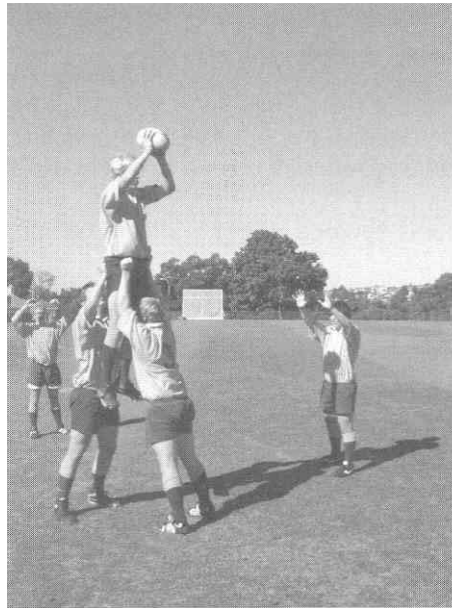
- Players either side of the jumper will begin in a crouched position.



- It is important that they watch the jumper and react to the jumper's movement. They should not watch the throw.
- As soon as the jumper moves they should grasp the jumper (in pre-determined places); compress towards the jumper; stepping towards the line of touch and extending arms and legs until the body is in a "locked out" position.
- It is imperative the lifting action begins with the legs and is finished with the arms – not the other way around.



- It is essential that the supports maintain firm control of the jumpers until they have landed firmly on their feet.



Sweeper

- This is the designated player who will control the ball from the jumper once it has been won. This person may not be required on some occasions.

Throwing to Position No.2 in Lineout

- Positions 1 and 3 would be the supporters/lifter. Position 4 would jump in case the ball was missed by 2. When 2 catches the ball, 4 would bind onto 3 to stop opposition players coming through 'the gap'.
- Position 5 would take a sweeping role and catch the ball or 'rip' it from 2. Positions 6 and 7 would not commit unless driving maul ensued.
- The hooker, who threw the ball, could join the back of the ensuing maul, be used as a runner or remain within the 5 metre zone for further developments within this area.

Throwing to Position 4 in Lineout

- Positions 3 and 5 would be supporters/lifters. Position 6 would jump in case the ball was missed by 4. When 4 catches the ball, 6 would bind onto 5 to stop opposition players. 2 would bind onto 3 in the same fashion.
- Position 1 would take on the sweeping role and catch or 'rip' it from 4. Position 7 would not commit.
- The hooker would have a support/runner role, as designated by the play that was called.

Throwing to Position 6 in Lineout

- Throwing to 'the back' will greatly aid in committing the opposition backrow to the lineout and slow down their defensive role of denying the attacking backline time and space.
- Position 5 and 7 would be supporters/lifters. As the ball leaves the thrower's hand(s), positions 1, 2 and 3 would commence a sweeping role.
- Position 3 would remain close to the lineout and rip the caught ball. 2 should sweep wide for tap ball and 1 would follow in a support role. It is important that 1, 2 and 3 all turn towards the line of touch so that they can sight the ball through the air.

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- Position 4 would bind on 5 to stop the opposition coming through the gap.
- The hooker's role could vary depending on what platform of delivery was used and where the ball carrier was designated to challenge the defence.

Rotation of Roles

- Variation in the lineout can often deceive the opposition, therefore rotating jumpers into different positions depending on their strengths and weaknesses can be useful to create a tactical advantage.
- It is now the case that 'jumpers' become 'lifters'; 'lifters' become 'jumpers' and that halfbacks adopt different roles.

Platforms of Delivery

- i) 'Off the top' – this ball is deflected at the top of the jump. The ball is pushed or guided by the jumper to a sweeper or directly to the halfback.
 - On every throw in there should be a sweeper if the ball is accidentally tapped, or if the jumper is unstable in the air, for any reason, a deflected ball will be consolidated.
 - The halfback should begin at about the 5m line and follow the ball as it travels along the lineout. The halfback should always be in a position to deliver a pass to the backline.
 - With tapped ball it is important that the players either side of the jumper and support players squeeze together to prevent the opposition coming through gaps within the lineout.
- ii) Caught Ball
 - This ball is brought down and held by the jumper and can be either ripped by the sweeper and delivered to the halfback or formed into a driving maul.



- If delivered directly to the halfback then the roles of players change slightly as they attempt to mirror a scrum type formation, in this case the jumper and support players assume the role of a front row. The 'ripper' assumes the role of a lock and the other players from the lineout come in behind.
- In this scenario, it is important that the original jumper 'steers the ship' or controls the direction of the force and keeps the players in the driving maul on their feet.



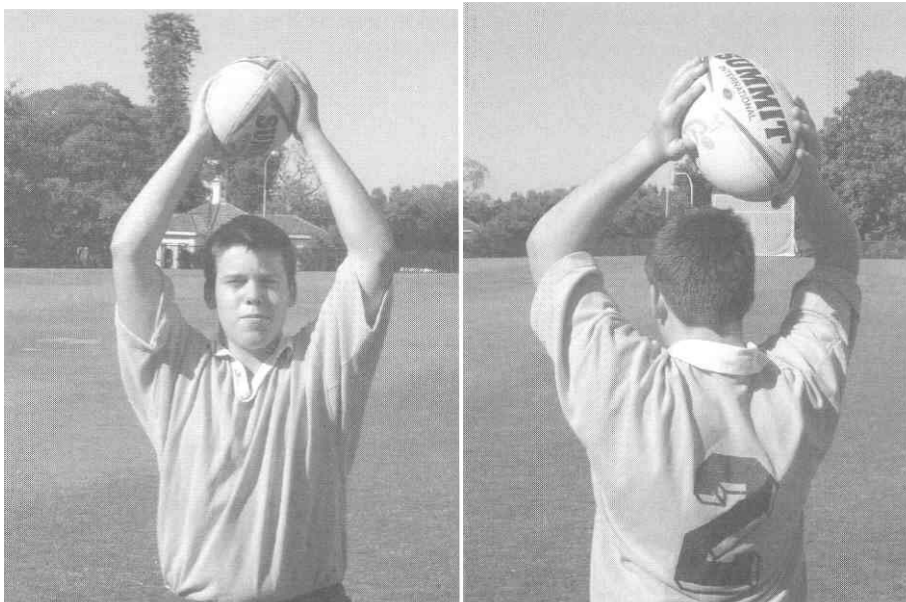
How to Practice Lineout

As with other group skills it is more productive to work on the individual and mini unit skills than to spend the majority of time on the total lineout. If the throw is perfected by the thrower and the jump-catch-support roles are practiced by the mini units, then the complete lineout will come together quickly and effectively. This method also allows more than one player practicing the throw. It is advisable to have more than one skilled thrower in a team.

How to Practice the Throw

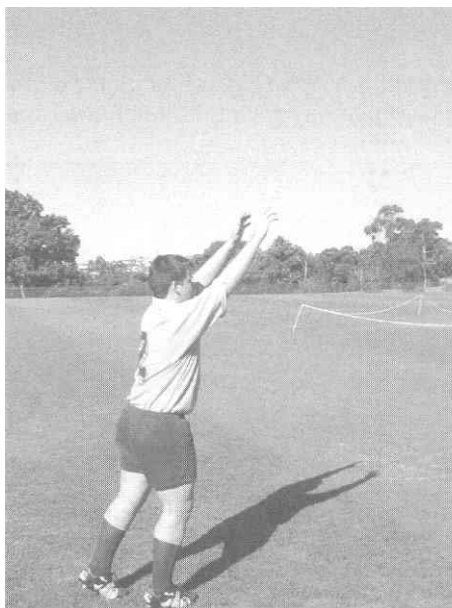
Key Factors to Look For

- **The Handhold** – two handed with one hand at back and the other hand further forward with fingers spread.



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- **The Stance** – feet shoulder width apart, left foot in advance of right for a right hand dominant thrower. The direction of the throw can be adjusted by varying the position of the front foot.
- **The Throwing Action** – commence with ball behind the head and high. Without a further backswing and keeping the trunk stable, bring the arms forward towards target. The fingers must play a significant role in the throwing process, as they are responsible for the 'feel', which gives the thrower control.



- **The Release** – Cut under the ball with the back hand and release both hands at the same time with the elbows pointing towards the target. The timing of the release will determine the **trajectory** of the throw. The Trajectory should be varied according to the position and type of jump. May vary from flat to a lob, or from fast to slow.

Throwers should take their timing off the jumper and try to have the ball reach the jumper at the top of the jump.

Practice Drills

- Two players throwing the ball to one another concentrating on the technique of throwing.
- A single player throwing at a fixed target from a fixed distance. The target may be a mark on the goalpost or a ring attached to a stand or a goalpost. The number of successful throws should be kept. Some reality can be added to this practice by making the height identical to that reached by specific jumpers and the distances identical to that of the positions that they jump from.

How to Practice the Jump/Support

Jumpers must initiate the upward movement and the support players should then quickly assist them by, commencing with knees bent, grasp the jumper and thrust them into the air. Both stability and ease of supporting is enhanced if the two supporting players squeeze the jumper by moving close together as they lift. It is imperative that the supporters keep firm control of jumpers until they have landed safely on their feet.

Practice Drills

- In groups of three have the jumper call "1,2,3" and on three, the group synchronise their jumping and support as one. This will enable the coach to check technique and coordination.
- As above but without the call, which will teach the supporters to coordinate their movements from the movement of the jumper.
- As above but including the variety of movement to disadvantage the opposition players.

- Thrower, jumper, supporters as above but with the thrower delivering the ball and then supporting the catching unit either by catching the ball when it is delivered or by ripping the ball when the jumper brings it back to the ground.

If the mini units become proficient then a full lineout will quickly fit together. When the technique and communication of the option selected have been mastered, the pack is ready for opposed lineouts. As for opposed scrummaging the opposed lineouts should be brief and closely controlled.

Safety Aspects of Lineout

Generally there are very few injuries at lineouts. The potential for injury occurs when players jumping for the ball are in the air. It is essential that they are firmly supported from the time they leave the ground until the time that they land. Interfering with jumpers whilst they are in the air is foul play and the referee will not tolerate it.

How to Use a Lineout Tactically

- When winning possession thought also has to be given to subsequently using the possession.
- By taking the ball down and driving, a team can pressure the opposition to mass in the one place and thus create space elsewhere for later usage. This can more easily be done if all or nearly all of the forwards are involved in the lineout.
- A short lineout may increase the chances of winning the ball but, because most of the opposition forwards are not in the lineout but in defensive positions, it is more difficult to use the ball effectively.

Receiving Kick-offs and Restarts

Restarts include the following kicks:

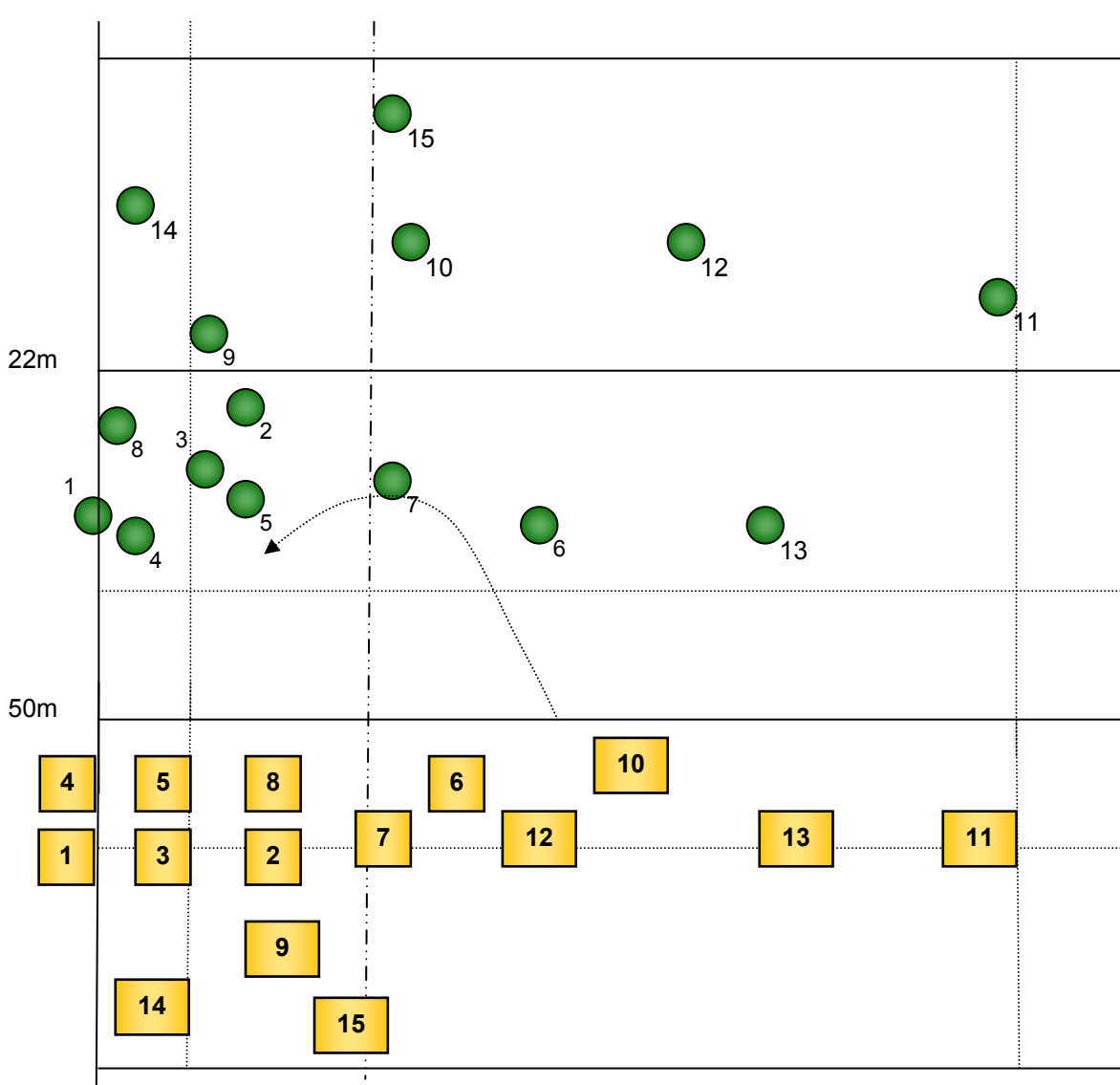
- a) Starting a match and the second half.
- b) After a try is scored.
- c) After a successful penalty or field goal.
- d) After a touchdown requiring a 22 metre dropout to restart play.

In most games there are as many opportunities to gain possession from kick-offs and restarts as from scrums or even lineouts. It is essential that the team has a plan to deal with both the receipt of the ball and subsequent attempts to carry it up the field. In some ways the kicking team has an advantage in that they can determine the target area and concentrate pressure there in an attempt to regain possession. Success for the catching team largely depends on:

- An early decision as to whom will catch the ball, which is communicated clearly. If two players call, the catch is left to the one who is moving forward, as that player will be in a stronger position.
- Immediately a catcher moves to catch the ball, designated players must provide support. This should be organised in advance and will normally depend on where the ball is kicked.
- The catcher who stands still and waits to catch the ball whilst the opposition are charging forward in an attempt to arrive at the same time as the ball will be under considerable pressure. It is therefore better if catchers can be trained to wait back and to attack the ball immediately prior to the catch. This ensures that they have some forward momentum and can resist the opposition contesting the ball.
- The supporters must not interfere with the timing nor direction of the catcher's jump but should give positive support immediately the catcher has touched the ball.
- Kick-offs and restarts are often caught deep in your own territory where mistakes can cost points. The ability of a team to advance the ball from these situations generally depends on having a well-known and well-practiced plan.

Examples of Positional Roles for Receiving a Centrefield Restart

The positions illustrated below are not prescriptive and those occupied by individual players may vary depending on the organisational needs of the team.



Roles for Conventional Short Restarts

4 and 5 are the primary catchers.

1, 3 and 2 provide primary support for 4 and 5. 7 may also assist with this role.

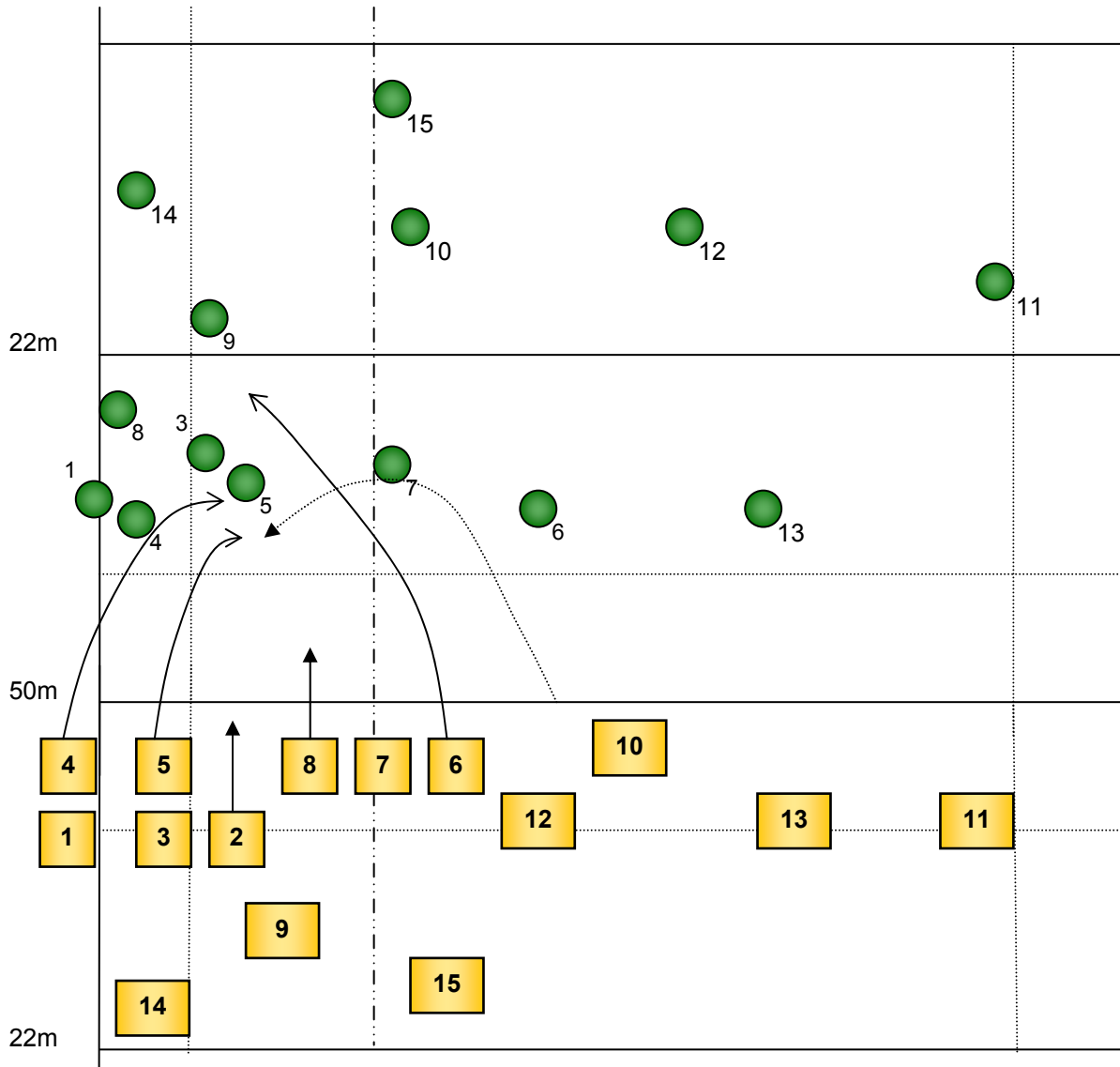
8, 9 and 14 are in position to catch deeper kicks.

Other players are distributed to ensure that full coverage of the field is achieved.

After the ball is caught by 4 or 5, the deeper players act as secondary support and ball runners.

Example of Positional Roles for Chasing a Centrefield Restart

The chasing roles indicated below are not prescriptive and may be varied depending on the individual skills of the chasing team.



Chasing Roles for a Conventional Short Restart

4 and 5 will contest the ball in the air.

1 and 3 will provide primary support for 4 and 5.

6 scavenges for possession of ball that is not caught cleanly.

2 acts as a sweeper to collect ball that is caught or trapped back by 4 or 5.

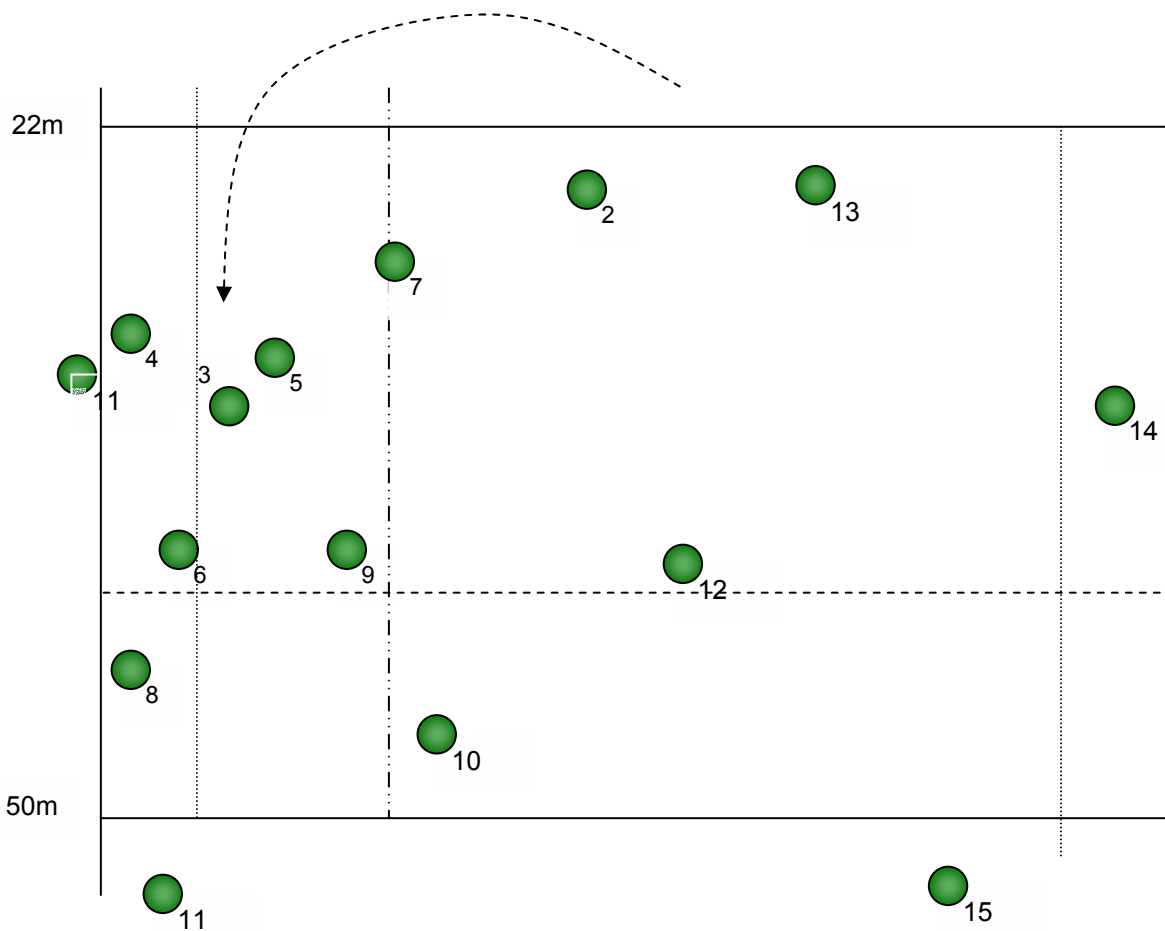
7 and 8 are prepared to continue the attack or to defend, depending on which team wins the ball.

Regardless of the role, all players must be ball conscious and take any opportunity to gain possession.

Example of Positions for Receiving a 22m Dropout

The most important features of positioning to receive a 22m dropout are:

- Provide coverage on both sides of the kicker for short kicks.
- Cover deep positions on both sides and midfield.
- Provide for support for shallow catches to permit the ball to be consolidated.
- Provide running support for deep catches to enable counterattack.



The above positioning is indicative only and will be substantially affected by weather conditions and the skills possessed by members of the receiving team.

Law Related to Restarts

For restarts at halfway:

- A drop kick must be used.
- All players must be behind the kicker.
- The kick must be taken from the centre of the field and at or behind the halfway line.
- The ball must travel ten metres or be played by a receiving team player.
- If the kick travels out on the full the receiving team may opt for a scrum in mid field on the halfway line, a lineout on the halfway line or another kick.

For 22 Metre Restarts:

- A drop kick must be used.
- All players must be behind the kicker.
- The kick may be taken anywhere along the 22 metre line.
- The ball may be played by either team once it has crossed the 22 metre line.
- If the kick travels out on the full the receiving team may opt for a scrum in mid field on the 22 metre line, a lineout on the 22 metre line or another kick.

Safety Aspects of Catching, Kick-offs and Restarts.

The only 'at risk' situation is the catcher jumping for the ball. Injuries are infrequent but close support is the key to injury avoidance. Players in the air contesting for the ball cannot be tackled until they have landed back on the ground.

How To Practice Receiving, Kick-offs and Restarts.

- Commence with a mini unit of a catcher and two supporters. Arrange to have the catcher coming forward and attacking the ball at the last moment rather than standing and waiting for it. The support players should not touch the jumper until the ball is secured, however they must be in position quickly and ready to assist the jumper back to the ground safely. Initially the ball can be delivered by a throw or short kick.
- Make sure that players understand their responsibility for wherever the ball is kicked. This can be explained in terms of zones, designated catchers and designated supporters. Only catchers that can be threatened by the chasing team need direct support. This is best practiced by arranging kicks to various areas to observe the reactions of players and to make corrections.

Balls Surrendered by the Opposition

In many matches teams will receive more possession from the opposition kicks, mistakes and law infringements than they win in contests for possession. The more pressure that is placed on the opposition, the more likely they are to give your team back the ball. There is a saying that the ball will always come back to the team that is going forward and this is true both in defence and attack. It is important that a team does not rely heavily on the opposition to give them possession but can compete effectively in contest for the ball. The most common source of useable ball from the opposition is poorly placed kicks, which permit counter attack. However, players must always be alert to pounce on dropped ball or poorly directed passes.

Teams that concede penalties or free kicks are essentially conceding both possession and territory. These turnovers in law are extremely useful and take the sting out of opposition attack. In most matches the number of penalties and free kicks exceed the number of scrums and may approach the number of lineouts.

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When you are playing against a team that is very skilful at contests for primary possession it is important to have a plan to acquire the ball from the opposition after the set play. Thus your team is not relying on residual ball but has a definite plan to acquire the ball. The weakness in this approach is that you depend on the frailty of the opposition to concede possession to you. It is far more reliable to compete strongly for possession at primary contests.

2. Advancing the Ball

The object of the game is to advance the ball towards the opposition goal line. Essentially, this can only be done by:

- Keeping the ball in hand and running with it, or
- By kicking the ball.

A player with the ball in hand has greater control over it than if it has been kicked. However, it is generally difficult to carry the ball through a committed defence.

Both running and kicking have a place in the game but neither should be done without thought. Kicks can provide:

- An effective way of relieving pressure when in tight defence.
- An easy way to gain territory. Often kicks for territory result in a lineout throw and ball loss to the opposition, and it is better if they don't go out but an organised chasing policy forces the opposition to kick the ball out and your team gains both territory and the lineout throw.
- An alternative attacking strategy to get the ball in behind a solid defensive pattern. Attacking kicks include chip kicks, grubber kicks, box kicks and high balls.

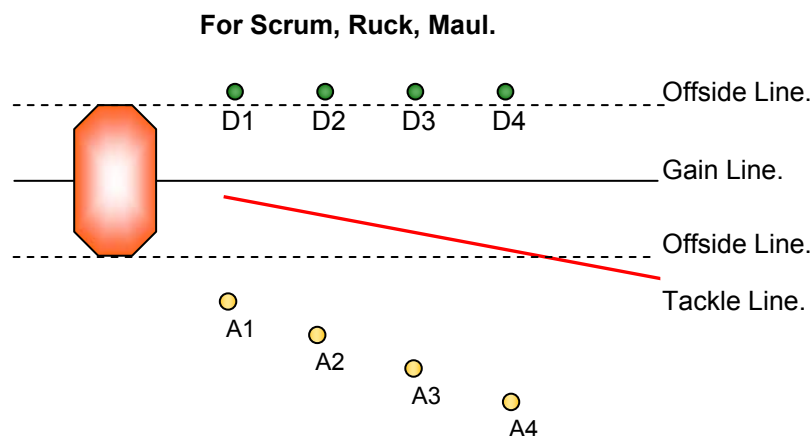
All kicks must be accompanied by an organised chasing pattern which is designed to regather the ball from attacking kicks and to pressure the catcher into making mistakes or a hurried return kick from territory kicks.

Running with the Ball

Players find advancing the ball in the hand as the most difficult task in playing rugby. It is often referred to as attacking play and less accurately as backplay. In rugby, every player has a role to play in advancing the ball and all are required to master a number of basic ball skills.

In order to understand the concept of advancing the ball, a number of terms need explaining.

- **The Gain Line** is an imaginary line at right angles to the touchline and passing through the point on the field where possession was gained. If the team do not carry the ball to the gain line before progress is stopped, they have lost ground.
- **The Tackle Line** is an imaginary line that runs halfway between the line of defenders and the line of attackers. In situations where a team can predict that a contest for the ball will be won or lost, the attacking players normally choose a position of depth to give them time and space, whereas the defending team members stand close to the offside line to deny the attackers time and space. Thus the tackle line is normally behind the gain line.



- **The Offside Line** is an imaginary line beyond which players cannot advance if they intend to participate in the game. For defenders, the offside line at scrums, rucks and mauls is set by the hindmost foot of a defender in the scrum, ruck or maul. For lineouts, the offside line for players not participating in the lineout is 10 metres back from the centre of the lineout.
- **Alignment** refers to the positions that players adopt on the field. We distinguish between the starting alignment, which is where players stand before the ball is available and the running alignment, which is where they are when the ball is made available to them. Alignment may be described as deep or shallow, wide or narrow, depending on the positions adopted by the players. By varying the combinations of depth and width, attackers are able to create doubt in the defensive team and make ball usage more effective. The positioning of the first receiver, in terms of both depth and width, is of great importance. Other players outside the first receiver, called lateral support players, can choose a position of depth and width to suit their purpose. Although the starting alignment is important, it is the running alignment that largely determines the success of the attack.
- **Angle** generally refers to the running angle of attackers and also to the angle of a pass that they deliver. As a general rule, it is not productive for players to run across field as they are less likely to gain territory, will isolate themselves from support and make it difficult to maintain possession of the ball after they are tackled. Straight running towards the opposition goal line is generally the most productive angle to choose. However a runner entering the attack at a different angle from the other players is difficult to tackle. Variations in angle create problems for defenders and when combined with decoy runners increase the chances of successful attack.

In relation to passing the angle, flat or lateral passes enhance the player's view of the opposition defenders. Deep passing angles tend to encourage lateral running. There are occasions when a flat pass is to be preferred and occasions when a deep pass will be the best option.

- **Speed** of decision making, passing and running are all essential elements of good attack. In particular, variations of speed increase the chances of penetration, particularly if the strike runner can hit the ball at a faster pace than the player transferring the ball. The defence will take their timing from the other players and may be surprised by the change of speed.
- **Support** refers to players who have positioned themselves to be of assistance to the ball runner. Primary support are generally best positioned slightly behind and to the inside of the ball runner. The primary support player is often the previous ball carrier. Support players should call to the ball carrier to indicate that they are in position and ready to receive the ball. In addition to lateral support there should be in depth support or trailers who come from behind the player. The more support that a team can provide for a ball runner, the greater the chance of penetrating the defence of the opposition.
- **Starter Moves.** After each contest for the ball, a team should have organised how they intend to use it. This initial phase from primary possession is call a "starter move". Teams evaluate their strengths and weaknesses relative to the opposition and starter moves are designed to
 - a) Commence the process of using your strengths and exploiting the opposition's weaknesses.
 - b) Increasing the chances of retaining the ball after contact because members of the attacking team can organise support in the area where the breakdown is likely to be.

A team need not have a large range of starter moves, but should plan for opportunities to exploit the blind side, narrow open side, midfield and out wide. It is more difficult to exploit superiority out wide than it is close to the play. If a team intends to move the ball wide from primary possession, they will need to have excellent passing skills, straight running in the midfield to interest the defenders and generally an extra attacker introduced into the line. As a rule it is normally better to go forward before going wide. This means that wide attack will have a better chance of success from quick phase ball delivered when the defence is disorganised.

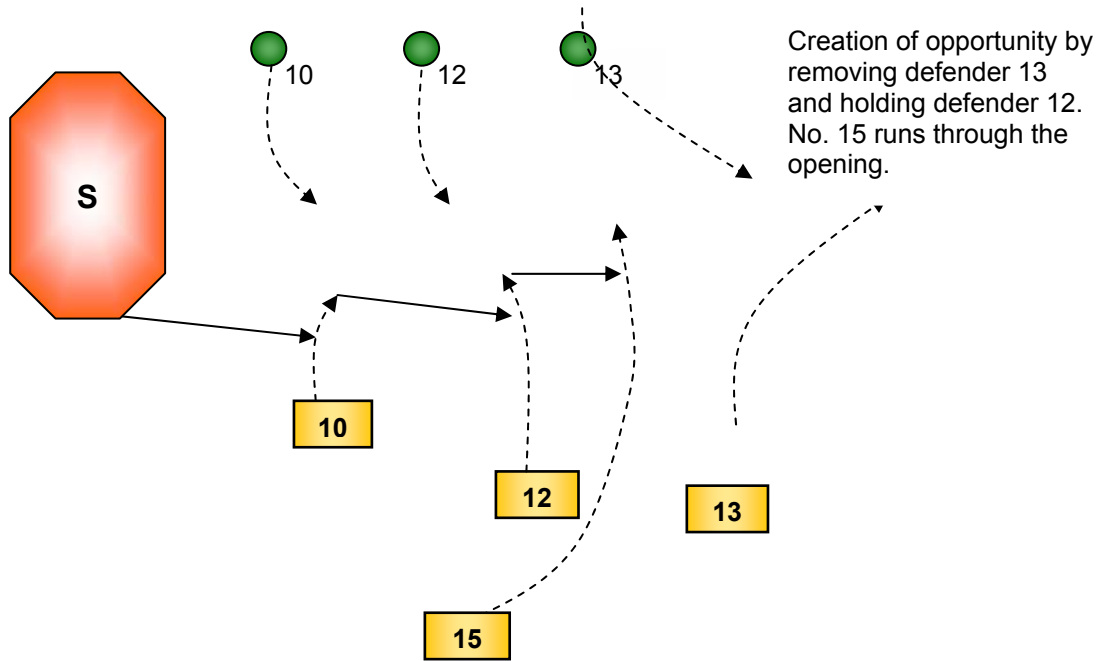
- **Penetration** refers to breaking through the defensive line. If defenders are well organised and are good tacklers, it is not easy to penetrate and it may require considerable organisation of attackers. Methods of penetration include:
 - a) Individual running skills including speed and evasive skills (fend, sidestep, and swerve). This is difficult except where one player is clearly superior to the opponent.

- b) By adding attackers to a point on the field so that attackers outnumber defenders.
- c) By removing a defender from the defensive line, usually by a decoy runner.
- d) By combinations of the above.

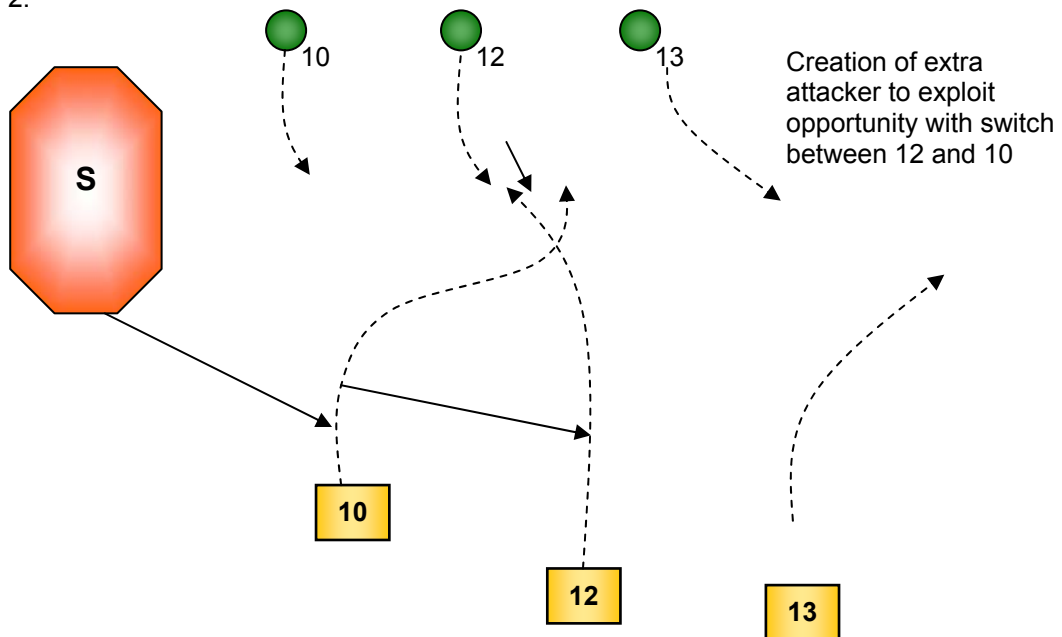
The eventual aim of the game is to penetrate the opposition defence, to advance the ball across the goal line and score a try. Penetration is best achieved by a combination of effort involving several players. It is important that players understand what they are trying to achieve and what their role in the process is.

Some Examples of Creating Opportunities for Penetration by Removing a Defender and/or Adding an Additional Attacker

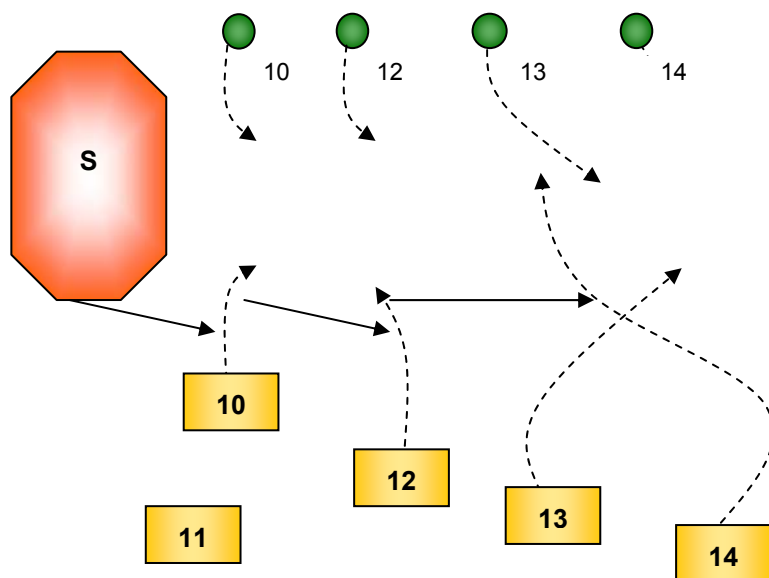
Example 1.



Example 2.



Example 3.



Creation of opportunity by removing defender 13 and holding defender 12. No. 14 exploits the opportunity.

How to Practice Advancing the Ball

The most important ingredient for success is the individual skill of the attackers. They must be afforded opportunities to sharpen their handling and running skills in an environment where they must make quick decisions. Even in situations where a team is attempting a pre-arranged starter move, players are still required to react to the opposition and to make decisions. Coaches need to clearly understand that success will flow from a combination of sound technical skills and good decisions or tactical skills. Practice routines must be designed to accommodate both of these needs. Success at penetrating the opposition defence usually involves the attackers controlling the position of defenders so that a team member can run through the space that has been created. Players must become practiced at both creating and recognising opportunities. This skill will be developed by placing players in situations where they must react to what is in front of them.

Unopposed team runs will do little for the development of technical skills and nothing for the development of tactical skills. The process of improvement and preparation for matches will be:

- Spent most of the time on small group, opposed decision making activities.
- Spent a lesser amount of time making sure that players can perform a number of starter moves that will carry the ball to various points of attack.
- In a team situation, practice starter moves with full support and subsequent phase play. Realism can be added to this by arranging varying degrees of opposition.

The most common fault in practicing advancing the ball is to perform unopposed and to run unrealistically, ignoring the tackle line, which is the most likely area near which forward progress will be halted. The second most common fault is to engage in team activities, which require individual skill levels in advance of those that your players possess. It is natural for coaches and players to copy successful attacking play from international and super 12 teams but unless your team has a high level of skill the play will not be successful. Remember that all players in the team have a role to play in advancing the ball.

How To Use Attacking Play Tactically

- It is important to attack through your team strengths. However it is not essential that you do so off primary possession. It may be more productive to go forward first, to disorganise the defence, and then move the ball to the intended point of attack.

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- An understanding of risks and benefits is important. The risk of an unwanted outcome is affected by field position and support. The benefit of a particular attacking ploy is also related to field position, support as well as the score and time remaining. For inexperienced players, field position can be used to indicate attacking options. We recognise that participating is more important than the outcome of the match. It is still important for players to learn to manage the game and to have the satisfaction of achieving outcomes that are deserved.

3. Maintaining Possession of the Ball

Although the team tasks of winning and advancing the ball are vital to its overall success, it is often difficult to score off primary possession. It is therefore essential that teams can maintain possession of the ball for enough phases to create pressure and disorganise the defence.

From a coaching viewpoint, spending practice time at maintaining possession after a player has been tackled will provide rapid improvement. All of the very best teams in the world are skilled at maintaining possession.

The starting point is knowledge of tackle law:

- A **tackle** occurs when the following situations exist together:
 - a) The ball carrier is held and
 - b) The ball carrier is brought to the ground. Having one knee on the ground, sitting on the ground or being on top of another player who is on the ground are all included as being on the ground.
- Tacklers are required to:
 - a) Release the tackled player immediately the tackle is completed.
 - b) Get to their feet or move away from the ball.
- Tackled players have the following options:
 - a) They must play or release the ball immediately. In playing the ball they can pass the ball to a supporting player or place the ball in any direction or push the ball away from themselves, provided that it does not go forward.
 - b) Must get to their feet or move away from the ball.
- Tackled players are not allowed to:
 - a) Interfere with the ball again until they are on their feet.
 - b) Prevent an opponent from gaining possession after the ball has been played.
- Tacklers are not allowed to interfere with the ball until they have regained their feet.
- Other players in the vicinity of the tackle and on their feet may:
 - a) Enter the tackle area only from directly behind the tackle area.
 - b) Compete for possession of the ball.
 - c) Remove opposition players from over the ball by driving through the tackle area. This is referred to as 'cleaning out'.
- Other players in the vicinity of the tackle are not permitted to:
 - a) Prevent the tackled player from playing the ball and getting up or moving away from it.
 - b) Fall over players on the ground and so prevent a contest for possession.
- Essentially, only players on their feet can participate in the game. Any player who is on the ground is not permitted to play the ball or to attempt a tackle.

Skills Associated with Maintaining Possession

The Ball Carrier

The ball carrier must accept the primary responsibility for continuity of possession after tackles. This is helped if the ball carrier controls the contact. The keys to control of contact are early decision making by the ball carrier and selection of the skill, which is most appropriate for the situation. Generally the most effective method of maintaining possession when confronted with a tackler is to pass to a support player. Sometimes there is no close support available and sometimes it is not a good option to give the ball to the support. The player can attempt to avoid the tackle and if that is not successful they should choose an option which maximises the chances of maintaining possession.

Preparation for contact involves lowering the centre of gravity, aiming for a weak spot, eg side rather than the middle of the body, and leaning forward. Immediately before and during a tackle the ball carrier should have a high work rate to enable the ball to be controlled and to improve the chances of the subsequent contest for possession being won. At the same time it should be recognised that the defender is attempting to win the contact and preventing the ball carrier from controlling the ball after the tackle by denying the ball carrier the opportunity to control the ball. The outcome of the contest at contact between the ball carrier and the tackler is crucial to maintaining possession after a tackle.

Players Who Remains on their Feet

The ball carrier has a number of options available when confronted with an immediate defender. Players who manage to stay on their feet can keep the ball in hand until support arrives. The method of ball presentation that usually proves the most effective is to screen the ball from the opposition with the body and by placing it near to the hip. The most common fault of ball runners is to 'lead' with the ball or to hold it in front of their body so that on contact it becomes wedged between the ball carrier and the defender.

Ball carriers should also continue to drive forward with their legs. This makes it difficult for the opposition to secure the ball. Because the player is not tackled, the ball carrier can retain the ball until a support player arrives and secures then 'rips' the ball.

The support player may delay the rip if the ball is controlled and moving forward. The action sequence is:

BALL CARRIER

HIT: engages the opposition with a lead arm or shoulder.

SCREEN: protect the ball by lowering side-on, widening the leg base and shielding the ball with both hands back on the side of the midriff.

DRIVE: pushes in tandem to move the unit forward.

DELIVER: releases the ball to the support partner.

SUPPORT PLAYER

HIT: accelerates into contact with the ball carrier.

SECURE: grips the ball in an interlocking share of possession with the first player.

DRIVE: pushes in tandem to move the unit forward.

DISTRIBUTE: uncouples the ball and passes, runs or rolls out.



The Tackled Player

Tackled players can win the contact by ensuring that their team maintains possessions after the tackle. They have a number of options immediately after the tackle including:

- Pass the ball to support.



- Place the ball in any direction.



- Release the ball.

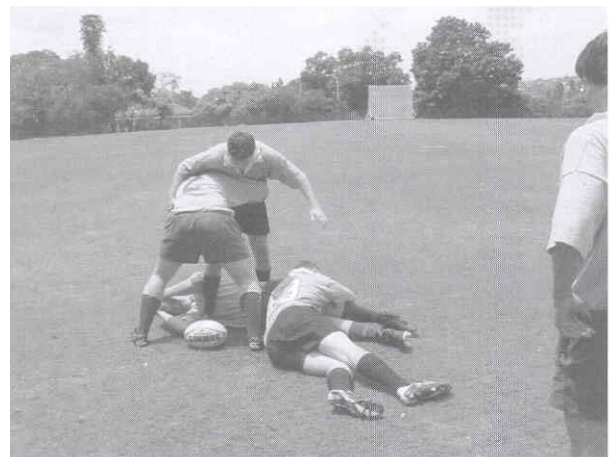
The choice of option will be determined by a number of factors including field position and support. The ball presentation method selected requires preparation and the tackled player should work hard between the contact with the tackler and the tackle being completed to ensure that the option is implemented properly. If the ball carrier controls the contact the chances of presenting the ball well and maintaining possession are high. If the tackler controls the contact the chances of maintaining possession after the tackle are considerably decreased.

The First Support Player

The first support player is crucial to maintaining possession, and it is important that they arrive and act quickly. The first support player is often the previous ball handler, however all players will be called upon to perform this role if they are close to the tackle area. The first support player must choose an option that gives a good outcome for the team. If the ball is passed, play can continue, if it is placed in the it can be picked up and driven forward or passed to another support player.



It is more usual for the ball to remain in the tackle area. Support players on their feet can compete for the ball by picking it up or by cleaning out an opposing player arriving at the tackle area. A support player attempting to secure the ball should adopt a strong position because opposition players will be focussing on the ball. It is recommended that the player steps over the ball and maintains a broad base. Stability is assisted by bending the knees, thus lowering the centre of gravity and keeping the chin up. The player should be side on to opposition players arriving and thus able to better resist force.



Other Support Players

Both teams will organise other players to arrive at the tackle scene and if the contest for the ball is not over when they arrive then a maul or a ruck takes place.

If the ball is not on the ground (if the player is tackled the ball is deemed to be on the ground) and players from both sides are gathered around it, a **maul** has been formed. The ball can be held in a maul and driven forward, however if the maul stops moving forward the ball must emerge. This is referred to as the “use it or lose it” law. Players cannot be offside in a maul if they are properly bound.



Australian Rugby Union

When forming a maul the ball carrier should turn as the first support arrives to secure the ball. The next two support players should seal off the front of the maul and prevent the opposition from touching the ball. Subsequent support players provide drive. The original ball carrier essentially steers the maul by sensing weak spots in the opposition defence.

If the ball is on the ground and the players from both sides are gathered around it, a ruck has been formed. The ball cannot be handled by any players until it has emerged from the ruck. Players in a ruck must be bound to a member of their own team and the ball will emerge either by being played with the feet or by driving the ruck over it.



Ruck ball is generally delivered more quickly than maul ball and is often the first choice for teams who wish to maintain continuity and recycle the ball before the opposition defence can realign.

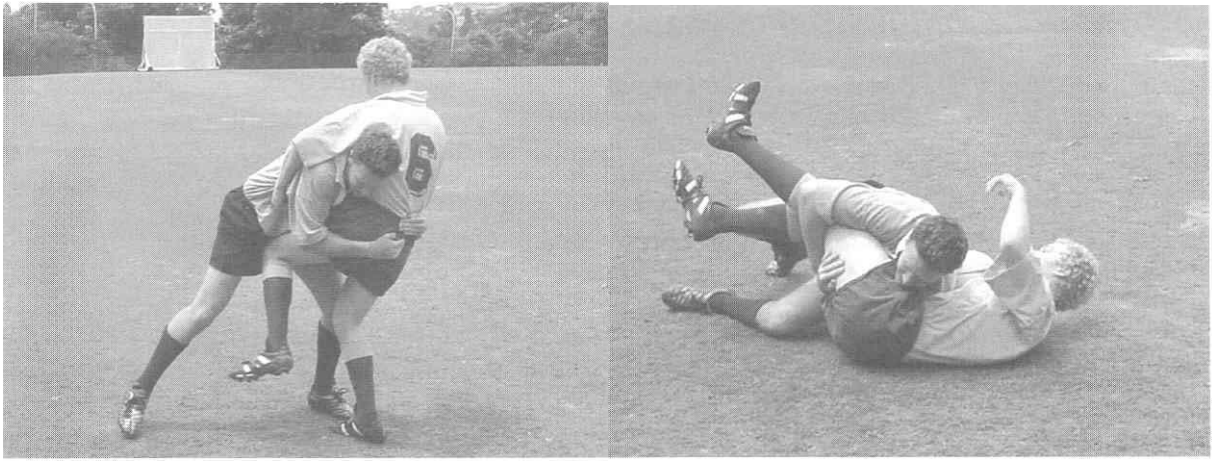
Players joining a ruck or a maul must do so from behind the last feet of their own players in the ruck or maul.

Safety Aspects of Contact in Maintaining Possession

The Ball Carrier

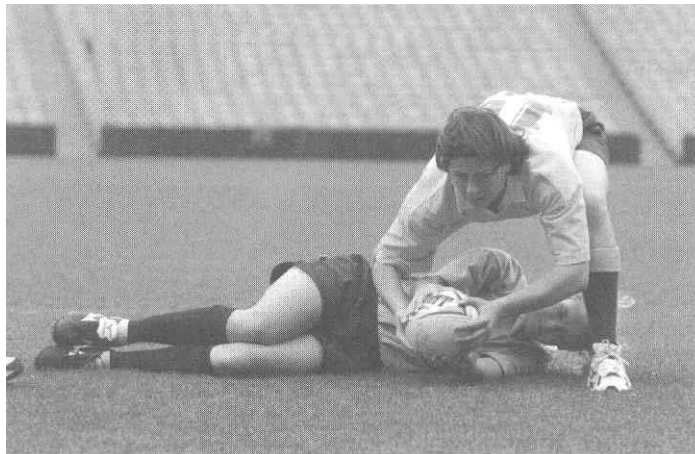
The ball carrier can be protected by:

- Minimising the impact by aiming for a weaker spot eg the side, rather than the midpoint of the defender's body.
- Preparing for contact by dropping the centre of gravity, leaning forward and broadening the base. This assists stability.
- Making contact with hard parts of the body such as shoulder or hip.
- Falling safely if tackled. This includes a rolling action and tucking in the head and shoulders. If the player squeezes hard on the ball with both hands, that is, hugs it, this will happen. On no account should a tackled player put out an arm to break the fall.



The Support Players

- The first support player can be protected by adopting a strong position over the ball with broad base, low centre of gravity and chin up.



- Subsequent support players can protect themselves by lowering their centre of gravity, keeping a broad, stable base, chin up and driving through the contact area with a down to up motion like an aeroplane taking off.

Contact should be taught as a leg-based activity. The legs provide the power that is transmitted through the spine and into the opposition. It is the power of the legs and the stability provided by good footwork that leads to safety in contact.

How to Practice Maintaining Possession

The general principles to follow when choosing practice routines include:

- Spend a lot of time on drills/exercises that relate to stability and individual body shape. Unless players can stay on their feet, generate, and direct force through the contact area, they will be of limited use to the team.
- Make sure that players know the law relating to contact and that drills require them to follow the law.
- Ensure that players know their precise roles and rotate the roles as the drills are repeated.

How To Use Continuity Skills Tactically

- In situations where speed of recycling is important because you wish to deny the opposition defence time to regroup, then the team should select place, pick and drive, mini ruck or ruck options. These are situations in which players should not struggle to stay on their feet and gain an extra metre, but go to ground quickly.
- In situations where you need to buy time to enable support to arrive, ball carriers should try to stay on their feet for as long as possible.
- If the opposition are not committing players to the breakdown, but are assembling a strong lateral defence, then a driving maul through the tackle area will be difficult to resist. This will force them to commit more players to the breakdown and create space for attackers elsewhere.

4. Recapturing Possession

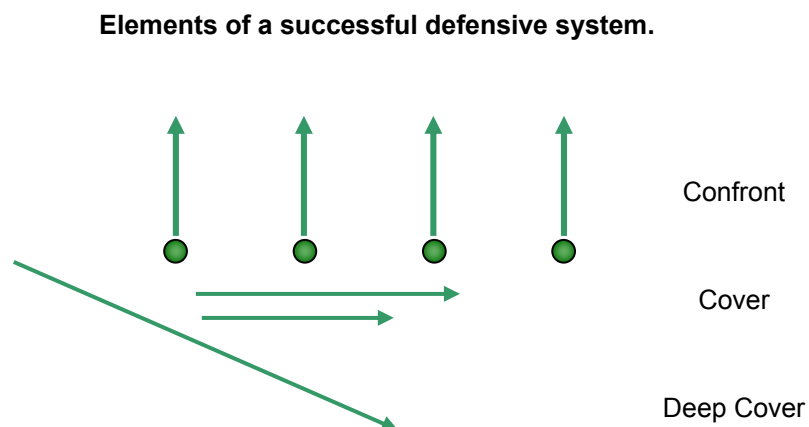
About half the time players are on the field the opposition are in possession of the ball. Hence for half of all matches the principal aim should be to recapture it from the opposition. A team that is not in possession is said to be in defence, but this is not necessarily a negative position. We don't have to wait for an opposition mistake; but we can cause them to give the ball back to us by the choice of poor option or by making a mistake. The process all begins with **pressure** which is applied in four ways:

- **Contest.** A vigorous contest for primary possession may result in poor quality possession and the opposition will have difficulty in establishing well-organised attack.
- **Force.** The denial of time and space causes the ball carrier to make quick decisions and exposes weaknesses in skill level.
- **Tackle.** This is the conclusive method of stopping forward progress. A firm tackle that puts an attacker on the ground quickly, decreases the opportunity to maintain the ball in the contest for possession after the tackle.
- **Cover.** This involves having a second and even a third line of defence to pick up an opposition ball runner who has penetrated the primary defensive line. Essentially the cover provides support for the front line defenders.

Defence Patterns

All defence patterns should have the following features:

- A group of players who run towards the attackers and confront them before they reach the gain line. They force the attackers to make quick decisions and to run or move the ball wide at a time that the other defenders have plenty of time to assess where problems might arise. If extra attackers or evasive actions are performed some distance behind the gain line they are unlikely to result in team penetration. This group of primary defenders normally runs at the inside shoulder of the attackers, restricting their options and presenting a side on tackle.
- A group of players who move across field behind the primary defenders and who should tackle any attacker who penetrates the primary defence within a few metres of the breach. The general rule for these players is that they should stay inside the ball. Players who move across but are deeper than the cover defenders referred to above should tackle any remaining attackers



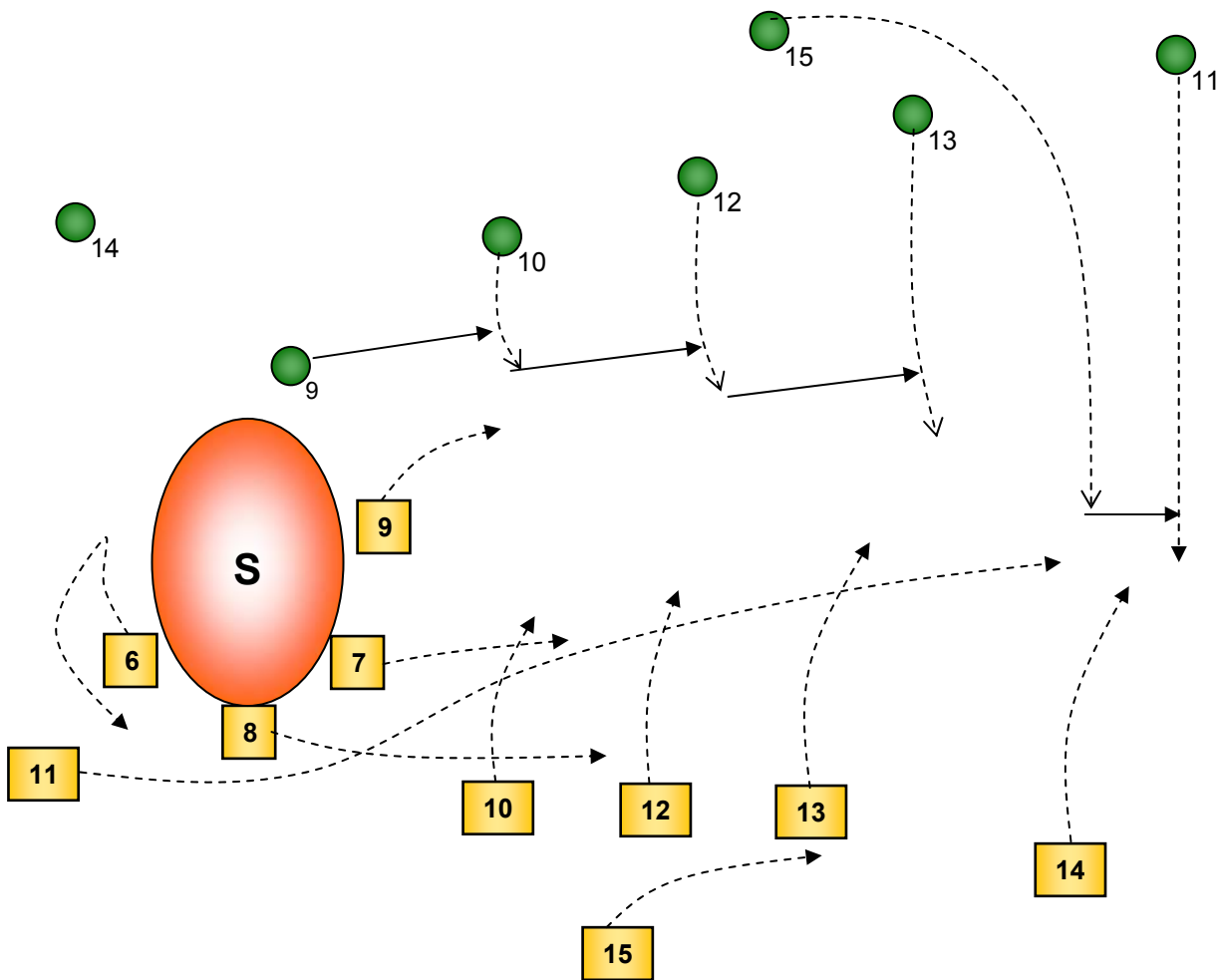
An Introduction to Defence Systems.

At any level a defence system will only function if each player has clearly identified the ball carrier that he is responsible for tackling. Professional teams may have specialist defensive coaches and spend a great deal of time practising defence. This reflects the fact that at all levels of participation, more games are lost by poor

defence than are won by excellent attack. Defence from set play is easier to organise than defence from general play. Essentially, there are two main patterns from set plays:

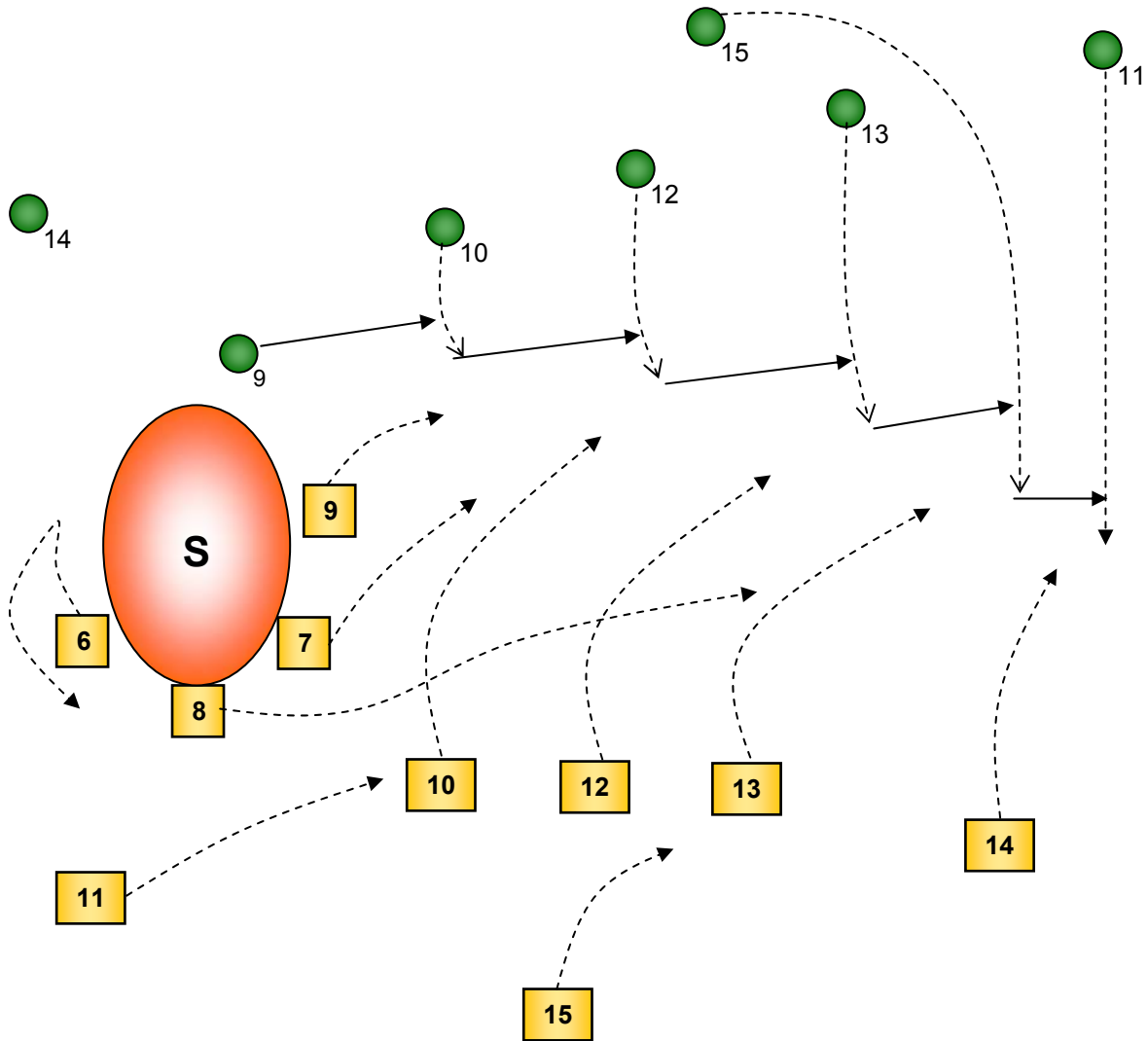
- “Man on man” defence, whereby defenders are responsible for tackling the player directly opposite them. This is the most direct and simple form of defence and is recommended for junior players. When an extra opponent enters the attacking line the defenders stay with their original opponent and the additional attacker becomes the responsibility of another designated defender, who is generally the blind winger or the fullback. This system is also referred to as isolation defence, because a successful attacker is isolated from the support players, who are marked by their opponent. It is important that any attackers penetrating the initial defence are tackled before they have run more than a few metres.

An example of a “man on man” defensive pattern from a scrum



- “One out” defence whereby each defender is responsible for tackling the opponent who is one further out from the set play than they are. To effectively follow this system players need to have skill, speed and good judgement. It is not recommended for inexperienced players. One out defence takes care of an extra attacker but it does have weaknesses both in close to the play and out wide if the ball is quickly moved laterally.

An example of a “one out” defensive pattern from a scrum



Defence from general play is much more complex to organise. The most important ingredients to include in the organisation of general play defence are:

- Quick, lateral repositioning after a tackle has been effected. The first positions filled should be the players who “post up” immediately adjacent to the tackle, ruck or maul situation.



- Try to avoid having your slower, less agile players defending against the best runners in the opposition team. Slow moving players that find themselves in an unfamiliar wide position should exchange with other players inside them until they are closer to the tackle area. If the ball is cleared quickly this may not be possible and the attack may be able to exploit a weakness in the defensive line.

A coach must choose a defensive system that is commensurate with the skill and experience of the players. Everyone in the team must know and practice the defensive system.

How to Practice Defence

Attack and defence are essentially different aspects of the same thing and can be practiced together. Emphasis should be placed on small group work involving communication and approach lines. Defence can be practiced without tackling but to be realistic, players should be asked to perform a two-handed hip tag, which ensures that they are in a position to tackle.

Safety Aspects of Tackling

A side on tackle is a fairly safe activity. A front on tackle has the potential to present danger to the tackler. In recent years the game of rugby has changed from largely a side on game to being largely a front on game. It is therefore important that the players are thoroughly skilled in the correct technique of making front on tackles.

Tackling must be taught as a leg-based activity. Contact is made with the shoulders and arms but it is the legs that generate the power necessary to perform a tackle effectively and safely.



Approach slightly from the side.



Foot placed close to attacker & knees dipped prior to contact.



Squeeze hard with the arms & drive with the legs to complete the tackle.

How To Use Defence Tactically

- The most important ingredient is to be positive about defence. If a team can go forward in defence they can nearly always recapture possession either by forcing errors and turnovers after tackles or by encouraging the attacking side to kick. A good positive approach to defence will often yield more possession than can be gained through primary contest for the ball.
- Remember the importance of contesting balls at primary contests. Poor quality possession is much easier to recapture than good quality possession.

* * *

CHAPTER IV.

Acquisition of Individual Skills

It is important to distinguish between talent and skill. Skill is the ability to perform a technique and arrive at a constant outcome under pressure, whereas talent refers to the potential ability that an individual possesses. It is possible and necessary to develop natural talent and to improve the skill level of all people.

Most of the skills that are required in rugby are variations of generic hand/eye and foot/eye coordination requiring the player to have a basic knowledge of where they are in time and space. They need to progress to the stage where a skill is selected and performed automatically. The most important age span for the acquisition of skill is approximately eight to fourteen years of age. Children who are given the opportunity to develop skills at this age will reach their potential. They will most probably only be interested in developing their skill level if the process is enjoyable, thus an ideal environment to develop skills will include:

- A pleasant, fun atmosphere which is created by the coach including the use of praise and the avoidance of harsh criticism.
- An element of competition which is associated with a games approach.

Young people who come to rugby want to play rugby. We must balance the desire to play a match with the need to acquire skill. If the skill acquisition activities are games or parts of the game of rugby, they will be more inclined to participate.

It is important that skills are properly taught in the first instance because it takes longer to correct than it does acquire a new skill. Although individuals vary greatly in their capacity to acquire skills it is generally accepted that about twenty sessions may be required to confirm the skill.

Rugby is a game that consists of the selection and performance of a large number of individual skills during any one game. The approach to coaching should concentrate on getting the skill part right and the team performance will follow. Decision making in skill selection should be included in practice activities.

Examples of Skills That Should Be Developed by young players

Handling Skills

Basic Pass
Clearing Pass
Switch Pass
Fielding A Kick

Running and Evasion Skills

Sidestep
Swerve
Hand-Off
Hit 'n Spin

Kicking Skills

Punt
Chip Kick
Grubber Kick
Drop Kick
Place Kick

Contact Skills

Body Position
Screen Pass
Pop Pass
Gut Pass
Placing The Ball
Secure and Rip
How To Fall Safely

Ground Skills

- Picking Up The Ball
- Falling On The Ball and Recovering

Recapturing Skills

- Approach To Tackle
- Head On Tackle
- Side On Tackle

The Key Factor Approach

One of the important skills that a coach should develop is to be able to analyse the performance of the team and of individual players. It is necessary to distinguish between performance or technical errors and decision or tactical errors. A major difficulty for a coach in a complex match situation is to establish the cause of a technical error. This cause-effect relationship is central to determining any remedial action that is required. It is essential that the coach is able to give positive and precise feedback to players, that will enable them to improve their performance of skills.

In order to assist this process, the ARU has developed an organised process of analysing the game and the skills involved in the game. The most fundamental features of each skill has been identified and called a 'Key Factor'. A coach who checks, in order, the key factors assigned to any one skill will almost always be able to identify the cause of a technical performance problem.

The key factors identified for a number of basic team and individual skills are presented in a chart form below. Collectively they provide the coach with a with a valuable tool for identifying and correcting errors.

Key Factor Chart

Team Principles	Team Tasks	Player Performance
1. Go forward	1. Win the ball	1. Fitness
2. Support	2. Advance the ball	2. Skill
3. Continuity	3. Maintain possession of the ball	3. Motivation
4. Pressure	4. Recapture possession	
Scrum	Line-out	Line-out Throw
1. Foot positioning	1. Throw	1. Stance
2. Binding/Grips	2. Jump and catch	2. Handhold
3. Push/Resist push	3. Support	3. Throw
4. Mechanics	4. Variety	4. Release
	5. Surprise	
Line-out Support	Ruck/Maul	Back Play
1. Contest	1. Support	1. Alignment
2. Protect	2. Body position	2. Angle
3. Tidy up	3. Drive	3. Speed
	4. Ball channelling	4. Penetration
		5. Support

Key Factor Chart continued

Defence

1. Contest
2. Force
3. Tackle
4. Cover

Receiving a Basic Pass

1. Vision – look at the ball
2. Position – be there early
3. Hands – hands out early
4. The take – stop the ball with one hand

Throw a Basic Pass

1. Turn – turn head and shoulders to look at target.
2. Propel – bend arms and flick with two little fingers behind ball.

Support after Pass

1. Push the ball across
2. One step
3. Swing far knee across

Delayed Pass

1. Fully extended arms
2. Rotate shoulders and hips
3. Flick the ball up and back

Spin Pass

1. Hands on side of ball
2. Roll from back hand

Screen Pass

1. Drive
2. Screen the ball
3. Support

Switch Pass

1. Widen angle
2. Screen the ball
3. Support

Clearing Pass

1. Furthestmost foot beside ball
2. Widen the base
3. Sweep the ball
4. Follow through

Rip

1. Approach
2. Ball contact
3. Rip

Picking Up the Ball

1. Approach
2. Bend the knees
3. Pick up

Falling on the Ball

1. Drive
2. Secure
3. Get up
4. Drive or screen

Running

1. Speed
2. Balance
3. Change of pace
4. Change of direction

Sidestep

1. Approach
2. Leg drive (hard step)
3. Getaway (fast step)

Swerve

1. Feint
2. Swing away

Hand Off

1. Ball transfer
2. Hand off

Kicking

1. Handhold
2. Release
3. Follow through

Place Kicking

1. Head-position
2. Approach
3. Non-kicking foot
4. Follow through

Key Factor Chart continued

Fielding Kicks

1. Arms out
2. Trap the ball
3. Protect the ball

Tackling

1. Head position
2. Shoulder contact
3. Leg drive
4. Arm grip

Examples of Practicing Skills

Game skills may be classified as open skills, or closed skills. Open skills are those, that are performed in a dynamic environment where skill execution is subject to change, for example, an attacker initiating one skill pattern and then changing in reaction to defensive actions. The majority of rugby skills are open skills. Closed skills are those which are performed in a controlled environment. Goal kicking is an example of what is largely a closed skill in that the skill execution is not substantially subject to environmental influence.

When coaching open skills, any practice drill adopted should involve a lot of repetition and the ability to vary the pressure on the players performing the drill. Initially, players should be asked to become familiar with the techniques in a low-pressure environment. Gradually the pressure on the performers can be increased by restricting the time and space, and by providing opposition. The skill is not fully acquired until a decision-making ingredient is added and the player has to exercise a choice of what skill, when and where. Numerous publications have examples of drills suitable for developing skills. It is important that the coach selects drills that are appropriate for the age and state of rugby development of the players. It is better for a coach to select a small number of drills designed to achieve specific goals and to repeat them than to work through a lot of drills in any one session. In particular, the introduction of new and unfamiliar drills can be time consuming. A good drill which permits variations in pressure, close supervision and correction of errors, and an element of competition will keep a group working happily and productively for a long time.

Introducing Ball Skills**Initial Exploration Drills**

- Standing in a circle, hand a number of balls around the circle. At the end of a given period of time ask who hasn't dropped any. Stress **handing** the ball, then turning with hands ready for the next ball.
- Same as point 1 with only two balls. Start one around the circle and follow it with the second. See if the second can catch up with the first before it gets back to the starting point.
- Stand in a circle and divide it in half with an equal number of players in each group. The coach starts the game by handing one ball to a member of each team. Players pass the ball quickly around their half of the circle to the last player of the group, the captain. On completion the ball is raised overhead. First see which group can pass without error and then see which can pass the fastest.
- Overhead Relay. Line up in file formation. Pass the ball overhead to each player until the ball reaches the end of the line. The last player carries the ball to the head of the line and play continues until all the players have had a turn. Each participant must handle the ball and it cannot be thrown. If dropped the ball is started from the place at which it was dropped.
 - a) See which group can pass the ball with the fewest errors.
 - b) See which group can pass it the fastest and finish first.
- Under Relay. This time hand the ball back between the legs.
- Over-Under Relay. The first player passes the ball overhead, second player hands the ball back between the legs. Continue to alternate the pattern, always starting the ball overhead at the head of the line.

Individual Participation

After the previous involvement the beginners are now ready to explore possibilities for activity as an individual, each having their own ball.

- Begin by simply tossing the ball up and catching it, gradually throwing it higher. Make them rub the padded part of the fingers to get a 'feel' of the part used in catching the ball.
- Throw the ball up and clap hands as many times as possible making sure to catch it 'with the fingers'.
- Reach back between the legs and throw the ball overhead before catching it.
- Bounce the ball three times while in a sitting position with feet astride. Progress to a kneeling position and then finally to the standing position. This exercise promotes better control, tracking ability, hand-eye coordination, understanding of force variations and balance in general.
- The above bouncing exercise can be developed by repeating the routine on the right side then the left side. This brings body rotation plus an awareness of space.
- In a standing position see how many consecutive bounces can be made.
- After every three consecutive bounces throw alternate legs over the ball.
- Roll the ball out, runout, and field your own ball.
- Roll, toss or throw the ball at a target.
- Keep the ball circling around the body from one hand to the other touching the body all the way and then do the same without letting it touch the body.
- Hold the ball in one hand out to the side. Throw it over the head and catch it on the other side with the other hand. Repeat back to the opposite side.
- Hold the ball between the heels, flick it up and catch it.
- Invite the player to do other tricks with the ball.

Group Learning Activities

Further learning takes place when a player works with another player or a small group of players.

- Pass the ball to a partner with stress on the 'push' of the passer and the 'pull' of the receiver. Count the number of catches made without a miss.
- To develop an awareness of back space, turn your back on your partner and toss the ball back overhead.
- Throw the ball up and catch, then throw it to the partner.
- Partner passes the ball while the receiver claps the hands as many times as possible before catching it.
- Starting close together exchange passes taking one step backward with each successful catch.
- One player passes the ball while the partner makes a target that can be a circle with both hands or on either side with one hand.
- To develop wrist action, pass the ball under one leg.

The Basic Pass and Drills

Transferring the ball from A to B is not difficult in technique but being able to do it **accurately** and **quickly under pressure** requires quite a high level of skill.

- Throw a very hard pass at the player. The player will have difficulty catching it and even greater difficulty transferring it on quickly.
- This time throw the pass **for** the player instead of **at** the player and then have the ball transferred to another player. It can readily be seen that transfer speed is more closely related to speed of hands than to the speed of the ball.
- Repeat the above action and reinforce the message. The two points to emphasise are:
 - Throw the pass sympathetically so that it is easy to catch by a relaxed catcher.
 - Develop the ability to **transfer quickly** as opposed to throwing hard passes.”

Teaching Tackling – The Front on Tackle.

A high priority with all coaches should be making sure that all players are able to execute a front on tackle. Tackling must be taught as a leg-based activity, although the initial contact is with the upper body. We will divide tackling into two skills:

- Getting into position to make the tackle or ‘tracking’.
- The tackle.

Getting into Position to Make the Tackle or Tracking

Unless a player is positioned correctly the tackle has little chance of success and may be a dangerous exercise. The key factors are:

- Take the space away from the attacker with some quick steps forward towards the inside shoulder. This eliminates one side as an effective attacking option and creates a slightly side on situation.
- Slow down and stabilise by widening the foot base.
- Change direction slightly and drive towards the ball carrier.
- With the final step, place one foot near to the player to be tackled and drop the centre of gravity by bending the knees. Most people teaching tackling today recommend that if the left foot is forward contact should be made with the right shoulder and the rear foot will provide drive. Similarly if the right foot is forward then the contact is made with the left shoulder. Because the shoulder used determines head position if a player is approaching to the left to make the tackle it should be right foot/ left shoulder and if the player is approaching to the right, it should be left foot/ right shoulder with the final approach.

Coaching Cues

Players often need cues to help them remember sequences. One set of cues to assist the approach to a tackle is:

Action	Cue
Take the space away by running hard at the attacker.	<i>Fast feet.</i>
Slow down, broaden the base and change direction.	<i>Paddle.</i>
Step towards the attacker and drop the centre of gravity.	<i>Step and dip.</i>

Introductory Exercise

Mark a 10m x 5m grid. Place a ball carrier at one end of the grid one metre to the side of a corner position. Place a defender at the other end on the corner position. At a signal both players move. The attacker is trying to score a try at the other end of the grid; the defender is trying to control the attacker and to make a two-handed tag on the hips before a try is scored. Unless defenders can get both hands on the attacker they will not be in a position to make the tackle.

After a number of turns using approaches from both the left and the right the roles are reversed. At first the exercise should be carried out at a slow pace to ensure that the defender understands what is required. Once the players acquire the technique an element of competition can be introduced with the defender being awarded points for making a tag. In order to emphasise the importance of making the tackle as far forward as possible the grid can be divided across the middle. The defender is awarded one point for a tag on the defender's end of the grid and two points for making a tag in the attacker's end of the grid.

The Tackle

The procedure recommended under covers all of the fundamental elements of making a tackle safely. The amount of time that a coach will spend on each exercise will depend on the level of development of the players.

Exercise 1. To Ensure Safe Shoulder and Head Position

Tacklers are placed on their knees. Ball carriers adopt a position three to four metres in front of the tackler and one metre to the side. The ball carriers will move at a fast walk towards the tacklers. If the ball carriers are approaching from the right of the tacklers they will move to the left shoulder of the tacklers. The tacklers adopt a raised arm or hook position with the elbow in front of the shoulder. As the ball carriers arrive at the hook the tacklers place their heads on the ball carrier's hip. The ball carriers do not continue forward movement but stop. The tacklers must make contact at thigh level, well below the centre of gravity of the ball carrier. The exercise is repeated using approaches from both the left and the right.

Coaching Cues

All of our exercises in front on tackles rely on the tackler placing themselves at an angle of between 15° and 30° to the running line of the ball carrier. It is important that in this drill the ball carrier approaches from a similar angle.

Exercise 2. Use of the Arms to Assist with the Tackle

This is a similar exercise to the one above, except that the tackler does not form a hook with the arm in advance but brings both arms up as the ball carrier approaches and squeezes them together in a firm grip around the ball carrier's thighs.

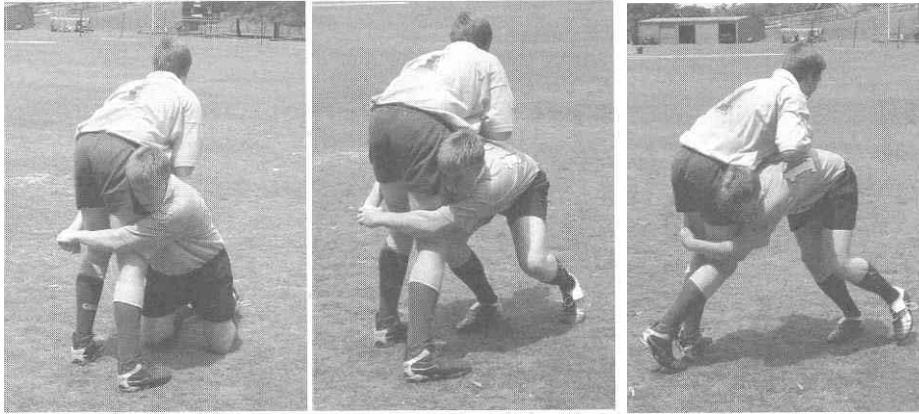
Exercise 3. Use of the Legs

Commence with a similar position but with the kneeling player having one foot forward and on the ground. If the ball carrier approaches the right shoulder the left foot should be forward. The tackler places a foot towards the ball carrier and drives forward, placing the head on the hip and securing a firm grip with both arms. The ball carrier continues forward movement and the tackler completes the tackle. The leg drive is made easier if players are encouraged to bend their knees as they step. A player without a bend at the knees cannot use legs to drive through the tackle.

Coaching Cues

Tackling is a leg-based activity and the force generated by the legs will follow the direction of the foot. It is important that the front foot points towards the ball carrier.

In the interests of safety and transfer of the leg power from the tackler to the ball carrier, the tackler must keep the chin up and eyes on the target area at all times.



Exercise 4. Use of the Legs and Timing

Starting position for the ball carriers is the same, but they will be required to run towards the tackler. The tackler commences on the balls of their feet with knees bent and is required to time the tackle to the arrival of the ball carrier. The sequence will be step, dip, and drive to complete the tackle.

Coaching Cues

Try to encourage the players to make the tackle in front of them rather than let the ball carrier come to them.

Make sure that the tackler 'dips' or lowers their centre of gravity before driving into the tackle.

The above drills will ensure that players understand safe techniques of tackling however they are not enough to ensure that players can make a tackle in a match. In order to build up to a tackle we have presented a number of closed skills, but tackling in a match is very much an open skill. It is therefore necessary to build on these drills with a number of additional exercises involving decision-making, pressure of time and opposition, and competition. Until players have become competent at performing on field tackles the coaching process is not complete.

CHAPTER V.

Miscellaneous Topics

The Rugby Pathway

Step One: Under 7 and 8 “Walla Rugby”

In refining the traditional approach to Rugby, the size of the football and playing field have been modified to suit the young player. The number of players on each team has also been reduced to ensure that young players have every opportunity to develop their skills and enjoy success.

The Main Features:

1. **Playing Area:** Maximum 70m x 35m (across full field from 5m to 40m line)
Note: 70m x 22m – across one quarter field is also acceptable.
2. **Team Size:** Ten (10) player per standard team.
3. **Ball Size:** Size 3 (Walla Rugby) Football recommended for this age group.
4. **Playing Time:** Two x 15 minute halves.
5. **Scoring:** A try is worth 5 points. No goal kicking at this age level.
6. **Kick Off:** Must travel 5 metres towards opponent’s goal line.
7. **Kicking in General Play:** No kicking in general play is allowed.
8. **Drop Outs:** Taken from the line 15m out from the goal line.
9. **Fair Catch:** There is no fair catch “Mark” provision at this age level.
10. **Penalty Kick:** The “Tap Kick” is the only option for a team receiving a penalty.
Defending team must stand back 5m towards their own goal line.
11. **Walla Tag:** To halt the progress of the ball carrier a defending player must contact the ball carrier with two hands (simultaneously) below waist height.
Once tagged the ball carrier has two options:
 1. Pass the ball to a team mate immediately or
 2. Set up for a Ball Take.
12. **Scrum:** Three-player scrum with all three in the front row.
There is no pushing in a Walla scrum.
Only a hooker may strike for the ball.
13. **Lineout:** Maximum four player lineout.
Once caught by a player in the line no other player may challenge for a ball before it is transferred to the scrum half.
The ball is thrown into the line standing 3 metres from touch.

Backlines back five metres from the line of touch.

14. **Advantage:** referees should play the Advantage Law generously to ensure a free-flowing game.
15. **Off-side:** There is no off-side in general play.
Off-side line exists for Scrum, Lineout and Ball-Take situations (see relevant sections).
16. **Finals Series:** No finals, no competition ladder and no premiership awarded at this age level.

Step Two: Under 9 and 10 “Mini Rugby”

Mini Rugby introduces young players to the contact elements of tackle, continuity, ruck and maul. Mini Rugby continues the theme of free-flowing running and passing rugby action.

The Main Features:

- 1) **Playing Area:** Maximum 70m x 50m (across half a standard full field)
Note: 70m x 35m – is also acceptable.
- 2) **Team Size:** Ten (10) players per standard team.
- 3) **Ball Size:** Size 3 (Mini Rugby) Football recommended for this age group.
- 4) **Playing Time:** Two x 20 minute halves.
- 5) **Scoring:**
A try - 5 points
A goal kicked after a try - 2 points
(Taken from in front of the posts – if goal posts available)
(There are no penalty or dropped goal at this level.)
- 6) **Kick-off:** Must travel 10 metres towards the opponents’ goal line.
(Re-kick for failed kick-off.)
- 7) **Kicking in General Play:** kicking in general play is allowed **but** should be discouraged at this age level.
- 8) **Drop-outs:** Taken from the line 15m out from the goal line. (Re-kick for failed drop out).
- 9) **Fair Catch:** There is no Fair-Catch “Mark” provision at this age level.
- 10) **Penalty Kick:** The Tap Kick, kick for touch or kick for territory are the only options for the team receiving a penalty.
(Penalty kicks for goal are not permitted at this age level.)
Defending team must stand back 10m towards their own goal line, or goal line, whichever is nearer.
- 11) **Tackle:** A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is brought to ground and held by an opponent. This includes being on one knee, sitting on the ground or being on another player on the ground.
Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately – place, push or pass the ball.
No defending player may prevent the ball carrier from playing the ball.

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After a tackle players must be on their feet when they play the ball.

- 12) Scrum:** Five player scrum with three in the front row and two in the second row.
There is no pushing in a Mini Rugby Scrum.
Only the hooker may strike for the ball.
- 13) Ruck:** If the ball in a ruck becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession at the commencement of the ruck.
- 14) Maul:** If the ball in a maul becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession at the commencement of the maul.
- 15) Lineout:** Maximum four player lineout.
Once caught by a player in the line no other player may challenge for the ball until it has been transferred to the scrum half.
Backlines back 5 metres from the line of touch.
- 16) Advantage:** Referees should play the Advantage Law generously to ensure a free flowing game.
- 17) Off-Side:** Players are off-side in general play if they were in front of their team mate who last played the ball.
Off-side lines exist for Scrum, Lineout, Ruck and Maul situations.
- 18) Finals Series:** No finals series but premierships awarded for “First Past the Post” at this age level.

Step Three: Under 11 and 12 “Midi Rugby”

Midi Rugby is a twelve-a-side stepping stone to the full game. Midi Rugby utilises the ARU Under 19 Laws with modifications associated with football, playing field and team size.

Main Features:

- 1) Playing Area:** Maximum 75m x 60m (3/4 full pitch in length x width of pitch to 5m lines).
Note: 70m x 50m – across standard pitch is also acceptable and may be more practical.
- 2) Team Size:** Twelve (12) players per standard team.
- 3) Ball Size:** Size 4 (Wallaby Junior) Football recommended for this age group.
- 4) Playing Time:** Two x 20 minute halves.
- 5) Scoring:**
- | | |
|--|----------|
| A try | 5 points |
| A goal scored after a try | 2 points |
| A goal from a penalty kick | 3 points |
| A dropped goal
(if goal post available) | 3 points |

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- 6) Kick-Off:** Must travel 10 metres towards the opponent's goal line. (Re-kick for failed drop-out).
- 7) Drop-Outs:** Taken from the line 15m out from the goal line. (Re-kick for failed drop-outs).
- 8) Fair Catch:** The Fair Catch "Mark" provision is available at this age level.
- 9) Penalty Kick:** the Tap Kick, kick for touch, kick for territory and kick for goal are the available options for a team receiving a penalty.
- Defending team must stand back 10m towards their own goal line, or behind the goal line, whichever is nearer.
- 10) Free Kick:** Generally awarded for technical infringements.
- A goal cannot be scored directly or indirectly from a free kick.
- Ground is not gained from kicking a free kick out on the full.
- 11) Tackle:** A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is brought to the ground and held by an opponent. This includes being on one knee, sitting on the ground or being on another player on the ground.
- Once tackled the ball carrier must immediately – place, push or pass the ball.
- After a tackle players must be on their feet when they play the ball.
- 12) Scrum:** Six-player scrums with three in the front row, two in the second row and a No. 8.
- There is no wheeling, popping or collapsing permitted in a Midi Rugby scrum.
- Scrum may not push their opposition more than 1.5 metres.
- The hooker must strike for the ball.
- 13) Ruck:** If the ball in the ruck becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession at the commencement of the ruck.
- 14) Maul:** If the ball in a maul becomes unplayable the scrum feed will be awarded to the team NOT in possession of the ball at the commencement of the maul.
- 15) Advantage:** Referees should play the Advantage Law generously to ensure a free flowing game.
- 16) Off-side:** Players are off-side in general play if they were in front of their team mate who last played the ball.
- Off-side lines exist for Scrum, Lineout, Ruck and Maul situations.
- 17) Finals Series:** No finals series but premierships awarded for "First Past the Post" at this age level.

ARU Safety Directives

For Players, Coaches, Administrators and Match Officials

[Note: the information contained in this section is distributed annually to all clubs and schools in the form of a wall chart. It is to be displayed in a prominent position in order that all participants in the game may be familiar with its contents.]

The Australian Rugby Union (ARU) and the International Rugby Board (IRB) encourages Clubs and Schools to take recommended measures to ensure that the game is both safe and enjoyable to play. Following are directives and recommendations in the interest of safety.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PLAYER CARE

The following are the minimum recommended requirements for Unions and Clubs and it is a directive of this union that each be closely observed.

Each Union or Club should have a suitably trained person in attendance at each match.

At least one stretcher is required that is suitable for the transfer of suspected spinal injuries, preferably a scoop stretcher. A set of cervical collars of varying sizes must also be available.

Each Union or Club should have access to a medical room, which is regularly cleaned, equipped with adequate lighting (angle poise light), running water, first aid equipment and a telephone.

A sign should be erected noting the emergency telephone numbers of your Union or Club Doctor, ambulance and nearest hospital.

Each Union or Club Medical Officer should ensure that appropriate items of first aid equipment are available.

Your Union or Club is encouraged to provide appropriate safety instruction for match officials, coaches, administrators and first aid attendants.

Further details on medical requirements for player care can be found at the Australian Rugby Union web site www.rugby.com.au

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Players should be selected for positions appropriate to their physical build and stature. Players should be physically fit to play rugby when selected and those unfit should not be selected.

All players should be encouraged to carry out special exercises that strengthen their necks, limbs and body. This is especially applicable to those in the scrummage who should build their neck and back muscles as well as upper body strength. Players should not be selected to play in the front row unless they have recent experience or have been coached and supervised in a training environment.

ALL players are to be in-serviced in the ARU's Smart Rugby program by their team coach or Smart Rugby coordinator. Smart Rugby is designed to inform coaches of best practice techniques, to minimise the risk of injury to players, and increase the level of confidence that participants and families can gain from their association with the game. The three main areas that Smart Rugby focuses on are the Tackle, the Scrum and Preparation for Contact.

Coaching manuals are available which provide exercises specific to those requirements. This directive has particular relevance to those participating at or below U19 level.

Concussion

Attention is drawn to Regulation 10 of the IRB

10.1 A player who has suffered concussion shall not participate in any Match or training session for a minimum period of three weeks from the time of injury, and may only do so when symptom free and declared

fit after a proper medical examination. Such declaration must be recorded in a written report by the person who carried out the assessment of the player.

10.2 Subject to clause 10.3 below, the three week period may be reduced only if the player is symptom free and declared fit to play after an appropriate assessment by a properly qualified and recognised neurological specialist. Such declaration must be recorded in a written report prepared by the properly qualified and recognised neurological specialist who carried out the assessment of the player.

10.3 In age grade rugby, the three week minimum period shall be mandatory.

“Guidelines and Procedures for the Management of Concussion” as approved by the IRB, are separately available from your controlling Union. It is the responsibility of the coaches and club administrators, in conjunction with medical practitioners, to ensure that these requirements are closely observed.

If referees are doubtful of the ability of a player to continue in a game they should exercise their prerogative under **Law 3.8** which requires that player to leave the field.

Management of Concussion.

Concussion Guidelines are regularly reviewed. The following guidelines for the management of concussion were adopted, as guided by the IRB.

Please note that it is the directive of this Union that the procedures as outlined be strictly observed.

Concussion occurs when, after a blow to the head, there is brain injury with some immediate disturbance to cerebral function.

Signs and Symptoms include:

- **VOMITING**
- **HEADACHE**
- **LOSS OF MEMORY**
- **DOUBLE OF BLURRED VISION**
- **GIDDINESS OR UNSTEADINESS**
- **CONFUSION OF DISORIENTATION**
- **LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

Being unaware of what happened, even for a few moments at the time of injury, is the most consistent sign that a player is or has been concussed.

A player showing any of these signs or symptoms should be removed from the field and referred for medical attention.

Prolonged loss of consciousness as a result of a blow to the head may be indicative of a more serious injury, so the player should be immediately referred to a hospital for further attention.

With a brief loss of consciousness, the player should be removed from the game for immediate medical assessment.

Loss of consciousness for a period exceeding 4 or 5 minutes as a result of a blow to the head may be indicative of a more serious injury, so the player should be immediately referred to a hospital for further attention.

All concussion episodes should be reviewed by a medical practitioner.

WARNING

Complications, potentially serious, may occur within 24 hours after apparent recovery or the onset of symptoms such as headaches, increasing drowsiness, blurred vision and vomiting, require immediate medical assessment.

Mouth Guard

Players should be encouraged to wear a specially made and fitted mouth guard during both matches and training sessions.

Re-Hydration

Coaches should ensure that an adequate supply of fluid, preferably water, is consumed by players before, during and after training sessions and the match, so that appropriate levels of hydration are maintained.

Treatment of Injured Players who are Bleeding

A player who has an open or bleeding wound must leave the playing area until such time as the bleeding is controlled and the wound is covered or dressed. Such a player may be replaced on a temporary basis but if unable to resume playing within 15 minutes the replacement becomes permanent.

Front Row Replacement

In the event of the front row forward being ordered off, or temporarily suspended, the referee will confer with the captain of the player's team to determine whether another player is suitably trained/experienced to take their position; if not the captain shall nominate one other forward to leave the playing area and the referee will permit a substitute front row forward to replace that player.

This substitution may take immediately prior to the next scrum, or after another player has been tried to the front row. In U19 matches the replacement of players ordered off or temporarily suspended, should occur at the time of ordering off or temporary suspension.

When no other front row forwards are available due to a sequence of players ordered off or injured or both, the game will continue with non-contested scrummages defined as:

A normal scrum except: there is no contest for the ball, neither team is permitted to push, the team putting it in must win, and the referee must take additional care to ensure a soft engagement.

ELIMINATION OF ILLEGAL AND FOUL PLAY

Pile Up, Foul Play and Retaliation

Correct body position in Scrummage, Ruck and Maul is critical.

Players should join in a safe manner, ensuring that their head and shoulders are above the hips at all times.

The IRB has reiterated its position that the game can only be played by players who are on their feet. Referees are directed to be strict with players not observing this requirement.

Referees are also reminded of the recommendation relating to body position in scrummage, ruck and maul and to be particularly harsh when dealing with players who engage in foul play or engage in any form of retaliation.

Punch or Stomp Send Offs

For all competitions U19 and downwards it is mandatory for referees to send off players who punch or stomp opponents. The ARU believes this is an appropriate measure to assist elimination/reduction of foul play and to send a clear message to the community that Rugby is serious about countering this sort of behaviour.

Team Selection

Coaches are requested not to select players who have been found guilty of repeated illegal or foul play. Touch judges shall report incidents of foul play under Law 10.4

Flying Wedge or Cavalry Charge

The formations generally described, as the “flying wedge” and “cavalry charge” are to be regarded as dangerous play and accordingly shall be penalised under Law 10.4

Judiciary Committees

Judiciary committees have been requested to take stern action with players found guilty of illegal or foul play.

Tackling

Statistics indicate that the majority of serious injuries are now occurring during or consequent to the tackle, many of the serious injuries being to the tackler through hitting an opponent headfirst.

Correct head positioning is an essential component of a safe tackle.

Illegal and dangerous tackling should be discouraged, such as crash tackling the defenceless, tackling player's ball, early, late, 'stiff' arm tackling and tackling around the head and neck.

Referees are to be particularly severe in dealing with offenders.

Scrummaging

Scrum Engagement Sequence (All levels 19 years and over)

The 'phased sequence of engagement' is to be strictly observed and it has been directed that referees verbally manage each step in sequence **CROUCH** and **HOLD** and then **ENGAGE** when both front rows are ready.

Front row players must adopt the **CROUCH** position before the engagement. Head and shoulders must remain above the level of the hips with knees bent sufficiently to make a simple forward movement into engagement,

Players should keep their chin up and head straight in order to maintain the normal side and safe alignment of the cervical spine.

The **HOLD** then is to give the players time to see that this safe alignment has been made before they **ENGAGE**.

Scrum Engagement Sequence (Under 19)

All levels Under 19 will continue to observe the sequence:

Front row players must adopt the **CROUCH** position before the engagement. Head and shoulders must remain above the level of the hips with knees bent sufficiently to make a simple forward movement into engagement.

Players should keep their chin up and head straight in order to maintain the normal and safe alignment of the cervical spine.

CROUCH-TOUCH-HOLD-ENGAGE

Following the **CROUCH** a light **TOUCH** on the upper arm will establish a safe distance for engagement. **HOLD** means to **pause** prior to the **ENGAGE** call from the referee, **NOT** to hold or grip the jersey of your opposition. The referee will manage the entire sequence of events in the engagement process.

Scrummage Collapse

In the event of a scrummage collapse the referee must whistle immediately so that players stop pushing.

Mayday Call

The "MAYDAY" call is a safety technique put into operation when a scrum is considered by a player to be collapsing, or has collapsed, or when a player believes that he/she is in a potentially dangerous position.

It was considered necessary to have a recognised call Australia wide which would allow people to have an understanding of what actions they should take when one of the above mentioned situations occurs in a scrum.

The following is a description of the process to be followed by players, when the "Mayday" call is heard. Referees should be acutely aware of the process, as they may well be the person who can talk the players through the correct disengagement sequence.

- The player makes a loud call, "MAYDAY!"

An injured player should not be moved after the "Mayday" call. All other players should follow the sequence below:

- The referee should blow the whistle.
- The back five should immediately stop pushing and release pressure on the front row.
- Everybody in the scrum sinks to their knees in a controlled manner. At the same time players do what is called a 'faceplant'. Keeping their chin forward and their face pointing straight ahead, they sink to the ground face first. Nobody should turn their head to the side, as this is potentially dangerous.
- All players remain bound except for the front row props, who release their grip on the opposition prop only.
- The referee will ascertain which player called mayday by asking questions of the players on the ground.
- The scrum is then disassembled from the back. The referee will manage the process. First the opposition will move away, then the backrow, followed by the locks of the scrum that called 'mayday'. Considerable care should be taken to ascertain if the front row members are injured before they disengage from their binds.
- Any player who is suspected of being seriously injured must not be moved until medical attention arrives. Any other player bound to a suspected injured player should remain where they are until a medical attendant arrives.

If the Mayday procedure is applied, force will immediately be relieved from the player's neck and even if the opposition continues to push, they will slide over the top of the collapsed scrum. It should be emphasised that a mayday procedure cannot be implemented unless all players have both feet behind their hips. This is a crucial safety requirement for scrummaging.

Management of Injuries

General Recommendations

Prompt medical advice (usually at Emergency and Accident Department of a local hospital) should be obtained if:

1. Unconsciousness, persistent headache, vomiting or nausea occurs after a blow to the head, or a concussion injury.

2. Breathing difficulties occur after an injury to the head, neck or chest.
3. Severe pains in the neck occur, particularly if radiating to the arms.
4. Abdominal pain occurs, particularly if associated with shoulder tip pain.
5. Blood is present in the urine.
6. An eye injury occurs.
7. If a player collapses separate to any trauma.
8. There is any concern over a player's injury or health following training or a match.

Specific Recommendations.

If a tooth is knocked out

It should be replaced immediately in its socket (if dirty, wash it first with milk if available) and mould aluminium foil over the replaced tooth and its adjacent teeth. The player should then seek immediate dental advice.

If a fracture or dislocation is suspected

The injured limb should be supported, ideally with a splint while the player is lifted into a stretcher or helped from the field.

X-rays to confirm the diagnosis (or exclude injury) are essential and should be performed as soon as possible.

If the fracture area is found to be compound (bony fragments protruding through the skin) the area should be covered with a clean towel while waiting for the ambulance.

The player should not consume food or drink until cleared by a doctor (in case a general anaesthetic is required.)

If the player is unconscious

Always suspect an associated spinal fracture.

If respiratory arrest occurs, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) should be commenced.

RING THE AMBULANCE

Determine the manner in which it happened and determine if there is sensory or power loss.

If there is no one experienced in the management of this problem

The **PLAYER SHOULD NOT BE MOVED** but given emotional support while awaiting the ambulance.

Ensure the player is sufficiently warm.

Club Responsibility

Send a team or club official with the ambulance and notify parents/spouse.

Call the **ARU Serious Injury Hotline on 1800 036 156**

Complete the Serious Injury Incident Report available from your club administrator or at www.rugby.com.au

Fax the Serious Injury Incident Report to the ARU on (02) 8354 3399

The ARU, in conjunction with the club, will proceed with the Serious Injury Management Protocol.

The importance of these directives as safety factors within the game cannot be overstated!

The SmartRugby Program

The following statement is found at the beginning of the Rugby Law book “Rugby Union is a sport which involves contact. Any sport involving physical contact has inherent dangers.” Whilst acknowledging the realism in this statement, the ARU is determined to minimise the risk involved in the game of Rugby and to provide an enjoyable and injury free experience for participants. This will enhance the level of confidence that that players and their families can have in their association with the game.

A recent surveys into serious injuries identified certain activities within the game as having a higher risk associated with them than others. It also identified certain groups of players by position, experience and age, who were most likely to be at risk. As a result of this survey, a further report was commissioned to identify strategies to reduce the risk of injury associated with participation in Rugby. The Board of the ARU approved a program, called the SmartRugby Program, which is mandatory for all players to follow at the commencement of each season. The SmartRugby Program, which is part of the ARU’s risk management plan, includes the following elements:

1. A technical program for all players, which takes approximately two hours to complete, and which concentrates on the correct (safe) method of performing skills that have been identified as potentially high risk activities.
2. Additional technical tuition for groups that have been identified as at risk including players making the transition from U19 Law to Senior Law, and inexperienced players at any age.
3. Every club and school is required to nominate a person as SmartRugby Coordinator. The SmartRugby Coordinator is registered with the ARU and becomes the conduit for safety information between the ARU and the club or school.

Responsibilities of the SmartRugby Coordinator

- Coordinate the delivery of the basic technical program to all players in the club. This ensures that they are aware of recommended techniques for all aspects of contact. Ensure that the prescribed additional practice time is devoted to contact situations by players in transitional age groups, and inexperienced players of all ages. This may require careful monitoring of new players to the club and late starters to the season.
- Ensure that the ARU guidelines for safe match and practice environments are complied with, and that the ARU safety guidelines chart is displayed prominently.
- Notify the ARU when the club has complied fully with these requirements. The ARU will then issue a certificate to the organisation indicating that it is SmartRugby compliant.
- In addition to this annual program the SmartRugby coordinator should ensure that the club continues to follow safe practices at all times during the season. This may include observation of the conduct of practice sessions and ensuring that experience and physique are taken into account when selecting players to play in the front row.

The SmartRugby coordinator is not required to personally complete any of the above roles. In a large club the responsibility for technical program delivery will be delegated to the team coaches, and responsibility for field safety will be delegated to others. The coordinators role is essentially to remind the organisation of minimum requirements to satisfy the duty of care due to participants in the game, and to advise the ARU when the mandatory requirements have been complied with. The SmartRugby coordinator should be an influential member of the club, possessing considerable commonsense and with a sound background in the game of Rugby.

Delivery Options – SmartRugby Technical Program

Compliance with the SmartRugby Technical Program requires all players to be exposed annually to recommended best practice in a variety of contact situations. These practices are designed to protect participants from injury and discomfort, and to maximise their enjoyment of the game. The material covered in the SmartRugby Technical Program is contained in the ARU SmartRugby booklet.

The SmartRugby Program is to be delivered at each club or school by the coaches. The ARU deliver a 'Train the Trainers Course' in a single two hour unit, with specific drills and a uniform presentation order and requires each club or school to have a representative attend a session convenient to them. The SmartRugby Program recommendations represent the minimum time and subject material that must be covered before players are exposed to match situations.

Clubs are required to cover the same content, however considerable flexibility in presentation is available to clubs. Coaches may decide which of the contact skills to place greatest emphasis on, and also which practice drills to use, based on an assessment of the players that they have. These decisions will be influenced by the level of experience and the ability of their players. The coach of a talented 1st Grade team may opt to spend 20% of the time on the most basic concepts of contact, and 80% on more advanced contact drills. The coach of a less talented lower grade team may devote 80% of the time to basic concepts, and only a small proportion on more advanced drills. Common sense will determine what is required.

Coaches can also decide whether to opt for one two hour session dealing with the principles of contact, or to spread the required practice over a number of sessions. Essentially, any coach who is fulfilling his responsibilities to the players will have no difficulty in complying with the SmartRugby requirements however it will encourage them to review their practices.

SmartRugby Presentation Content

Every club and school is required to have at least one representative attend a SmartRugby presentation each year. The presentation will vary from time to time depending on the audience and also on the injury record in Australian Rugby. The current presentation is designed to last approximately two hours and contains the following elements:

Introduction

- The Serious Injury Survey – findings and recommendations
- Risk Management Plan – decision of the ARU board
- Risk Management Strategies, collectively called the Smart Rugby Program
- Smart Rugby Components – Mandatory Annual Technical Program for players
 - Provision of safe practice and playing environment
 - Coach and referee education program
 - Serious incident management procedures
 - Protective equipment qualities particularly mouthguards and headgear
- Smart Rugby Coordinator – role within the club
 - liaison with ARU and local unions
 - responsibilities
- Delivery options for technical program
 - Content options
 - Method options

Technical Program

- Not designed as a comprehensive technical explanation of any of the areas of contact, but emphasis placed on safety in contact.
- Emphasis in this presentation will be on basic aspects of contact.
- The time devoted reflects the relative risk involved with each area.
- In all cases contact will be presented as a leg-based activity.

- Common body shape for all contact situations.

a) Stability

Nature and importance of.

The relationship between stability & power.

- Practice drills. 1 v 1 –
- Hands on shoulders, attempt to destabilise.
 - Free hands, attempt to slap opponent's knees.
 - Shoulder grips, attempt to slap opponent's knees.
 - Wrist grip, ball, use opposition as a brace.
 - As above, but change hands each 5 seconds.
 - Player on all fours, resist being turned on back.
 - Player flat on ground, prevent from getting to feet.

Summary: fun activities, good for warmup, improves strength & fitness.

b) Tackle

Interested in both the safety of the ball carrier and the tackler.

- Preliminary activity based on
- footwork and positioning
 - two-handed tag
- Safety for ball carrier based on
- footwork
 - finding space
 - dropping the centre of gravity
 - falling properly with two hands on ball, rolling action and no hands out.
- Safety for the tackler based on
- positioning footwork
 - choice of target area
 - leg, shoulder relationship
 - use of arms & head position

Note: the modern game is much more front on than side on. Tacklers must try to position the ball carrier so that they are at an angle of between 15° and 45° when making contact.

- Defensive tackle drills, 1 v 1
- arm hook / head position
 - above plus leg action / two arms
 - above plus start on haunches

When competent progress to real situations, 1 v 1, 2 v 3, 3 v 5, etc.

Note: mention the limitation of fixed defenders and of tackle bags.

- Offensive tackle drills, 1 v 1
- approach at angle
 - target lower chest
 - leg positioning and drive
 - must use arms
- Variation with leg lift
- must win contact to succeed
 - lift out, not up

Coaching hints:

Attacker must run upright. Use tackle suits &/or shields to encourage confidence.

Level I Coaching Manual

Each coach &/or player should be encouraged to use cue words to ensure proper performance eg. quick 3, paddle, skip and dip

c) Scrum

Again, the emphasis will be on individual body shape.

From either the photograph in the SmartRugby booklet or from a suitable demonstrator, explain the correct positioning of:

- Feet
- Knees
- Buttocks
- Back
- Neck and chin

Drills:

1 v 1 on knees. Grips, under and through, bear down, push.

1 v 1 on feet. Demonstration of weak position & strong position.

1 v 1 on feet. Movement whilst maintaining body shape – backwards, forwards, sideways, height adjustment.

2 v 2 ... as above.

3 v 3 ... etc. as above.

Building a scrum

Engagement procedures.

Mayday procedures

- Special needs for scrummaging
- ankle, hip & shoulder flexibility
 - selection based on physical suitability

d) Ruck and Maul

This year referees will require the tackler to roll away immediately the tackle has been completed, and the tackled player to play the ball immediately. The tackled player may not prevent an opposition player on his feet from winning the ball.

Demonstrations

- Position of the 1st supporter
- dangerous
 - safe

Clean out technique and permitted area

Note: refer to the section on tackle law in the Smart Rugby booklet.

Fuelling Up For Rugby

Off Season

1. Checklist for Off/Pre-Season Diet

- Make an early decision with your coach/fitness consultant as to whether you would benefit from weight loss or loss of body fat prior to the next season.
- Seek assistance from a qualified sports dietician in planning an individual dietary regimen to reach these goals – including practical shopping and cooking tips if appropriate.
- Ensure sufficient daily energy (kilojoules, carbohydrate and protein) intake to facilitate quality training, assist recovery, delay fatigue and reduce susceptibility to illness.
- Maintain adequate fluid intake – particularly in the warmer off/pre-season weather.
- Meals and snacks should be planned to suit individual training routines.

2. Avoid Weight & Body Fat Gain

Carrying extra body fat will disadvantage any player. An over-fat athlete will have a decreased power-to-weight ratio, decreased endurance, strength, speed and agility – all factors which will influence performance.

The main causes of overweight are:

- Consuming excess kilojoules – particularly in the latter part of the day.
- Consuming excess fat, or alcohol and fat combined.
- Skipping meals – especially breakfast and lunch.
- Bingeing between meals or late at night.

The most effective way to lose weight or body fat is to:

- Aim for no more than 0.5 – 1 kg loss in body weight per week – a loss of lean muscle tissue may occur if weight loss is more rapid than this.
- Spread food intake over 5-6 small meals per day rather than 2-3 large ones.
- Eat enough to ensure adequate energy for training and adequate carbohydrate to maintain glycogen stores and satisfy your appetite.
- Decrease consumption of fats, excess refined sugars and alcohol – which provide the highest kilojoule content for the lowest nutrient value.
- Spread protein intake over the whole day – not all in 1 or 2 meals.
- Change poor eating habits such as eating when bored, stressed, depressed, celebrating or merely due to habit or social occasions.
- Allow planned “treats” to avoid any episodes of bingeing.
- Include extra “fat burning sessions” if necessary – consult your coach or conditioner.
- Monitor body fat levels regularly – not just your weight on the scales.

3. Tips for bulking up in the off season

The main reasons that some individuals find it difficult to gain a desired increase in muscle mass are:

- Insufficient energy intake.
- Inadequate number of meals and snacks during the course of the day.
- Excessive training used in other activities such as physical work or other sports/activities.
- Physical immaturity and adolescent growth 'spurts'.
- Inappropriate training practices.

Tips for "bulking up" include:

- Follow a well-planned resistance program.
- Get enough rest.
- Consume at least 5 or 6 meals a day and more kilojoules than you expend.
- Include small to moderate serves of protein at each meal to facilitate muscle maintenance and growth.
- On completing a resistance-training session, you should consume carbohydrate for immediate recovery, plus a source of protein within one hour. Protein will provide amino acids for growth and repair.
- Ensure that your diet is still relatively low in fat, so that you don't gain extra body fat (especially older players).
- High carbohydrate, but perhaps lower fibre, foods and drinks should be consumed with and in between meals.
- Sugars should be used sensibly to add extra kilojoules eg. In drinks, honey, jam.
- Extra kilojoules and protein can be added to drinks by mixing a couple of tablespoons of skim milk powder (very cheap), or some other protein powder or high energy drink (eg. Sustagen Sport). These can be flavoured by blending with fruit, yoghurt, icecream, honey, etc.
- Add extra snacks such as banana sandwiches, buns, muesli/breakfast/sports bars, dried fruit and nuts or extra milk drinks between meals and training sessions.
- Monitor body fat levels to ensure that gains in body weight are due to increases in lean muscle tissue rather than fat.
- Aim for an increase of 1-2 kilograms per month.

4. During the season

Tips for Match Preparation and Recovery

- Fuel up on carbohydrates on 2-3 days prior to each match. Try to spread your food and drinks over 5-6 meals/day.
- Reduce fat and protein intake therefore leaving more room for carbohydrates.
- Increase fluid intake – especially water, sports drinks, cordial and juices. As muscle stores glycogen they also store water.
- Avoid unnecessary extras such as high fat snacks and take away foods.

- Avoid alcohol during at least the 24-48 hours before a match.
- Eat a high carbohydrate meal before a match – for example:
 - pasta with a tomato-based or low fat source with a small amount of lean meat, chicken or fish added if desired.
 - Stir fry or Asian meal with lots of rice, noodles or couscous.
 - Small serve of very lean meat, chicken or fish with plenty of potatoes and vegetables/salad.
 - Add bread, a fruit-based dessert and plenty of fluids.
- Players who find it difficult to consume food on match days should try to include a supper of toast, pancakes, a reduced fat milk or “carbo-loading” drink the night before.
- Eat a suitable pre-match meal approximately 4-5 hours before the match. Easily digestible, low fibre carbohydrates and fluids are all that are normally required to comfortably satisfy hunger. Small snacks of fruit, bread, or carbohydrate and meal replacement drinks may be consumed up to 2 hours before play begins.
- Examples of suitable pre-match meals:
 - Cereal and low fat milk and fruit.
 - Break/toast/muffins/crumpets and jam, honey, bananas, spaghetti.
 - Pancakes with honey, jam and syrup.
 - Pasta or rice with low fat topping.
 - Large fruit salad and yoghurt.
 - Liquid meal replacements.
 - Drink water and/or sports drinks/carbo-loading drinks regularly and “prime” your stomach with 1-2 cups of fluid during the warm-ups. Ensure that your urine is dilute (ie is clear) prior to match.

Replace carbohydrate and fluid stores immediately with appropriate drinks and food. Good examples include sports drinks, cordials, non-cola soft drinks, fruits such as watermelon and pineapple, or a honey sandwich.

Shopping and Cooking Tips

Tip #1 Plan Time To Shop Well

- Organise regular shopping trips – if there is no food in the house you are unlikely to prepare healthy meals.
- Stock your pantry and freezer with foods that have a long shelf life.
- Plan to shop for perishable items once or twice a week eg fruit and vegetables.
- Shop from a list so that you spend time and money more efficiently – keep a checklist of items you run out of on the fridge or pantry door.
- When you are writing your shopping list think of the meals you are likely to make in the following week to make sure all the ingredients will be at home.
- Read the labels – especially look for lower fat content eg grams of fat per 100 grams – choose items that are <10% (the lower the better).

- Don't shop when you are hungry – you are more likely to be tempted by unnecessary items!

Sample shopping list – stocking up on good nutrition.

Long life storage in cupboard or pantry

Milk powder (skim)

Breakfast cereals, rolled oats

All varieties of pasta, vermicelli, noodles (Asian shops have a huge variety of noodles)

Rice – try different types – also most packet rice meals are low fat, like Maggi Rice'n more

Couscous

Low fat crispbreads, crackers, rice cakes, low fat pretzels and popcorn.

Taco shells (not corn chips, they are high in fat), pappadums (to microwave), grissin's (breadsticks)

Dried beans/lentils eg soup mix.

Canned beans

Canned fish and seafood (in water or brine)

Pasta sauces in jars, salsa or taco sauce.

Canned soups

Canned vegetables – corn, tomatoes, mushrooms

Canned fruit – in water or in its own juice is best

Tomato paste/puree (non added salt available)

Spreads – honey/peanut butter/jam/vegemite

Dried fruits/raw nuts

Suitable snack bars eg breakfast bars/muesli bars/popcorn bars/fruit bars

Potatoes, onions

Herbs, spices and condiments eg mustard, chutney, low oil salad dressing etc

Bottle of sauce or marinade to add flavour eg sweet chilli sauce, satay, soy, oyster, plum

Bottles of good oil eg olive, canola or Pure and Simple spray

Sports drinks

Freezer Storage

Bread rolls, pita bread, muffins, crumpets, pikelets, hotcakes

Pizza bases, large lebanese breads, lavash breads

Pre cooked rice, fresh pasta

Frozen vegetables – single types or mixed.

Reduced fat milk

Ice cream, frozen yoghurt, gelati or frozen fruche (try the lite or low fat types)

Meat, poultry and fish

Short Storage Perishables

Breads of all types

Reduced fat milk and yoghurts

Fresh fruit and fruit juices

Fresh vegetables

Meat, poultry and fish

Eggs

Reduced fat cheese, cottage, ricotta cheese, light Philadelphia cheese

Fresh pasta, noodles and sauces

Tip #2 Quick and Healthy Cooking Ideas

Grills and Barbeques with Vegies or Salads

- Choose lean trimmed meats, poultry, fish or seafood – and use minimal or no oil to cook – try “Pure an Simple” or an olive oil spray.
- Marinate to improve flavour with herbs, spices, garlic, honey, wine etc (or a bought marinade)
- Get ready made kebabs for a change from a “poultry shop” or butchers’ – under the grill or bbq
- Keep to a smaller serve of protein and increase carbohydrate intake with a large serve of potato (eg oven or microwave baked in their jackets, cut into wedges and cook on the BBQ using a small amount of oil spray), corn, rice, couscous or noodles.
- Frozen vegetables are fine – as long as you don’t overcook them – look for the mixed vegetable combos for variety.
- Make sure you include enough carbohydrates when serving salad by including some of the following wither hot or cold eg canned corn, pasta, couscous, noodle, potato, bean or rice salad with low fat dressings – otherwise you need to add bread to the meal.
- Include lots of colourful vegetables to provide good sources of vitamins and minerals – dark greens, orange and red types.

Pastas and Casseroles

- Make a sauce using a commercial pasta sauce, tinned or pureed tomatoes (add your own herbs and spices), or sometimes a can of soup is a useful start. You may use some of the “Chicken Tonight” or Uncle Ben’s jars that aren’t the creamy type. A couple of tablespoons of canned/bottled curry paste make a good start too.
- Add some protein in the form of chopped meat or chicken (eg low fat mince, sliced turkey or trimmed bacon, chicken pieces) canned fish, fresh or canned seafood, or beans (such as “Mexi” or kidney type) – you may need to cook the meat or chicken first.
- Add some sliced or chopped vegies – fresh, frozen or canned.
- Served over cooked pasta or as a filling for big jacket potatoes – remember to look for the variety if fresh, filled pastas such as tortellini and ravioli.

Australian Rugby Union

- Or serve as a chunky casserole with cooked rice, noodles or couscous.

Stir Fries

- Brown chunks of meat, poultry or seafood in a wok or pan using little or no oil. Use ginger/garlic etc to flavour or perhaps a curry paste or spice mix.
- Add vegetables cut into bite size pieces or frozen stir-fry combinations
- Add a commercial flavour sachet or sauce, or your own combinations of herbs and spices
- Add rice or noodles that have been cooked and drained or serve with couscous or rice on the side – try different types of rice eg brown, fragrant (the cooking instructions are on the pack and all may be cooked in a microwave). Many fresh noodles may be added just before serving.

Other Ideas

Homemade Pizza

Use a thick bread dough pizza base or Lebanese/pita breads

Spread with tomato paste, pizza or pasta sauce

Use low fat toppings such as lean meat, chicken, turkey, seafood or beans and vegies – perhaps pineapple too.

Sprinkle grated low fat cheese lightly over the top and bake or grill eg low fat mozzarella.

Homemade Nachos

Use homemade corn chips (pita bread cut in triangles and cooked in the oven with no oil for 5-10 minutes)

Use refried beans, mexibean and some lean meat. Cook with onion, garlic, chilli and any other vegetables.

Put the mixture over corn chips, top with a small amount of grated low fat cheese.

Serve with salsa and (if you must) extra light sour cream – or try with low fat natural yoghurt.

Hearty Soups

Use soup stock or tinned soup, add lots of vegetables (fresh, frozen, tinned), include potato/corn or legumes, add in noodles, pasta or rice and perhaps some cooked lean meat or chicken.

Noodle Omelette

Mix up a couple of eggs and low fat milk.

Add in herbs and some cooked noodles or rice.

Cook in pan using canola or olive spray to coat pan.

Top with some finely cut vegetables (onion, mushroom, capsicum, tomatoes) and low fat cheese.

Further Tips

- Look for low fat recipe books – especially those catering specifically to athletes eg “Survival for the Fittest – AIS Cookbook for Busy Athletes”
- Plan a “cook-a-thon” every now and then, on a day off or a weekend.
- Cook up bulk pasta sauces, healthy lasagne, curries, casseroles and freeze them to use when you are too busy to cook.
- Be careful of food labels, some products advertise as 95% fat free but they are still quite high in fat. Make sure you check the labels for 10g of fat per serve or less.
- If you are using frozen or other prepared meals. Add in extra vegetables (fresh, frozen, tinned). If there aren't many ‘carbs’ in the meal, add in potato/corn/legumes and have some bread.
- Try leaving the fatty spreads off breads/muffins/crumpets etc like chutneys, mustard, hommus or nothing at all. Otherside use a thin spread of the high fat options.
- Try using a small amount of water/wine/sherry for stir frys or frying vegetables/strips or lean meat/mince (would not work well with steaks).

High Energy Menu Plan

This is a menu plan for those with high energy requirements who are exercising or training regularly. The amounts to be eaten at each meal/snack will depend on your appetite, and whether you are attempting to maintain or gain weight.

Early Morning – (if you train before breakfast)

If possible eat some fruit or some bread and drink water, juice or a sports drink.

Breakfasts

Fruit juice

Large bowl of cereal eg porridge/oatmeal (cook in microwave)

Fresh, dried or tinned fruit

At least 1-2 slices of bread/toast, English muffins, crumpets, raisin bread with little or no marg/butter with spreads.

For a change remember pancakes with syrup and fruit

If you want a cooked breakfast sometimes try – poached/boiled/scrambled/”dry” fried eggs, baked beans, spaghetti, low fat cheese and tomato, occasionally grilled ham/bacon.

If you need to increase your weight or finding it difficult to maintain, add a high energy drink eg Sustagen Sport, Ensure, Endura Opti or other meal supplement powder added to reduced fat milk, plus flavouring and/or fruit eg banana, honey, yoghurt, milo – adding a few tablespoons of skim milk powder is a cheap way of doing it. For convenience you can buy ready made drinks such as Exceed Sports Meal Plus, Gatorpro, or Sustagen Tetra packs.

Morning Tea

Juices, milk drink or cordial plus a selection of high carbohydrate foods – fruit, sandwiches or rolls, fruit bun, bagel, cake or muffin, scones, pikelts, dried fruit or nuts, fruit yoghurt or ‘fruche’, muesli/breakfast/fruit or sports bar, crispbreads/ rice cakes and spreads, popcorn.

Lunches

2-3 sandwiches/rolls/pocket breads/bagels/focaccias/panninis with lean, cold meat, poultry, fish, seafood, egg, reduced fat cheese and salad – maybe 1 with just a spread or banana.

1-2 good quality ham/steak/chicken/vegie burger with salad

1-2 kebabs or falafels – avoid added cheese/sour cream

Noodles with chopped chicken or ham, or a tin of fish, and chopped vegies such as tomato, mushrooms, capsicums, shallots, corn, etc.

Salad plate plus a couple of bread rolls

Soup and some bread rolls eg “main meal” soups

Pasta or rice dish with a non oily/creamy sauce

Omelette and toast

Also have some fruit, yoghurt, cake/bun/muffin plus a drink eg fruit juice, milk.

Afternoon Tea and Pre Training Snacks

Water, juice, cordial or sports drink plus fruit, bread/toast with banana or honey, bowl of cereal, breakfast bars, noodles or other snacks as for morning tea

Straight after training sports drinks such as Exceed, Fluid and Energy Replacement, Gatorade, Powerade, Isosport, Isostar, Sports Plus, Endura etc or juice, cordial, milk or non-cola soft drink. If you are not going to eat for a while, try to have a milk/protein drink within one hour of finishing training eg Sustagen Sport, banana smoothie – especially after a weights training session.

Dinner (limited selection presented as examples only)

TIP: if you're very hungry, try having a hearty soup and bread or crackers as an entree or a low fat dip with pita crisps, pretzels, crackers or raw vegies.

Teriyaki Chicken

Marinate skinless chicken breasts/thighs in grated ginger or ginger powder, honey, chinese five spice powder, garlic, soy sauce and wine for at least 1 hour, then cook in marinade or grill/BBQ. Serve with large amounts of cooked rice, noodles or jacket potatoes plus other steamed or stir fried vegetables. Try different types of rice eg brown, fragrant or basmati.

Grilled Fillet Steak (about 180 – 200 grams)

Eat with 2-3 large potatoes cooked in their jackets or mashed with milk or vegetables, or salad.

Chicken or Lean Meat Curry/Casserole

Use your own spice combination, a curry paste, a packet sauce or a non-creamy jar of sauce and serve with lots of noodles/rice/couscous and vegies.

2 or 3 Small Trimmed Grilled Chops

Serve with rosemary or a spicy tomato sauce plus lots of boiled or mashed potatoes (mashed with low fat milk) plus steamed or microwaved vegetables. Veal chops are often leaner than lamb.

Grilled/Baked or BBQ Pan Fried Fish

Wrap about 300gr of fish in foil with lemon juice and mixed herbs and bake for 10-15 minutes in a moderate oven. Serve with vegetables including potatoes or low fat oven baked fries.

Pasta with Sauce

Make a sauce using a commercial pasta sauce, tinned or pureed tomatoes. Sometimes a can of soup is a useful start. Add your own herbs or spices. Add some protein in the form of chopped meat or chicken egg cooked lean mince, sliced ham, turkey or trimmed bacon, cooked chicken pieces, canned seafood or beans. Add some sliced or chopped vegies and serve over cooked pasta. Remember to look for the variety of filled fresh pasta such as ravioli and tortellini.

Stir Fry Meat and Vegetable with Rice/Noodles

Stir fry strips of lean beef, pork, lamb or chicken breast in a non-stick pan, adding some ginger and garlic if desired. Remove from pan and add any vegies and stir fry. You can add extra flavour with sweet chilli, plum, sweet and sour, or satay sauce, and you can buy frozen stir fry and serve with cooked rice or noodles.

Fresh noodles such as the 'Hokkien' type may be found near the fresh pastas. They may be added when you add the sauce and usually don't require pre-cooking. You can also use fresh seafood in the stir fry.

Home Made Pizzas and Salad

Use large 'Lavash' breads or bought pizza bases, spread with tomato paste or pasta sauce, grated low fat cheese and toppings such as lean ham, mexibean, chicken pieces, seafood and vegies/pineapple etc.

Skewers of Chicken/Lamb/Pork/Beef Kebabs

You can make your own or you can buy kebabs from shops that you can grill/BBQ. Serve with lots of rice or microwaved potatoes and a large serve of salad or stir fried vegies.

Mexican Burritos

Using tortillas and Mexican beans/beef, chopped tomato, cucumber, onion, lettuce and yoghurt sauce (blend 200g of low fat yoghurt with 2 teaspoons of minced garlic) and top with reduced fat grated cheese. Wrap all the ingredients in soft tortillas or large taco shells.

As a desert, try fruit, yoghurt, vitari, gelati, light ice cream, fruche, frommage frais, jellies and custards.

Supper (important if weight gain is your goal)

Hot or cold milk drink plus toast, crumpets, pancakes or another bowl of cereal.

Information prepared by Holly Frail and Kerry Leech – Nutrition Consultants

Hydration

Optimal performance requires that you maintain, as much as possible, a constant temperature. Core body temperature is a balance between metabolic processes that produce heat, including exercise, and physiological processes responsible for heat loss.

Environmental conditions that impair the ability to lose heat during exercise will result in an increase of core body temperature. This will lead to early fatigue, poor performance and may constitute a significant health risk.

If you do not prepare to deal with heat, you may find yourself performing poorly, and experiencing symptoms ranging from fainting and muscle cramps to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Much of excess body heat is lost through the process of sweating and subsequent evaporation. This has an associated fluid loss which can have disastrous effects if action is not taken to replace it. A loss of 2.5% of body weight constitutes dehydration. By the time that athletes first feel thirsty they are already dehydrated. It is therefore necessary to train people to avoid the impact of dehydration. The following checklist will help prevent dehydration:

- Take a water bottle to every training session and try to minimise the amount of direct sun exposure by taking water breaks in the shade.
- Drink plenty of fluids before, during and after competition. Remember that water is the best hydrator. Half a litre is recommended 30 minutes prior to activity and a litre within the final 3 hours.
- During competition, drink 100-150 ml every 15 minutes depending on conditions and intensity of activity.
- Wear appropriate clothing. Choose loose fitting with a fabric that is light coloured and allows sweat and air to pass through.
- After competition, drink liberally, avoiding alcoholic or caffeine beverages which increase dehydration.

The Effects of Alcohol

Consumption of alcohol within 24 hours of competition:

- Leads to dehydration
- Slows reflexes and reaction time
- Is energy deficient but may mask hunger and prevent topping up the energy stores.

Consumption of alcohol after competition:

- Causes further dehydration rather than fluid replacement
- Slows down glycogen replacement and physiological recovery
- Increases the severity of soft tissue injuries by causing bleeding to continue
- Increases loss of important vitamins and minerals which are essential for injury recovery and maintaining immunity to infection.

Players should avoid alcohol until fluids and carbohydrates have been replaced. Alcohol should be completely avoided when players have been injured or are suffering from illness or fatigue.

Recovery – Relaxation

Players need to plan recovery from training as well as from matches. The greater the intensity and the more frequent physical activity, the more important the role of recovery and relaxation becomes. There are four key components to consider when planning recovery: rest, nutrition, physical recovery and mental recovery.

Rest

Most physical training programs focus on providing the work loads necessary to improve performance. It is equally important to plan for rest both within each session and between sessions of activity. High quality work can only be sustained if it is separated by periods of recovery. The coach is responsible for planning the work/recovery ratio in practice sessions and for establishing a team match plan that permits a similar work recovery pattern during matches.

Outside of formal training the player has the biggest influence over work/recovery times, and should explore how the following techniques can be integrated into the program.

Active rest such as walking, jogging, cycling, swimming at less than 65% effort. This is valuable following a hard day of competition and speeds up the recovery and ability to train again and continue the cycle of improvement.

Passive rest such as doing nothing, sleeping, meditating, visualising or listening to music.

Rest is an essential but under-valued ingredient of performance.

Nutrition

Renew your energy stores by eating well-balanced meals, avoiding long gaps between meals, and including protein and carbohydrate in each meal.

Work towards carbohydrate replacement within one hour after exercise through consuming high carbohydrate drinks and foods.

Concentrate on restoring the fluid balance with water:

- Top up with up to one litre of water during the three hours prior to exercise.
- Consume 100-150 ml every 15 minutes during exercise depending on conditions and intensity of activity.
- Drink water after exercise. Avoid coffee, tea or alcohol.

Physical Recovery Techniques

- Utilise hydrotherapies such as whirlpools, baths, saunas and hot/cold showers to stimulate increased blood flow as well as to provide a relaxed state.
- Maintain a daily/regular stretching routine to improve your flexibility.
- Have regular massage to enhance blood flow and promote muscular recovery.
- Use active rest as a recovery technique.

Mental Recovery

Relaxation

Relaxation calms you, removes tension and helps you to focus and control your actions during practice and competitions. There are many relaxation strategies and techniques. You should try some of those listed below and see which ones work for you:

1. find a quiet area and assume a comfortable position with your eyes closed.
2. Practice breathing exercises and muscle relaxation techniques
3. Focus on your breathing by placing your hands on your chest and feel the air entering your lungs.
4. Concentrate on breathing to the bottom of your lungs by expanding your stomach as you breath in.
5. Allow a feeling of relaxation to flow through your body.
6. Breathe in either through your mouth or nose, whichever is more comfortable, and exhale through the other.
7. Develop a slow, deep, rhythmic breathing pattern. You should be able to eventually reproduce this relaxation response in competition.

Mental relaxation is also obtained by doing something completely different form your normal routine. The principal guideline to follow is to ensure that the different activity selected to promote mental relaxation does not inhibit physical recovery.

Recovery and relaxation are also about maintaining balance in lifestyle whilst pursuing sporting goals. Athletes must be aware of the need to keep their sporting activities, work/study, and social life in a workable balance. If any activity dominates a lifestyle, either in terms of time commitment or in terms of focus on a particular activity, it will eventually destabilise the other elements of a lifestyle. This will in turn affect the performance in the sporting area.. Recovery/relaxation not only assists the athlete to achieve sporting goals but helps them to maintain the necessary balance in their lifestyle.

ARU Coaching Re-accreditation Policy for 2002/2003

Introduction

The ARU, in consultation with State Unions have agreed that the following re-accreditation procedures for accredited coaches will apply from 1.1.2002. Individual coaches will have to provide evidence of complying with the following prior to being re-accredited.

Level I

A Level I coach will have to complete the following:

- a) A Law update
- b) A safety update
- c) To have coached for three of the last four years.

On completion, the coach will be deemed to be re-accredited at Level I.

Level II

A Level II coach will have to complete the following:

- a) A Law update
- b) A safety update
- c) To have coached for two of the last four years
- d) To produce a season diary for the last year of coaching a team.

On completion, the coach will be deemed to be re-accredited at Level II.

Level III

The following will come into force from 1.11.2002. Prior to this time, Level III coaches will have to provide proof of gained 100 points as per the re-accreditation points system. From 1.11.2002 a Level III coach will have to complete the following:

- a) A Law update
- b) A safety update
- c) To have coached at a high* level for two of the last four years. (If not at a 'high' level, then the coach will have to forward a technical paper of no less than 1500 words).
- d) To produce a season diary for the last year of coaching a team.
- e) To have acted as a mentor for two sessions for other accredited coaches.
- f) To have attended two technical sessions during the last four years, run either by their state Union or the ARU.

ARU Protocol for Serious Injury

ARU Serious Injury Case Manager

The Australian Rugby Union has appointed a Serious Injury Case Manager (SICM), to assist the club in managing serious injuries. The SICM is your first point of contact in the event of a serious injury (ie: fatality or suspected spinal injury), and will provide a link between the club and the Australian Rugby Union.

Australian Rugby Union Protocol for Serious Injury

In the event of a serious injury the following protocol process is followed for managing the traumatic situation.

1. Provide immediate on-field medical care and arrange suitable transportation to the hospital for the injured player
2. Club representative to phone the ARU Serious Injury Case Manager (SICM) on the ARU Hotline 1800 036 156 in the event of a serious injury (ie: fatality or suspected spinal injury). This number is a call back service and your details will be passed on to the SICM who will call you back ASAP. Please have all details of the incident ready to pass on to the SICM
3. SICM to establish initial contact with designated hotline caller to ascertain current status
4. SICM notifies ARU General Manager (GM) of Community Rugby or designate of situation
5. SICM or GM notifies designated representative responsible for zone/region/state union (eg: New South Wales Country Rugby Executive Officer)
6. Designated representative responsible for zone/region/state is to establish one point of contact with the club/zone to coordinate situation (eg: President/Executive Officer)
7. SCIM or GM to notify ARU Media Manager
8. SICM, GM and representative responsible for the zone/region/state to establish a process of support as required

Club Responsibilities

1. Provide immediate on-field medical care and arrange suitable transportation to the hospital for the injured player
2. Phone SICM on the ARU Hotline 1800 036 156 in the event of a serious injury (ie: fatality or suspected spinal injury), who in turn notifies ARU nominee
3. Phone zone/regional/governing affiliate administration
4. Accurately record any details and persons associated with the injury
5. Notify next of kin in the case of a 'neck' injury
6. In the case of a fatality, the Police will notify the next of kin
7. Monitor players/match officials (referees, touch judges)/club officials (coaches, managers, runners, trainers, physiotherapists etc) for team debrief and/or personal counseling
8. Complete the Serious Injury Report (on the back of this page) and fax copies to

ARU Serious Injury Register (02) 8354 3399 and

Gow-Gates Insurance Broker (02) 9261 3755

9. Complete the ARU Sports Injury Claim Form for all insurance claims

State Union Responsibilities

1. Follow up counselling requirements for the injured player, club personnel, referee and touch judges in conjunction with SICM and GM
2. In conjunction with club officials, zone/regional/governing af filiate administration and ARU handle all media contact. There should be one point of contact for media releases
3. State Union representative to attend any inquest/event
4. Assist (with club) any fund raising activities as required

ARU Responsibilities

1. Monitor current and ongoing status of the injured player
2. Provide support logistical and human, to the injured player, club, match officials and state union as required
3. Complete analysis report of injury occurrence and record on Serious Injury Register
4. In the case of a fatality, delete name from RugbyNet database

AUSTRALIAN RUGBY UNION

Serious Injury Report Form.

Player's name: _____ Phone number: _____

Age: _____ DOB: _____ RugbyNet number: _____

Player's address: _____

Next of kin: _____ Phone number: _____

Player's position: _____ Player's club: _____

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Teams involved in the match: _____ Vs _____

Grade: _____ Ground: _____ Competition: _____

Ground address: _____

Condition of field: _____

Weather conditions: _____

Referees name: _____ Phone number: _____

Touch Judges name: _____ Phone number: _____

Touch Judges name: _____ Phone number: _____

Is there video footage of the game? Yes No (If yes, please retain until contacted by the ARU.)

Was the game suspended? Yes No If yes, for how long: _____

Did the game restart? Yes No

Did the incident occur during: Tackle Maul Ruck Scrum Line Out Other

If other, please specify: _____

Give a brief description of the injury: _____

Was the player taken to hospital: By car By ambulance By helicopter

What hospital was the player taken to? _____ Phone number: _____

Who accompanied the player to the hospital? _____ Phone number: _____

Was there a doctor or medical personnel in attendance at the game? Yes No

If yes, did that person apply medical treatment to the player? Yes No

Name of medical personnel: _____ Phone number: _____

Outline the treatment, if any, the player received on the field: _____

Level I Coaching Manual

Your name: _____ Position in the club: _____

Contact numbers: Home: _____ Work: _____ Mobile: _____

Your signature: _____ Referee's signature: _____

Date: _____

FAX COPIES IMMEDIATELY TO:

(1) AUSTRALIAN RUGBY UNION

(02) 8354 3399

(2) GOW-GATES INSURANCE BROKER

(02) 9261 3755

Australian Rugby Union – Code of Conduct By-Laws

1. Interpretation

In these By-Laws:

“**ARU**” means the Australian Rugby Union Ltd;

“**Bookmaker**” means a person or organisation in the business of receiving, negotiating, or settling bets;

“**Competition**” means any match played as part of a structured competition or series, a trial match, a friendly match, a match against a visiting team from another union or matches, trials or any other competitions involving a Rugby Body;

“**game**” means rugby football;

“**Laws of the Game**” means the Laws of the Game of the International Rugby Board;

“**Member Union**” means a union in membership of the ARU;

“**officer**” means a director, other officer or employee of the Rugby Body;

“**participant**” means a player (including an amateur or non-contract player), a referee, touch judge or other match official, a selector, coach, trainer, manager or other team official, or an individual involved in the organisation, administration or promotion of Rugby Football including a director, other officer or employee of a Rugby Body;

“**Rugby Body**” means the ARU, any Member Union or Affiliated Union of the ARU, or any Rugby Union, Club or other body in membership with or affiliated to a Member Union or Affiliated Union;

“**Rugby-related conduct**” includes behaviour which occurs outside the playing enclosure that may damage the image of Rugby Football or which may impair public confidence in the integrity and good character of participants, including, but not limited to, conduct during travel to or from either Rugby Football games or authorised tours (whether within Australia or overseas), conduct when on tour, conduct at Rugby functions and promotional events and other conduct where a participant is involved in activities connected with the ARU or its sponsors; words in the singular include the plural and vice versa; and a reference to a gender includes the other genders.

2. Object of By-Laws

The ARU is committed to promoting and strengthening the positive image of Rugby Football and its participants in Australia. In light of this commitment, the Code of Conduct seeks to establish standards of performance and behaviour to ensure that participants act in a professional and proper manner and to ensure that the game is played and conducted with disciplined and sporting behaviour. The Code of Conduct also seeks to deter all on-field and Rugby-related conduct that could damage the game of Rugby Football by impairing public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of matches and competitions or in the integrity and good character of participants. In addition, these By-Laws seek to ensure that every Participant is liable to effective sanctions if they are found to have breached the Code of Conduct.

3. Code of Conduct

All participants in the game are bound:

- (a) not to bet or otherwise financially speculate, directly or indirectly, on the outcome or on any other aspect of a Rugby Football match or Competition which he or she is either involved in (whether as a player, official or in any other capacity) or connected to;
 - (i) not to throw or fix a match, try to achieve a contrived outcome to a match or a Competition, or otherwise influence improperly the outcome or any other aspect of a match or a Competition;
 - (ii) not to provide information to a Bookmaker about a match or any aspect of a match which he or she is either involved in (whether as a player, official or in any other capacity) or connected to;
- (b) not to seek or accept a bribe or other benefit to do anything mentioned in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii);

- (c) to report immediately to the ARU any offer of a bribe or other benefit to do anything mentioned in paragraph (i) and (ii) or any attempt by any other person to do anything mentioned in paragraphs (a) ,or (b);
- (d) to promote the reputation of the game and to take all reasonable steps to prevent the game from being brought into disrepute;
- (e) not to engage in any Doping Practice as defined in the ARU's Doping By-Laws;
- (f) to comply with the ARU's Safety Directives for Referees, Coaches and Players;
- (g) not to repeatedly breach the Laws of the Game relating to Foul Play or Misconduct;
- (h) not to abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, touch judge or other match official, whether on or off the field, or a selector, coach, manager or other team official;
- (i) not to show unnecessary obvious dissension, displeasure or disapproval towards a referee, touch judge or other match official, his or her decision or generally following a decision of a match official;
- (j) not to use crude or abusive language or gestures towards referees, touch judges or other match officials or spectators;
- (k) not to do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult or humiliate another participant on the ground of the religion, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour or national or ethnic origin of the person;
- (l) not to conduct themselves in any manner, or engage in any activity, whether on or off the field, that would impair public confidence in the honest and orderly conduct of matches and competitions or in the integrity and good character of participants; and
- (m) not to do anything which adversely affects or reflects on or discredits the game, the ARU, any Member Union or Affiliated Union of the ARU, or any squad, team, competition, tournament, sponsor, official supplier or licensee, including, but not limited to, any illegal act or any act of dishonesty or fraud.

4. Officers of a Rugby Body²

- a) An officer must, in relation to the Rugby Body of which he or she is an officer:
 - i.) act in good faith and in the best interests of the Rugby Body;
 - ii.) avoid all conflicts of interest between:
 - b) the interests of the Rugby Body; and
 - c) his or her own interests or the interests of any other person, including another Rugby Body; and
- d) not disclose to any person or use for his or her own purposes confidential information obtained as a result of the officer's relationship with the Rugby Body, including but not limited to deliberations of the board of directors or other governing organ of the Rugby Body.

5. Duty to Comply

Each Member Union and each Affiliated Union is obliged:

- a) to comply with, and to require Rugby Unions, Clubs and other bodies and persons in membership with it or affiliated to it to comply with, these By-Laws; and
- b) to adopt the Procedures for Monitoring and Disciplining Breaches of the Code of Conduct set out in the Appendix to these By-Laws for monitoring compliance with, and imposing sanctions for breaches of,

² A person may be an officer of more than one Rugby Body, in which case it is important for the person to distinguish the separate capacities in which he or she acts as an officer; for example, a director of the ARU, when acting in that capacity, must act in the best interests of the ARU in preference to the interests of any other Rugby Body of which he or she is an officer.

these By-laws by participants under its jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of Rugby Unions, Clubs and other bodies in membership with it or affiliated to it.

APPENDIX TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT: PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND DISCIPLINING BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Introduction

The following procedures have been established in order to assist in providing uniform disciplinary procedures for alleged breaches of the Code.

2. Definitions and Interpretation

In this Appendix:

Code means the Code of Conduct By-Laws;

Committee means the Conduct Committee constituted by a Rugby Body to investigate and conduct hearings in the name of the ARU in relation to alleged breaches of the Code and to impose sanctions, as constituted by the Rugby Body for the time being and for the purpose of hearing a particular matter;

Contract Participant means a participant who is currently receiving, or has received, Material Benefit;

Guidelines means any guidelines issued by the ARU in relation to these Procedures;

Managing Union means a Member Union which organises and supervises a particular competition or competitions;

Material Benefit means money, consideration, gifts or other benefits given to a participant in respect of such participant's participation in the game;

Principal Rugby Body Representative means the General Manager or President of the Rugby Body, or person acting in a similar or equivalent role;

Procedures means these Procedures for Monitoring and Disciplining Breaches of the Code of Conduct;

senior legal practitioner means a person who is admitted to practise law in Australia and who has at least [ten/five] years experience in legal practice;

State Union means the highest level Managing Union in any State or Territory where an alleged breach of the Code occurs (eg. the NSW RU, QRU or ACTRU); and

Tribunal means the Conduct Tribunal established under clause 10 of these Procedures as constituted by the ARU from time to time.

Where words appearing in these Procedures have been interpreted or defined in the Code, the Code interpretation or definition shall apply; words in the singular include the plural and vice versa; and a reference to a gender includes the other genders.

3. Conduct Committees

- 3.1 Each Rugby Body must establish a Conduct Committee, which will have power to act in the name of the ARU to determine all alleged breaches of the Code by participants under its jurisdiction.
- 3.2 For the purposes of clause 3.1 where the Rugby Body is a:
 - a) Club; where the alleged breach does not occur at a Competition and the participant against whom the breach is alleged usually plays for, or is connected to the club, the club will be the Rugby Body for the purposes of this Code;

- b) a Managing Union; where the alleged breach occurs at a Competition organised by the Managing Union will be the Rugby Body for the purpose of this Code.
- 3.3 Each Committee shall consist of three participants of the Rugby Body nominated by the Principal Rugby Body Representative. The Principal Rugby Body Representative may nominate themselves to be a participant on the Committee. One of the three participants must be appointed as Chairperson.

4. Alleged breaches of the Code

- 4.1 Where a Rugby Body is notified by a participant, or for any other reason believes, that a participant under its jurisdiction may have acted in breach of the Code, it must, in a timely manner, notify:
- a) the participant in respect of whom a breach has been alleged;
 - b) the relevant Committee,
 - c) the State Union; and
 - d) the ARU,
- of the nature of the alleged breach.
- 4.2 The notification required by clause 4.1 must be by way of a standard Code of Conduct Notification Form and must include particulars of the alleged breach.
- 4.3 Subject to clauses 8 and 9 the Committee:
- a) must investigate the alleged breach of the Code;
 - b) may impose a disciplinary measure, in accordance with the Guidelines, taking into account any relevant aggravating or mitigating circumstances; and
 - c) must prepare a written statement of its factual findings, decision and reasons and provide copies of that statement to:
 - (i) the participant in respect of whom a breach has been alleged;
 - (ii) the relevant Rugby Body;
 - (iii) the State Union; and
 - (iv) the ARU.
- 4.4 The investigation referred to in clause 4.3(a) must be commenced as soon as reasonably practicable after the Committee receives notification of the alleged breach under clause 4.1.
- 4.5 A Committee will have power to regulate its own procedure. Subject to its obligation to give proper consideration to the matter before it, a Committee should generally conduct hearings with as little formality, and with as much expedition, as is permitted by the nature of the matter.

5. Alleged breach by Contract participant

- 5.1 Where a Rugby Body becomes aware of an alleged breach of the Code by a Contract Participant under its jurisdiction, in addition to the obligations contained in clause 4, the Rugby Body must ensure that the Chairperson of the relevant Committee is a Judge, a retired Judge or a senior legal practitioner with preference to be given to persons who have previous experience in proceedings relating to Rugby matters.

6. Appeal

- 6.1 Subject to clause 6.5, a participant against whom a Committee has made an adverse finding pursuant to clause 4.3, may appeal to the Committee of the State Union against the decision, including any disciplinary measure imposed.
- 6.2 Written notification of an appeal under 6.1 must be received by the secretary of the State Union within five business days of the making of the adverse finding.
- 6.3 A State Union which receives notice of an appeal against the decision of a Committee must notify the ARU of that appeal within 2 business days of receiving such notice.
- 6.4 Subject to clauses 8 and 9, the State Union, on the expiry of seven business days from the receipt of notification of the appeal under 6.2:
 - a) may refuse to hear the appeal;
 - b) may conduct a fresh investigation of the alleged breach of the Code, however it may have reference to documents prepared by a Committee in the course of the initial investigations into the alleged breach;
 - c) may confirm, modify or dismiss the decision of the Committee;
 - d) may confirm, modify or dismiss the disciplinary measure imposed, provided that any change to the disciplinary measure imposed takes into account the Guidelines and any relevant aggravating or mitigating circumstances;
 - e) must make a statement in writing stating its findings of fact, reasons and decision and send copies of that statement to the relevant participant, the Rugby Body and the ARU.
- 6.5 Any appeal against an adverse finding made by the Committee of a State Union must be made to the Tribunal adopting the same procedures set out in 6.1 to 6.4 above save for the substitution of "State Union" with "ARU".

7. Further particulars of alleged breach

- 7.1 If requested by the ARU, a Rugby Body must send to the ARU a report detailing further particulars of the alleged breach of the Code.
- 7.2 The report in 7.1 must:
 - a) be in writing;
 - b) provide any information requested by the ARU; and
 - c) provide any other information that the ARU would reasonably need to make an informed assessment of the nature and severity of the alleged breach of the Code.

8. State Union Intervention and Representation

- 8.1 Subject to clause 9, where the State Union receives notification of an alleged breach of the Code by a participant, either from a Rugby Body under clause 4.1 or from any other source the State Union has the right to:
 - a) declare that the procedure referred to in clause 4.3 must be conducted by the Committee of the State Union if, in the opinion of the State Union, the alleged breach of the Code negatively affects, or has potential to negatively affect, the image of the State Union or the game of Rugby; or
 - b) appoint a representative to the Committee required to conduct the procedure under clause 4.3, in place of a Committee member that would otherwise sit. If there is any dispute, the State Union may determine which Committee member is to be replaced by the State Union representative; or

- c) be given the opportunity to be heard by the Committee.
- 8.2 The State Union must notify the Committee from whom the State Union received notification under clause 4.1 of its decision whether to exercise the rights in paragraphs (a), (b) or (c).
- 8.3 No decision, with the exception of an interim decision, can be made before the Committee has received the notice in paragraph 8.2.

9. ARU Intervention and Representation

- 9.1 Where the ARU receives notification of an alleged breach of the Code by a participant, either from a Rugby Body under clause 4.1 or from any other source the ARU has the right to:
- a) declare that the investigation must be conducted by the Tribunal if, in the opinion of the ARU, the alleged breach of the Code negatively affects, or has potential to negatively affect, the image of the ARU or the game of Rugby; or
 - b) appoint a representative to the Committee required to conduct an investigation under clause 4.3, in place of an existing Committee member that would otherwise sit. If there is any dispute, the ARU may determine which Committee member is to be replaced by the ARU representative; or
 - c) be given the opportunity to be heard by the Committee.
- 9.2 The ARU must notify the Committee from whom the ARU received notification under clause 4.1 of its decision whether to exercise the rights in paragraphs (a), (b) or (c).
- 9.3 No decision, with the exception of an interim decision, can be made before the Committee has received the notice in paragraph 9.2.
- 9.4 Where the ARU receives notification of an appeal to a State Union under clause 6 the ARU has the right to:
- a) declare that the procedure referred to in clause 4.3 must be conducted by the Tribunal if, in the opinion of the ARU, the alleged breach of the Code negatively affects, or has potential to negatively affect, the image of the ARU or the game of Rugby; or
 - b) appoint a representative to the Committee required to conduct the procedure under clause 4.3, in place of an existing Committee member that would otherwise sit. If there is any dispute, the ARU may determine which Committee member is to be replaced by the ARU representative;
 - c) be given the opportunity to be heard by the Committee;
- 9.5 The ARU must notify the Committee hearing the appeal of its decision whether to exercise the rights in paragraphs (a), (b) or (c).
- 9.6 No decision, with the exception of an interim decision, can be made before the Committee has received the notice in paragraph 9.5.
- 9.7 At all times the rights of the ARU under this clause 9 supersede those of a State Union under clause 8. The exercise by the ARU of the rights provided by this clause 9 preclude the exercise or operation by a State Union of the rights provided by clause 8.

10. Establishment of Conduct Tribunal

- 10.1 The ARU will establish from time to time a Tribunal to investigate and conduct hearings in relation to alleged breaches of the Code, to impose appropriate sanctions where the Tribunal finds that a breach has occurred, and to hear appeals from the Committee of a State Union.
- 10.2 The Tribunal will consist of three members, to include:
- a) as the Chairperson, a Judge, retired Judge or senior legal practitioner. Preference will be given to a person with prior experience in proceedings related to Rugby matters;
 - b) two other members to be selected in the ARU's absolute discretion.

- 10.3 The Tribunal will have power to regulate its own procedure. Subject to its obligation to give proper consideration to the matter before it, the Tribunal should generally conduct hearings with as little formality, and with as much expedition, as is permitted by the nature of the matter.
- 10.4 The Tribunal will be the forum for the investigation, hearing and disciplinary of any alleged breach of the Code by a Contract Participant employed by the ARU during the term of that Contract Participant's employment. The Tribunal will also be the forum for the investigation, hearing and discipline of any Contract Participant employed to play with any Australian Super 12 team during the course of the Super 12 (or any successor competition).

11. Review of Committee decision by Tribunal

- 11.1 In addition to the Tribunal's role under clause 10, the Tribunal may, at the request of the ARU, review the decision of any Committee.
- 11.2 The Tribunal:
- a) may conduct a fresh investigation of the alleged breach of the Code, however it may have reference to documents prepared by a Committee in the course of the initial investigations into the alleged breach;
 - b) may confirm, modify or dismiss the decision of the Committee;
 - c) may confirm, modify or dismiss the disciplinary measure imposed, provided that any change to the disciplinary measure imposed takes into account the Guidelines and any relevant aggravating or mitigating circumstances;
 - d) must make a statement in writing stating its findings of fact, reasons and decision and send copies of that statement to the relevant participant, the Rugby Body and the ARU.

12. Compliance

- 12.1 All Rugby Bodies and participants are deemed to have full knowledge of these Procedures and any Guidelines in relation to these Procedures.
- 12.2 A Rugby Body must ensure it complies with the Procedures and Guidelines and must take reasonable steps to inform each participant under its jurisdiction of the terms of the Procedures and Guidelines.
- 12.3 A Rugby Body or participant who fails to comply with these Procedures or Guidelines is liable to sanctions from the ARU.

13. General

- 13.1 Each Rugby Body will be responsible for all costs associated with establishing a Committee, conducting investigations and hearings.