



Unified Rugby Course

- How to adapt the sessions?
- Player Development

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How to use this resource?

This resource has been designed to support coaches in the use of game-related practices during practice sessions. The resource includes progressive skills drills that can be used on their own, as part of a session, or as part of a series of sessions.

Using the principle of **APES**, the sessions are:

Active

Purposeful

Enjoyable

Safe

What are the "Key Development Points"? (KDPS)

Both professional level coaches and educators of the different youth groups have identified and agreed on four Key Developmental Points (KDPs), which will help to develop the playing structure and skills of the players, regardless of their starting level. The four KDPs are:

- Ball Reception
- Ball Presentation
- Offload
- Tackling

Training through games

Games can be extremely useful in developing skills and understanding of the game, however, coaches must ensure that they coach during games, not simply monitor the activity. This involves providing specific feedback on both positive and weaker areas in relation to the objective set out at the beginning. It is important that the focus on the main element (e.g. hand position when receiving the pass) is maintained during the game as sometimes the tendency is to try to cover all aspects (e.g. hand position, passing technique, receiving). This can result in the key message being diluted by trying to focus on too many details at once. Breaking skills down into manageable chunks can help players absorb points more easily. When players work well under pressure, the coach can progress and challenge the participants in the session.

Please note the following when using games:

- What is your goal for the practical session?
- What skills do you want to develop within the game?
- What is the main problem that players have to solve?
- What are the limits and safety rules?
- What is the scoring system?



- How do you restart the game after scoring?
- What are the key questions you can ask to emphasise the technical aspects?
- What progress and setbacks can you make?

The Global-Specific-Global method of structuring a session can be a very useful way of using both games and skills practice together. With this method the trainer can start with a game (global work) and if a particular aspect is identified that needs more practice, the trainer can use a specific drill to focus more on the technique. Afterwards, the trainer can return to the modified game or activity (global work) to check the evolution in an environment more directly related to the game.

Progress and regress in practical sessions

All sessions should have the possibility of progress and regression depending on how the players evolve during the session. Each activity in this resource has progress and regress steps that the coach can use if he/she feels it is appropriate. Progress should be used to challenge players and move them forward. Backsteps can be used to refocus attention on specific areas of the game or if players are not able to perform the activity to the desired level.

It is very easy for players to execute skills and make decisions in conditions where there is no opposition and little or no pressure, however, success can give a false impression of their ability to execute at the same level in match conditions.

Pressure can be applied in different ways:

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

In most cases the opposition provides all three elements. Pressure can be applied by conditioning practice and increasing degrees of pressure as the skill develops, but pressure is essential for a technique to become a skill.

Examples of some modifications/conditions that can be made to progress or return are:

- Position the scoring zone (two or three try zones)
- The size of the pitch (e.g. narrower to encourage group play).
- Number of passes allowed
- Forbid/allow kicking
- Number of players in attack/defence
- Scoring system (by number of passes, by correct offloads, not only scoring by tries)
- Risks / Rewards (positive reinforcement of players who try new things)
- Time allowed
- Specific roles for players
- Adding or deleting game rules



EXAMPLES OF PRACTICAL EXERCISES.

Exercise: Pass in all directions.

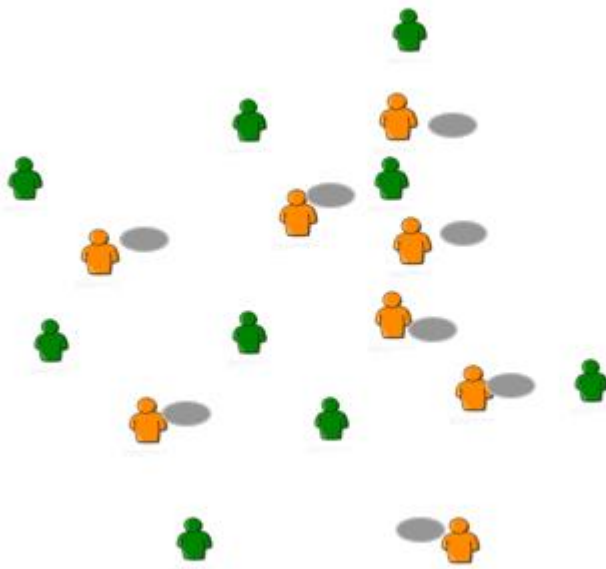
Objective: To work on receiving the ball and communication between passer and receiver.

Material: Cones to delimit the perimeter.

Description:

All players are inside the perimeter. The number of balls distributed is less than half the number of players, i.e. if we have 20 players we distribute 8 balls.

All players jog freely in any direction in the defined space. Players with the ball look for someone to pass the ball to and then immediately go to look for another ball.



Key points:

- Hands ready to receive the ball
- We pass and receive with both hands
- Communication, if it is not ready, we don't give the ball.

Progress

The number of balls can be increased so that there is less time between passes and they have to constantly reposition their hands.

The space can be widened to encourage longer passes and increase the pace of the run.

It can also be intensified by reducing the spacing so that the passing frequency is higher.

More pressure can be added by giving 5 seconds to find a new receiver of the ball and reducing the time.

Progress can be made by varying the type of pass. Long passes, overhead passes, back passes, ground passes. It will allow us to challenge their skills and increase the range of movement in the warm-up.

Backtracking

If there are shy players who isolate themselves, use two enablers to alternately pass to them.

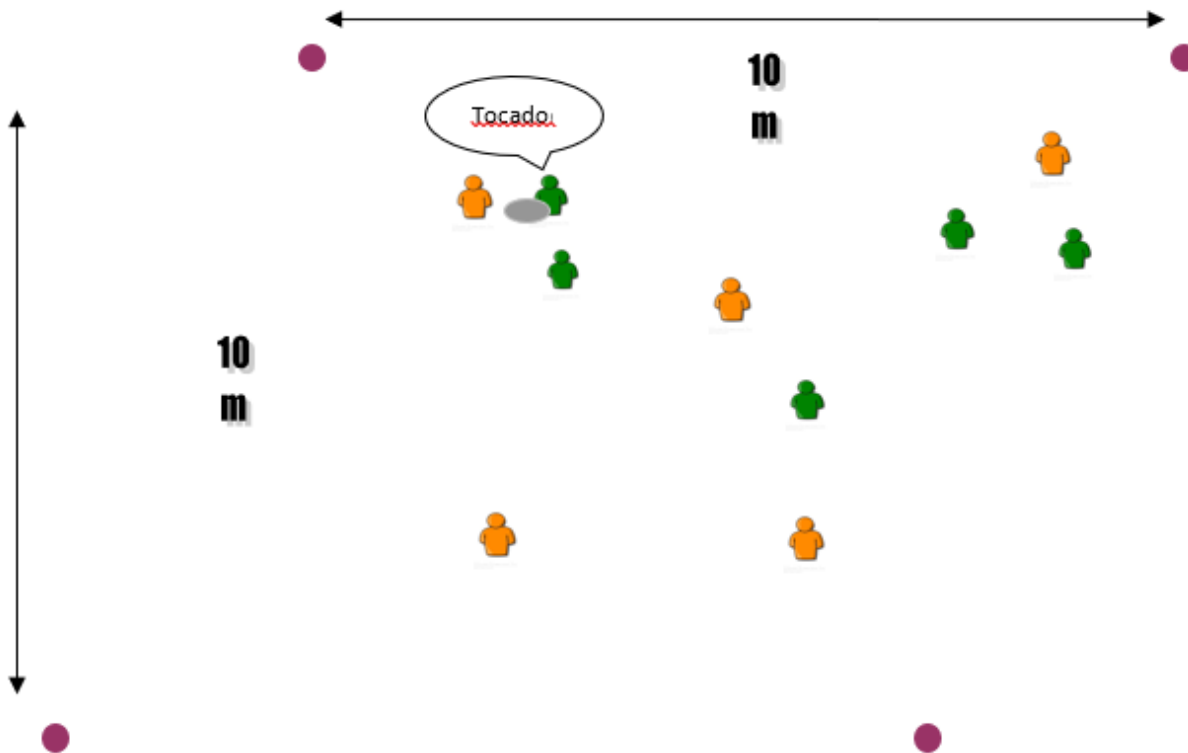
If there are players who are afraid of receiving, we can reduce the space and pace of walking to facilitate the coordination of the gesture. The pace can be increased little by little. If there is a choice, foam balls can be used.

If there are players with reduced mobility, they can be placed in the centre of the space so that they are always close to a passer.

Note

This is a simple passing game that can be used after isolating the passing technique in static exercises. Once they have become familiar with the proper technique and communication is effective, it can be used as a warm-up.





Exercise: Corner ball

Objective: To work on receiving the ball and communication between passer and receiver.

Material: Cones to delimit the perimeter.

Description:

The ball is passed between team members.

The aim is to touch a player of the opposing team with the ball.

Once a player is touched, he/she becomes part of the other team.

If the ball is dropped, play continues.

Key points:

- Hands ready to receive the ball
- We pass and receive with both hands
- Keeping everyone moving
- Communication, if you are not ready we don't give the ball.



Progress

The number of balls can be increased so that there is more movement and fewer people standing still.

The space can be widened to encourage longer passes and increase the pace of the run.

It can also be intensified by reducing the spacing so that the passing frequency is higher.

More pressure can be added by giving 5 seconds to find a new receiver of the ball and reducing the time.

Progress can be made by varying the type of pass. Long passes, overhead passes, back passes, ground passes. It will allow us to challenge their skills and increase the range of movement in the warm-up.

Regression

If there are players who are touched quickly allow them to play two or three touches before changing teams.

If there are players who are afraid of receiving, we can reduce the space and pace of walking to enable the coordination of the gesture. The pace can be increased little by little. If there is a choice, foam balls can be used.

If there are players with reduced mobility, they can be placed in the centre of the space so that they are always close to a passer.

Comment

It is a game that affects the perception of space and positioning in relation to the ball. It also works on evasion and communication.

Methodological aspects specific to rugby union

Table of contents:

1. The differentiating elements of rugby
2. Conditions of the educational environment
3. Variables for the construction of activities
4. Teaching process
5. Sample practice sessions
6. Planning 1 session of 50 minutes

1. The differentiating elements of rugby:

Rugby is a contact, collective and ball sport with particular demands which, in turn, are constituted as differentiating elements from other sports:



- The informational demands of the game are based on the constant relationship of opposition and collaboration, the process of perception, decision and execution must be permanent in order for the player to adapt to the new situation. But it is necessary to consider the wide range of possibilities that the player has to do so: unlimited running with or without the ball, passing the ball, kicking it, throwing it, contacting other players, ...
- The energy demands of rugby will be a function of the levels of intensity, duration and precision of the tasks required of the players. Furthermore, if we prioritise the types of actions that occur, we discover a wide variety of energy requirements associated with all the possibilities of running, avoiding, side-stepping, pushing, jumping and moving.

In fact, we can summarise that the constant decision making, the physical contact, the shape of the ball and the assembly of skills that a player can develop, are elements of rugby as a singular sport.

2. Actual conditions of the educational environment:

Often, in our educational environment, the means available will condition to a large extent some specific aspects of the teaching-learning process. It is enough to think of the problems involved in developing a contact sport such as rugby; although the fear of contact and the general lack of knowledge of the rules of the game are also some of the problems that we may encounter; therefore, the ability to adapt will be key.

The starting point of the Under Age Rugby proposal is that it is possible to play rugby on a field with a hard surface and reduced size (40x20). Following this priority and without forgetting the principles of the game, it is necessary to adapt some rules that will facilitate the teaching-learning process: reducing the number of players per team, conditioning the ways of restarting the game and avoid falling to the ground.

3. Building of activities:

Collective sports are games with complex structures of collaboration and opposition subject to complicated rules for beginners. Therefore, we must present rugby in a simple and accessible way, it is a challenge for coaches and trainers. The proposed methodological line is based on enhancing the learning process based on respect for the spontaneity and creativity of the player, ensuring both the understanding of the game and the acquisition of basic skills specific to rugby.

The proposed activities can be grouped into three groups:

Adapted games: They place rugby at the level of the player; therefore, introductory games contain basic rules that enable the player to enter directly into the activity.

Pedagogical situations: They guarantee the integrated development of the mechanisms of perception, decision and execution. They serve to isolate game actions, enabling learning and, above all, promoting the player's understanding and initiative. These Problem Situations achieve an active and rational work from which the beginner should seek solutions to the demands of the game, being built by combining the variables of the game: the spatial-temporal relationship, the attackers-defenders relationship, the origin of the ball and the adaptation of the rules of the game.



Exercises: They are aimed at acquiring or reinforcing technical skills. They must be in line with the relevant content, and must be very well adapted to the level of the players, which guarantees that they can continue to progress in terms of complexity and physical demand.

4. Teaching process:

What is happening, what can I do and how can I do it? are the questions that arise for the player in every game action when playing a team sport such as Rugby. To respond to these demands the player must:

- ☛ Perceive and identify meaningful stimuli.
- ☛ Make the right choice between alternatives. Decide what is right.
- ☛ Effectively carry out the necessary skill.

We are therefore faced with the need to propose a teaching-learning process that responds as much to affective and cognitive processes as to motor or technical ones, so its approach must be more "behavioural-constructivist" than "mechanistic-analytical". This methodological orientation is based on the simultaneous observation, analysis and evaluation of:

- ☛ The critical characteristics of the activity, in our case Rugby.
- ☛ The player's prior knowledge.
- ☛ The observable behaviour of the player within the activity.

The process is developed through the use of "meaningful learning", not simply "repetitive learning", focusing attention both on the function of what is being learned and on its realisation in a context as similar as possible to play.

In this way, the procedures established in the planning of a Rugby module developed over four sessions, using different methodological tools, it is worth highlighting:

- ☛ Basic Games that progressively integrate the rules are proposed.
- ☛ Problem-situation activities that encourage productive behaviours are proposed.
- ☛ For the development of technique, exercises for assimilation and application of basic skills are proposed.
- ☛ Different approaches to ensure the comprehensive assessment of the player.