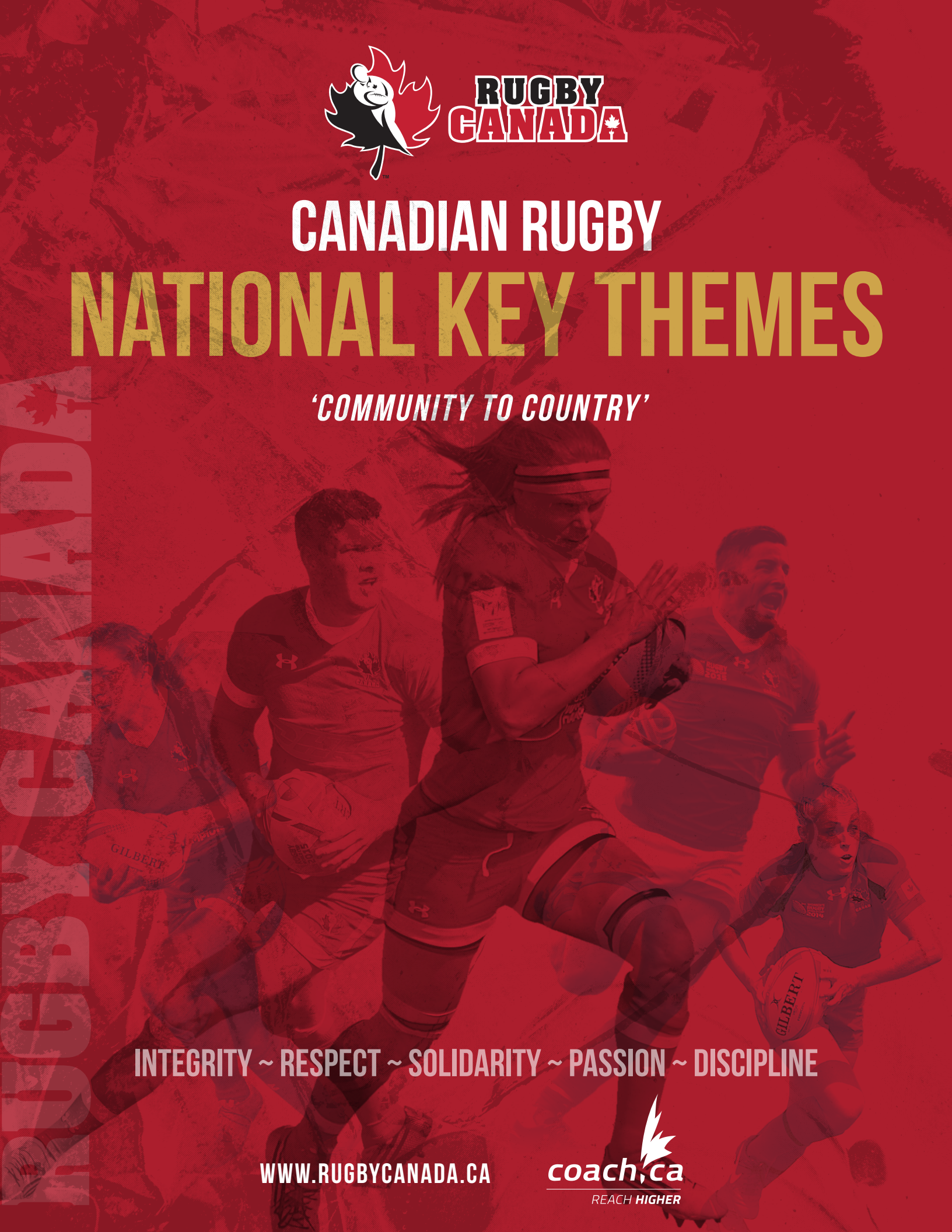
RUGBY CANADA

CANADIAN RUGBY
NATIONAL KEY THEMES

'COMMUNITY TO COUNTRY'



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Ciaran Hearn
National Senior Men's 15s
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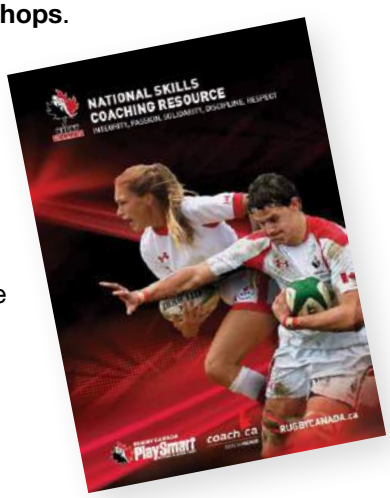
'TAKING KIDS FROM COMMUNITY TO COUNTRY'

January 2016 sees the launch of **Rugby Canada**'s new strategic plan. The Rugby Canada strategic plan emphasizes the importance of developing skills during **Learn to Train** and **Train to Train** stage of Rugby **Canada's Long Term Rugby Development Plan**. This will be achieved in part with the delivery of **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes Professional Development Workshops**.



The **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes** will be delivered to U12 through to U16 coaches in both Rugby Clubs and High Schools through a coordinated National Training and Education Calendar delivered by **Rugby Canada's Trained Professional Development** Workforce.

The **National Key Skills Resource** is a document that can be used alongside the **Rugby Canada National Skills Coaching Resource**.

STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5	STAGE 6	STAGE 7	STAGE 8
ACTIVE START	FUNdamentals KICK OFF to Rugby!	LEARNING TO TRAIN DEVELOP the Basics	TRAINING TO TRAIN BUILD the Rugby Hard Drive	TRAINING TO COMPETE OPTIMIZE Rugby Potential	TRAINING TO PERFORM MAXIMIZE Rugby Performance	ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE OPTIMAL Rugby Performance	ACTIVE FOR LIFE
GOAL Promote fun and participation, development of movement skills	**GOAL** Focus on sport skills development	**GOAL** Enhance overall sport skills including core rugby skills	**GOAL** Promote rugby specific skill development	**GOAL** Develop rugby specialization and position-specific skills	**GOAL** Develop core skills and position-specific skills	**GOAL** Achieve optimal performance	**GOAL** Support active involvement in rugby and/or healthy lifestyle
AGES Males 0-6 Females 0-6	**AGES** Males 6-9 Females 6-8	**AGES** Males 9-12 Females 8-11	**AGES** Males 12-16 Females 11-15	**AGES** Males 16-19 Females 15-18	**AGES** Males 19-23 Females 18-21	**AGES** Males 23+/- Females 21+/-	**AGES** All

RUGBY CANADA'S LONG TERM RUGBY DEVELOPMENT

All of Rugby Canada's programs and documents are aligned with its **Long Term Rugby Development (LTRD)** model. All skills in this document are aimed at the following identified ages with the coach monitoring the competency of the player and adjusting any parameters (e.g. distance of pass) and progressions as needed. The **Rugby Canada National Key Themes Resource** focuses on the following LTRD stage:

LTRD STAGE 4 – TRAIN TO TRAIN

Objectives:

- Develop endurance, strength, and speed
- Develop and consolidate rugby-specific skills, and tactics
- Identify rugby-specific talent

WHAT ARE THE CANADIAN RUGBY NATIONAL KEY THEMES?

Four **National Key Themes** have been identified and agreed through consultation with **Rugby Canada's National Coaches, High Performance Coaches** and **Provincial Coaches**, facilitated by the **Training & Education Team**. This resource is aimed to assist with structuring your training sessions as well as challenging players' skills under pressure:

- Run, Catch & Pass
- Ball Out of Contact
- Tackle Technique & Tracking
- Breakdown & Clearout

These four **National Key Themes** have been identified as being vital in order to develop players capable of playing an exciting/enjoyable style of rugby.

- Have the capability to move the ball around the field effectively
- Create a quick breakdown
- Play a fast and effective style of rugby
- Develop important aspects of defence

The aim of the **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes Resource** is to highlight the benefits that this resource offers to all coaches and players, and supports it's implementation into club and school training sessions. This resource is further supported by professional development workshops offered across the country.

BENEFITS FOR PLAYERS

A clear benefit of this resource is to support the development of our young athletes that will aim to increase their understanding as they acquire a greater knowledge of the core skills improving them as individuals.

- Give an opportunity for a player to be more effective in a rugby game
- Allow an understanding of how to use the **National Key Themes** in a game setting, improving and developing their skills and influence on the game
- Increase the ability to be more creative by varying styles of play in Schools, Clubs, Provincial and National Age Grade Programs
- Be able to enjoy a faster paced game and increased competitiveness

BENEFITS FOR COACHES

The **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes Resource** can add greater depth to your coaching sessions when used alongside team and unit skills. As a coach you will be challenged to:

- Focus on key factors
- Be able to observe and analyze critically
- Ensure that feedback is specific to the key factors of the skill
- Correct faults as well as praise good practice
- Further develop your club/school style of play/ethos
- **Develop a more skillful and effective rugby player**

When the C**anadian Rugby National Key Themes** are aligned with the Principles of Attack and Defence, we are able to appreciate how important these **National Key Themes** are to playing the game of rugby:

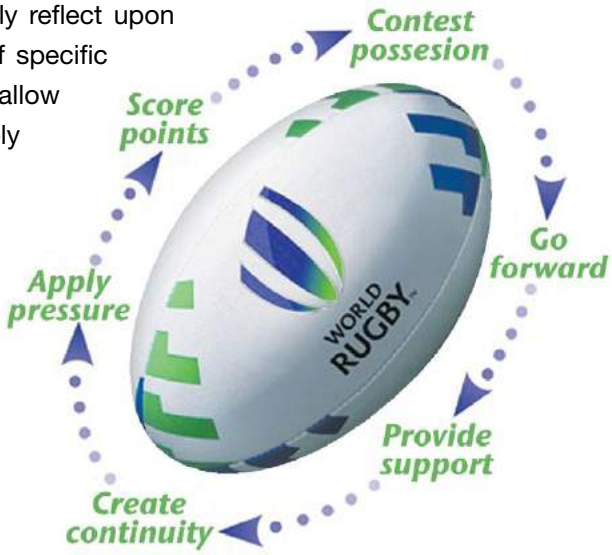
ATTACK

1. Gain Possession – (Run, Catch & Pass)
2. Go Forward – (Run, Catch & Pass / Ball Out of Contact)
3. Support – (Run, Catch & Pass / Ball Out of Contact / Breakdown & Clearout)
4. Continuity – (Run, Catch & Pass / Ball Out of Contact / Breakdown & Clearout)
5. Pressure & Points

DEFENCE

1. Go Forward (Tracking)
2. Support
3. Apply Pressure – (Tackle Technique)
4. Regain Possession – (Tackle Technique / Breakdown & Clearout)
5. Attack – (Run, Pass & Catch / Ball Out of Contact)

The benefits as a coach in being able to develop individual skills has been clearly outlined, another benefit will be the capability of critically observing and giving positive feedback to your athletes with specific key factors. This capability will allow you as a coach to effectively reflect upon individual / unit / team strengths. An increased knowledge of specific key factors of the **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes** will allow you to develop the way you want your team to play and ultimately assist in the innovation and planning of your coaching program.



BENEFITS FOR PERFORMANCE RUGBY

During the consultation process with the national, provincial and high performance staff, the clear message was that if we can perform **National Key Themes** effectively under pressure then this will create a foundation to further develop the players.

As a nation, if we are able to effectively implement these themes in a game environment then we will see a benefit to our provincial and national age grade programs.

The **Canadian Rugby National Key Themes**, Run, Catch & Pass, Ball Out of Contact, Tackle Technique, Breakdown & Clearout are unquestionably fundamental themes for the game of rugby, and will form a key part of the competencies that a player is measured against during the early stages of the **Player Development Program**. A player that can execute the **National Key Themes** effectively under pressure will be easier to identify to our Provincial and National Age Grade Coaches during Provincial and National Age Grade try outs.

An integral part of **Rugby Canada's Talent Identification** criteria will be observing players that have an introduction to, and basic development of, **Rugby Canada's National Key Themes**

A player that is able to run forward and while passing and catching a ball under pressure, can also pass the ball out of contact effectively is the foundation of which a team can be built. Additionally, the ability to retain the ball in contact, take the ball to the ground securely, ensure quick presentation for fast ball retention as well as bringing an opponent to ground quickly are vital fundamentals to team success.

For any player that has ambitions to be considered for Provincial and National Age Grade Programs, it is imperative that they are familiar with the key factors of the **National Key Themes** and able to execute them consistently and effectively under pressure.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE

This resource has been designed to assist coaches through the use of **'Game Sense Coaching'**. The resource includes gradual build up skill practices, drills that can be used as part of whole-part-whole learning activities and learning activities. The resource is used best when it is integrated into a series of sessions.

By using a coaching process you will be able to *introduce* key factors of the **National Key Themes**, *demonstrate* the key factors, *Observe and Analyze* the key factors of the core skills and *review* the key factors critically & positively.

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Games are the most effective way to create pressure and enable players to develop core skills and game understanding.

As coaches we aim to create an athlete centred environment where the athletes are able to make mistakes as well as be challenged in their decision making. Coaches should be aware of when to push information and when to pull information as well as the types of questions that a coach uses.

A coach must be able to provide both critical and positive feedback related directly to the instructional objectives. Which is directly related to the aim of the session, set out during the introduction stage of the coaching process. A challenge is to ensure that the coach focuses on 2-3 key factors throughout the session and resist temptation to try and 'fix everything'.

A coach that focuses on too many key factors may dilute the message that they are trying to coach/teach the athlete, causing confusion or too much information for the athlete to take in.

A benefit of this resource is that it has broken the **National Key Themes** into the relevant key factors of each of the four **National Key Themes**.

Once a coach and the player feels that they are performing the key factors of the **National Key Themes** consistently and effectively under pressure then it may be time to progress and challenge the players.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING WHEN USING GAMES:

- What safety considerations need to be taken into account?
- What is the aim of your session?
- What tactics and skills do you want to develop within the game?
- What modifications / exaggerations can you make to emphasize these tactics and skills?
- What is the main obstacle for the player to overcome?
- How is success measured?
- What questions can you ask players to develop their decision making?
- What progressions and regressions can you make?

An effective coaching tool is to use a whole-part-whole approach. This is when a coach facilitates a game (whole), once the coach identifies a specific core skill to be developed, the coach can then use a skill practice (part).The coach can then put the players back into a game or modified activity (whole) to challenge the players further in a game related environment.

PROGRESSION & REGRESSION OF GAMES & PRACTICES

It is important that a coach is capable of progressing and regressing a session based on observation and analysis of the players during the session. This resource has been developed to allow progressions and regressions.

Effective use of progressions in sessions is when there is a need to challenge the players in order to further their development. Regressions are effective when there is a need to re-focus on a more specific area of the game, or the players are not able to execute the **National Key Themes** effectively.

Coaches should look to move very quickly from unopposed conditions, as there is little to no pressure put on the players. The success also brings about a false impression of their ability to deliver the same standards under match conditions.

Pressure can be applied in several different ways:

1. Reduce time
2. Reduce space
3. Increase intensity
4. Provide and / or condition opposition

More often than not an opposition will provide all of these elements, conditioning the practice and increasing the degree or pressure as the **National Key Themes** develops. Pressure is essential to developing a technique into a skill.

EXAMPLES OF SOME MODIFICATIONS / CONDITIONS THAT CAN BE MADE TO PROGRESS OR REGRESS PRACTICES INCLUDE:

- Create more than one area that points can be scored in
- Dimensions of playing area (wide to develop expansive attack)
- Number of passes allowed
- Banning Kicking / promoting kicking
- Number of players in attack / defence
- Scoring system (e.g. could be for number of passes or effective ball out of contact)
- Risk / Rewards
- Time Allowed
- Specific roles for players
- Adding / Deleting game rules

'RUN, CATCH & PASS'

RUN

- Call for the pass (sharing information)
- Hips Square
- Scan (Eyes towards the ball)

CATCH

- Hands towards the ball
- Soft hands to receive the ball, fingers forward
- Ten finger contact and re-shape the ball
- Ball centred
- Scan & Listen, Make a decision
- Hips Square

PASS

- Eye Contact with target in which pass is being made to
- Move ball across the body
- Fire fingers towards target
- Follow through the pass

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Chaos Square

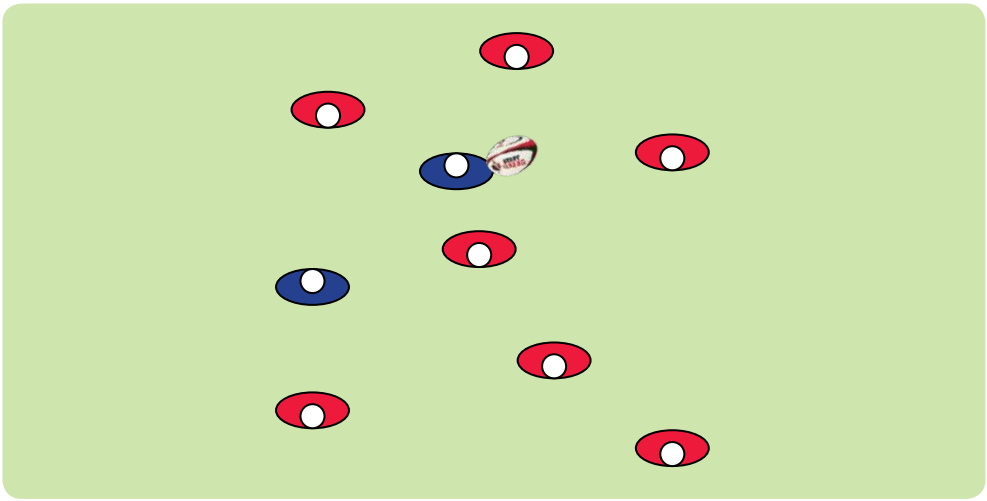
Objective To develop pass and catch while moving under pressure

Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags 0 — Area 10 x 10 (metre)
- Cones 4 — Suits 0 — Players 10
- Shields 0 — Bibs 10 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Create a square marked out with 4 cones, 10mx10m
- Start with two players wearing a bib
- The players wearing the bibs have to try and tag a player that is not wearing a bib
- Once a player is tagged they put a bib on and join the team of players in bibs.
- The players wearing the bibs can pass in any direction but can not run with the ball



Key Factors

- Scan
- Hands towards the ball
- Scan and Listen

Progression / Regression

- Increase/decrease the size of the grid
- Add more than one ball
- Give a time restriction on how long the bibs have to tag everyone

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Passing Under Pressure

Objective To develop run, catch and pass while moving under pressure against a defensive line

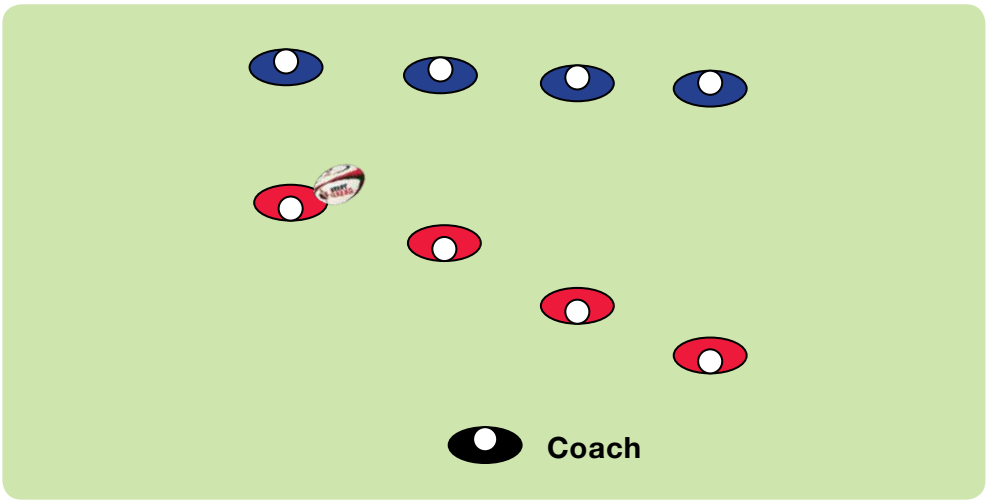
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags 0 — Area 15 x 20 (metre)
- Cones 4 — Suits 0 — Players 8
- Shields 0 — Bibs 0 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Create a rectangle marked out with 4 cones, 15mx20m
- Start with 4 attackers facing 4 defenders that are 20m apart
- The coach should position themselves behind the attacking line
- The attacking line and defensive line will move forward on the coaches whistle
- Before the coach blows their whistle, the coach should identify a player in the defensive line that should retreat after moving forward for 5m to create a whole for the attack to go through

Diagram



Key Factors

- Call for the ball
- Scan & Listen, Make a Decision
- Hips Square

Progression / Regression

- Increase/decrease the speed in which the defenders can come forward.
- The defender that retreats becomes a second line of defence that the attack must beat
- Increase/decrease the size of the grid

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Middle Man Drill – Diamond

Objective Isolate Run, Catch & Pass

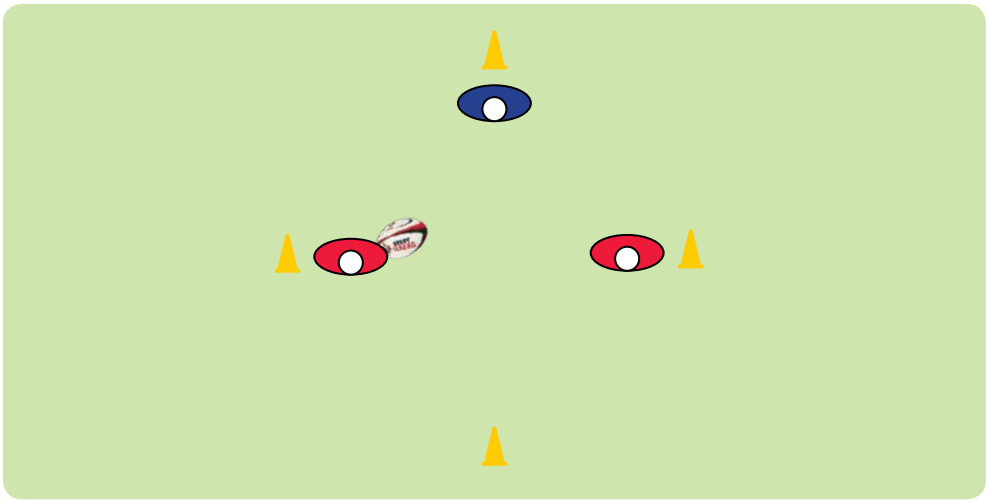
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 5 x 5 (metre)
- Cones 4 — Suits n/a — Players 3
- Shields 0 — Bibs 0 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Cones are in a diamond shape with feeders starting on opposing cones
- Working player receives pass and transfers quickly working back and forth between cones

Diagram



Key Factors

- Hands towards the ball
- Hips Square
- Move ball across the body

Progression / Regression

- Variation – working player is walking
- Variation – Change distance of the pass
- Progression – add defender to 4th cone

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Drift Touch

Objective To pressure the Run, Catch & Pass encouraging to play with width

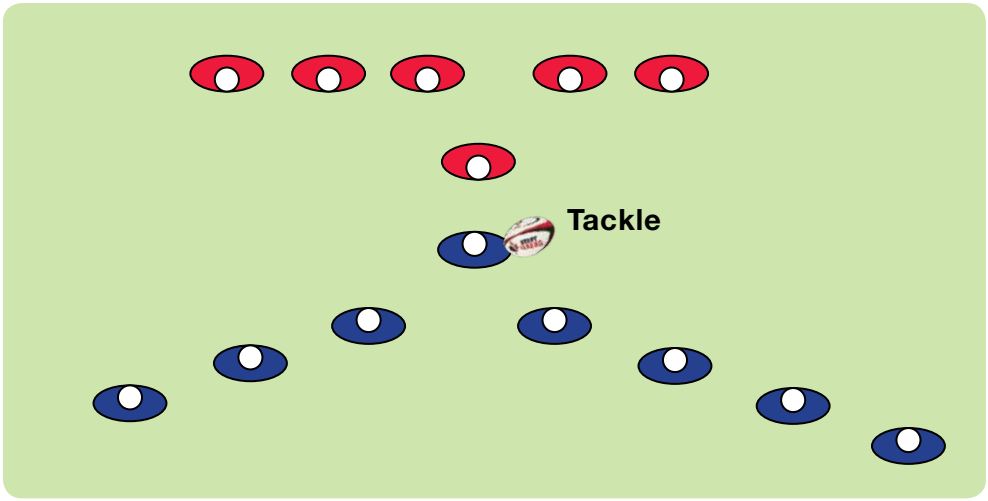
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 50 x 40 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 14 (8 Attack, 6 Defense)
- Shields 0 — Bibs 8 — Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- 8 attackers vs 6 defenders
- Once an attacker is touched the defense must link arms with the defender who made the touch
- The attacking player when touched must present the ball effectively on the ground
- When the scrum half plays the ball the defense may release
- Attack have 6 phases to score

Diagram



Key Factors

1. Ball centred
2. Scan & listen – make a decision
3. Move ball across the body

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the number of attackers
- Increase or decrease the number of defenders
- Increase or decrease the size of the playing area

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice The Diamond

Objective To isolate and develop Catch & Pass

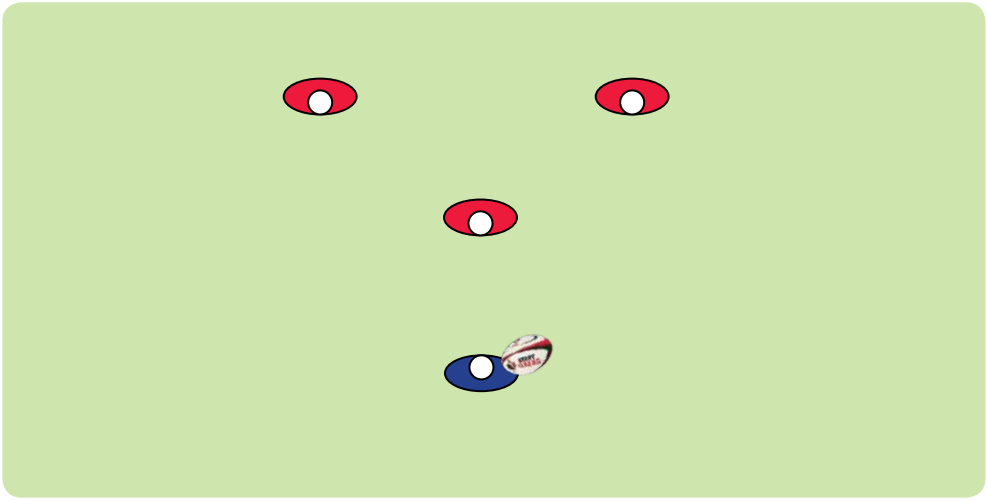
Equipment Required

- Balls 2 Bags n/a Area 1 x 7 (metre)
- Cones 4 Suits n/a Players 4
- Shields 0 Bibs 8 Time 10 minutes

Practice Description

- Work as a group of four
- Feeder pops to passer
- Passer rotates passing left and right

Diagram



Key Factors

1. Eye contact with target pass is being made to
2. Elbow in
3. Follow through the pass

Progression / Regression

- Vary the width depth of receivers (develop a variety of passing techniques including Pop Pass and Push Pass)
- Replace the Rugby Ball with a weighted Pass Developer Rugby Ball

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Role of the first receiver

Objective To develop run, catch and pass skill of the first receiver

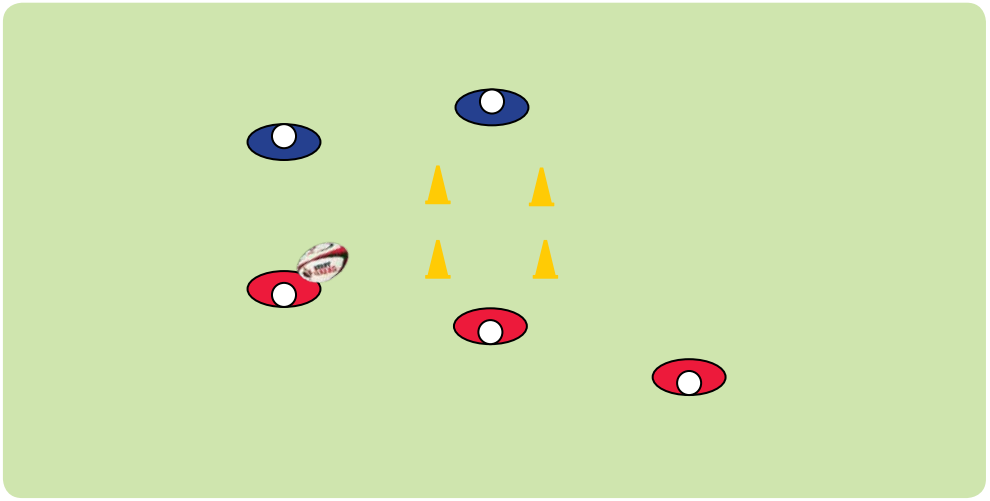
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags 0 — Area open field
- Cones 4 — Suits 0 — Players 5
- Shields 0 — Bibs 0 — Time 10 minutes

Practice Description

- Create a square with 4 cones 5mx5m in front of the first receiver
- A clearing pass should be made into the square
- The first receiver should give and catch and pass in the square
- The defender opposite the first receiver can pressure the pass
- A defender can come from the clearing pass position to pressure the first receiver

Diagram



Key Factors

- Move ball across body
- Fire fingers towards pass
- Follow through the pass

Progression / Regression

- Increase/decrease the speed in which the defender can come forward
- Increase/decrease the size of the square the catch and pass should be made
- The defender can make a two handed touch and develop to fill contact

BALL OUT OF CONTACT

BALL CARRIER

- Ball Carrier to identify space (Towards the gain line)
- Carry ball in two hands centred
- Attack defender, accelerate, use foot work, win the contest one handed off load – (Decision Making Opportunity)
- Leg Drive through contact, beyond shoulders of the defender
- Turn shoulders and hips to locate support player
- Timed offload to the support player (Pop Pass)

IF THE PLAYER GOES TO GROUND

- Fall to ground slowly
- Score try land on ball
- Pivot onto hip
- Is there an opportunity to pop off the floor – (Decision Making Opportunity)
- Pop ball to support runner

SUPPORT PLAYER

- Recognition of Offload
- Adjust support line to ball carrier
- Support ball carrier from depth
- Hands up
- Attack and break the gain line

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Support Touch

Objective Effect CONTINUITY at the breakdown through close support

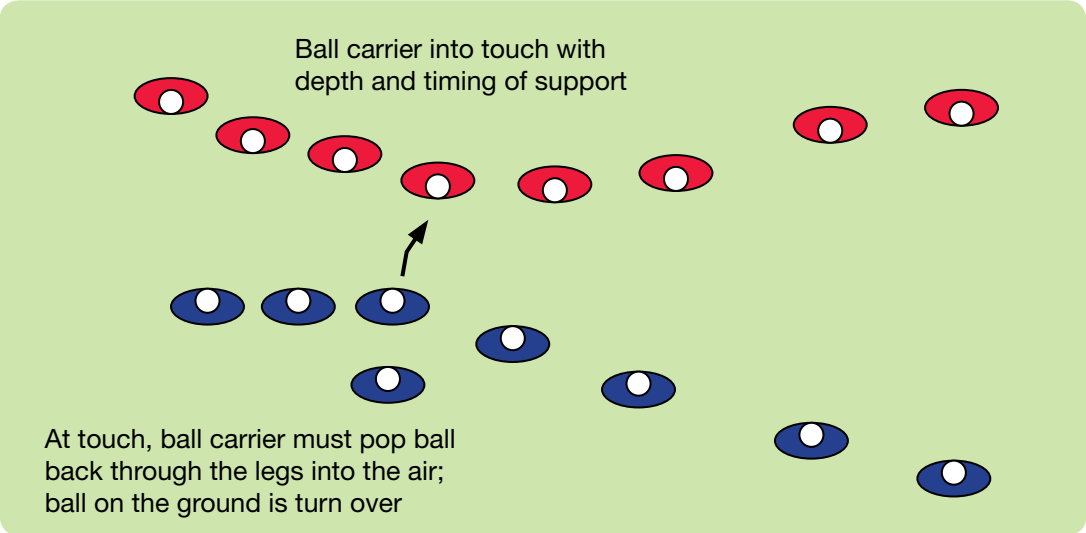
Equipment Required

• Balls	2	Bags n/a	Area 30m x 40m (metre)
• Cones	1 stack	Suits n/a	Players 16 +
• Shields	n/a	Bibs 8	Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Touched ball carrier must immediately pop ball back between legs
- Must not be targeted or thrown to a support player
- Support players must take ball in the air
- Ball touching ground is turnover

Diagram



Key Factors

- Ball Carrier to identify space (towards the gain line)
- Carry ball in two hands

Support Player

- Recognition of offload
- Support ball carrier from depth
- Hands up

Progression / Regression

- Limit time to make the pop: 2sec, 1sec, immediate
- On touch ball carrier must land on ball then roll before pop
- Reduce numbers on defence to increase success

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Ball Out of Contact

Objective Looking for opportunities to evade defender and opportunities to offload the ball

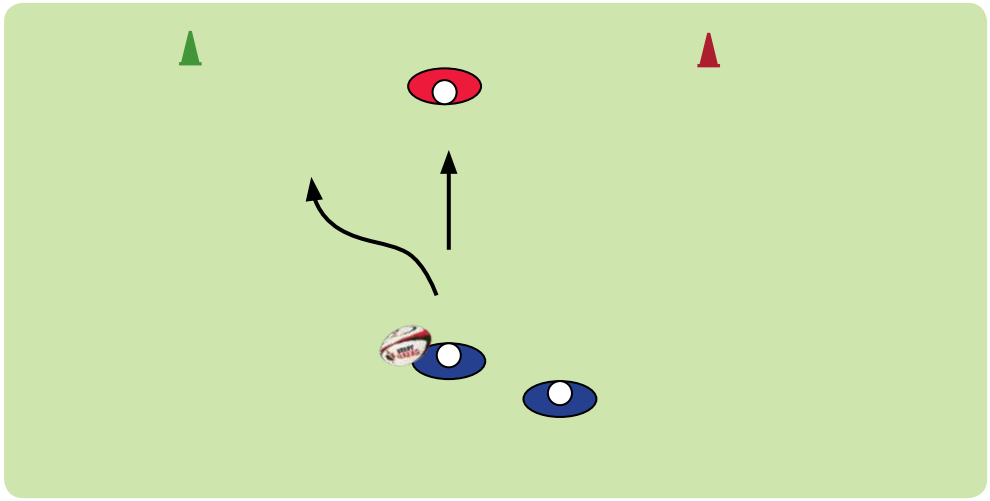
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 5 x 6 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 3
- Shields n/a — Bibs 2 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Attacking player stands two meters from defender
- Coach calls a color and player evades towards that color cone

Diagram



Key Factors

- Attack defender, accelerate, use footwork, win the contest
- Leg drive through contact, beyond shoulders of the defender

Support Player

- Adjust support line to ball carrier
- Attack and break the line

Progression / Regression

- Coach to determine how early or later color call comes into activity
- Cones to be taken out of activity and players to read the space against defender
- Use as part of whole-part whole, when in a game reward with a a point when key factors are executed

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Ball Out of Contact

Objective Keep ball alive while moving forward

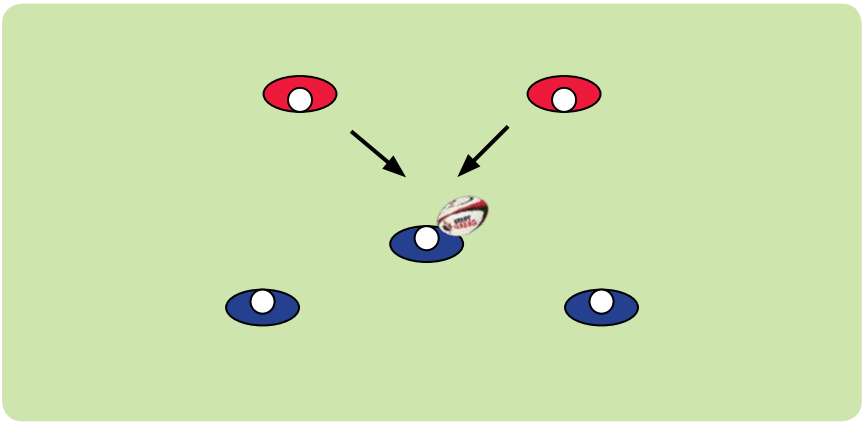
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 5 x 6 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 3
- Shields n/a — Bibs 2 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Defenders to make a 2 handed waist height tackle
- Encourage a 1 handed inside pass
- Encourage a 1 handed outside pass
- If the ball carrier goes to ground encourage a pop pass from the floor
- Develop the clearing pass if the pop pass from the floor is not an option

Diagram



Key Factors

- Carry ball in two hands centred
- Leg drive through contact, beyond shoulders of the defender
- Timed offload to support player

Progression / Regression

- Manipulate the pressure that a defender can put on the ball carrier
- A tackle can be a light scrag/grab
- Develop the tackle to full contact
- Apply the pressure of a two man tackle

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Offloading Tree

Objective To develop support lines for the ball carrier for an effective off load

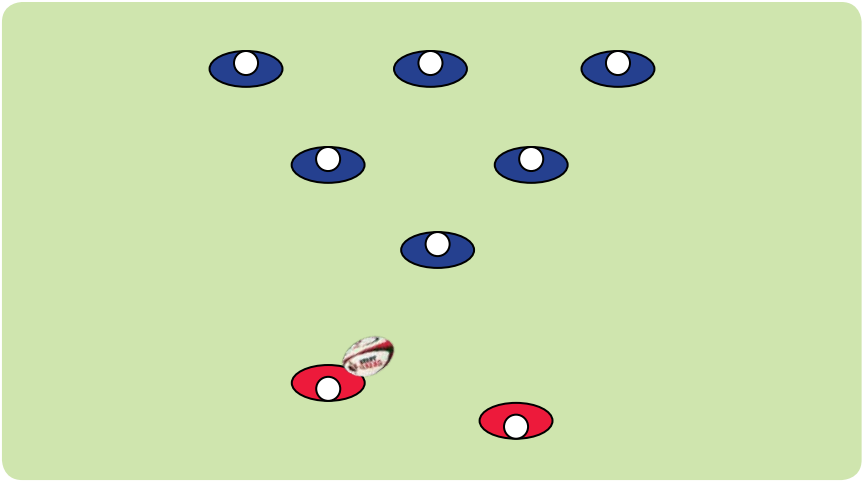
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 Bags 0 Area open field
- Cones 0 Suits 0 Players 8
- Shields 0 Bibs 0 Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Two attackers must create a ball out of contact situation with the first defender
- Once the first defender has been beaten, the defender becomes an attacker
- There is now a 3v2 opportunity to create a ball out of contact situation
- Once the two defender has been beaten they become attackers
- The final situation is a 5v3 opportunity to create a ball out of contact situation

Diagram



Key Factors

- Carry the ball in two hands centred
- Attack the defender, accelerate, use footwork, win the contest
- Leg drive through contact

Progression / Regression

- Defenders can either make a two handed ‘hold’ tackle and progress to full contact
- Allow the defenders to have the freedom to move forward as soon as the attackers have made a success offload
- Increase/decrease the size of the area to work in

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Popping or Clearing Pass Touch

Objective Improving ball out of contact from the ground skills

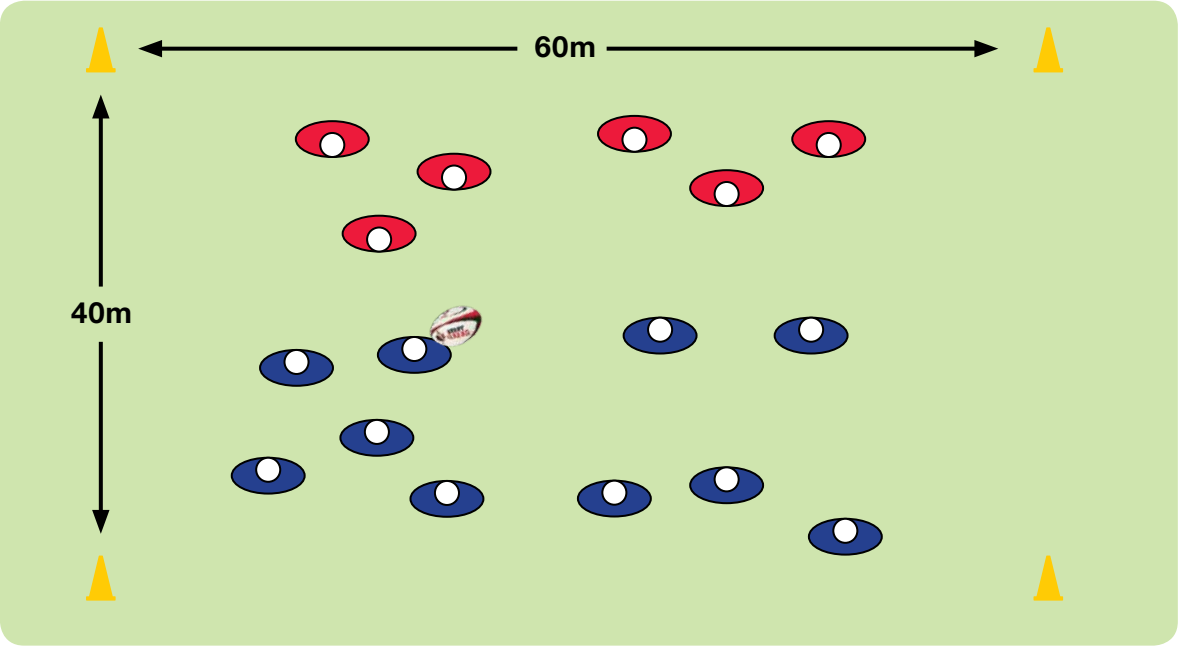
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 60 x 40 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 16 per game
- Shields n/a — Bibs 8 — Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Game of standard touch (8-a-side)
- If the defender touches the ball carrier with one hand, the ball carrier hits the floor and pops the ball from the floor
- If the defender touches the ball carrier with two hands, the ball carrier hits the floor and the next player must execute a clearing pass

Diagram



Key Factors

- Fall to ground slowly
- Pivot onto the hip
- Recognition of offload

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the pitch size.
- After a two handed touch has been made, one player must clear past the player that presents the ball before the clearing pass is made
- Once a one handed or two handed touch has been executed the players(s) that make the touch must go to ground and then get back to their feet

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Two Touch

Objective To be able to identify an isolated defender, with support and create an attacking opportunity

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields n/a

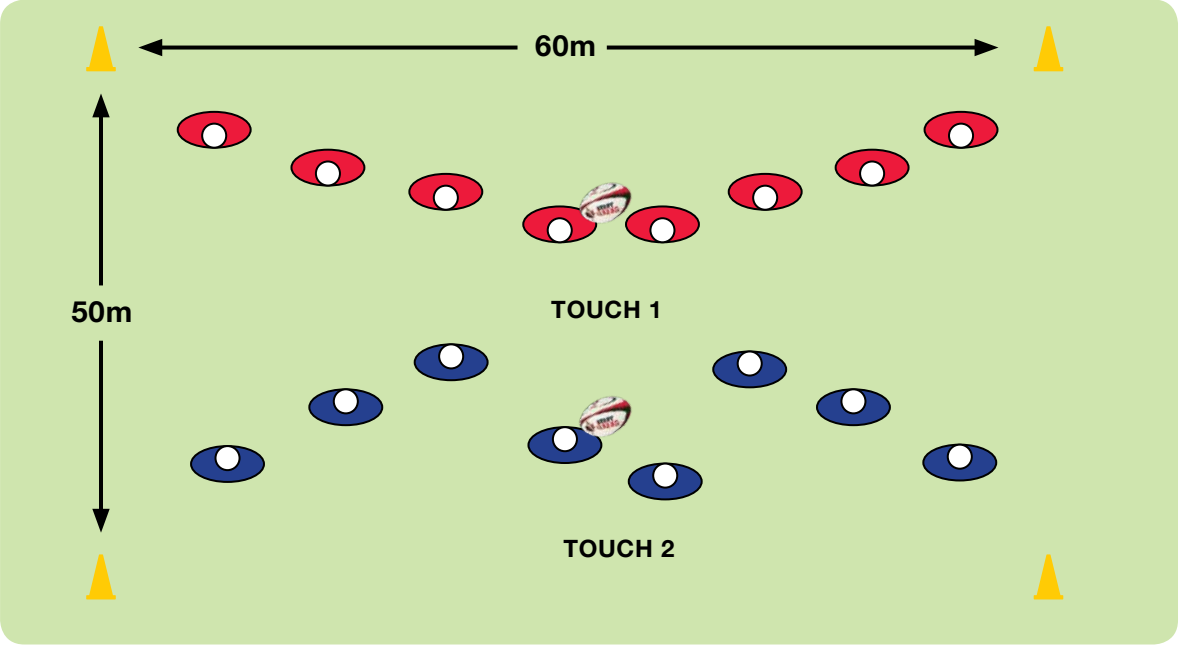
Bags n/a
Suits n/a
Bibs 8

Area 50 x 40 (metre)
Players 16 per game
Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- 8v8 Touch Rugby
- Two handed touch on the hips is a tackle
- If a player is touch tackled (two handed touch on the hips) they can keep running or pass the ball
- If a player is touch tackled twice, by two different defenders the other team gain possession (not by the same player making the touch tackle)
- A player that has been touch tackled once can not score

Diagram



Key Factors

- Attack defender, accelerate, use foot work, win the contest
- Leg Drive through contact, beyond shoulders of the defender
- Support ball carrier from depth

Progression / Regression

- Create a distance in which the offload can occur (suggestion 2 metre)
- After there has been two players making two handed touch tackles the ball carrier stills has two seconds to offload before a turn over to the other team
- Regress by decreasing number of defenders

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Montpellier

Objective To develop running/support lines to receive the ball out of contact

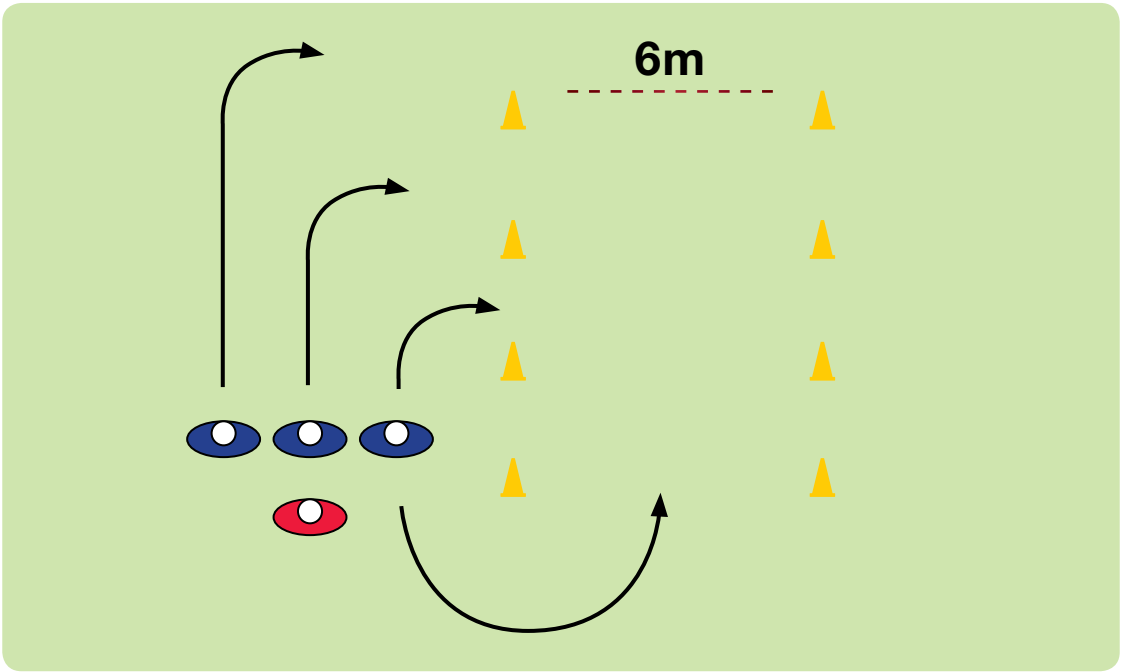
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 6 x 10 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 7 (vary attackers and defenders)
- Shields n/a — Bibs 4 (Attackers) — Time 10 minutes

Practice Description

- Attackers and defenders set off at the same time
- Attackers each go round cones at increasing distances
- Attackers must make their way up the channel by either beating the defender, beating the defender with pass or offload
- A tackle is a two handed touch

Diagram



Key Factors

- Ball carrier to identify space
- Attack defender, accelerate, use footwork, win the contest

Support Player

- Adjust support line to ball carrier
- Support ball carrier from depth
- Hands up

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the width of the grid
- Increase or decrease the number of attackers and defenders

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Chaos Corridor

Objective To create an opportunity for continuity with a varied defensive line

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 8
- Shields 0

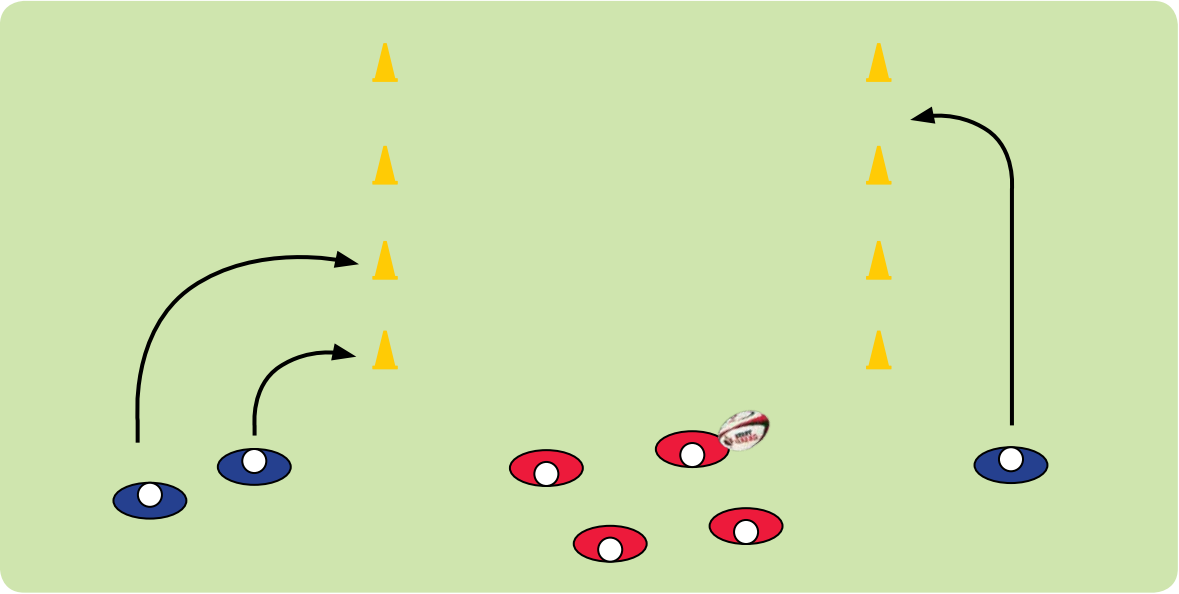
Bags 0
Suits 0
Bibs 0

Area 15 x 20 (metre)
Players 7
Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Create a channel that 4 attacking players have to score a try at the end of
- The coach blows their whistle and the defenders must enter the corridor between cones
- Two defenders can not run through the same 'gate'
- The attackers have to create continuity to score a try
- The attacking team must start again if they are brought to ground and can not pop the ball from the floor

Diagram



Key Factors

- Call for the ball
- Ball carrier to identify space
- Timed offload to the support player

Progression / Regression

- Increase the number of defenders that are involved
- Vary what side the defenders start
- Increase/decrease the size of the grid

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Offload with a single support runner

Objective Develop the support players running lines, as well as developing the decision making of the ball carrier through effective communication between the ball carrier and support player

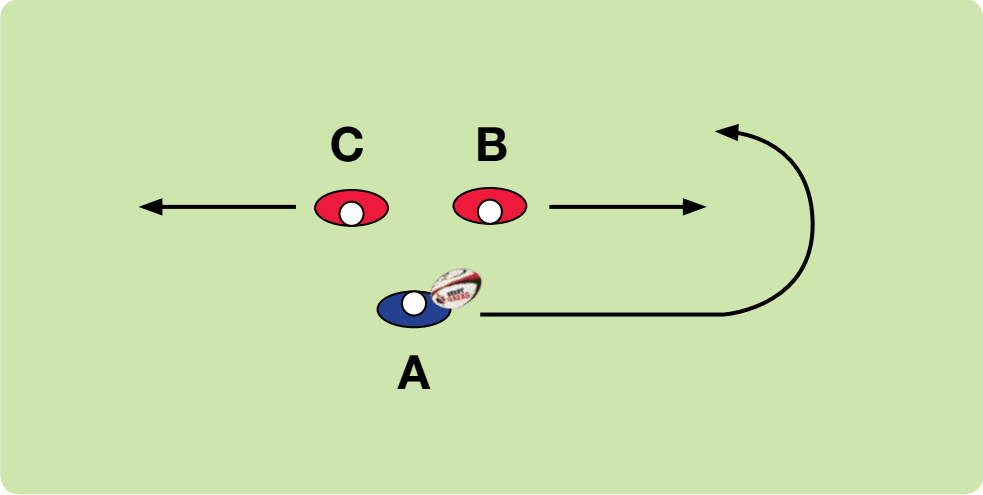
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 Bags n/a Area n/a
- Cones 1 stack Suits n/a Players 3 per game
- Shields n/a Bibs 0 Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Player A starts with the ball and will call 'GO'
- On 'GO' Player C and B must back peddle for 3 seconds
- Player A pass the ball to either C or B
- Who ever receives the ball becomes the attacker, the other players becomes the defender
- Player A will run behind to support the player that they passed the ball to
- The attacker will beat the defender and execute an offload

Diagram



Key Factors

- Leg Drive through contact, beyond shoulders of the defender
- Turn shoulders and hips to sight support player
- Timed offload to the support player (Pop Pass)

Support Player

- Recognition of offload
- Adjust support line to ball carrier

Progression / Regression

- Defender makes a tackle with a two handed touch
- Make the tackle full contact

TACKLE TECHNIQUE & TRACKING

TACKLER

- Sight the Target
- Boxer Stance (Hands up, shoulder width, balls of feet, split stance, hips square)
- Track Ball Carrier
- Close space quickly with short steps, accelerating forward
- Sight target area
- Same foot same shoulder (Foot in the hoop)
- Shoulder contact on thigh
- Punch through tackle
- Leg drive
- Wrap
- Regain, feet to compete

BALL CARRIER

- Score try, land on the ball
- Place ball to outside (rock on to shoulder 2 handed placement)
- Ball and head towards own try line

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Tackle technique

Objective Foot position shoulder contact and wrap

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields n/a

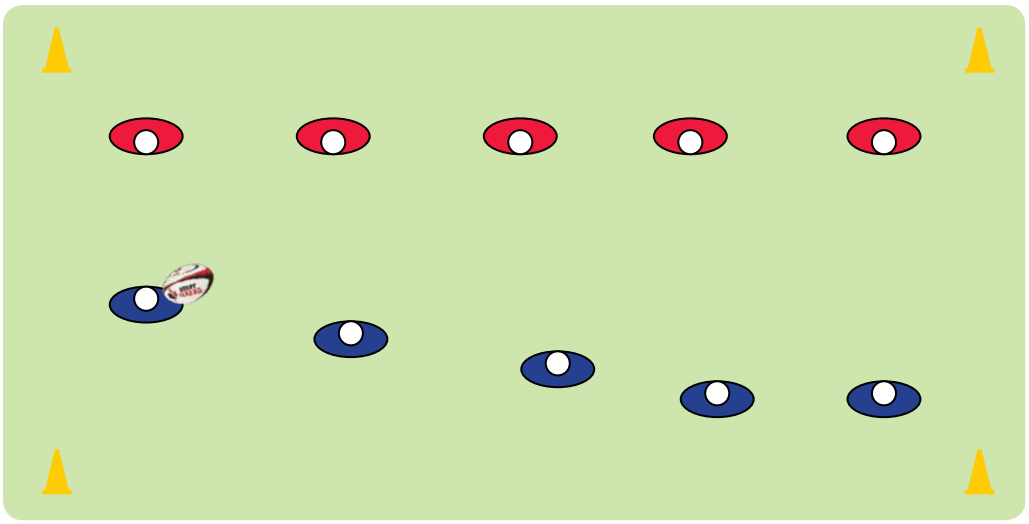
Bags n/a
Suits n/a
Bibs 5

Area 15 x 10 (metre)
Players 10 per game
Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- 5v5 walking touch rugby
- Defending players will start with their hands behind their back
- A successful 'tackle' is when the defender can make contact with their shoulder on a ball carrier
- If the right shoulder is in contact with the 'attacking' player then the right foot should be close to the player being tackled
- If the left shoulder is in contact with the 'attacking' player then the left foot should be close to the player being tackled

Diagram



Key Factors

- Track ball carrier
- Close space quickly with short steps, accelerating forward
- Same foot same shoulder (foot in the hoop)

Progression / Regression

- One V one close down space and get easy shoulder contact

Progression

- Develop the tackle grip / clamp around ball carrier
- Increase or decrease the size of the pitch

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Chop Tackle Game

Objective To develop contact below the waist while working on the leg drive through contact

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields n/a

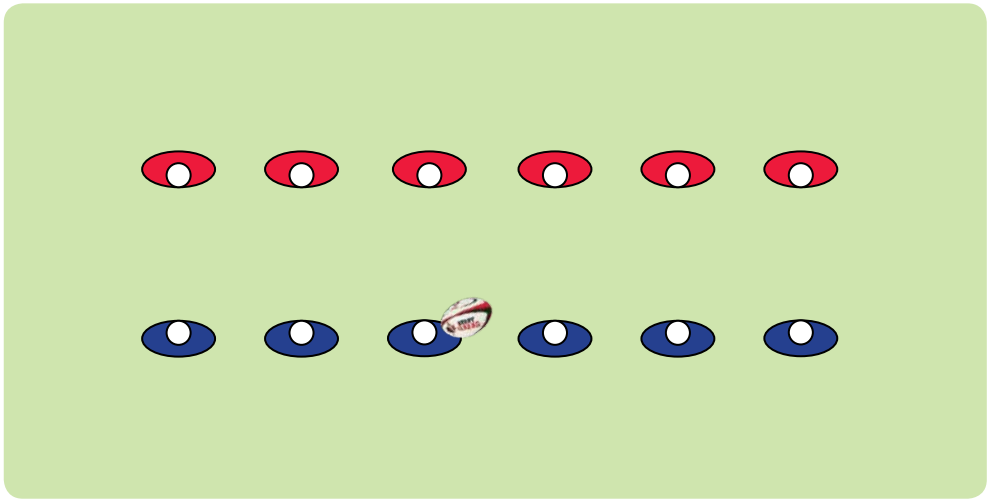
Bags n/a
Suits n/a
Bibs 6

Area 15 x 15 (metre)
Players 12 per game (6 attackers, 6 defenders)
Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Game lasts 45-60 seconds of continuous defence maximum -must complete 6 points worth of defence
- 1 point is awarded for a low chop tackle on the legs of the ball carrier, where the tackler does not go forward in the contact
- 2 points are awarded when a defender completes a positive tackle behind the gain line but does not dominate
- 3 points are awarded for dominant tackle behind the mainline where tackler goes forward in contact
- No points are awarded for tackles above the waist

Diagram



Key Factors

- Shoulder contact on thigh
- Punch through the tackle
- Leg drive

Progression / Regression

- Tackler may not compete for the ball
- No offloads in contact
- Add Competition for ball/Tackler only may compete for ball/ 2 hands on before clearance= turnover

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Eye to thigh tackle height

Objective To develop contact on a moving target, with a specific focus on the height of the tackle

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields n/a

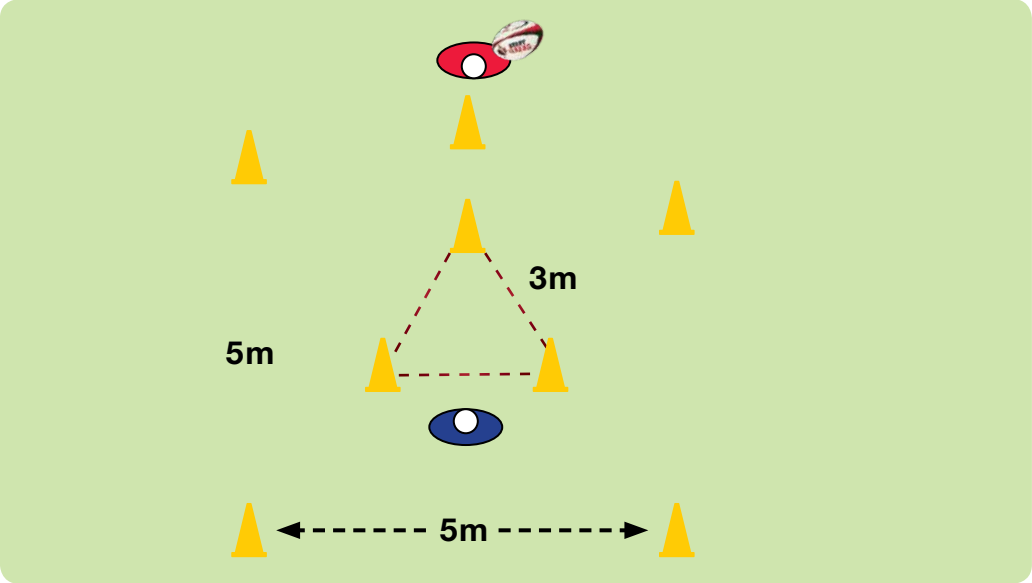
Bags n/a
Suits optional
Bibs 0

Area 5 x 5 (metre)
Players 2 per game
Time 10 minutes

Practice Description

- Ball starts in front of the red player on the ground
- When the red player picks the ball up the blue player (defender) can move forward
- The red player has to score between the two opposite cones past the blue player
- Both the red player and the blue player are not allowed inside the triangle

Diagram



Key Factors

- Sight the target
- Same foot same shoulder (foot in the hoop)
- Punch through the tackle

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the size of the square
- Increase or decrease the size of the triangle
- Develop to feet to compete

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice	Tackle Technique One-On-One
Objective	A drill that can be used as part of whole part whole to focus specifically on the key factors of tackle technique

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields n/a

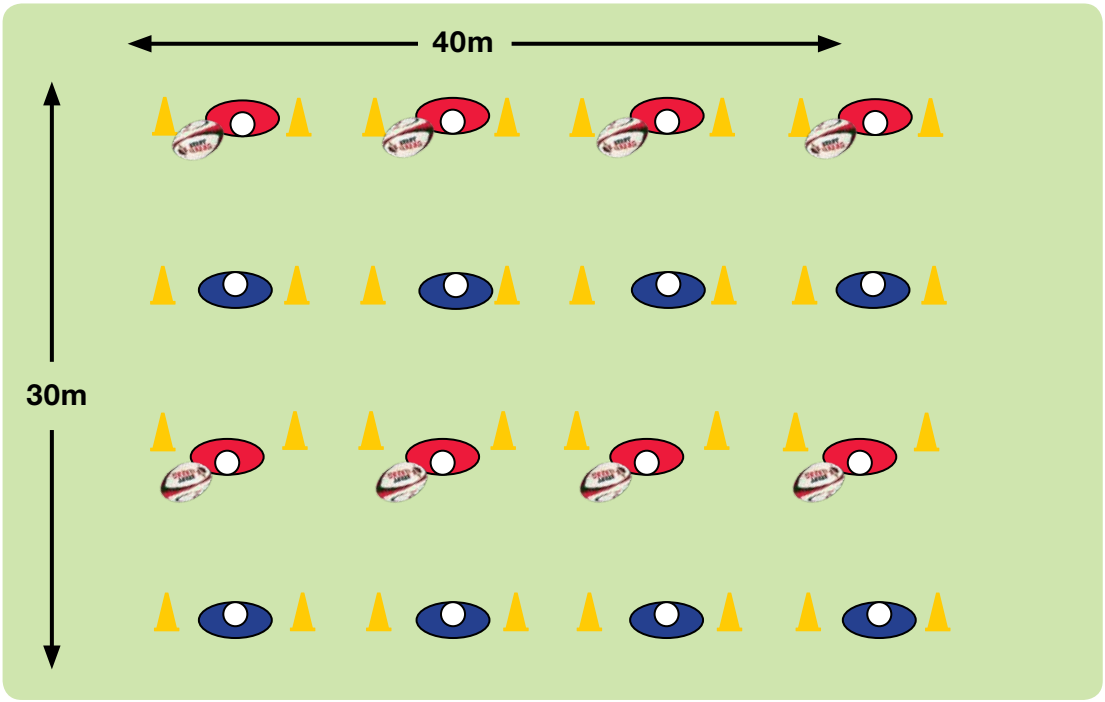
Bags n/a
Suits n/a
Bibs 8

Area 40 x 30 (metre)
Players 2
Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Blue bibs are defenders; red bibs are the ball carriers. Defenders call when they Go Forward, starting the attack
- Attackers to stay in the square and try to beat the defenders
- The defender can progress the speed in which they go forward
- The attacker can attack either side of the defender to encourage tackling of both shoulders

Diagram



Key Factors

- Sight the Target
- Boxer Stance (Hands up, shoulder width, balls of feet, split stance, hips square)
- Track Ball Carrier

Progression / Regression

- The size of the area can increase or decrease the level of difficulty for the tackler
- A smaller area will reinforce the key factors of tackle technique

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice 3v1 Stop The Tries

Objective A continuous game that develops the Tackle Technique and Tracking through a small sided game

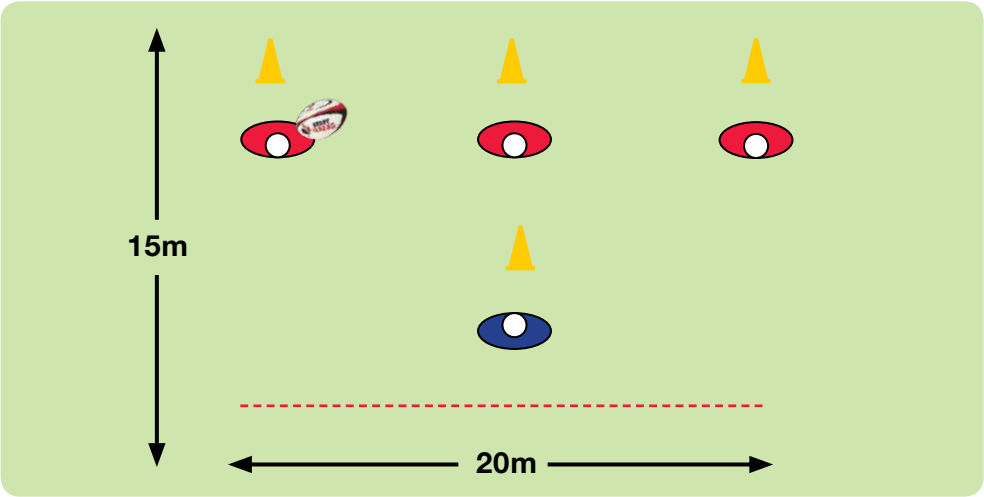
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 Bags n/a Area 15 x 20 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack Suits n/a Players 4 per group
- Shields n/a Bibs 1 Time 10-15 minutes

Practice Description

- 3 attackers and 1 tackler in a 20m x 15m grid with one try line marked out with cones
- Attackers start on the cones and pass the ball along the line on the coaches call (attacker 1, 2 or 3) attempts to evade tackler and score
- Tackler adopts correct tackling technique and attempts to tackle the tackler
- Tackler gets back to their feet quickly and back into the defensive line of 3
- Repeat practice 5 times before rotating roles

Diagram



Key Factors

- Same foot same shoulder (Foot in the hoop)
- Shoulder contact on thigh
- Punch through tackle

Progression / Regression

- Start the tackler in a variety of positions, for example on their back or chest
- Progress by varying the distance of the tackler to the try line
- Regress by decreasing the number of attackers

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Two Zone Attack

Objective Develop individual tackle technique within a game environment

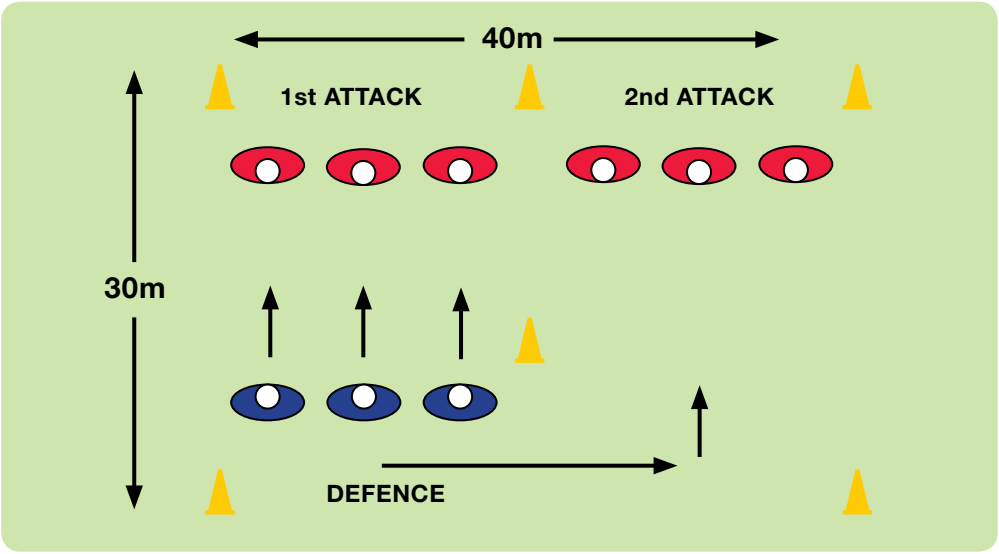
Equipment Required

- Balls 2 — Bags n/a — Area 30 x 40 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits optional — Players 9+
- Shields n/a — Bibs 6 — Time 15-20 minutes

Practice Description

- 3 attackers, 3 defenders
- All of the attackers have to be stopped (same foot same shoulder, not full tackle)
- Once the attack has been stopped the defenders move across and defend a second attack in channel 2
- Defence should defend 8 times before changing

Diagram



Key Factors

- Sight target area
- Same foot same shoulder (Foot in the hoop)
- Shoulder contact on thigh

Progression / Regression

- Progress to full tackles, focusing on players working in a chain of 3
- Progress by increasing the number of attackers
- Increase or decrease the size of the area to progress or regress

SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Non stop tackle

Objective To create a live non-stop situation that will make defenders move onto another tackle

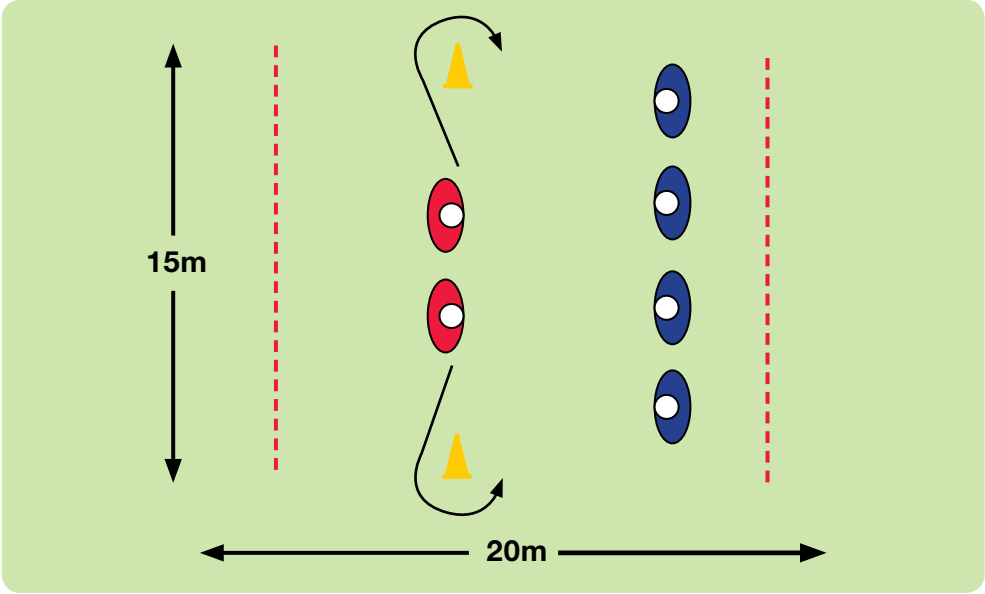
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 Bags n/a Area 20 x 15 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack Suits optional Players 6
- Shields n/a Bibs 4 Time 15-20 minutes

Practice Description

- 4 attackers start on a try line, 2 defenders start on the half way line
- The attackers will attempt to score a try at the other end, if they are successful then they turn around and score a try at the other end
- The defenders can move forward to tackle, once a tackle has been made then the defenders must run around the side cones before they can join back in
- If an attacker is tackled then they jog through to start on the try line they were attacking

Diagram



Key Factors

- Punch through tackle
- Leg drive
- Wrap
- Regain, feet to compete

Progression / Regression

- The size of the grid can be increase or decreased to adjust the difficulty
- The numbers of attackers and defenders can be increased and decreased

BREAKDOWN AND CLEAR OUT

BALL CARRIER

- Attack defender, accelerate, use foot work
- Aim to get your inside foot outside there lead foot
- Keeping your hips square, accelerate, win the collision
- Adjust body height (chest parallel to the ground)
  Ball on chest, elbow down
- Leg Drive, get through and behind the defender

Placement

- Score try, land on ball
- Place ball to outside (Rock on to shoulder 2 handed placement)
- Ball and head towards own try line

ARRIVING PLAYER

- Are players involved or not involved in the contest (breakdown)
- Adjust support to ball carrier
- Enter through gate
- Identify threat and visual cues

- Win the shoulder to chest battle
- Remove immediate threat – hips past the ball
- Shoulder to chest battle and/or identify windows

- Identify secondary threat
- Remove secondary threat or secure ball
  (take space past the ball and hold position)

- In or out (has the ball been won)
- Assist the clear – remove any additional threats

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Ruck Touch

Objective Affect CONTINUITY at the breakdown through Clear Out

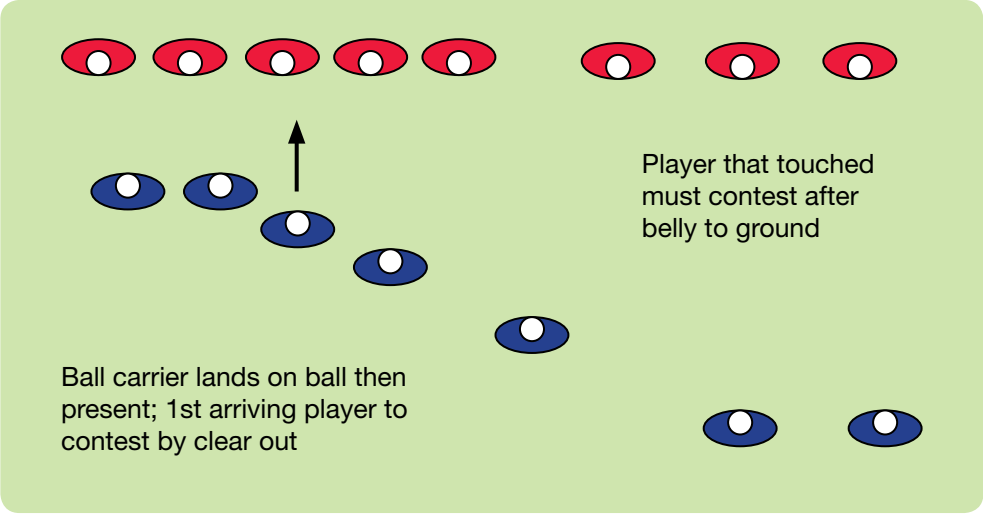
Equipment Required

- Balls 2 — Bags n/a — Area 20 x 15 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits n/a — Players 16 (8 Attackers, 8 defenders)
- Shields n/a — Bibs 8 — Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- Touched ball carrier must land on ball then present
- Defender that touched must lay flat to belly then contest
- First arriving player must clear-out defender
- Second arriving player must pick up the ball to play on

Diagram



Key Factors

- Enter through the gate
- Win the shoulder to chest battle
- Pick Lift or Pass

Progression / Regression

- Change the timing of the defender to impose a decision to clear out (short time) OR pick and go (longer time)
- Defender NOT to belly so first arriving player has harder work

Second arriving player secures space; add a second contest

- Coach in-field to start – ensure effective “score the try” before moving on to contest

Cue low to high and yards after contact

COACHING THROUGH GAMES

Practice Clear Out Game

Objective To create an opportunity for a clear out in a small game environment

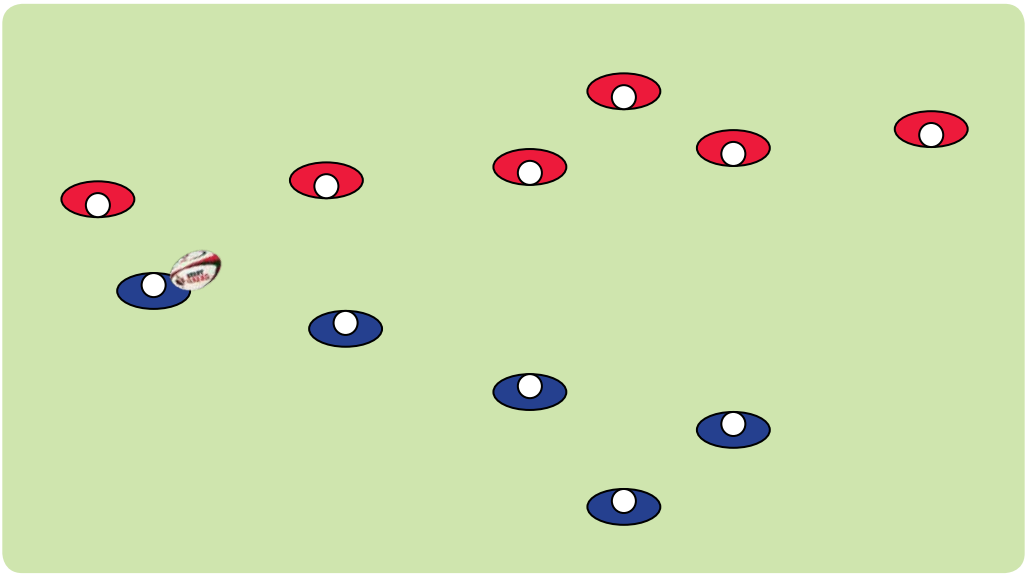
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 Bags 0 Area 50 x 60 (metre)
- Cones 0 Suits 0 Players 2 0
- Shields 0 Bibs 0 Time 20 minutes

Practice Description

- 2 handed touch
- Ball Carrier and 'Tackler' go on their chest
- 'Tackler' must role away
- Next arriving defender and attacker when they arrive within 1 metre must go on their chest then to their feet before they can compete/ruck

Diagram



Key Factors

- Attack defender, accelerate, use foot work
- Score try land on the ball
- Win the shoulder to chest battle

Progression / Regression

- Increase/decrease the size of the field
- Increase the number of players that can be involved at the contest/ruck
- All the tackler to compete after they have rolled away

PROGRESSION SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Counter Clear Out

Objective When an attacker goes to ground on their own, the defender can counter ruck

Equipment Required

- Balls 1
- Cones 1 stack
- Shields 1

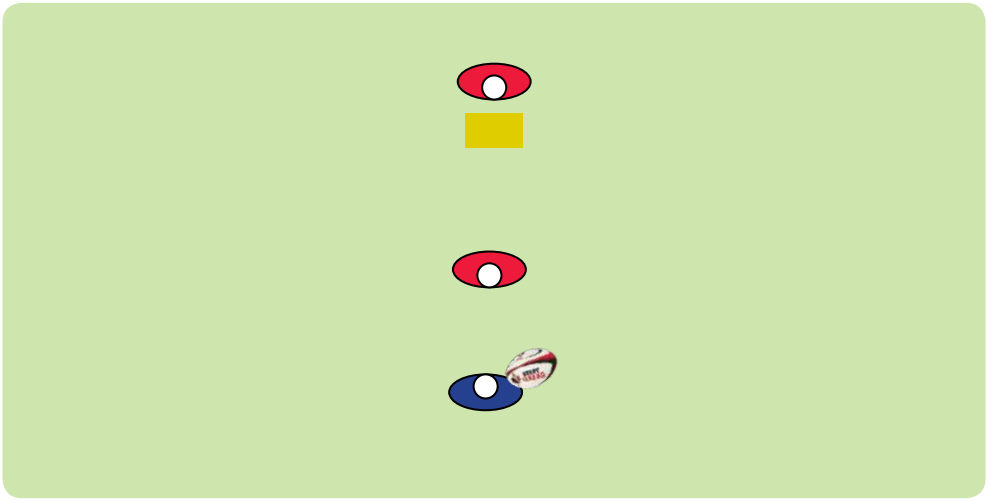
Bags n/a
Suits optional
Bibs 0

Area 5 x 5 (metre)
Players 3
Time 10-15 minutes

Practice Description

- The defender starts with the ball, facing an attacker with a player holding a tackle shield directly behind
- The defender passes the ball to the attacker, who carries the ball into the defender. The defender goes to ground with assistance from the tackler (Ball Placement Key factors)
- The player with shield creates resistance for the defender to counter ruck

Diagram



Key Factors

- Enter through gate
- Identify threat and visual cues
- Win the shoulder to chest battle

Progression / Regression

- The player with the field can adjust the height in which they are over the ball carrier on the floor
- The player with the shield can adjust the resistance that they apply to the counter ruck
- An extra tackle shield can be added along with an extra defender

PROGRESSION SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Present and Clear

Objective Develop Ball Presentation and roles of support players through a game related situation

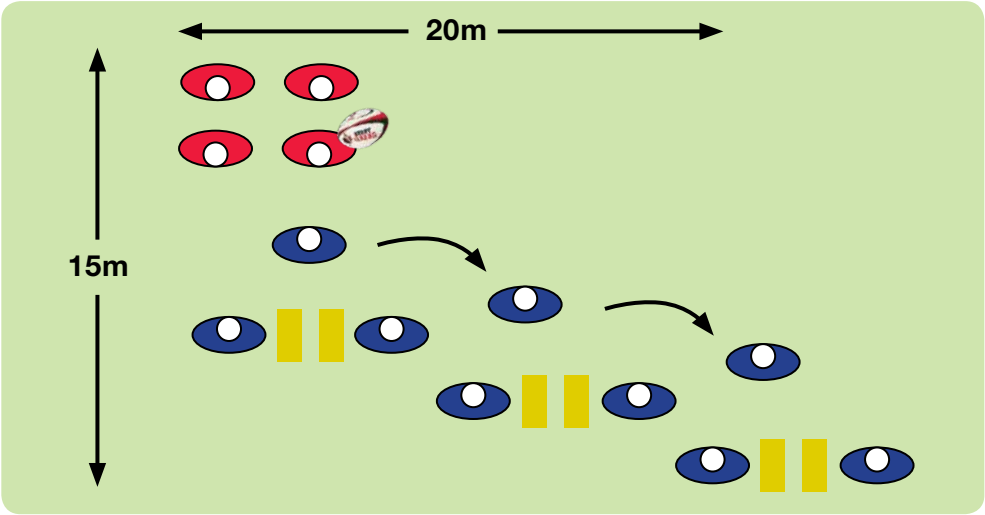
Equipment Required

• Balls 1	Bags n/a	Area 15 x 20 (metre)
• Cones 1 stack	Suits 3	Players 13 +
• Shields 6	Bibs 0	Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Defenders in groups of 3 (one player in a tackle suit with 2 defenders with hit shields behind)
- In groups of 4, attackers work up through the groups of defenders. The first attacking player should look to evade and drive as he/she can
- Players should decide if they pick and go or include a clearing pass
- Once through the group of defenders, attackers regroup and come back the other way

Diagram



Key Factors

- Score try, land on ball
- Place ball to outside (Rock on to shoulder 2 handed placement)
- Ball and head towards own try line

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the amount space the players have to attack
- Increase or decrease the number of players in attack
- Increase or decrease the number of players in defence

PROGRESSION SKILL PRACTICE

Practice Progressive 3v2

Objective Provide decision making opportunities to the ball carrier and support runners in relation to ball placement skills

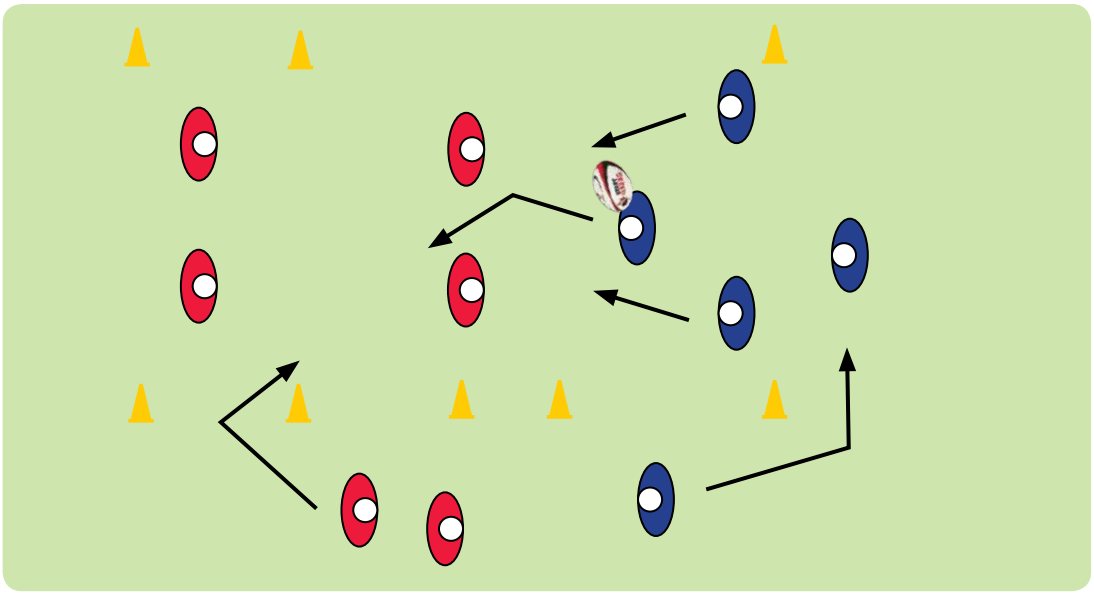
Equipment Required

- Balls 1 — Bags n/a — Area 15 x 20 (metre)
- Cones 1 stack — Suits 3 — Players 13 +
- Shields 6 — Bibs 0 — Time 15 minutes

Practice Description

- Start with a 3v2 position. Defenders to stay on a line. Attack cannot pass the ball – must present
- Progress to 2 defenders being added in the 'end' zone
- The fourth attackers to be added to clear the ball from end the contact area

Diagram



Key Factors

- Attack defender, accelerate, use foot work
- Aims to get your inside foot outside their lead foot
- Keeping your hips square, re-accelerate, win the collision

Progression / Regression

- Increase or decrease the amount of space to attack in
- Progress to increasing the number of defenders

LONG TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT – PLAYER PROGRESS GUIDE

By the age of 16 almost all players should be able to achieve competence in the facets below although some players may be able to achieve more. Please note that this is a development guide and not a selection tool.

Athlete	**Date**
Squad	**Coach/Trainer**

PLAYER COMPETENCIES **A** = is able to do **P** = Progressing **X** = is not able to	A / P / X	ACTIONS
RUN, CATCH & PASS		
Call for the pass (sharing information)		
Hips Square		
Scan (Eyes towards the ball)		
Hands towards the ball		
Soft hands to receive the ball, fingers forward		
Ten finger contact and re-shape the ball		
Ball Centred		
Elbow in		
Scan & Listen, Make a Decision		
Eye Contact with the target in which the pass is being made to		
Move ball across the body		
Fire fingers towards target		
Follow through the pass		
BALL OUT OF CONTACT		
Ball carrier to identify space (Towards the gain line)		
Carry ball in two hands centred		
Attack defender, accelerate, use footwork, win the contest		
Leg drive through contact beyond the shoulders of the defender		
Turn shoulders and hips to locate support player		
Timed offload to the support player (pop-pass)		
Fall to ground slowly		
Score 'try' land on the ball		
Pivot onto hip		

PLAYER COMPETENCIES A = is able to do P = Progressing X = is not able to	A / P / X	ACTIONS
BALL OUT OF CONTACT		
Pop ball to support runner		
Recognition of offload		
Adjust support line to ball carrier		
Support ball carrier from depth		
Hands up		
Attack and break the gain line		
TACKLE TECHNIQUE &TRACKING		
Sight the target		
Boxer Stance		
Track the ball carrier		
Close space quickly with short steps, accelerating forward		
Sight the target area		
Same foot same shoulder (foot in the hoop		
Shoulder contact on thigh		
Punch through the tackle		
Leg Drive		
Wrap		
Regain feet to compete		
Score ‘try’, land on the ball		
Place ball to outside (rock onto shoulder two handed ball placement)		
Ball and head towards own try line		
BREAKDOWN & CLEAR OUT		
Attack defender, accelerate, use footwork		
Aim to get your inside foot outside their lead foot		
Keeping your hips square, accelerate, win the collision		
Adjust body height (chest parallel to the ground) Ball on chest elbow down		
Leg Drive, get through and behind the defender		
Score ‘try’, land on ball		
Place ball to outside (rock onto shoulder two handed placement)		
Ball and head towards own try line		
Are players involved or not involved in the contest		
Adjust support to ball carrier		

PLAYER COMPETENCIES **A** = is able to do **P** = Progressing **X** = is not able to	A / P / X	ACTIONS
BREAKDOWN & CLEAR OUT		
Enter through gate		
Identify threat and visual cues		
Win the shoulder to chest battle		
Remove immediate threat – hips past the ball		
Shoulder to chest battle and/or identify windows		
Identify secondary threat		
Remove secondary threat or secure ball (take space past the ball and hold position)		
In or out (has the ball been won?)		
Assist the clear – remove any additional threats		
Pick, lift or pass		

Karen Paquin
National Senior Women's Sevens

Ghislaine Landry
National Senior Women's Sevens

RUGBY CANADA

Produced by Rugby Canada

Many thanks to everyone that played a part in bringing this resource together.

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