



LEVEL 2 COACHING

DEVELOPING RUGBY SKILLS

PRACTICE ACTIVITY CARDS



1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

These cards were developed to support the IRB Level 2 Coaching Course - Developing Rugby Skills. The cards are split into key factor cards and practice cards. The cards will shortly be animated and available on line. Meanwhile feel free to print and use as you see fit.

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2. PASSING AND CATCHING KEY FACTORS

PASSING OUTCOME: To make a pass that is easily caught by a team-mate in a better position than the passer to maintain continuity of play.

KEY FACTORS:

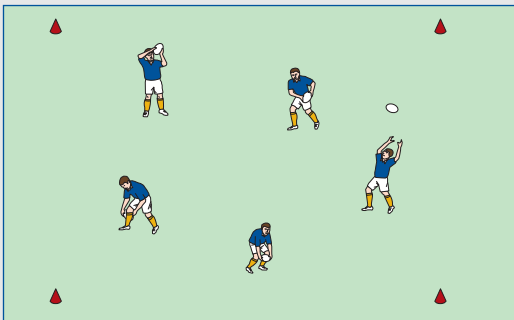
- 1 Run straight.
- 2 Hold the ball in two hands.
- 3 Commit a defender.
- 4 Prop on the inside leg.
- 5 Turn side on to the defence, to face the supporting receiver.
- 6 Swing the arms through in the direction being passed to.
- 7 Use the elbows and wrist to control the speed and flight of the ball as the ball is released.
- 8 Follow through with the hands in the direction of the pass.
- 9 Pass to the “target” area at chest height in front of the receiver.
- 10 Support the receiver once the pass has been completed.

CATCHING OUTCOME: To catch the ball while retaining vision of the positioning of opponents so that the receiver has time to choose the best available option.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Position so that the receiver can run towards the ball in its flight.
- 2 Run towards the space created by the passer.
- 3 Extend the hands to catch the ball early.
- 4 Watch the ball into the hands.
- 5 Catch the ball with the fingers and hands.
- 6 Once the ball has been caught, perform the best option.

3. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



BALL FAMILIARISATION

Players work individually with one ball per player. Players familiarise themselves with the ball by passing it a given number of times:

- 1 Around the head.
- 2 Around the waist.
- 3 Around the knees.
- 4 Around the ankles.
- 5 In figure 8s through the legs.
- 6 Into the air taking a step forward and catching behind the back.
- 7 Between the legs, leaving the ball in one place and changing the hands from left at the front, right at back, to left at the back, right at the front.
- 8 Running down the field passing the ball through the legs.

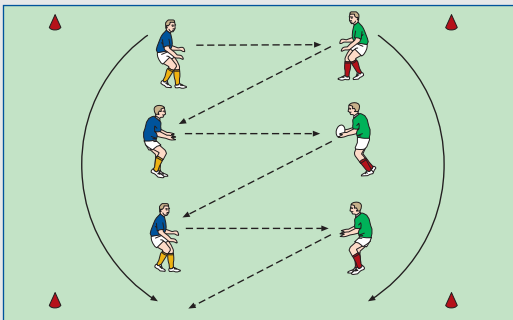
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Close the eyes.
- 2 Perform activities on the run.
- 3 Use medicine balls.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Spread the fingers.
- 2 Ball in both hands for maximum control.
- 3 Ball control is more important than running speed.

4. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



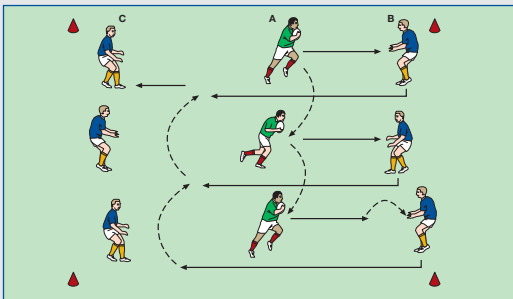
ZIG-ZAG PASSING

Organise all players into two lines facing each other approximately 4-6 metres apart. Feed as many balls, one at a time, as the player's skill will allow to the first player in the line. These are passed zig-zag from one line to the other right down the lines. Once all of the balls being used have been handled by a player, that player runs to the end of the line to receive the balls again. The drill continues across the field and back.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Ball in both hands.
- 2 Provide a target with the hands for the passer at chest height.
- 3 Pass to the target.
- 4 Reach to receive the pass.
- 5 Pass only to a player who is ready.

5. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



GROUP PASSING

Players work in three groups of three in a 15 metre by 20 metre channel. Group A starts along the centre of the channel with groups B and C at either end of the channel. Group A has the ball and runs towards group B making as many passes as possible. When they reach group B the ball is given to group B who make as many passes as possible running towards group C. Group C then cross the channel back to group A and the drill continues.

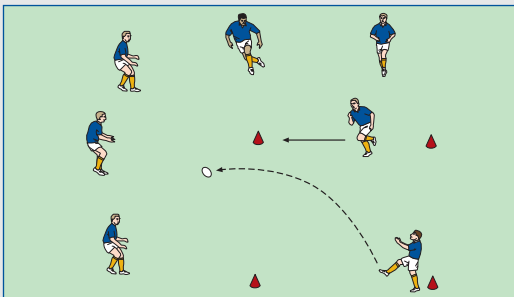
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Incorporate specific passes, e.g. miss passes, loops, etc.
- 2 Place one or two defenders in the channel to reduce the time the players have to pass the ball.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Ball in both hands. | 5 Immediately pass the ball on. |
| 2 Reach and catch ball early. | 6 Re-align when the direction of passing changes. |
| 3 Pass in front of the receiver. | |
| 4 Receiver deep enough to run towards the ball. | |

6. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



SOFTBALL

Organise players into two equal teams. Use cones to define a playing 'diamond' about 15-20 metres square. Place cones in each corner to act as 'bases'. One team goes in to bat and the other is in the field. Members of the batting team kick the ball using any type of kick into the field and try to get as far around the bases as they can. If the kick is caught, the player is out. If the ball is passed to a base before a runner arrives, the player is out. Three players out equals team out. Play nine innings per team.

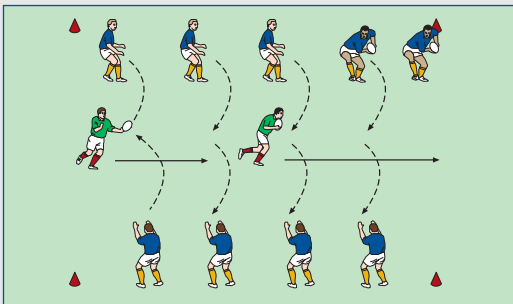
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 A set number of passes must be made to return the ball.
- 2 Return the ball by kicking or with a specific type of pass.
- 3 Fielders cannot run with the ball - they must pass or kick.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 Key factors for kicking. | 4 Catch before passing. |
| 2 Looking for and kick to space. | 5 Support the fielder to provide a passing option. |
| 3 Catch/field the ball cleanly. | 6 Key factors for passing. |

7. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



PRESSURE PASS

Players work in three groups of five to six players in a 10m by 22m channel. Groups A and B line up facing each other approximately 10m apart with individual players approximately 5m apart. Each player in group A has a ball. The first player of group C jogs down between groups A and B receiving passes from the A players and passing them to the B players. With the balls now with the B players the next player in group C makes a pass from group B to A. The frequency with which the players in group C run depends on the players' passing skills.

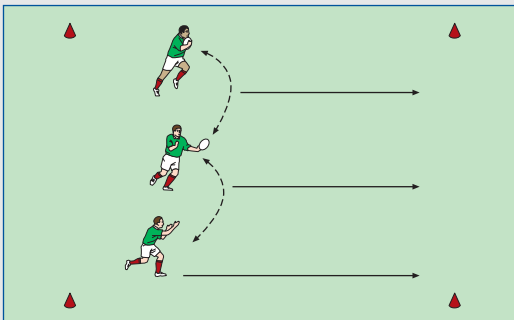
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Spread out the players in groups A and B if they need more time.
- 2 Stand the players closer together if the players need less time.
- 3 Have two group C players run at the same time.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Ball in both hands. | 3 Reach to receive the pass. |
| 2 Pass in front of the receiver. | 4 Pass the ball immediately. |

8. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



THREE PLAYERS, TWO BALLS

Players work in groups of three in a 22m by 12m channel. Each group has two balls. Each of the two outside players has a ball each. The three players run across the channel passing to the centre player who passes back to the player who made the pass to them.

ACTIVITY VARIATION:

- 1 A passes to B, B passes to C and C passes back to A. Start with one ball with A and move to two balls, one with A and one with C.

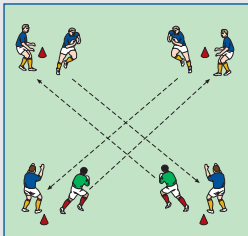
KEY POINTS:

- 1 Ball in both hands.
- 2 Pass in front of the receiver.
- 3 Reach to receive the pass.
- 4 Pass only when the receiver is ready.

9. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES

MAGIC SQUARES

Divide players into four groups with each group positioned at the corner of a 10m or 15m square grid. The player at the front of each group has a ball. On “go” the ball carriers run diagonally across the grid and, as they reach the group diagonally opposite them, pass to the first player in that group. After passing, the player moves to the back of the line to which they have run. The ball receiver performs the skill back in the opposite direction.



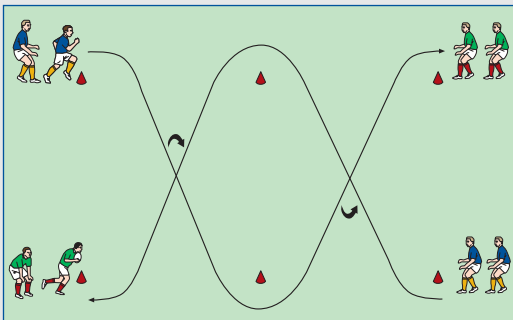
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Receiver leaving before the passer has reached the other side.
- 2 ‘Pop’ pass.
- 3 ‘Gut’ pass.
- 4 Grubber kick.
- 5 Chip pass.
- 6 Kick and recover.
- 7 Two players run across passing to each other.
- 8 One ball carrier from each corner make side-on contact with each other when they meet in the centre and pass back to the next player in their group.
- 9 Upon meeting a second player from the same group binds on the ball carrier, secures the ball and both drive forward as a unit.
- 10 Upon reaching the other side the ball carrier goes to the ground and places the ball. The first player in the opposing group picks up the ball and re-commences the activity in the opposite direction.
- 11 Two players ‘hit and spin’ as they go across the grid.
- 12 The drill can be expanded to practice rucks and mauls by increasing the number of players involved.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Accuracy in performing the skill so that possession is not lost.
- 2 Use peripheral vision to find, and evasion to use, space.
- 3 Reduce group sizes and the size of the grid to intensify the activity. Do the opposite to reduce the intensity.

10. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



SCISSOR PASS

Players work in pairs in a 15m by 22m channel. The players start by the cones on one side of the grid. The players run forward and across the grid the ball carrier scissor passing with the partner. Players, once they have reached the perimeter of the grid run back towards the partner to repeat the skill.

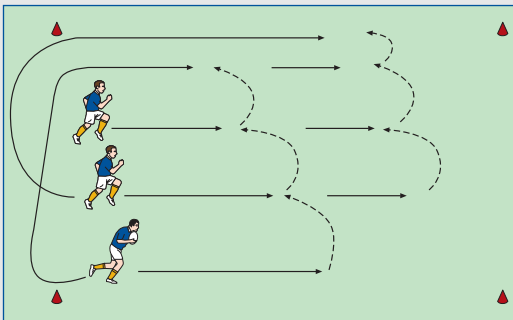
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Increase the number of players to a maximum of five.
- 2 Add in a tackler at each scissor pass so that the pass is made in the tackle using channel or screen passes.
- 3 The players initially run forward 5m-10m before deviating across to simulate drawing a defender.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for passing.
- 2 Running lines in the backs.
- 3 Turn towards the receiver when making the pass.
- 4 Straighten the lines of run after each pass.

11. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



DOUBLING ROUND

Players work in groups of four or five with one ball per group, on a full field. Players start at one goal line. On “Go” the players jog down the field, running straight. The ball is passed along the line. As soon as each player passes the ball the passer doubles round to join the opposite end of the line. The activity continues from goal-line to goal-line.

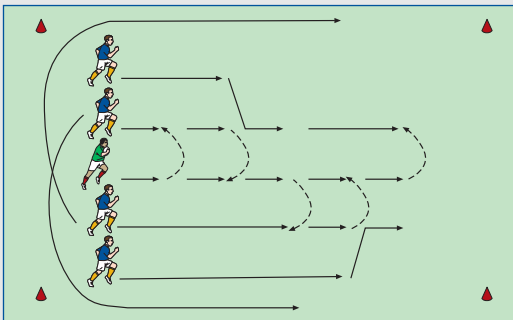
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Blow a whistle to signal speed up or slow down.
- 1 Restrict the width of the field.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for passing.
- 2 Run straight.
- 3 Keep depth so that the player can accelerate towards the ball when it is passed.

12. PASSING AND CATCHING ACTIVITIES



PASSING IN FIVES

Players work in groups of five in a 20m by 40m channel with one ball per group. Players line up across the channel approximately 4m apart. The third player has the ball. The group runs down the channel. The ball carrier passes to the second player who passes the ball back and runs to support outside the fifth player. The third player now passes to the fourth player who returns the pass and supports outside the first player. As each player moves in support the remaining players on this side move to within passing distance of the third player. Rotate players so that they all have a turn at being the third player.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Ball in both hands. | 3 Reach to receive the pass. |
| 2 Pass in front of the receiver. | 4 Sympathetic passes. |
| | 5 Work rate. |



13. RUNNING AND EVASION KEY FACTORS

OUTCOME:

In possession of the ball

To evade opponents while running towards their goal-line without becoming isolated from team-mates unless a try can be scored.

KEY FACTORS:

Running with the ball

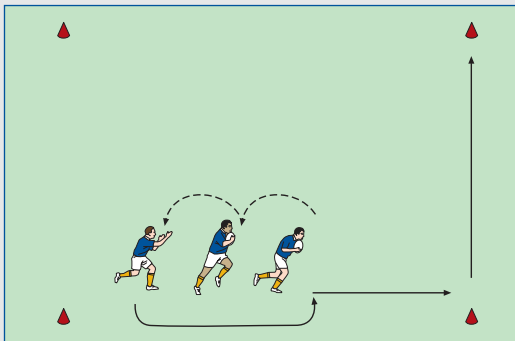
Note: It is best to carry the ball in both hands as this gives the ball carrier the greatest range of attacking options.

- 1 Run towards the nearest defenders.
- 2 Change the direction of movement close to them, using a sidestep, swerve, and/or change of pace.
- 3 Move into the space furthest from the defenders.
- 4 Accelerate to take advantage of the space that has been created.

Sidestep

- 1 Run towards the nearest defenders.
- 2 Change direction close to them by pushing sideways off the right foot to go left and the left foot to go right.
- 3 Accelerate, to take advantage of the defender's hesitation.

14. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



SINGLE FILE RUNNING

Players work in groups of up to ten players with one ball per group. In a single file, the group jogs around the perimeter of the field. The ball is passed back along the line. When the ball reaches the last player, this player sprints, with the ball in both hands, around the outside of the line to the front. Once the player is at the front, the ball is passed down the line once again.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Use more than one ball.
- 2 Designate the type of pass to be made.
- 3 The runner weaves in and out of the players ahead on the way to the front.

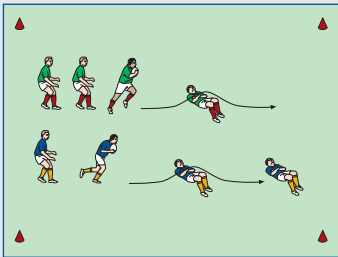
KEY POINTS:

- 1 Sprint to the front.
- 2 Pass only to a receiver who is ready.
- 3 Be balanced when side-stepping and swerving between players on to the way to the front.

15. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES

STEPPING OVER

Players work in groups of six to ten. They line up in single file on one side of the field. The first player bursts 3m to 4m and lies on the ground at right angles to the running direction. The next player runs, stepping over the player on the ground and lies down once the first player has been cleared. Each player does the same, stepping over all the players ahead of them. Players lie closer together for high knee raising and further apart for striding out.

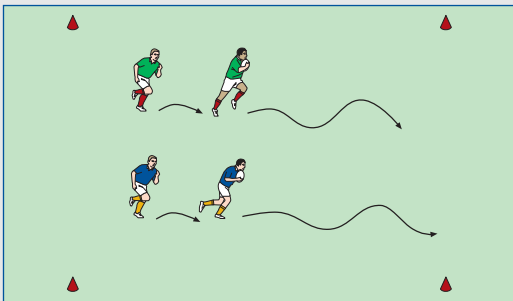


ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Pass the ball as the player goes to ground.
 - 2 Pass once the player has gone to ground.
 - 3 Roll the ball back as the player goes to ground.
 - 4 Step over the player on the ground, pick up the ball and go on.
 - 5 After picking up the ball pass short to the next player who takes the ball on.
 - 6 Replace the players lying on the ground with tackle bags across the line of running. Place a ball on the far side of each tackle bag. Individually, players step over the tackle bag, pick up the ball and place it on the other side of the bag. Each player performs this skill simulating the recovery of a ball at a tackle.
- 1 Acceleration.
 - 2 Speed and endurance.
 - 3 Performing skills accurately when fatigued.
 - 4 Recovery.

KEY POINTS:

16. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



SHADOW

Players work in pairs in a 20m by 20m grid, one ball for each pair. On the coach's call, ball carriers run evasively at speed, anywhere in the grid, evading other ball carriers. The player's partner tries to stay within 1m. The ball carrier runs for 15 to 20 seconds then the players recover before changing the ball carrier and repeating the activity.

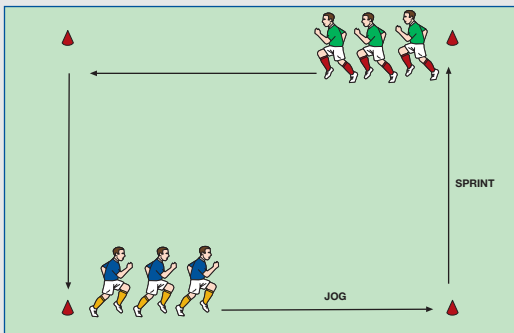
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 On the coach's call, the ball carrier turns, sets and feeds the partner who then becomes the ball carrier.
- 2 The ball carrier runs at the partner who tries to stay in front. If the ball carrier succeeds in getting passed, the roles are reversed.
- 3 On the whistle, the ball is placed on the ground, recovered by the partner and the roles are reversed.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Acceleration and peak speed. | 3 Rapid changes of direction. |
| 2 Speed endurance. | 4 Working off both feet. |
| | 5 Stability and balance. |

17. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



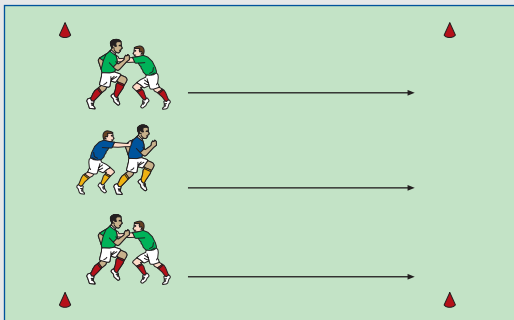
220s

Divide the team into two groups. The groups take up position diagonally opposite each other in the corners of the field. Group 1 jogs the length of the field and sprints the width of the field. The coach names the player who leads the sprint. Once the players of group 1 reach the opposite corner they rest. Group 2 players jog the length of the field and sprint the width in the same way. When group 2 players reach the opposite corner group 1 players start again and the activity continues.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Acceleration and peak speed.
- 2 Speed off the mark.
- 3 Speed endurance.

18. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



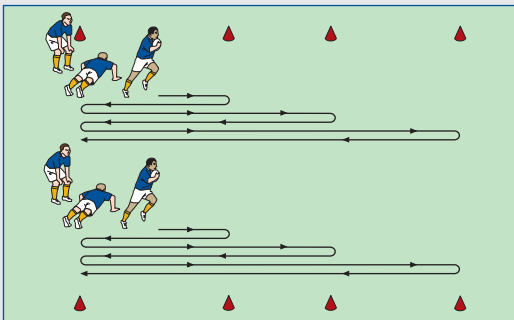
POWER SPRINTING

Players work in pairs in the area from the goal line to the 22m line. Players pair up on the goal line. They face each other and place their hands on each other's shoulders. While the forward-facing player sprints to the 22m line using short, sharp strides, the other player provides resistance. Once the 22m line is reached, the roles are reversed and the players repeat the activity back to the goal-line.

ACTIVITY VARIATION:

- 1 The pair stands facing the same direction, one behind the other. The player behind holds onto their partner's waist-band. The front player sprints hard against resistance provided by the partner using a low body position and short strides. As the intensity builds the front-runner calls "go," at which time the partner lets go and the runner sprints 10 to 15m.

19. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



SUICIDES IN THREES

Players work in groups of three, one ball for each group. The groups line up on the goal line. Cones are placed at distances from the goal line of 10, 15 and 22m. On “Go” the first player shuttle runs, carrying the ball, to the first cone and back, second cone and back and then the third cone and back. At the same time the second player does press ups and the third rests. Once the runner has completed running the roles are rotated. The coach decides how many shuttle runs have to be completed by each player.

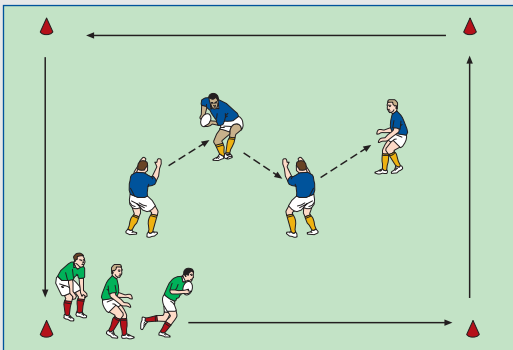
ACTIVITY VARIATION:

- 1 Use a different exercise, e.g. sit-ups, burpees, etc.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Acceleration and peak speed.
- 2 Speed endurance.
- 3 Muscular endurance.
- 4 Recovery.

20. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



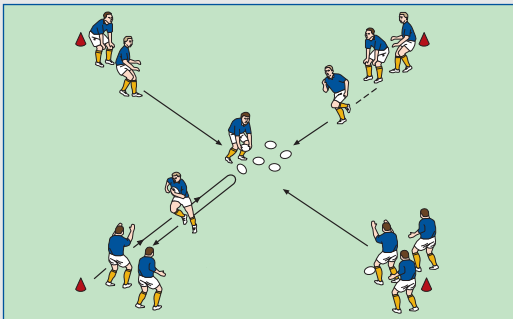
BALL PASS vs GROUP RUN

Organise players into two groups with between eight and 20 per group. Players work in a 10m by 10m grid or larger for greater numbers. Group A assembles inside the grid and group B lines up on a corner cone. Group B players run, with the ball in both hands, one at a time around the perimeter of the grid handing the ball to the next player when they return. At the same time group A players make as many passes as they can. Count the passes, reverse roles and compare the number of passes to decide the winner.

KEY POINTS:

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Ball in both hands. | 4 | Sympathetic passes. |
| 2 | Fast hands. | 5 | High work rate. |
| 3 | Reach to receive the pass. | | |

21. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



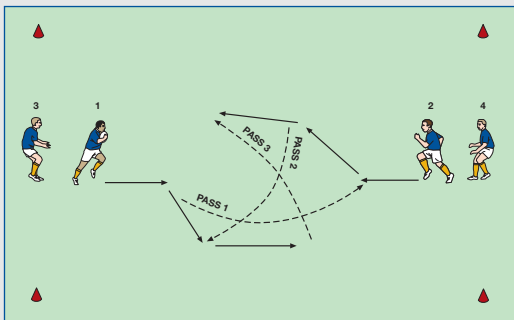
ROB THE NEST

Organise the players into four groups of three and position one group on each corner of a 10m by 10m grid. Place six balls in the centre of the grid, the 'nest'. Number the players in each group 1, 2 and 3. On the coach's call, the player whose number is called tries to gather balls one at a time from the centre nest or the other team's nests, until three balls have been gathered. The first team to gather three balls is the winner. The activity continues until all players have been a robber.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for picking up the ball.
- 2 Run in a strong body position.
- 3 Protect the ball.

22. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



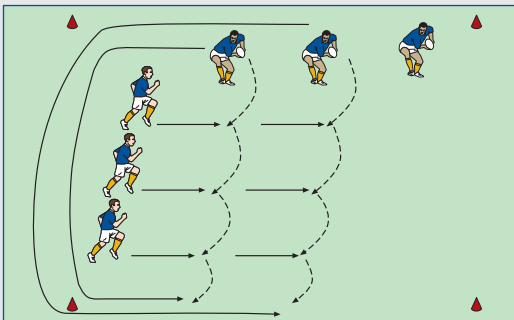
QUICK HANDS

Players work in groups of six with one ball in a 20m by 10m channel. Players 1,3 and 5 go to one end of the channel and players 2,4 and 6 to the other. On “Go” players 1 and 2 run towards each other. Before they run past each other, they must complete a set number of passes (between one and six). Players may run straight or fan out so that passes are not made directly ahead of the receiver.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Ball in both hands.
- 2 Pass in front of the receiver.
- 3 Reach to receive the pass.
- 4 Sympathetic passes.
- 5 Work rate.

23. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



RUNNING STRAIGHT WHILE PASSING

Players work as a team in a 30m channel from goal line to goal line. Backs line up on one goal line with forwards evenly spaced along a touchline with a ball each. Backs align themselves with a marker at the far end of the field and attempt to remain on this line throughout their run down the field. The back-line runs straight down the field. As they reach each forward the forward passes the ball and it is passed along the back-line.

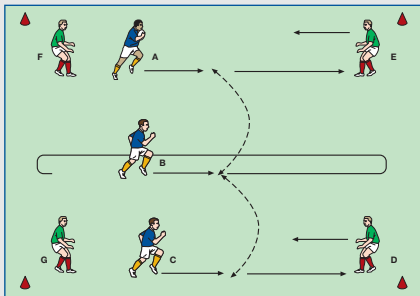
The forward runs behind the back-line to receive the ball at the end of the line. The forward takes up a position on the opposite touchline and waits for the backs to repeat the activity as they return. Backs check their running line at the end of each length.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for passing.
- 2 Running lines in the backs.
- 3 Back-line alignment.

CENTRE RUN

Players work in groups of nine in a 10m by 10m grid with one ball. Two players stand in each corner, one behind the other, facing the team on the same side of the grid. One player stands on one side of the grid halfway along the



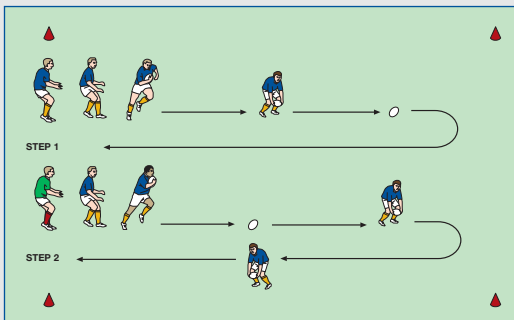
start line. A corner player has the ball and, as the line of three players runs forward, the ball is passed along the line. When they get to the other side it is passed to the front player. The centre player now runs across the grid passing the ball with the two players from that side of the grid. The grid continues for a set number of times overloading the centre runner before another player has a turn.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Two players perform the centre run.
- 2 One player must avoid a tackle bag.
- 3 Place two hit shields in front of a player. The player must pass before the shields, or after crashing through them and performing an 'arms through' pass.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Ball in both hands.
- 2 Maintain alignment - no forward passes.
- 3 Passes in front.
- 4 Quick hands.
- 5 Take the ball early.
- 6 Reach for the ball.
- 7 Quick pivot.
- 8 Rapid changes of direction.



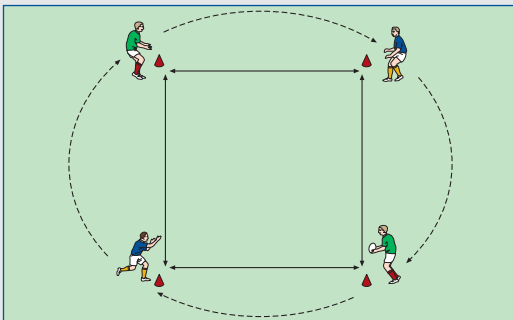
PICKING UP THE BALL RELAY

Players work in groups of five or six in a 10m by 20m grid with two balls per group. Players line up in single-file on one side of the grid. The front player initially has one ball and the second ball is on the 10m line. The ball is carried out 5m and placed on the ground. The ball on the 10m line is picked up and carried back to the start line and passed to the next player. The second player runs to the 10m line and places the ball on the ground and runs back to the start line picking up the ball on the 5m line on the way back. The ball is then passed to the third player and the activity continues.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for picking up the ball, i.e. straddle the ball, bend at hips and knee, scoop ball with rear hand and use the front hand to control.

26. RUNNING AND EVASION ACTIVITIES



RUNNING INTO SPACE

Groups of four players work in a 10m by 10 m grid with one ball and with one player on each cone. One player starts with the ball. The ball is passed around the grid. After passing the ball, each passer follows the ball, touching the ground at the foot of the next receiver before returning to their original position. Count the passes made in a given time or the time taken to make a set number of passes.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Pass in one direction and run in the other.
- 2 Take one player out. The ball continues along its original path with the non-passing player adjacent to the gap running to the gap to receive a pass.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Ball in both hands.
- 2 Pass in front of the receiver.
- 3 Reach to receive the pass.
- 4 Rapid changes of direction.
- 5 Sympathetic passes.
- 6 Work rate.



27. KICKING AND CATCHING KEY FACTORS

KICKING OUTCOME:

To gain territory or to regain possession of the ball.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Stand in balance.
- 2 Shoulder forward: right foot - left shoulder, left foot, right shoulder
- 3 Hold the ball in two hands so that its long axis is aligned with the foot.
- 4 Allow the ball to fall to the striking position in this alignment, while at the same time stepping onto the non-kicking foot, which should be in line with the target.
- 5 Swinging the kicking foot through the line of the ball, striking it along its long axis.
- 6 Adjusting the flight of the ball by adjusting the angle of the foot and the point at which the ball is struck.
- 7 Follow through with the kicking foot.
- 8 Extend the arm on the opposite side of the body for balance.

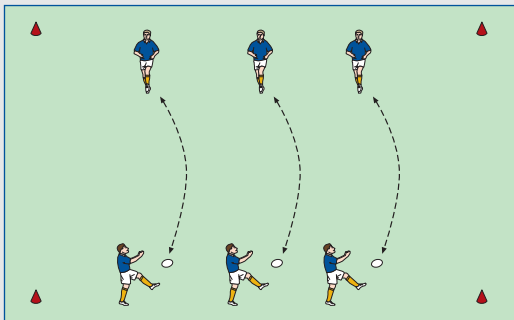
Throughout, keep the head down and eyes on the ball.

CATCHING OUTCOME:

To regain possession of the ball by catching it so as to retain possession once it has been caught.

KEY FACTORS:

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | Position to move towards the ball. | 5 | Call "My ball". |
| 2 | Assess whether the ball can be caught by staying on the ground or by jumping into the air to catch it. | 6 | Watch the ball into the hands. |
| 3 | Extend the arms in the direction of the ball as a guide. | 7 | Catch the ball at eye level, guiding it into the hands, arms and eventually into the body. |
| 4 | Position with the shoulder and hip towards opponents. | 8 | Brace the body in anticipation of opponents tackling the catcher. |



PAIR KICKING

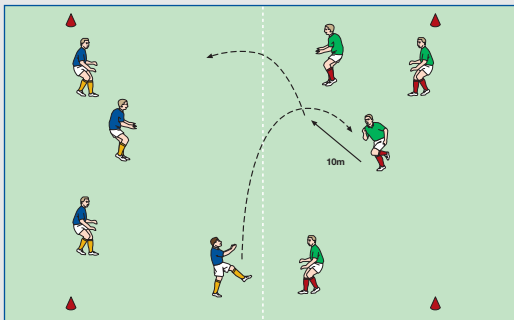
Players work in pairs with one player on the goal line and the other on the 22m line. They have one ball per pair. Players kick the ball accurately to each other across the grid. Punts and drop kicks should be made so that they can be caught on the full. For grubber kicks, the ball should almost stop before reaching the partner. Players should practise kicking with both left and right feet.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Increase pressure by reducing time to kick.
- 2 Increase the group size to three. The kicker follows the kick to challenge the catcher who then kicks to the third player, follows and challenges.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for kicking type.
- 2 Key factors for catching.



FORCE BACK

Two groups play on the full field with one ball.

RULES

- 1 All kicks must travel at least 15 metres.
- 2 Kick off from half way, as in a game.
- 3 If a kick is caught on the full, the catcher may advance 10m before kicking. If dropped, the catcher must retreat 10m.
- 4 If the ball is recovered but not caught, the next kick is made from the point of recovery.
- 5 If the ball is kicked into touch from inside the 22m line, the next kick is taken 15m in from where the ball went out. If kicked directly into touch outside the 22m, play restarts 15m in from the point of the kick.
- 6 Score one point if the ball crosses the goal-line, two points if it goes between the posts and three points for a drop kick between the posts.



30. KICK-OFF KEY FACTORS

THE DROP KICK AT RESTARTS

OUTCOME:

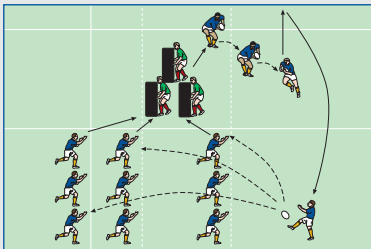
To restart play within the Laws governing restarts.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Hold the ball so that when it is dropped to the ground it bounces up in the same alignment and to the same height each time.
- 2 Step forward onto the non-kicking foot aligning the line of the instep with the target.
- 3 Drop the ball to the ground the width of the hips from the non-kicking foot.
- 4 Turn the shoulder of the non-kicking foot towards the target.
- 5 Keep the head down and over the ball.
- 6 Swing the kicking foot through the line of the ball so that it is struck at the point of maximum velocity.
- 7 Make contact with the bone on the top of the instep.
- 8 For low kicks strike the ball close to the ground, for high kicks let the ball bounce higher.
- 9 Follow through in a natural arc onto the toes of the non-kicking foot.
- 10 Use the arm of the non-kicking side of the body for balance.

KICK-OFF PRACTICE DRILL

Create a target area just past the 10m line on one side of the field, delineated by three players holding hit shield or tackle bags positioned to form a 5-7m triangle. Assemble the remaining team members in three lines behind the half way



line on the same side of the field one line in touch, the second on the 5m line and the third on the 15m line. At the centre on the half way the kicker has a number of balls that are drop kicked to the target area for the first players in each team to run forward and catch the ball. Those players marking the target provide stationary interference. Once the ball is recovered, the catching group passes and runs to the 22m line before returning the ball to the kicker.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Allow those in the target area to move.
- 2 Send two groups, one to recover the ball and create phase play the second to attack when the ball has been delivered.
- 3 Replace the target players with players who contest the ball.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Make recoverable kicks within the laws and with sufficient height.
- 2 Run towards the ball to catch it not with the flight of the ball so that the ball is moving away from the catcher.
- 3 Have a strategy for recovering deflected ball.



32. TACKLING KEY FACTORS

SKILL: THE SIDE-ON TACKLE

OUTCOME: To prevent territory being gained and to regain possession of the ball.

KEY FACTORS:

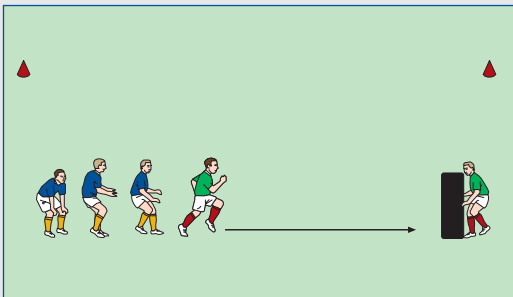
- 1 Position inside the ball carrier.
- 2 Run in a crouch.
- 3 Head up, back straight.
- 4 Sight the target - just below the ball carrier's buttocks.
- 5 Drive with legs to make firm contact with the shoulder on the target.
- 6 Head behind the ball carrier's body.
- 7 Wrap the arms around the ball carrier's lower torso.
- 8 Hold on tightly until the ball carrier is on the ground.
- 9 Get to the feet and recover the ball.

SKILL: FALLING IN THE TACKLE

OUTCOME: To retain possession of the ball. (To do this, the ball carrier will rely on the support of team-mates as the Laws require the ball to be played upon the completion of a tackle).

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Hold the ball firmly in two hands while running down the field.
- 2 When being tackled, turn with the impact.
- 3 Pass to supporting players.
- 4 Land on the back of the shoulder.
- 5 Lie at right angles to the line of running.
- 6 Pass the ball or place the ball so team-mates can recover it.



TACKLE BAG WORK

Organise players into groups of four or five with one ball and one tackle bag for each group. One player holds the tackle bag and remaining players line up 10m away.

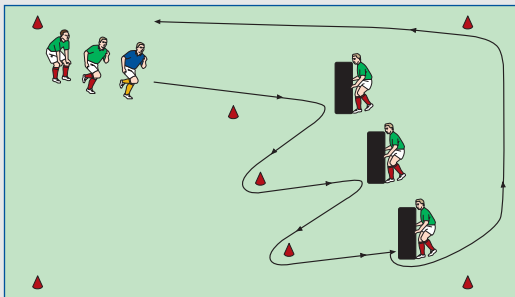
Players can perform a number of activities:

- 1 Tackle the bag.
- 2 Put a ball down at 5m, tackle the bag at 10m, recover the ball and pass to the next player in line.
- 3 Start with the ball on top of the bag. Tackle the bag, recover the ball.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for tackling.
- 2 Key factors for recovering the ball.
- 3 Work rate.

34. TACKLING ACTIVITIES

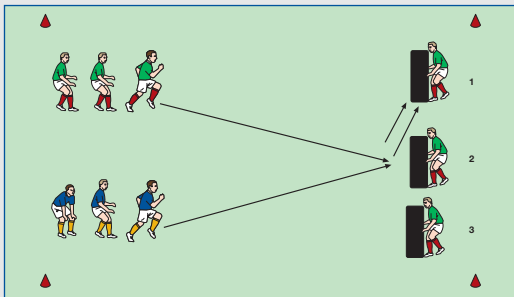


GETTING THE CORRECT LINE

Place up to eight held tackle bags, evenly spaced, along a line five metres apart. Place a cone 5-7m directly in front of each bag and one cone at 45° to the first bag in line with the other cones. The players start on the 45° cone and run forward, tackling the first bag. Once the bag has been tackled, the player runs backward to the cone directly in front of the first bag and moves forward at an angle to tackle the second and so on. Players tackle all the bags before replacing the bag holders.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Head to the side.
- 2 Contact with the shoulder.
- 3 Head up, back straight.
- 4 Drive with legs.
- 5 Hold on and squeeze.
- 6 Line of running from inside out.
- 7 Run back by running backwards.



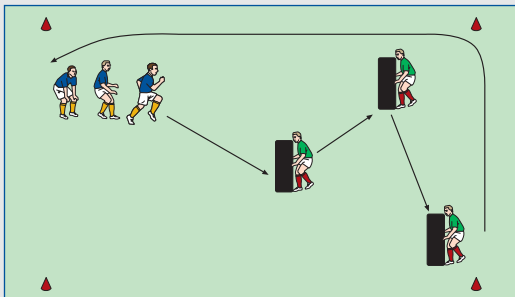
CALLING NUMBERS

Players work as a team in a grid 22m by 10m. Evenly space the tackle bags in a line 10m from the players. Number the bags.

Assemble the players in two lines in the centre of the line 10m from the bags. The coach calls a number and the first two players tackle the bag with that number. The number called will depend on the fitness of the players. Both players run towards the bag with the number called, but as soon as another number is called one of the tacklers breaks away and goes to the next bag that has been called.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Head to the side.
- 2 Contact with the shoulder.
- 3 Head up, back straight.
- 4 Drive with legs.
- 5 Hold on and squeeze.
- 6 Agility.
- 7 Anaerobic fitness.



REPETITION TACKLING

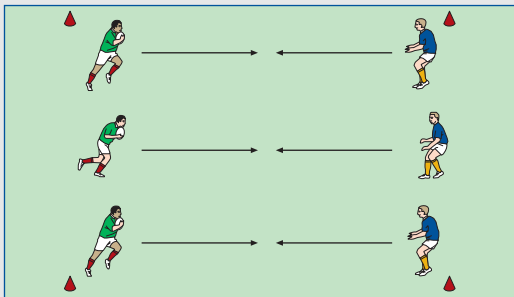
Players with tackle bags are arranged in zig-zag alignment every 5m along a 5m by 15m grid. On “Go” the players tackle each bag in succession. Once the players have completed their tackles they go to the back of the line. The second player leaves after the player ahead has completed two tackles.

ACTIVITY VARIATION:

The tackler picks up the tackle bag, thus allowing the former holder to tackle the next tackle bag.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for tackling.
- 2 Head to the side.
- 3 Contact with the shoulder.
- 4 Head up, back straight.
- 5 Drive with legs.
- 6 Hold on and squeeze.



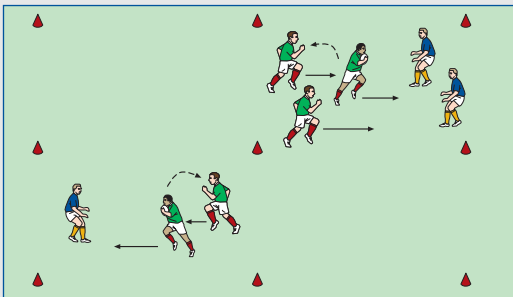
SPEAR TACKLING

Players of similar size work in pairs in a 5m by 22m channel. Players line up in two lines opposite partners. One line is designated '1' the other '2'. On the coach's call, '1' or '2' the two lines jog towards each other. The players in the line that has been called smother their partners, who attempt to lift the lead leg as they do so.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Head to the side.
- 2 Make contact with the shoulder just above the ball.
- 3 From a low position, drive up.
- 4 Wrap with the arms.
- 5 Drive with legs.
- 6 Hold on and attempt to turn the ball carrier towards team-mates.

38. TACKLING ACTIVITIES

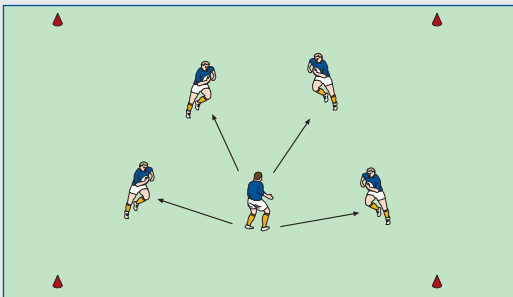


OVERLOAD DEFENCE

Groups work in grids the maximum size of which is 10m by 15m grids. Organise players into groups of no more than five players in which the attack outnumbers the defence. The number on each side and the size of the grid determines how much pressure the coach wishes to place on the defence. Groups play tackle rugby within their grids according to the laws of the game. The players rotate within the group after a try has been scored or possession lost.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Communication in attack and defence.
- 2 Defending inside out.
- 3 Key factors for tackling.
- 4 Key factors for falling in the tackle.
- 5 Picking up the ball at the tackle.
- 6 Using the extra player on attack.



TIME LIMIT TACKLES

Players work in groups of five in a 10m by 10m grid. Four players carry balls and one player is the tackler. The ball carrier tackles as many players as possible in a set time period (1 or 2 minutes). Once the time is up, the tackler becomes a ball carrier and another player becomes the tackler.

ACTIVITY VARIATION:

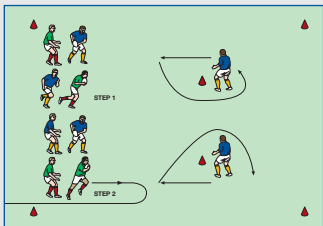
After each tackle, the tackler recovers the ball and the tackled player becomes the tackler.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Head to the side.
- 2 Contact with the shoulder.
- 3 Head up, back straight.
- 4 Drive with legs.
- 5 Hold on and squeeze.
- 6 Key factors for falling in the tackle.
- 7 Key factors for picking up the ball at the tackle.

MOVING INTO THE TACKLE

Players work in groups of five in a 10m by 10m grid. One player is the tackler positioning along the back line of the grid in the middle. Place a cone on this spot. The remaining players form two pairs, one pair on the left side



of the grid and one on the right. Each group has a ball and the ball carriers take turns at trying to run across the grid without being tackled. After each tackle is made the tackler retreats to the cone, running backwards so that the attack can be seen. The tackler reaching the cone cues the next ball carrier to run.

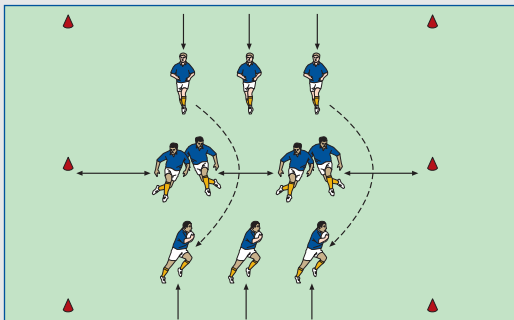
ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 The ball carrier must only attempt to beat the tackler on the outside.
- 2 The ball carrier may attempt to beat the tackler by running back inside.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Move into the tackle inside out.
- 2 Prevent the ball carrier cutting inside.
- 3 Head to the side.
- 4 Contact with the shoulder.
- 5 Head up, back straight.
- 6 Drive with legs.
- 7 Hold on and squeeze.
- 8 Key factors of falling in the tackle.

41. TACKLING ACTIVITIES



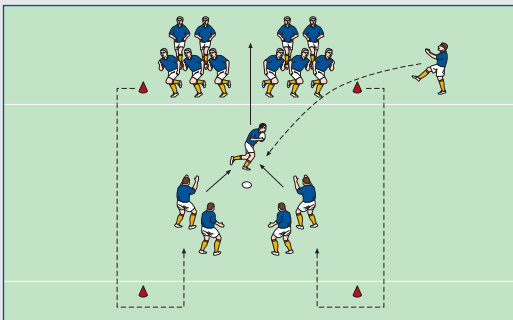
OFFENSIVE TACKLING

In a 10m by 10m grid set up three lines, one for groups of three tacklers on one side of the grid, one for groups of three ball carriers on the opposite side of the grid and one halfway across for two groups of two blockers.

The blockers bind as a two person front row and move sideways to block the path of the tacklers as they move forward to tackle the ball carriers. On “Go” both ball carriers and tacklers move forward, the ball carriers trying to reach the other side of the grid before they are tackled. As the space is limited, the tacklers should attempt to make a smother tackle.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Key factors for the smother tackle.
- 2 Body position.



TACKLE COMPETITION

In a 22m grid from the goal-line to the 22m line, group the players in two equal teams on the goal-line. The coach kicks the ball into the grid and a stipulated number of players from each group runs along the outside of the grid and enters the grid from the 22m line. Vary the number to compete after each contest. Here they compete for the ball and attempt to carry the ball over the goal-line; the group that succeeds scores a point for their team.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Play with no laws.
- 2 Gradually introduce the laws of the game so that eventually the contest is played according to the laws.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Tackling.
- 2 Falling in the tackle.
- 3 Support in attack and defence.
- 4 Eventually playing to the laws of the game.



43. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE SPIRAL PASS

OUTCOME:

To increase the length, speed and accuracy of the pass.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Catch the ball in both hands.
- 2 Turn the ball so that its long axis is approximately 30 degrees to the horizontal.
- 3 In the passing action, use the top hand to give power and to impart spin.
- 4 Use the bottom hand to provide stability and direction.



44. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE CLEARING PASS

OUTCOME:

To clear the ball from a source of possession to the back line.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Body in a crouch.
- 2 Sink at the hips, bend at the knees.
- 3 Right foot to the ball when passing with the right hand and left foot to the ball when passing with the left hand.
- 4 Other foot a comfortable distance away for stability, pointing in the direction of the pass.
- 5 Head over the ball, eyes on the ball.
- 6 When passing right, use the right hand for stability and the left hand for power.
- 7 When passing left, use the left hand for stability and the right for power. This is the same as the spiral pass.
- 8 Gain power for the pass by using each successive muscle group in very rapid succession from the foot to the passing hand.
- 9 Follow through with the passing hand by pointing it in the direction of the receiver.



45. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE DIVE PASS

OUTCOME:

To pass the ball quickly, without interference to the backs.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Position to see the ball and the receiver in the same line of vision.
- 2 In a crouch, move to the ball.
- 3 Sink at the knees, bend at the hips, close to the ball.
- 4 Spread the fingers to scoop under the ball, grasping it with the hands.
- 5 Drive with the legs and, at the same time, pass the ball to the target area using both hands.
- 6 Follow through and use the hands to control the direction, speed and flight of the ball.

THE LOB PASS

OUTCOME: To pass to team-mates in the space from which the player has moved away.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 With two hands on the ball, push the hands forward and slightly up.
- 2 Use the wrists and fingers to lob the ball into the gap.



46. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE PASS MADE THROUGH THE TACKLE

OUTCOME: To pass to supporting players running into the space that the ball carrier has drawn the tackler from.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Hold the ball firmly in two hands to withstand the impact of the tackle.
- 2 Upon being tackled, turn with the impact of the tackle.
- 3 Keep the arms free above the level of the tackle.
- 4 Before falling to the ground, pass the ball to the space the receiver is moving into.

THE SCREEN PASS

OUTCOME: To pass accurately in contact.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Drive into a defender side on.
- 2 Upon contact, remain standing.
- 3 Turn back on to the defender.
- 4 Screen the ball from interference.
- 5 Make a close pass to a team-mate.



47. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE SPIRAL PASS

OUTCOME:

To retain possession of the ball while in contact with opponents.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Run in a position that is able to withstand impact.
- 2 Carry the ball in both hands so that options can be performed immediately.
- 3 Anticipate contact by turning side on.
- 4 Drive into contact in this position by sinking low and driving up.
- 5 Spread the feet to shoulder width, sink at the hips, bend at the knees.
- 6 Turn to face team-mates.
- 7 Make the ball available.
- 8 Perform the best option to maintain continuity.



48. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

FALLING TO THE GROUND TO PICK UP THE BALL

OUTCOME: To regain possession of the ball.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Approach the ball in a crouch.
- 2 Slide into the ball on the hip and thigh.
- 3 Grasp the ball into the body.
- 4 Pass the ball to a team-mate, or recover it, or regain the standing position with the ball in possession.

THE FEND-OFF OR PUSH-OFF

OUTCOME: To evade a tackler and continue to run towards the opposing team's goal-line.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Prepare to sidestep or swerve around an opposing player.
- 2 Transfer the ball to the arm furthest from the tackler.
- 3 While sidestepping or swerving away from the tackler, allow the tackle to come within arm's length.
- 4 Using an open hand, push the tackler away by straightening the arm very firmly.



49. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE PLACE KICK

OUTCOME: To kick accurately to score points.

KEY FACTORS:

Choose a kicking tee that suits the player's kicking style.

1 Placing the ball

Lean the ball slightly forward to expose the "sweet spot". This is approximately one third of the way up the back seam of the ball.

2 Moving back

Before moving back, stand over the ball in the kicking position. Move back to a position that is comfortable:

- this is usually approximately 4-6 paces back from the ball and 2-3 paces to the left for right foot kickers and 2-3 paces to the right for left foot kickers.
- Watch the "sweet spot" when moving back.
- At the end of the run, stand facing the ball.

Before approaching the ball:

- Relax.
- Focus - use key words, e.g. "head down", "follow through".
- Use imagery to picture the complete kick.

3 The approach

- Approach by running in an arc to open up the hips and get maximum power.
- Place the non-kicking foot hip width from the ball with the line of the instep of the foot in line with the target.
- The side seam of the ball should be in line with the ankle.
- Move the non-kicking arm forward to turn the shoulder side on to the target.

4 Contact

- Bring the kicking foot down and through the strike zone.
- Keep the head directly above the ball.
- Make contact with the bone on top of the instep.

5 Follow through

- Follow through in an arc with the kicking foot.
- Rise onto the toes of the non-kicking foot.



50. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE FRONT-ON TACKLE

OUTCOME:

To prevent territory being gained and to regain possession.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Be in a low crouch.
- 2 Move slightly inside the ball carrier.
- 3 Move forward into the tackle.
- 4 Drive with the legs.
- 5 Make firm contact with the shoulder between the waist and the hips.
- 6 Wrap with the arms.
- 7 Turn with the impact.
- 8 Regain the feet and recover the ball.



51. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

TACKLING FROM BEHIND

OUTCOME:

To prevent territory being gained and to regain possession.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Target the waistband.
- 2 Drive with the legs as close to the ball carrier as possible.
- 3 Drive with the legs and make impact with the shoulder.
- 4 Wrap with the arms.
- 5 Regain the feet and recover the ball.



52. INDIVIDUAL SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE SMOTHER TACKLE (INCLUDING BALL RECOVERY)

OUTCOME:

As for the front-on tackle.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Move forward towards the ball carrier.
- 2 Plant the foot as close to the ball carrier as possible.
- 3 Drive with a shoulder firmly to make contact just above the position of the ball.
- 4 Continue to drive the ball carrier back.
- 5 Wrap with the arms to prevent the ball being released, or grab the ball carrier by the jersey.
- 6 Turn the ball carrier towards supporting team-mates or take the ball carrier to the ground, turning the player so that the ball has to be released, where the tackler's team can regain it.



53. UNIT SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE LINE-OUT

OUTCOME:

To obtain controlled possession of the ball so that the team has the greatest range of options with which to go forward.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Line up along the line of touch one metre from the opposing line-out in a formation that enables possession to be gained.
- 2 Throw accurately down the line of touch to the catcher.
- 3 Step to the line of touch and jump to secure possession either by catching or deflecting the ball.
- 4 Drive up with the arms to increase the height of the jump.
- 5 Support the catcher above the waist once the player has left the ground.
- 6 Catch or deflect the ball.
- 7 Move the ball and turn the body away from opposing players.
- 8 Land in a stable, fully supported body position.
- 9 Hold the ball low so that team-mates may drive in a low body position and secure the ball.
- 10 Bind with the catcher and other team-mates to form a protective screen.
- 11 Control the ball.
- 12 Deliver or drive forward and deliver the ball.



54. UNIT SKILL KEY FACTORS

THE SCRUM

OUTCOME:

To deliver the controlled ball to the half back from a stable scrum so that the team can perform its preferred attacking option.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Select according to body type.
- 2 Assemble quickly with the front row one arm's length from the opposing front row.
- 3 Bind securely but comfortably as a unit before engaging the opposition.
- 4 Engage by following the sequence "Crouch" - "Pause" - "Engage".
- 5 Crouch low so that the front rows drive up into position.
- 6 Upon engagement, head up, back straight, spine in line and square on.
- 7 Co-ordinate the throw-in with the scrum pushing forward. Have a call for this.
- 8 Hook the ball between the loose-head prop's feet.
- 9 Channel the ball to the right of the number 8.
- 10 Deliver the ball to the half back/scrum half.



55. UNIT SKILL KEY FACTORS

DEFENCE

OUTCOME: To prevent territory being gained and to regain possession of the ball.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Run straight.
- 2 Hold the ball in two hands.
- 3 Commit a defender.
- 4 Prop on the inside leg.
- 5 Turn side on to the defence, to face the supporting receiver.
- 6 Swing the arms through in the direction being passed to.
- 7 Use the elbows and wrist to control the speed and flight of the ball as the ball is released.
- 8 Follow through with the hands in the direction of the pass.
- 9 Pass to the “target” area at chest height in front of the receiver.



56. UNIT SKILL KEY FACTORS

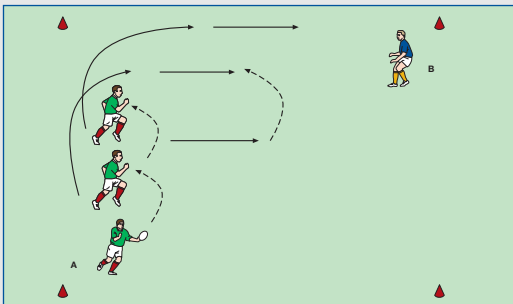
BACK LINE ATTACK

OUTCOME:

To create space through which one member of the back-line is able to penetrate the opposition's initial line of defence.

KEY FACTORS:

- 1 Stand sufficiently far apart to isolate each defender.
- 2 Align to give sufficient time to pass the ball along the back line.
- 3 Retain the alignment as the back-line moves forward.
- 4 Draw an opposition defender before passing.
- 5 Pass in front of the next back in the line so that the ball is easy to catch and peripheral vision is retained.
- 6 Create a gap just before the tackle line for the extra player to run through the initial line of defence.
- 7 Enter the gap to ensure the defence has insufficient time to tackle the extra player.
- 8 Use the disorganisation in the defence to pass to an unmarked player.
- 9 Accelerate through the gap.
- 10 Use support players to continue the attack.

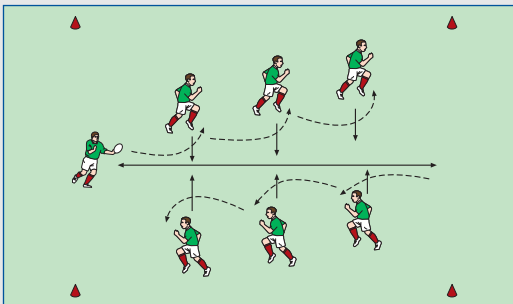


DOUBLE AND REVERSE

Players work in groups of five or six with one ball in a quarter of the field. Two half backs are required. The remaining players form a back line, A and B. The ball starts with halfback A. The ball is passed quickly along the back line. After making a pass, backs double around to the end of the line to receive and make another pass. The half backs remain stationary. When the last back receives their second pass, the ball is passed to half back B, who repeats the activity in the opposite direction, with the second back line. This skill activity makes players more aware of the players around them, and the position of the gain line and tackle line.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Align as flat as skill will allow.
- 2 Maintain alignment and realign quickly after each attack.
- 3 Run straight.
- 4 Apply the key factors for passing.



BACK LINE FORMATION

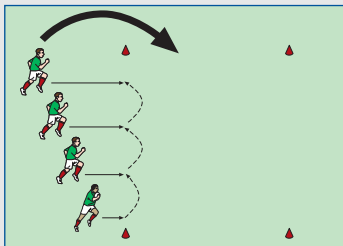
Players work in groups of nine with two balls per group. Appoint a half back / scrum half. The remaining players form two back lines, facing each other across a centre line. The halfback starts at position A, passing the ball, setting back line 1 in motion. As soon as the pass is made, the half back runs to position B, picks up the other ball and passes to back line 2 in motion. Once this pass has been made, the halfback runs back to position A ready to pass to back line 1 again. Continue for a given number of plays with back lines realigning each time the ball is passed along the line. Have the players change position to become familiar with being out of position, as often happens during phase play.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Align, maintain alignment and realign quickly.
- 2 Run straight.
- 3 Support only after making a pass that commits at least one defender.

AROUND THE CONES

Players work in groups of five around the perimeter of a 20m by 20m grid. Players line up as a back line from the first cone running towards the grid. The ball is passed along the back line so that it gets to the last player before and inside the second cone. The last receiver puts the



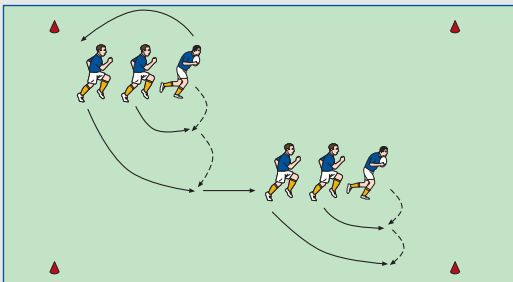
ball at the cone and the players re-align on this cone. After the ball has been passed along the line once again, the last receiver puts it down next to cone three, and similarly at cone four when it has been passed from cone three. Once around the grid results in four attacks - one from each side of the grid.

ACTIVITY VARIATIONS:

- 1 Reverse the direction of the attack.
- 2 Introduce a penetrating player in the back-line movement. This player can enter between any passing players or outside the last player.
- 3 Allow the penetrating player to break through the gain line and play inside the grid where the player is supported by the other backs to score on the other side of the grid.
- 4 Place defenders on the gain line and, eventually, inside the grid. The number and their positioning will depend on the players' skill levels and what the players wish to achieve.

KEY POINTS:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Alignment and realignment. | 4 Linear support. |
| 2 Running straight, creating space. | 5 Lateral support. |
| 3 Creating depth when passing. | 6 Decision making. |

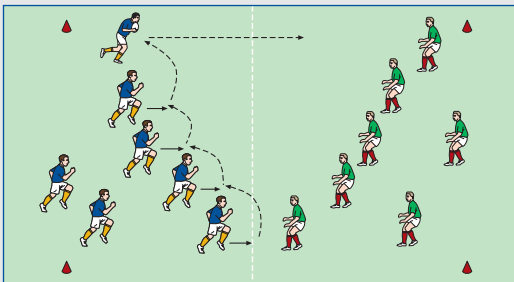


DECISION MAKING ARCS

Players work in groups of five in a 20m by 20m grid with one ball per group. Players line up in single file on one side of the grid, behind the ball carrier. The four receivers run in an arc to the left or the right to receive a pass from the player inside them. Once the last player has received a pass, all players form a line behind this player. Once the single file line has been formed, the players 'arc' once again, receiving a pass from the player inside them as they do so. The activity continues for the length of the grid. Introduce defenders who line up in single file facing the attack and arc out to defend each attacker. The number of defenders will be determined by the skill of the attack, but it will always be less than the attack so a defensive decision has to be made as to who to tackle. Based on this, the attack will practise identifying and passing to the unmarked player.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Using running lines inside out to create space on the outside.
- 2 Committing the defender.
- 3 Pulling the pass back to create space for the receiver.
- 4 Scanning to "read" what the defence is doing.
- 5 Identifying and passing to the unmarked player.



BACK LINE CONTINUITY

Two back lines are organised in half a field - an attacking line and a defensive line. The coach rolls the ball to the attacking group to commence play. The other group defends.

RULES IN ATTACK:

- 1 All players except the wing must pass the ball. They cannot take a gap.
- 2 The wing can take the outside gap only.
- 3 Once the gap has been taken or a ball carrier is held, the ball is placed on the ground.

RULE IN DEFENCE:

- 1 Use 'hold' tackles only. Once the ball is on the ground the coach calls which group is to be in possession following the stoppage. The coach may interrupt play at any time.

KEY POINTS:

- 1 Alignment.
- 2 Create space for your group, reduce it for the other group.
- 3 Take immediate advantage of a turnover of possession.



62. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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