

RugbyCoach junior



For coaches of players aged 8 to 13 years
Vol1 issue 8, 25 July 2007

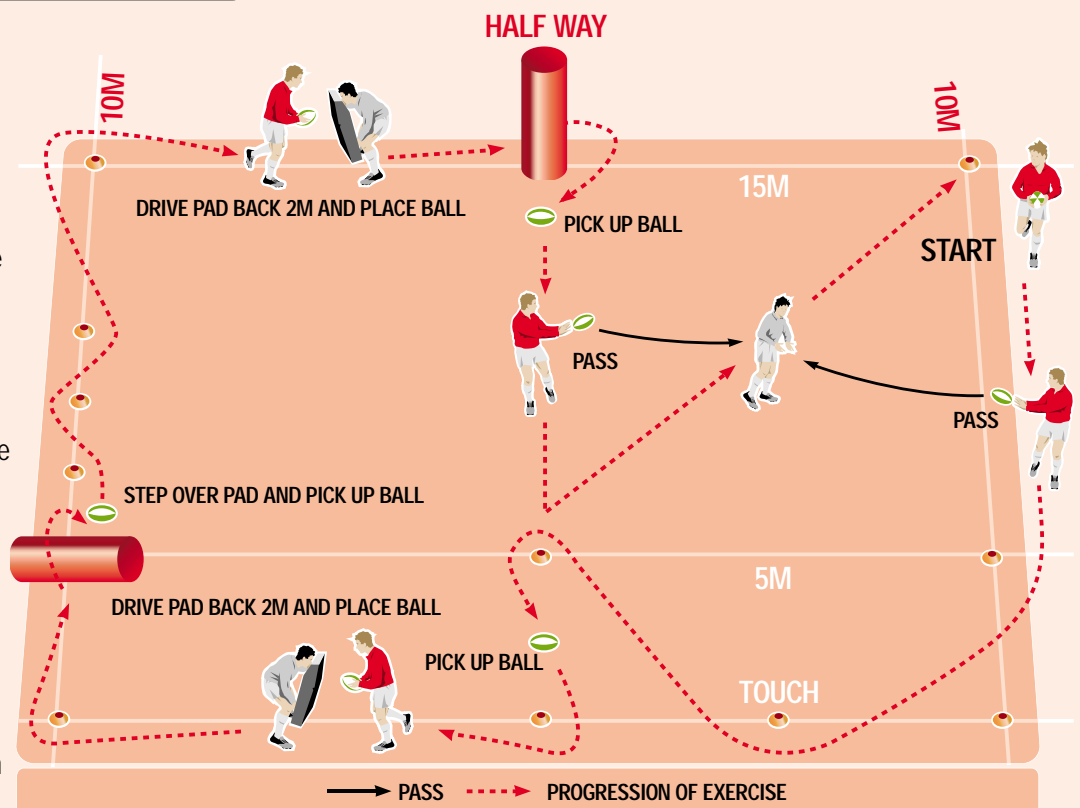
The Skill Set Practice

Rugby games involve a wide variety of skills used in frequently changing situations. Here is a great all-in-one practice session to test and improve your players' core skills and techniques.

Skill Set Practice

The following skills and techniques are used in this set-up:

- Passing left and right
- Body position to drive the pads
- Leg drive
- Picking up the ball at pace
- Placing the ball on the ground while moving forward
- Acceleration
- Deceleration
- Swerving
- Changes of pace
- Tackling
- Regaining possession
- Vision



The Practice

Set up the practice within the area between the half way, touch and 10 metre lines. Have your players run in a variety of directions around various markers while performing a number of rugby techniques. Some examples are included in the diagram.

You can control the practice by being the receiver of the passes. In this position, you can see what's happening and can encourage your players.

Developments

- Repeat the practice each week. Time and monitor your players and check for improvements.
- Add other skills, such as grubbering the ball, and receiving and giving passes.
- Set up a relay-chase, where each player has to catch the player in front of them, while both perform the tasks. The first man out can chase the last man back. In this way, every "chaser" is also "chased".

Player Management: How to Get Your Players to Focus

You will often hear coaches say "concentrate" or "focus". But how can you actively help your players do this?

Keep it simple and don't say too much!

- The pre-match/session talk. Outline only two or three key points for the match or session. If you outline too many aims, the players will lose focus.
- Re-emphasize these key points three or four times during your talk, to keep them at the front of the players' minds.
- Write the key points on the dressing room white board or on paper and stick it on the wall.
- If you want different players to focus on different things, write their individual roles or tasks on paper and stick them on the wall near where they are changing.
- Make sure the last thing you say to the players is to repeat the key points. 🚩

A-Z of Child Protection

"B" is for "Be aware"

Being constantly aware is essential in child protection, as ignorance is never an excuse. Keep a log book of your players (confidentially) and record any accidents that occur in training or in games. Your governing union might also have injury report forms which should be completed and sent off.

You should also record anything unusual. Changes in behaviour, unexplained marks and injuries or players becoming isolated from the squad. All these things can be signs of some form of abuse or bullying.

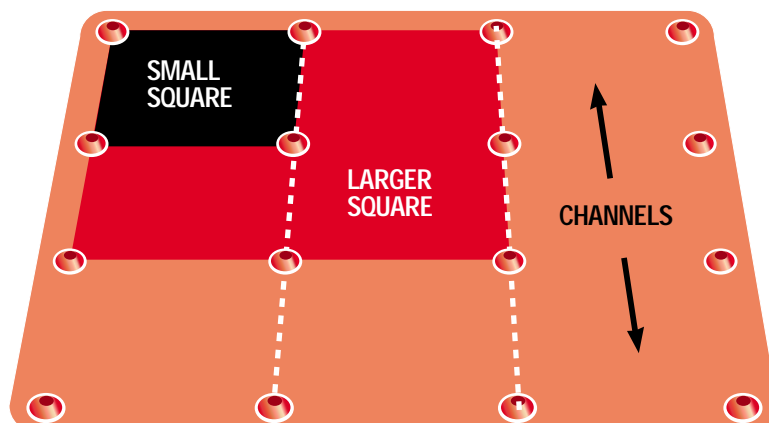
Make sure your players know that you and the other coaches are always available for a chat in private. However make sure you are never on your own with children. You could talk to them on the pitch away from everyone else or at the corner of a large room in the clubhouse. 🚩

In the next issue: "C" is for "Consent"

The Essentials

Practice Areas

- 1 Using a square to practise in is a flexible way of organising your training.
- 2 You can see all the players all the time and effectively observe them and monitor their safety.
- 3 The players criss-crossing the square causes a lot of traffic (other players getting in their way) which develops evasion and vision skills.
- 4 Communication and coaching points are easily heard by all players. Or you can isolate individuals or small groups to work with.
- 5 Very quickly you can turn the large square area into small squares or a channel by adding a few cones or vice versa. 🚩



Take a Gander at Geese

What can your players learn from geese? A strange question maybe, but these birds rely on team work to perform some remarkable feats, such as migrate 5,000 miles (8,000 km) annually at speeds of 50 mph (80 km), and fly at altitudes of 30,750 feet (9,375 m).

Geese Fact 1

As each goose flaps its wings it creates an uplift for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% extra flying range.

Rugby lesson: Players who share the same belief can help each other get where they are going more easily, because they trust each other to do their specific jobs to help the team succeed.

Geese Fact 2

When a goose falls out of formation it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back to take advantage of the lifting power of the birds in front.

Rugby lesson: If your players are organised as a team and everyone "buys into" the game plan, they will work as a team to succeed. For example, by working together to help players struggling for form or are having difficulty physically.

Geese Fact 3

When the lead goose tires it drops back into formation and another bird takes the lead position.

Rugby lesson: It's great to have a good captain, but it helps the team if all players share the workload physically and mentally, and are prepared to take the lead if required. Each individual has different strengths in different situations, which can be used for the benefit of the whole team.

Geese Fact 4

When a goose gets sick, two geese drop out and follow it down to ground to help and protect it.

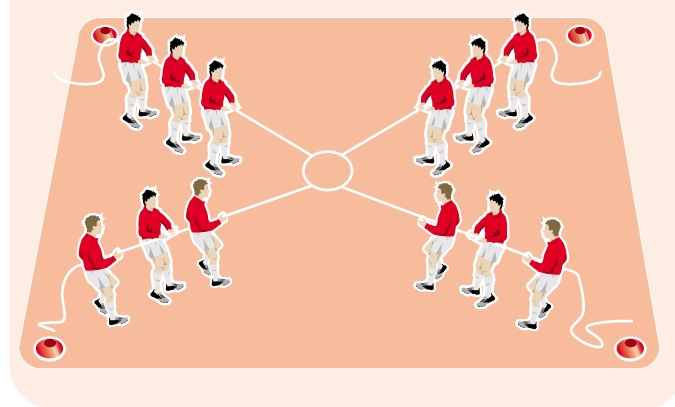
Rugby lesson: When a team mate is up against it, encourage your players to help them out and stand by each other in difficult as well as the good times.

Geese Fact 5

Geese in formation "honk" to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Rugby lesson: Ensure your players' "honking" is encouraging. Peer encouragement leads to team cohesiveness, individual empowerment, more success and greater enjoyment for all.

Multi-Way Tug-of-War



Multi-Way Tug-of-War

In traditional tug-of-war, tactics are important, but usually strength wins. In "multi-way" tug-of-war, while strength is important, tactics and team work should win out.

In this game, four teams each have a rope connected to a centre ring or knot. The teams try to pull the centre ring over their finish line. This can rarely be achieved by strength alone, since teams can swivel to co-operate with or compete against each other, and switch allegiances and directions.

- Divide your players into four groups. Try to make sure the groups are of similar strength.
- On your command "TAKE THE STRAIN", each team takes up the slack on their rope only. Make sure the centre ring is stable and centred. This needs strong leadership because teams are always keen to add extra strain!
- On your next command "GO" the players compete.
- Play the game over several rounds, continuing, say, until one team earns three victories and the "Tug-of-War" title.
- Allow your players plenty of time to recover physically and debrief or plan ahead after each round. You might consider having a feedback session after the competition, or even after each round, so your players can discuss (and learn) some of the secrets to success, and how these lessons might apply to rugby. 🏉

Opposition: _____ Date: _____
 Result: _____ Pitch: _____ Weather: _____

Squad #	Player's name	Tackling	Passing	Running	Support	Comments
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2						
3						
4						
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Additional comments:

Training work: