

LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT FROM 6 TO 6 NATIONS









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FOREWORD

The Irish Rugby Football Union is proud to present its Long Term Player Development Model which, for the first time, provides an integrated framework to facilitate the development of rugby players at all levels of participation and experience. It outlines a philosophy of sound practice and long-term participation, performance and enjoyment of Irish rugby.

An extensive process of discussion and consultation between world-renowned developmental expert Dr. Istvan Balyi, the National Coaching and Training Centre, and the I.R.F.U. Coach Development department, provided the impetus for the design of this Long Term Player Development Model. The collective intention is to provide the best possible rugby experience for all participants "from 6 to 6 Nations". The L.T.P.D. framework will help to ensure that the experience of training and playing the game is always appropriate for the developmental stage of the player involved.

The model is a Player-Centred one, in that the specific characteristics pertaining to each stage are based on the particular capacities of players at each stage of development.

The nature of rugby union required a close examination of the demands of the game itself at each stage, as well as the capacities of players. This analysis, coupled with extensive validation from coaches "on the ground" at all levels, resulted in the establishment of Player Capacities across 5 specific areas:

Technical, Tactical, Physical, Mental and Lifestyle.

These player capacities provide the compass by which the I.R.F.U.'s Coach Development Department designs and promotes rugby coaching courses at all levels, believing that all coaches should be appropriately trained and qualified to work with players at each stage in the Model.

An integral aspect of the L.T.P.D model is the "essence" of Player, Game and Coach at each stage - this single word summation of the characteristics of these three components throughout the stages acts as a guideline to all participants.

It is important to remember that the L.T.P.D. model is not intended to be a production line of world-class players but rather an integrated series of stages (based on scientific principles and participant experience) to maximise the potential of players according to their own ability and ambition. Ultimately of course, the successful establishment and maintenance of a long-term programme of development will be essential to that small number of players with the talent and aspiration to become elite performers.

The true effectiveness of the Irish Rugby Union's L.T.P.D. programme will be evidenced by its integration into all of our structures and systems and by the rewarding experiences of players, coaches, parents, referees, supporters and administrators of the game.

Coach Development Department Irish Rugby Football Union 2006



IRFU Long Term Player Development Model Outline

The LTPD model is intended to provide a common reference point for all participants in Irish Rugby with the aim of ensuring a more enjoyable and productive experience for all (players, coaches, parents, spectators, referees & officials).

The three key principles underlying the IRFU LTPD are:

- 1. The model is **Player-centred** all aspects of the model are appropriate to the capacities of participants at each stage. These capacities are: Lifestyle, Physical, Tactical, Mental and Technical.
- 2. The model is **Long-term** the reality is there are no short-cuts in developing competencies to levels of excellence. A widely accepted belief is that it takes ten years of proper coaching to produce a world-class athlete or player.
- 3. **Collective alignment** between relevant people & structures throughout a players rugby playing experience is the final principle behind the LTPD. This requires all participants who contribute to the development and experience of players to co-operate ensuring that all aspects of the LTPD are aligned.

The IRFU LTPD is a six-stage model, servicing participants 'from 6 to 6 Nations'. These stages are shown below;



In each stage the essence and characteristics of the player, game and coach are outlined to act as a reference point for all who participate in the playing, officiating and administration of the game. These are outlined on the following pages:





THE PLAYER - PLAYS

Players in this category are age-grade players (5 - 12 approx)

The capacities of young players dictate that most learning activities are best promoted through the medium of play. This theme does not just apply to modified games but also to reduced exercises and drill activities. Specific techniques and corrections can be integrated throughout the activity while still maintaining maximum participation and enjoyment. This will also ensure that players receive a positive and motivating experience.

THE COACH - GUIDES

To facilitate the needs and capacities of younger players the coach should act as a Guide, providing the environment for players to explore in a safe and exciting way. Corrections and guidance should be subtle and simple, dealing with issues in a broad rather than detailed perspective.

THE GAME - FUN

The end product should be a fun and safe experience. The emphasis is placed on open play (general movement) with all players running, passing and tackling. Younger players will continue to participate in activities that are enjoyable and rewarding. As players mature and develop greater capacities their needs and the demands of the game will also change.





LEARN TO PLAY & PRACTICE

THE PLAYER - EXPLORES

Players in this category are age-grade players (12-14 approx).

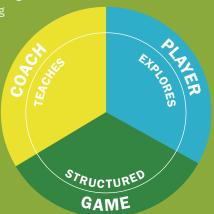
At this stage the players' capacities allow them to learn through exploring. Trying out new approaches, pursuing solutions and new experiences in a controlled environment will facilitate the development of the player. Individuals are capable of problem-solving and should be encouraged to express their opinions.

THE COACH - TEACHES

Due to maturation, the players are now capable of longe periods of concentration and attention; therefore teaching rather than guiding is more appropriate for accelerating learning. Knowledge of how to facilitate learning through understanding is critical together with skill development and progressions.

THE GAME - STRUCTURED

With the capacity for greater understanding and technical competence the game develops from open play to a more structured format to include the development of basic unit play (restarts - forwards & three-quarters). The game is still fun, safe and enjoyable with ample running, passing and tackling.







THE PLAYER - FOCUSES

Players in this category are two-fold; age-grade players (15-17 approx) & adult 'junior' players. Age-grade players have the capacity to focus and therefore can increase their competencies radically with the correct attention & application. Greater self-awareness and responsibility are characteristics of players at this stage, which if nurtured will form the foundations for future realization and success. Players are highly competitive and foster a greater awareness of team spirit and common goals and values.

PLANER TOOUSES STEAMER TOOUSES STEAMER TOOUSES

Adult players (junior) have similar technical and tactical competencies due to limited development, but have greater physical, mental and lifestyle capacities due to greater maturation and experience/achievement.

THE COACH - CHALLENGES

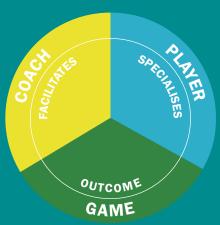
Given the greater capacities of players, the requirement for the coach is to go beyond teaching and challenge players to become more proficient and achieve higher standards of performance. Therefore the coach extracts a higher level of performance through appropriate challenges and application of pressure.

THE GAME - PERFORMANCE

Even though players are now highly competitive and play in league & cup competitions the essence at this stage is precise performance of the individual, units and team in the pursuit of achieving goals. The game is clearly structured and cohesive, with a greater emphasis on the role of the units. However, to maximise development, the focus should be on performance in the pursuit of desired outcomes and results.







THE PLAYER - SPECIALISES

Players in this category are two-fold; players (18-21 approx) & 'junior 1 & above' players. Players have now committed themselves to rugby as their chief sport and are willing to invest a significant amount of time and energy to become successful. They are driven and are fiercely competitive with a greater capacity for all game related competencies. Players pay more attention to developing themselves as positional specialists in order to undertake their functional roles.

With their increase in knowledge and maturity, players are capable of strong opinions and of taking greater responsibility while also contributing more towards problem solving.

THE COACH - FACILITATES

Since the characteristics of players are such that they have the capacity for greater input, the role of the coach shifts towards facilitation. Allowing opportunity for opinions and problem-solving is critical if players are to develop confidence and relative autonomy.

The coach will still need to employ teaching, challenging and guiding skills where appropriate, the emphasis should be on developing players' ability to 'navigate' rather than 'replicate'.

THE GAME - OUTCOME

The game is fiercely competitive with positional specialists clearly influencing events, mini units & units well synchronised and team play concentrated on reducing error and maximising success. The focus is on achieving desired outcomes in respect to attack & defence goals (team, unit, mini-unit).

For example, winning the lineout is more important now than thinking about the performance; however the essences of the previous stages (performance, structured, fun) are all brought to bear in the pursuit of achieving the 'outcomes'.



THE PLAYER - INNOVATES

Players in this category are adult representative players.

These players have the capacity to go beyond the rehearsed repertoires, strategies and tactical solutions and innovate when the situation demands. Highly competitive and driven they should be excellent in their positional & functional roles as well as have the capacity to fulfil multiple roles in general movement play.

They must have the ability to deal with the pressure of public expectation, interest and intrusion together with self-management and self-development.

THE COACH - EMPOWERS

The principles of adult learning together with the characteristics of champion athletes imply that coaches must release rather than restrict the potential of the players and other coaching staff, otherwise the potential for creativity and responsibility will be stifled.

With player accountability comes player responsibility and relevant player control. For this to occur the coach must create an environment where trust and respect between all squad members is established while still maintaining ultimate responsibility for team performance and results.

THE GAME - RESULT

This is the 'business end' of rugby, elite/professional sport is about winning and there's not much consolation in losing. Analysing & exploiting opponents weaknesses while hiding and protecting your own weaknesses is a main characteristic of this stage.

However, by consistently improving performance and achieving desired outcomes the incidents of winning will ultimately increase.

6 RETIREMENT & RETENTION

Players finish playing for many reasons: age, injury, family commitments, business and vocational goals, etc... For the game to develop and for the next generation to benefit from the knowledge and support of those who have gone before, there are many areas where ex-players can 'put something back':

SUPPORT RUGBY:

Potential roles open to ex-players include:

- **Official/administrator** become an active member of a club, region, branch, union or group either as a volunteer or paid position.
- **Development** become involved in player and/or coach development by undertaking education as a coach, tutor or mentor.
- Referee become involved in refereeing/officiating and or referee development by undertaking education as a referee, coach or assessor.

PROMOTE RUGBY:

Promote rugby by relaying positive personal experiences and highlighting the 'spirit of rugby' as a parent, friend, relative, teacher, sponsor etc.., .

ENJOY RUGBY:

 Enjoy rugby as a supporter, contributing to the identity and social aspects of rugby at all levels.

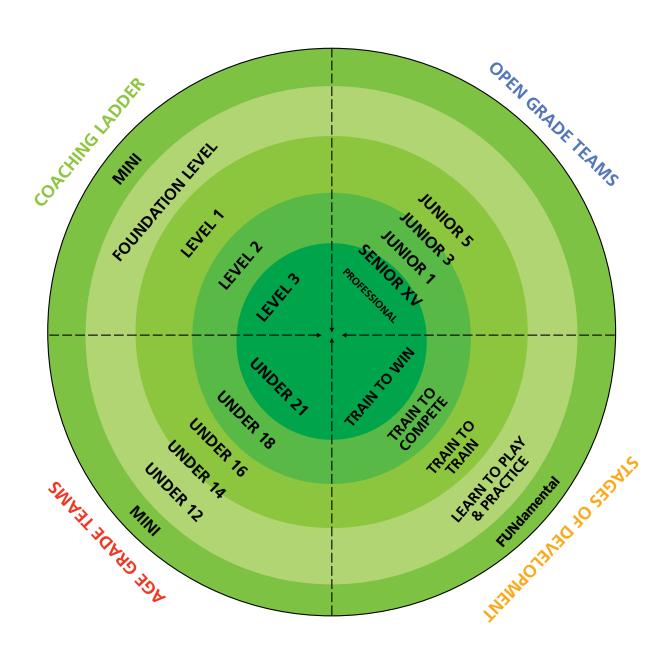


IRFU INTEGRATED PATHWAY

The Integrated Pathway Model on page 11 illustrates the placement of players and/or teams in relation to the Long Term Player Development Model, the I.R.F.U.'s Coaching Pathway and the various grades of club/school teams.

This model is deliberately shaded to highlight that it is often not possible to determine with absolute certainty where one should be positioned within each component – however, considering the capacities of the players at each stage of the LTPD, coupled with the content and processes of each coaching course provides an essentially accurate overview of the relationship between these components.

One important distinction of rugby in Ireland is the division of the game into "Agegrade" and "Open-grade" teams. An essential aspect of the Integrated Pathway Model is its recognition that players' abilities do not necessarily develop in conjunction with chronological age, i.e. just because a player is in their 30's does not mean that they, or the game they play, is better than an International U/21 player. Therefore it has been necessary to link players of different ages in relation to their capacities and the demands of the game at their particular level, rather than propose a more linear model where age equates ability.



LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

STAGE		FU	Ndamen	ital	LEARN TO PLAY AND PRACTICE
CHRONOLOGIC	CAL AGE	5-7	7-10	10-12	12 - 14
DEVELOPMEN	TAL STAGE		ly Childho te Childho		Late Childhood Early Puberty
SUMMARY			Safety, Basi Understand		"Safe and Enjoyable experience of the 15-a-side game"
WINDOWS OF TRAINABILITY		Mo First	UNdament ovement Sk Speed Wir ; 6-8; M: 7	tills ndow	FUNdamental Sports Skill Major Motor Learning Window
	TECHNICAL	Intro. toIntro. to	ual Skills o Unit Skills o Tackling at o Continuity 3 Mini		 Further development of Individual and Unit Skills Intro. to Position Specific Skills
	TACTICAL	OffsideGo ForSupport	ward	2 Mini)	 Identify with Positional role Basic Attack and Defence principles Basic Tactical preparation awareness of Opposition
PLAYER CAPACITIES	PHYSICAL	Co-ord ManipuFlexibilSpeed		otion	 Agility Flexibility Co-ordination and Manipulation Balance – static and dynamic
	MENTAL	• Self-es	e attitude to	sport	Goal setting- short termPatienceControlConcentration
	LIFESTYLE / PERSONAL	Social sFairnesSelf-coCreativ	iS		 Personal responsibility Interpersonal skills Ambition to improve

TRAIN TO TRAIN	TRAIN TO COMPETE	TRAIN TO WIN	RETIREMENT/ RETENTION
15 – 17 +/- & ADULT to JUNIOR 2 Early Puberty Late Puberty	18 – 21 +/- & ADULT JUNIOR 1 AND ABOVE Late Puberty Early Adulthood	21 +/- & SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE Early Adulthood Adulthood	Enter at any stage
"The performance of Rugby Skills to achieve the Principles of Play in a match"	"The performance of Multi- Functional Roles under match conditions"	"Improvisation and Problem- solving under match conditions"	'To enjoy a healthy lifestyle & retain participants for administrative, coaching, officiating, mentoring or supporting roles'
Build the Engine Endurance with the on-set of PHV Strength with the on-set of menarchie for females And 12-18 month after PHV for males Second Speed Window F: 11-13; M: 13-16	Individualise and optimise fitness	Individualise and maximize fitness	
 Unit and Ind. Skills used to achieve Team Play Development of Position Specific Skills 	Development of Functional Roles and problem- solving abilities within Individual, Unit and Team skills	 Mastery of Individual and Position Specific skills at a High-Performance level. 	 Retain appropriate recreational interest Apply knowledge in coaching / mentoring / tutoring capacity.
 Understanding "Game Plan" Implement Patterns of Play Selection of Tactical options Pressure – achieving the Principles of Play 	 Implement problem-solving strategies Identities of Rugby Develop Mini-unit strategies Game Appreciation 	 Implement Performance Analysis Ability to Adapt Tactical strategies during a match Prioritise Pressure – Possession / Position / Points Identify Opposition tactical strengths and weaknesses 	 Retain appropriate recreational interest Apply knowledge in coaching / mentoring / tutoring capacity.
 Strength Power Speed and Acceleration Pre-habilitation Sports specific multi-activity endurance Individual specific flexibility due to PHV 	 Multi-sprint Endurance Strength and Power Speed, Agility & Quickness Position specific conditioning Periodised training Recovery routines 	 Multi-sprint Endurance Strength and Power Speed, Agility & Quickness Position specific conditioning Periodised training Recovery routines Individualised programs 	 Keep active through recreational and other sporting activities Flexibility, endurance, strength training
MotivationGoal setting – medium termDetermination	 Pre-match preparation Controlled breathing Coping with Arousal and Anxiety Goal setting – long term 	Mental relaxationImageryCoping strategiesSelf-AwarenessProfiling	Adjustment to non- participation environment
 Independent thinking Ambition – career options Self-identity Role model role 	 Principle-centred values Life management Self-reliance Coping with failure 	 Self-reliance Patience to achieve long-term goals Positive use of Power / Influence Life management 	 Pursue personal & family goals Pursue further self-development Possible engagement in rugby development initiatives Appropriate nutrition



Technical Capacities

Knowledge and understanding of rugby specific skills necessary to play the game efficiently.

Tactical Capacities

Knowledge and understanding of the game and application of its principles to achieve goals.

Physical Capacities

Knowledge and understanding of the physical components specifically related to maturation and development.

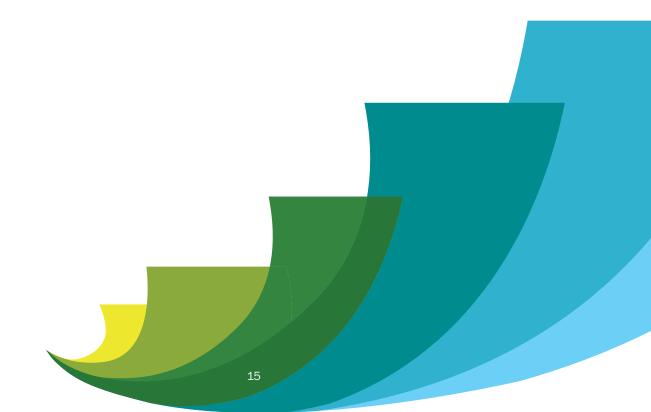
Mental Capacities

Knowledge and understanding of the psychological skills and strategies related to effective performance.

Personal & Lifestyle Capacities

Knowledge and understanding of issues related to self-awareness, self-development and establishing a balanced perspective.

LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PLAYER CAPACITIES





"Fun, Safety, Basic Skills and Understanding"

Technical Capacities

Phase	e 1 "Fun and Enjoyment" (age 6-8) Development through structured Play
1	EVASION SKILLS
	Change of Pace
2	HANDLING SKILLS
	• Throwing
	Catching
	• Lateral Pass
	Picking Ball off the Ground
	Placing the Ball on the Ground
3	CONTACT SKILLS
	Confidence in contact
	Modified tackling
4	SCRUM SKILLS
	Individual Body Positions - Safety
	• Feeding the Scrum
	• Striking the Ball
5	LINEOUT SKILLS
	• Throwing
	Jumping and Catching
	Delivery of the Ball
6	BACKLINE ATTACK
	Alignment
	Running and Passing

Phas	e 2 "Fun, Safety and Basic Skills" (age 8-10) Consolidate and Develop Phase 1 Skills
1	EVASION SKILLS
	• Side Step
2	HANDLING SKILLS
	• Lateral Pass/Decision Making (2v1 and 3v2)
	Pick and Pass
	• Sweep Pass
3	CONTACT SKILLS
	• Side Tackle
	• Front Tackle
	Falling and Placing the Ball
	Getting Back on your feet – rejoin the game
4	MAUL SKILLS
	Ball Carrier – Stability and Ball Presentation
	Link Player – Body Position, Secure and Deliver Ball
	Support Players – Bind and Protect



5	RUCK SKILLS
	Ball Carrier – Ball Presentation
	Link Player – Body Position & Ball Protection
	Support Players – Bind and Drive
6	SCRUM SKILLS (UP TO 5-MAN)
	• Formation
	• Engagement
	Striking and Channelling
	• Delivery
7	LINEOUT SKILLS
	Formation – Supports and Catcher
	Support and Protect the Catcher
8	BACKLINE ATTACK
	• Re-Alignment
	Support Running

1	se 3 "Basic Skills and Understanding" (age 10-12) Consolidate and Develop Phase 2 Skills EVASION SKILLS
_	• Swerve
	• Hand-Off
2	HANDLING SKILLS
	• Switch
	• Loop
	Decision Making-Creating Space
3	CONTACT SKILLS
	Tackle from Behind
	Passing out of the Tackle
	Gaining Possession in the Tackle
4	MAUL SKILLS
	Support Players-Bend, Bind and Drive
5	RUCK SKILLS
	Ball Carrier – Drive and Place
	Link/Support Players –Bend, Bind and Drive
6	SCRUM SKILLS (5-MAN)
	Individual Body Positions – Stability
	Develop Co-ordination of the Unit
	Safety – Managing a collapsed Scrum
7	LINEOUT SKILLS
	Catcher and Supports – Lineout to Maul
8	BACKLINE ATTACK
	Identify and Attack Space
	Using Patterns of Attack
9	KICKING AND CATCHING
	• Grubber
	• Chip

	• Punt
	• Fielding of the Ball in the air.

Tactical Capacities

1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Knowledge of Leprechaun Rugby/Mini Rugby Laws
	- Pass backwards
	- Offside
	- "Tackle"
	Concepts of Fair Play and Friendly 'competition'
2	THE GAME
	Play Modified Contact/Leprechaun Rugby (up to 8-a-side)
3	PRINCIPLES
	Go Forward – Running and Evasion (attack) & modified tackling (defence)
	Support – Pass Backwards to Support (attack) & assist to regain possession (defence)
Pha	se 2 "Fun, Safety and Basic Skills" (age 8-10) Consolidate and Develop Phase 1 Skills
1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Knowledge of Mini Laws
	- Lineout
	- Scrum
	- Ruck and Maul
	- Advantage
	Concepts of Honesty and Responsibility
2	THE GAME
	Play Full tackle – small sided games (up to 10-a-side)
3	PRINCIPLES
	Possession – Units as sources of possession
	Continuity – maintain Possession
Pha	se 3 "Basic Skills and Understanding" (age 10-12) Consolidate and Develop Phase 2 Skills
1	LAWS/ ETHICS
	The Tackle situation
	Concepts of Sporting Conduct & Perspective on Sport
2	THE GAME
	• Play up to 12-a-side
	Awareness of Basic Positional roles at set-piece
3	PRINCIPLES
	Defence-regaining Possession
	Introduction to Team Play (collective action in Attack & Defence)

Physical Capacities

Phase	se 1 "Fun and Enjoyment" (age 6-8) Development through structured Play	
1	AGILITY	
2	AWARENESS OF BODY IN SPACE	
3	BALANCE – STATIC AND DYNAMIC	
4	CO-ORDINATION AND MANIPULATION	
5	SPEED AND LOCOMOTION	
Phase	2 "Fun, Safety and Basic Skills" (age 8-10) Consolidate and Develop Phase 1 Skills	
6	AGILITY	
7	AWARENESS OF BODY IN SPACE	
8	BALANCE – STATIC AND DYNAMIC	
9	CO-ORDINATION AND MANIPULATION	
10	SPEED AND LOCOMOTION	

Phase	Phase 3 "Basic Skills and Understanding" (age 10-12) Consolidate and Develop Phase 2 Skills	
11	AGILITY	
12	AWARENESS OF BODY IN SPACE	
13	BALANCE – STATIC AND DYNAMIC	
14	CO-ORDINATION AND MANIPULATION	
15	SPEED AND LOCOMOTION	
16	WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN	
17	TRIPLE EXTENSION (INTRODUCTION)	

Mental Capacities

Pha	se 1 "Fun and Enjoyment" (age 6-8) Development through Structured Play
1	SELF CONFIDENCE
2	POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO SPORT
3	SELF ESTEEM
Pha	se 2 "Fun, Safety and Basic Skills" (age 8-10) Consolidate and Develop Phase 1 Skills
4	TOLERANCE
5	FOCUS AND CONCENTRATION
Pha	se 3 "Basic Skills and Understanding" (age 10-12) Consolidate and Develop Phase 2 Skills
6	DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-IMAGE
7	SOCIAL CONFIDENCE – RESPONSE TO POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT
8	ENTHUSIASM AND COMMITMENT

Personal & Life-Style Capacities

Phas	e 1 "Fun and Enjoyment" (age 6-8) Development through structured Play
1	CO-OPERATION
2	BASIC SOCIALISATION SKILLS
3	SHARING
4	FAIRNESS
Phas	e 2 "Fun, Safety and Basic Skills" (age 8-10) Consolidate and Develop Phase 1 Skills
5	POSITIVE RESPONSE TO DISCIPLINE AND STRUCTURE
6	SELF-CONTROL – BALANCE PERSONAL NEEDS/WANTS WITH OTHERS
7	SELF EXPRESSION
Phas	e 3 "Basic Skills and Understanding" (age 10-12) Consolidate and Develop Phase 2 Skills
8	IDENTIFICATION WITH POSITIVE ROLE MODELS
9	CREATIVE THINKING
10	COMMUNICATION SKILLS
11	WORK AS PART OF A "TEAM"
12	AWARENESS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES



Technical Capacities

1	EVASION SKILLS -1V1
	Change of Pace
	• Side Step
	• Swerve
	Hand Off
2	HANDLING SKILLS-MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF ATTACK
	Throwing and Catching
	Lateral Passing and Receiving
	Decision Making – Preserving Space
	Decision Making – Creating Space
	• Spin Pass
	Pick and Place
3	CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENCE
	Gaining Possession in the Tackle
	• Front, Side and Rear Tackles
	Contact Skills – Attack
	Placing the Ball in the Tackle
	Passing Around the Tackle
	Passing Out of the Tackle
4	MAUL SKILLS - MAINTAIN CONTINUITY IN A "STANDING " TACKLE
	Ball Carrier – establish strong base and protect Ball
	Link Player –Secure Possession and deliver Ball
	Support Players – Bend, Bind and Drive
5	RUCK SKILLS – RECYCLE QUICK POSSESSION IN THE TACKLE
	Ball Carrier – Ball Presentation
	Link/Support Players – Protect Ball Carrier and Secure Ball
	Ruck Skills – Creating a Ruck to maintain Continuity
	Ball Carrier – goes to ground/places ball while driving
	Link/Support Players – Protect Ball Carrier & Secure Ball.
6	SCRUM SKILLS – ATTACK (8 MAN) – INTRODUCTION OF BACK-ROW
	Formation
	Engagement
	Put-in and Strike
	Channelling – Channel 1 and 2
	Delivery and Use of the Ball
	Scrum Skills – Defence (8 man)



	Formation
	• Engagement
	Contesting Possession
7	LINEOUT SKILLS –ATTACK – (8 MAN)
1	• Formation
	Calls, Communication & Variations
	Movement & reaction
	Throw, Jump, Catch and Bind
	Delivery and Use of the Ball
	Delivery and use of the Ball
	Lineout Skills – Defence – (8 man)
	• Formation
	Movement/Reaction Contest Possession
8	Prevent Territory Being Gained BACKLINE ATTACK – FROM SCRUM, LINEOUTS AND PHASE PLAY
0	
	Positioning and Alignment – (to allow range of options) When the configuration of contracts and contracts are configurations.
	Identification of Space – (selection of pattern) A delegation of Space – (selection of pattern)
	Angles of run – (to preserve/create Space) This is a CR and the black of the space of the
	Timing of Pass – (to hold defenders)
	Penetrating defence –(with an unmarked player) Penetrating defence –(with an unmarked player)
	Support Ball Carrier (to continue Attack)
9	KICKING AND CATCHING – TO GO FORWARD AND EXPLOIT SPACE
	• Grubber and Chip (1v1)
	Punt (to gain ground)
	Fielding the Ball-gain/regain Possession
10	DEFENCE-PREVENT PENETRATION THROUGH INITIAL DEFENCE LINE
	Alignment (to one another)
	Move Forward (maintain alignment)
	React to emerging threat (flexibility)
	Tackle (to prevent territory being gained)
11	RESTARTS – TO GAIN/REGAIN POSSESSION OF THE BALL
	Receiving team -
	Formation
	Catch/Deflect the Ball
	Protect and Deliver the Ball
	Kicking Team -
	• Drop-Kick
	Move Forward in a Pattern (to apply Pressure)
	Contest Possession

Tactical Capacities

1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Personal Responsibility for Behaviour and Actions
	Understand basic Laws of 15-a-side game
2	THE GAME
	Play 15-a-side game
	Basic Tactical preparation – awareness of Opposition
	Introduction to structured Competition
	• Identify with Positional Role
3	PRINCIPLES
	Go Forward – include basic Kicking strategies
	Support – to maintain Continuity in Attack
	Team Play –Attack and Defence (collective action in Attack & Defence)

Physical Capacities

1	BALANCE
2	CO-ORDINATION AND MANIPULATION
3	SPEED AND LOCOMOTION
4	AGILITY
5	AWARENESS OF BODY IN SPACE
6	FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY
7	STRENGTH – (INCLUDING TRIPLE EXTENSION)

Mental Capacities

1	GOAL SETTING – SHORT TERM
2	PATIENCE
3	SELF-CONTROL
4	CONCENTRATION – FOCUS ON KEY FACTORS

Personal & Life-Style Capacities

1	PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY
2	AMBITION – COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE
3	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
4	AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE OF PUBESCENT DEVELOPMENTS
5	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
6	GOOD HEALTH AND HYGIENE PRACTICE



"The performance of Rugby Skills to achieve the Principles of Play in a match" (Age 15-17 & Adult up to J2)

Technical Capacities Development of Skills

1	EVASION SKILLS – MODIFIED GAMES/MATCH CONDITIONS
	Change of Pace
	• Side Step
	• Swerve
	• Hand off
2	HANDLING SKILLS - TO BEAT DEFENDERS
	Throwing and Catching
	Lateral passing and Receiving
	Decision making – Preserving Space
	Decision making – Creating Space
	Spin Pass
3	CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENCE – (MATCH CONDITIONS)
	Gaining Possession in the Tackle
	Front, Side and Rear Tackles
	Contact Skills – Attack –(select best option in match)
	Placing the Ball in the Tackle
	Passing Around the Tackle
	Passing Out of the Tackle
	Pick and Play
4	MAUL SKILLS – DEVELOP PLATFORM FOR ATTACK
	Ball Carrier – establish strong base and protect Ball
	• Link Player – secure Possession, perform best option
	Support Players – Support Link Player
5	RUCK SKILLS – RECYCLE QUICK POSSESSION IN THE TACKLE
	Ball Carrier – Ball presentation
	Link/Support Players-Protect Ball Carrier & secure Ball
	Ruck Skills - Creating a Ruck to facilitate Attack
	Ball Carrier - goes to ground/places ball while driving
	Link/Support Players-Protect Ball Carrier & secure Ball/perform best option

6	SCRUM SKILLS - ATTACK-DEVELOP PLATFORM FOR ATTACK
	• Formation
	Engagement
	Application of Pressure
	Put in and Strike



	Channelling – Channel 1 and 2
	Delivery and Use of the Ball
	Scrum Skills - Defence-Disruption of quality Possession
	• Formation
	• Engagement
	Application of Pressure
	Contesting Possession
7	LINEOUT SKILLS – ATTACK - DEVELOP PLATFORM FOR ATTACK
-	• Formation
	Calls, Communication & Variations
	Movement & reaction
	Throw, Jump, Catch and Support
	Delivery and Use of the Ball-best option
	Lineout Skills - Defence-Disruption of quality Possession
	Formation
	Movement/Reaction
	Contest Possession
	Prevent Territory being gained
8	BACKLINE ATTACK-MULTIPLE PHASES IN MATCH CONDITIONS
	Positioning and Alignment – (to allow range of options)
	Identification of Space – (selection of pattern)
	Angles of run-(to preserve/create Space)
	• Timing of Pass – (to hold defenders)
	Penetrating defence-(with an unmarked player)
	Support Ball Carrier-(to continue Attack)
	Awareness of formal Role in a pattern
9	KICKING AND CATCHING – TO GO FORWARD AND EXPLOIT SPACE
	Grubber and Chip (in game context)
	Punt (to gain ground)
	Fielding the Ball – Gain/regain Possession
10	DEFENCE-PREVENT PENETRATION THROUGH INITIAL DEFENCE LINE AND ATTEMPT TO REGAIN
	POSSESSION
	Alignment (to one another)
	Move Forward (maintain alignment)
	React to emerging threat (flexibility)
	Tackle (to prevent territory being gained)
	Support (to regain Possession)
11	RESTARTS-TO GAIN/REGAIN POSSESSION OF THE BALL
	Receiving team -
	• Formation
	Catch/Deflect the Ball
	Protect and Deliver the Ball
	Use platform to Attack Minding To any
	Kicking Team-



	Drop-Kick
	Move Forward in a Pattern –(to apply Pressure)
	Contest Possession/Prevent territory being gained
12	SUPPORT-TO FACILITATE ATTACK AND DEFENCE PATTERNS
	Anticipate how play will develop
	Appropriate lines of running
	Appropriate Positioning-Depth and Width
	Perform best option of Support

Tactical Capacities

1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Appreciation of the consequences of Actions
	Knowledge of Law 'penalties'/sanctions
2	THE GAME
	Effective set-piece play
	Understand Game Plan
	Choice/Selection of Tactical Options - exploit Space
	Develop Position Specific requirements
3	PRINCIPLE
	Pressure-achieving Principles of Play

Physical Capacities

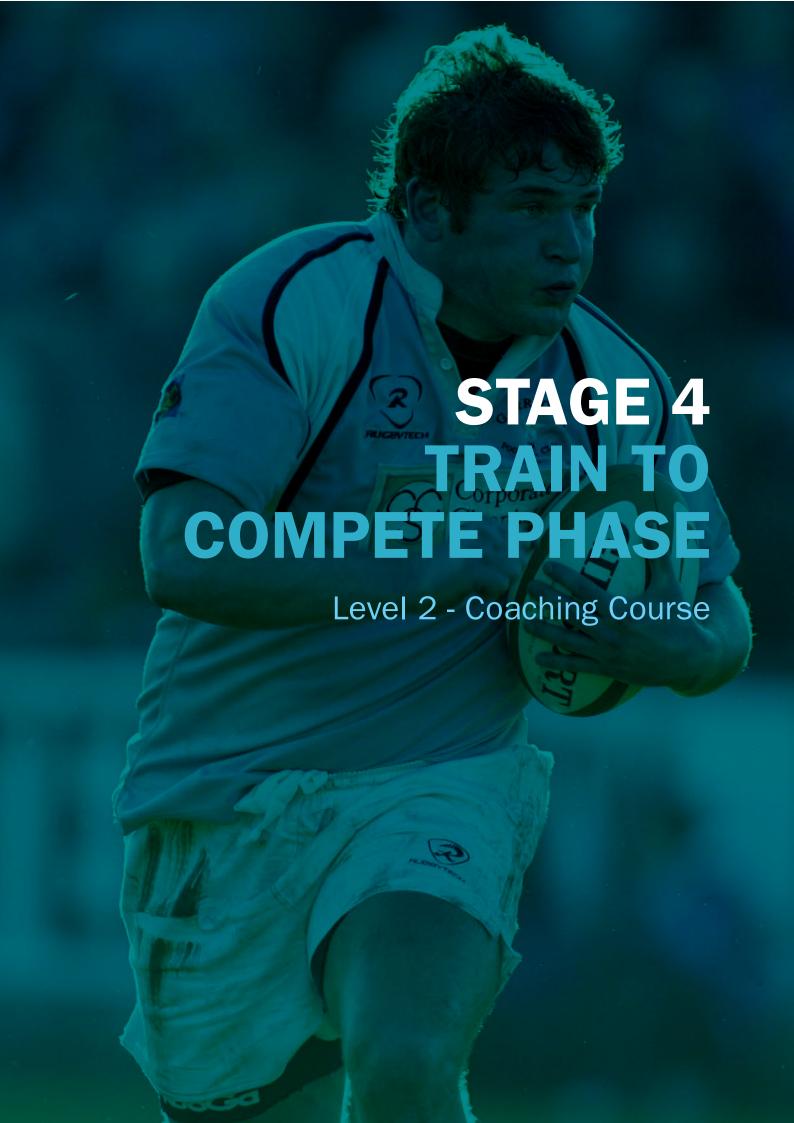
1	FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS
2	STRENGTH
3	POWER (INCLUDING TRIPLE EXTENSION)
4	MOBILITY
5	SPEED, ACCELERATION
6	MULTI-ACTIVITY ENDURANCE-SPORTS SPECIFIC
7	PRE-HABILITATION

Mental Capacities

1	MOTIVATION
2	GOAL SETTING-MEDIUM TERM
3	DETERMINATION
4	CONCENTRATION ON KEY TASKS AND KEY FACTORS

Personal & Life-Style Capacities

1	INDEPENDENT THINKING
2	AMBITION - PLAN CAREER OPTIONS
3	ACCEPTANCE OF STRUCTURE AND DISCIPLINE
4	ROLE MODEL FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN
5	ESTABLISHED SELF-IDENTITY
6	LIFE-BALANCE-COPING WITH PRESSURES



"The performance of multi-functional Roles under match conditions" (Age 18-21 & Adult J1 to Senior XV)

Technical Capacities Selection and Performance of Skills under match conditions

1	EVASION SKILLS
	Change of Pace
	• Side Step
	• Swerve
	Hand off
2	HANDLING SKILLS – TO BEAT DEFENDERS
	Throwing and Catching
	Lateral Passing and Receiving
	Decision Making-Preserving Space
	Decision Making-Creating Space
	• Spin Pass
3	CONTACT SKILLS-DEFENCE
	Gaining Possession in the Tackle
	Front, Side and Rear Tackles
	Contact Skills-Attack –(perform Multi-Functional Roles)
	Ball Carrier-choose best option
	1st Support Player-react to Ball Carrier
	Other Supporting Players-react appropriately to the situation
4	MAUL SKILLS-(PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES)
	Ball Carrier-establish strong base and protect Ball
	Link Player-secure Possession, perform best option
	Support Players-Support Link Player
5	RUCK SKILLS-(PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES)
	Ball Carrier-Choose best option
	Link/Support Players-react to Ball carrier/situation
6	SCRUM SKILLS-ATTACK-REACT TO OPPOSITION PRESSURE
	• Formation
	Engagement
	Application of Pressure
	Put in and Strike
	Channelling-Channel 1, 2 and 3
	Delivery and Use of the Ball
	Scrum Skills - Defence-Attacking Opposition weakness
	• Formation
	Engagement
	Application of Pressure
	Contesting Possession

7	LINEOUT SKILLS - ATTACK – PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Thrower-specialist role
	• Jumpers/Catchers
	• Decoys/Options
	• Supports
	• Distributors
	Lineout Skills - Defence-Perform Multi-Functional Roles
	• Jumpers/Catchers
	• Supports
8	BACKLINE ATTACK – PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Distributor
	• Decoy
	• Playmaker
	• Support
	• Striker
9	KICKING AND CATCHING – TO GO FORWARD AND EXPLOIT SPACE
	Grubber and Chip (in game context)
	Punt (to gain ground)
	Fielding the Ball-gain/regain Possession
10	DEFENCE - PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Tackler-prevent territory being gained/regain Possession
	• 1st Support Player-react to Tackler
	Other Supporting Players-react to situation
11	RESTARTS - PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Receiving Team
	• Catcher
	• Supports
	Kicking Team
	Kicker-specialist role
	• Jumper/Catcher
	• Supports
12	SUPPORT-PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	• 1st Support Player - choose best option
	Other Supporting Players - react appropriately to the situation
13	COUNTER ATTACK-PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Catcher/Ball Carrier
	• Initiator
	Supporting Player

Tactical Capacities

1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Appreciation of Laws, Rulings and interpretations.
	Appreciation of 'Role Model' responsibilities
2	THE GAME
	Implement problem-solving strategies-Identities of Rugby
	Implement Tactical Options to achieve Game Plan
	Develop and Implement mini-unit/partnership strategies
	Awareness of Opposition tactical strengths/weaknesses
	Evolve Position Specific requirements
3	PRINCIPLES
	Game Appreciation – Choosing best options

Physical Capacities

1	MULTI-SPRINT ENDURANCE
2	STRENGTH AND POWER
3	SPEED, AGILITY & QUICKNESS
4	SPORTS AND POSITION SPECIFIC CONDITIONING
5	PERIODISED TRAINING PROGRAMME
6	INDIVIDUALISED TRAINING PROGRAMME
7	ESTABLISH RECOVERY ROUTES

Mental Capacities

1	PRE-MATCH PREPARATION
2	INDIVIDUALISED WARM-UP ROUTINES
3	CONTROLLED BREATHING
4	PHYSICAL RELAXATION – P.M.R.
5	UNDERSTANDING / COPING WITH AROUSAL AND ANXIETY
6	GOAL SETTING - LONG TERM
7	CONCENTRATION – FUNCTIONAL ROLES

Personal & Life-Style Capacities

1	PRINCIPLE-CENTRED VALUES
2	PURSUE FURTHER EDUCATION / DEVELOPMENT
3	INTEGRATION OF SPORT, CAREER AND LIFE GOALS
4	ECONOMIC AND INDEPENDENCE MANAGEMENT
5	AWARENESS OF LEADERSHIP DEMANDS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
6	COPING WITH SET-BACKS / FAILURE
	(ADULT / NON-AGE-GRADE RUGBY)
1	SELF-RELIANCE
2	PATIENCE TO ACHIEVE LONG TERM GOALS
3	PROFESSIONAL – PERSONAL LIFE MANAGEMENT
4	OPENNESS TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



"Improvisation and Problem-solving under match conditions" (Senior Representative)

Technical Capacities

Ability to Improvise Individual Skills to Enhance Performance

1	EVASION SKILLS
	Change of Pace
	• Side Step
	• Swerve
	Hand Off
2	HANDLING SKILLS – TO BEAT DEFENDERS
	Throwing and Catching
	Lateral Passing and Receiving
	Decision Making – Preserving Space
	Decision Making – Creating Space
	• Spin Pass
3	KICKING AND CATCHING – TO GO FORWARD AND EXPLOIT SPACE
	Grubber and Chip (in game context)
	Punt (to gain ground)
	Catching/Fielding the Ball – gain/regain Possession
4	CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENCE
	Gaining Possession in the Tackle
	• Front, Side and Rear Tackles
	Ability to Problem-solve through the application of Multi-functional roles
5	CONTACT SKILLS- ATTACK -(PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES)
	Ball Carrier-Choose best option
	1st Support Player-react to Ball Carrier
	Other Supporting players – react to situation.
6	Maul Skills – (perform Multi-Functional Roles)
	Ball Carrier – establish strong base and protect Ball
	Link Player – secure Possession, perform best option
	Support Players – Support Link Player
7	RUCK SKILLS – (PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES)
	Ball Carrier – Choose best option
	Link/Support Players – react to Ball carrier/situation
8	
	SCRUM SKILLS – ATTACK – REACT TO OPPOSTION PRESSURE
	SCRUM SKILLS – ATTACK – REACT TO OPPOSTION PRESSURE • Formation
	• Formation
	• Formation • Engagement



	Delivery and Use of the Ball
	Scrum Skills – Defence – Attacking Opposition weakness
	• Formation
	Engagement
	Application of Pressure
	Contesting Possession
9	LINEOUT SKILLS – ATTACK – PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Thrower –specialist role
	Jumpers/Catchers
	Decoys / Options
	• Supports
	• Distributors
	Lineout Skills - Defence-Perform Multi-Functional Roles
	Jumpers/Catchers
	Supporters
10	
10	BACKLINE ATTACK – PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES Distributor
	Decoy Playmaker
	Support
	• Striker
11	DEFENCE - PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Tackler-prevent territory being gained/regain Possession
	1st Support Player - react to Tackler
	Other Supporting Players – react to situation
12	RESTARTS-PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Receiving team
	Catcher
	• SUPPORTS
	Kicking Team
	Kicker – specialist role
	Jumper/Catcher
	• Supports
13	SUPPORT - PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	1st Support Player-choose best option
	Other Supporting Players-react to situation
14	COUNTER ATTACK - PERFORM MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLES
	Catcher/Ball Carrier
	• Initiator
	Supporting Player

Tactical Capacities

1	LAWS/ETHICS
	Utilisation of Laws/rulings to develop match strategies
	• Fulfil "Role Model" responsibilities
2	THE GAME
	Implement Performance Analysis – Individual/Team
	Identification of Opposition tactical strengths / weaknesses
	Implement specific Game Plan(s) – based on Opposition
	Ability to Adapt Tactical strategies during a match
	Consideration of tactical developments in world rugby
	Mastery of Position Specific requirements
3	PRINCIPLES
	Prioritise 'Pressure' – Possession/Position/Points

Physical Capacities

1	MULTI-SPRINT ENDURANCE
2	STRENGTH AND POWER
3	SPEED, AGILITY & QUICKNESS
4	SPORTS AND POSITION SPECIFIC CONDITIONING
5	PERIODISED TRAINING PROGRAMME
6	INDIVIDUALISED TRAINING PROGRAMME
7	WELL-ESTABLISHED RECOVERY ROUTINES

Mental Capacities

1	MENTAL RELAXATION
2	MENTAL IMAGERY
3	COPING STRATEGIES – MATCH & PRE-MATCH STRATEGIES
4	SELF AWARENESS - THROUGH PROFILING
5	CONCENTRATION-STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Personal & Life-Style Capacities

1	SELF RELIANCE
2	PATIENCE TO ACHIEVE LONG TERM GOALS
3	PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE MANAGEMENT
4	OPENNESS TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
5	POSITIVE USE OF INFLUENCE/POWER
6	THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE



NOTES

How do I find out more about the I.R.F.U. Long Term Player Development Programme?

Please contact your local Rugby Branch and ask for the Rugby Development office.

Munster Branch Musgrave Park

Pearse Road, Cork 021 4323563

Leinster Branch 55 Main Street

Donnybrook, Dublin 4

01 2693224

Connacht Branch Galway Sportsground

College Road, Galway

091 561568

Ulster Branch Ravenhill Grounds

85 Ravenhill Park, Belfast, BT6 0DG

048 90 493111

What other resources are available?

Please log-on to the I.R.F.U. website at: **www.IrishRugby.ie** to view and download this booklet as well as the accompanying brochure and other information about the I.R.F.U. Long Term Development Programme.

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