



The Mini & Youth Rugby Blueprint Roadshow

October – December 2013

Feedback Report

TEAMWORK RESPECT ENJOYMENT DISCIPLINE SPORTSMANSHIP

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Summary

The Mini & Youth Rugby Blueprint Roadshow took place between October and December 2013. The roadshow visited 27 venues around the country and was attended by more than 500 people. The purpose of the roadshow was to give all rugby stakeholders a chance to share their views on how we shape the mini, junior and youth game in the lead up to Rugby World Cup 2015.

In recent years a great deal of work has gone into considering how the game is played, delivered and organised for young people up to the age of 18. The Age Grade Competition Review has been in process for a couple of years, working on producing a recommended competition and playing framework across clubs, schools and colleges. The aim of the blueprint roadshow was to share recent evidence from players highlighting why they play and why they might have stopped playing and to research the views of stakeholders on the best way forward for the game.

The challenge is to provide a game format, playing opportunities and support based on the needs and wants of young people. By getting this balance right we aim to ensure that more young people start, remain and choose a lifelong friendship with rugby union, strengthening our clubs and growing the game in the communities around them.

Roadshow Format and Method

At each roadshow event, the audience was given an opportunity to consider feedback from players aged 7 – 18 about why they play rugby union (and sport in general) and the reasons why they stop playing. There was the opportunity to compare this with their own experiences. They then discussed the particular needs of the 7 – 12 and 13 – 18 age bands, working in these age-related groups depending on which their current role is most closely aligned to.

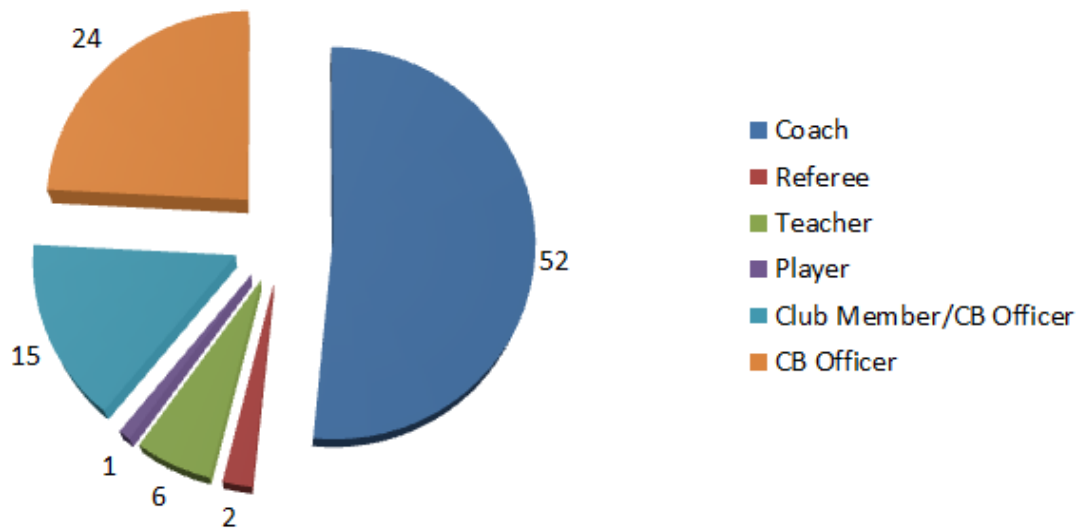
The evenings concluded with the attendees coming back together to vote on the types of competition and playing offers they believed best suited the needs of these players.

All the “voting” information was recorded to form statistical and tangible research that aids development of the competitive framework. In addition, any commonly agreed points and issues were noted at each roadshow event to identify key themes across the 27 evenings. This information is included in this report.

Roadshow Findings

A. Breakdown of Attendees

Fig 1 (expressed as a percentage)



Although it was not information specifically collected, the registers and breakdown of the groups when the audience split into age bands showed that slightly more than half of attendees were involved in the 13-18 game as opposed to the 7-12 age band.

B. Is competition right currently and if not who should address it?

A majority of attendees believed both that **competition needs to change** and that **it is the RFU's role to establish a national competitive framework**.

Fig 2

Does competition for 7 – 18 year olds need to change?

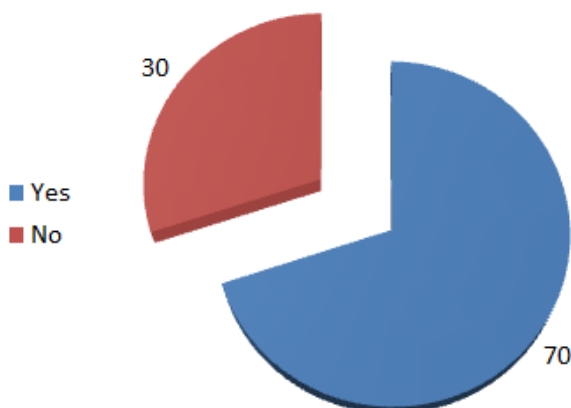


Fig 3

Is it the role of the RFU to create and establish a national competition framework?

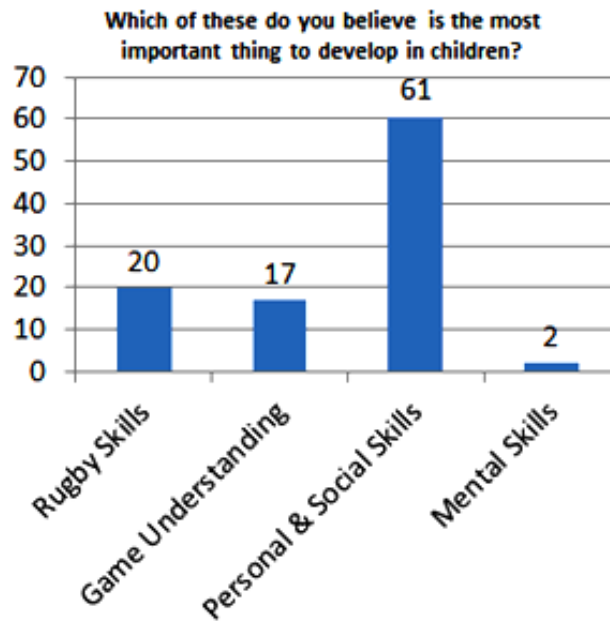


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C. What is most important to develop in children?

Attendees believed that it is **more important to develop personal and social skills** than rugby skills, mental skills or game understanding.

Fig 4



D. What are children’s needs from Rugby?

The majority of the attendees believed that **enjoyment and being with their friends** were the most important things to children. This concurred with what children tell us.

Fig 5

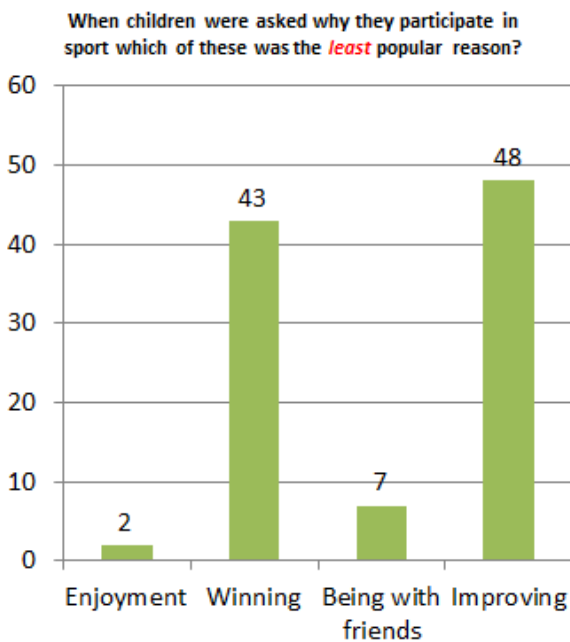
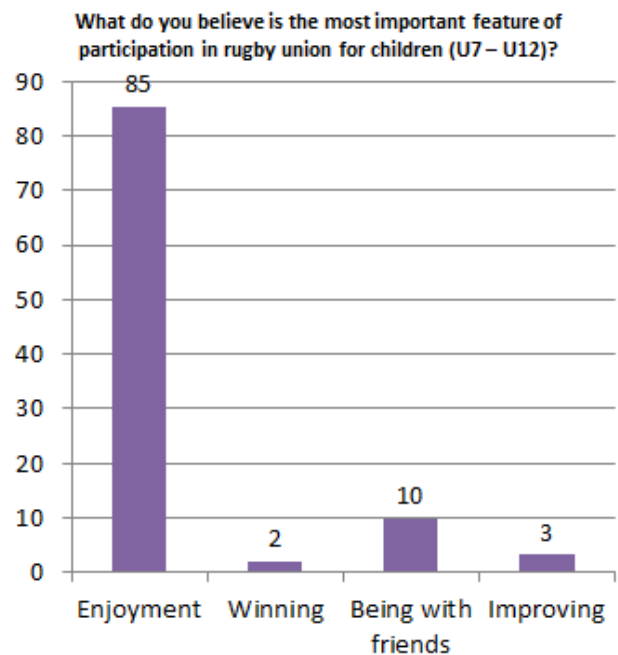


Fig 6



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E. What are young people's needs at 16+?

Attendees were asked to vote on why they felt young people aged 16+ specifically participated in rugby, and what reasons they gave for dropping out of the game. A majority believed that **enjoyment and being with their friends were the main reasons for participation**. When asked why young people aged 16+ stopped playing attendees voted for **social reasons and work/academic pressures**.

Fig 7

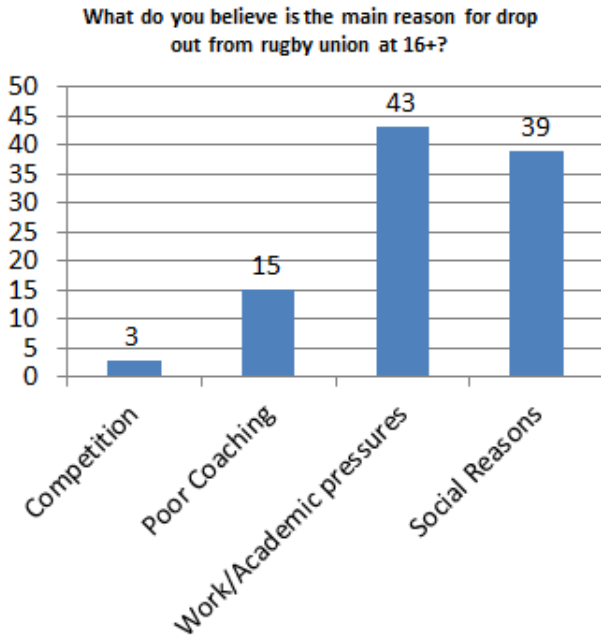
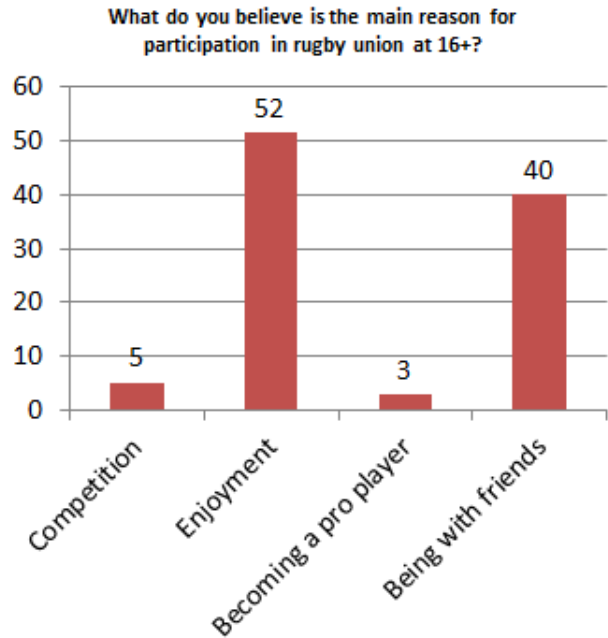


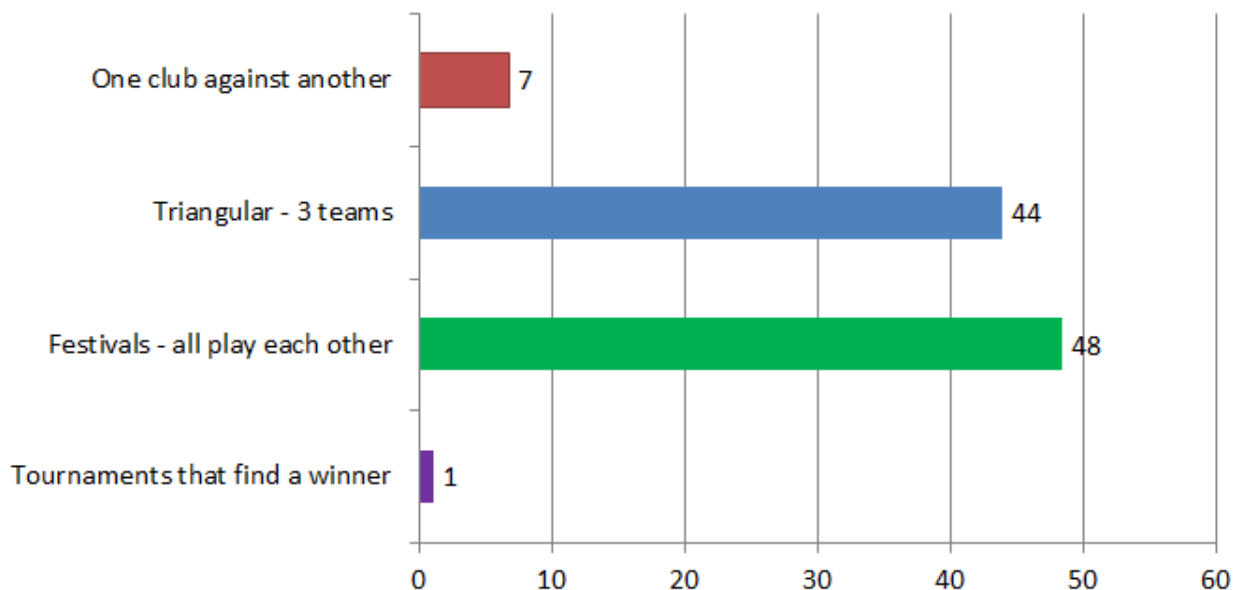
Fig 8



F. What competitive opportunities should we provide for U7 – U12?

Following the discussions about experiences of competition, playing formats and what motivated young people to play, the attendees were asked what types of competition we should provide. **Triangulars and Festivals scored highly**. A majority believed that we should not provide tournaments (which find a winning team), leagues or knock out cups for U7 – U12 players.

Fig 9: Which competition types provide the best **development** opportunities for 7 – 12 year olds.



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Fig 10

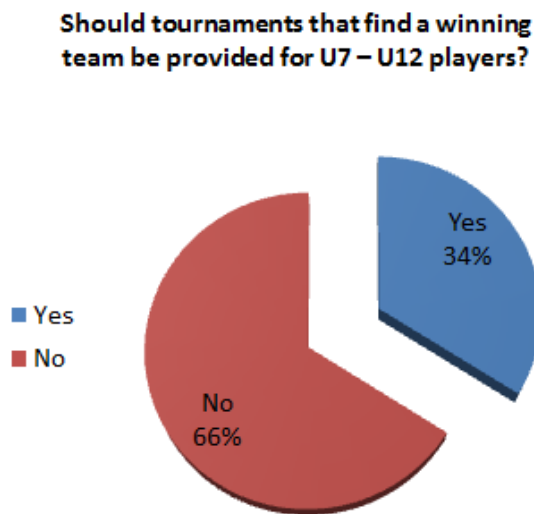
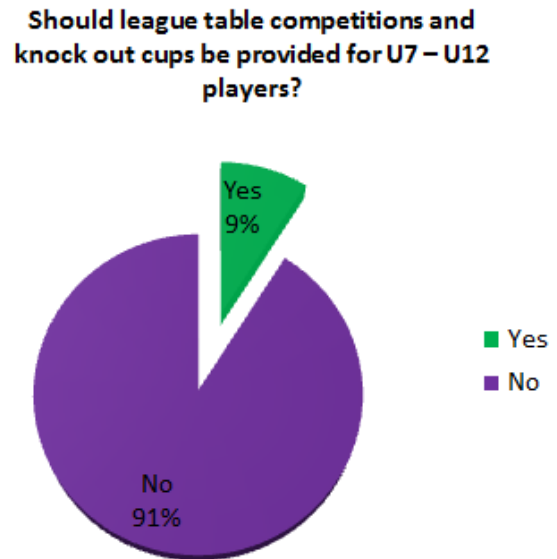


Fig 11



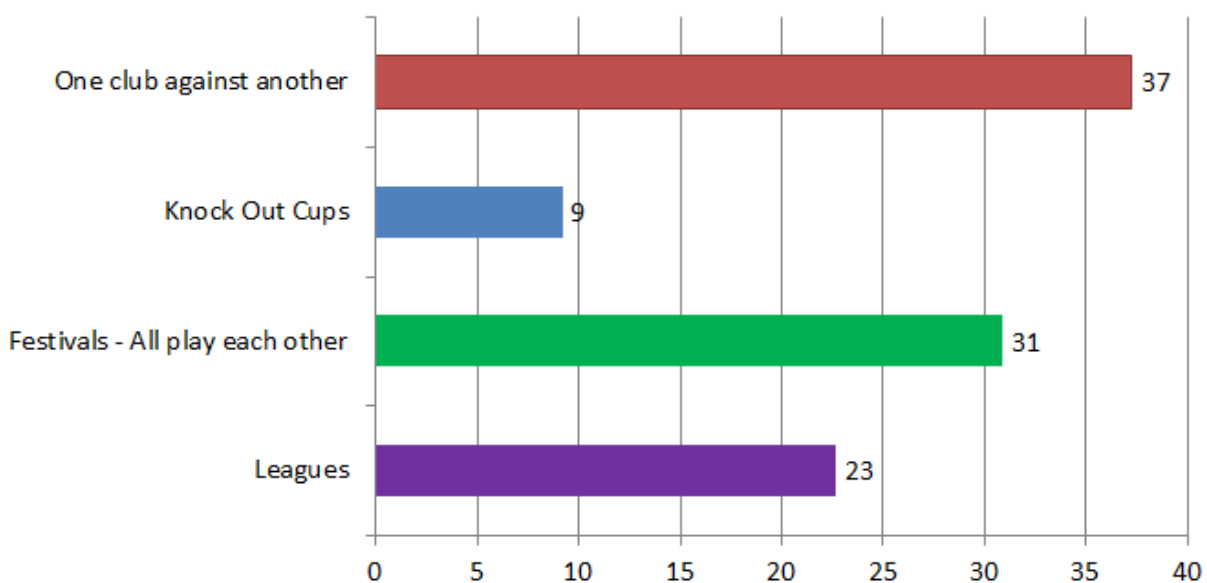
G. What Competitive opportunities should we provide for U13 – U18?

After discussions, attendees were asked to vote on what they thought was appropriate for U13 – U18 year olds firstly overall and then by breaking them down into two smaller age bands: u13 – U15 and U16 – U18.

Many expressed the opinion that the older players in this age group needed to be catered for, and that those who were deemed to be ‘better’ enjoyed the competitive nature of league and knock out cup competitions.

The voting showed a belief that the competitive offer should be *more fixtures and festivals than knock-outs and leagues* but that there is a clear shift to *more competitive intensity from U16 onwards with cups and leagues having more relevance*.

Fig 12: Which competition types provide the best *development* opportunities for 13 – 18 year olds.



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Fig 13: Should friendly matches/no overall winner festivals be provided for U13 – U18 players?

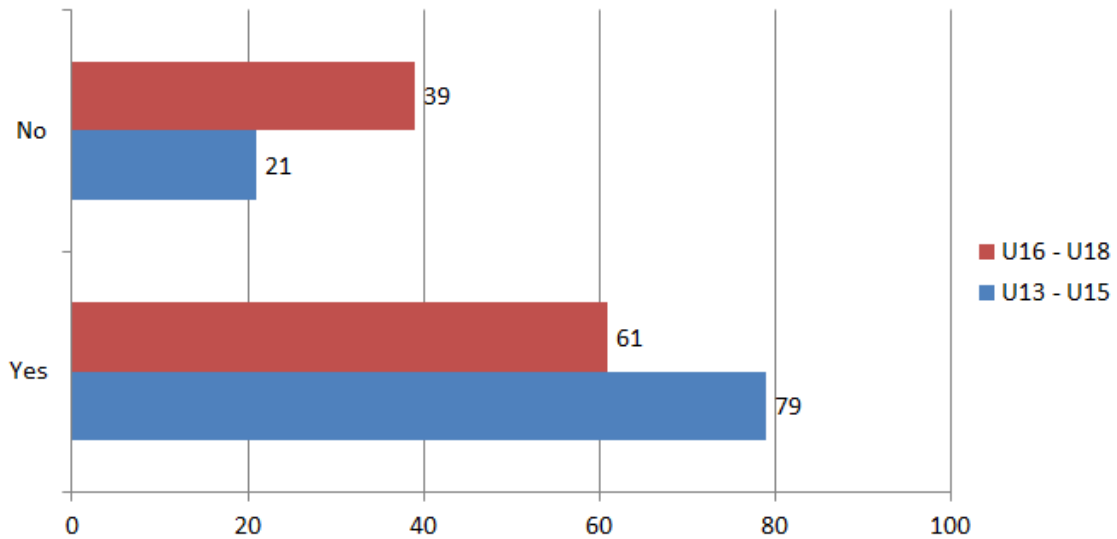


Fig 14: Should league table competitions be provided for U13 – U18 players?

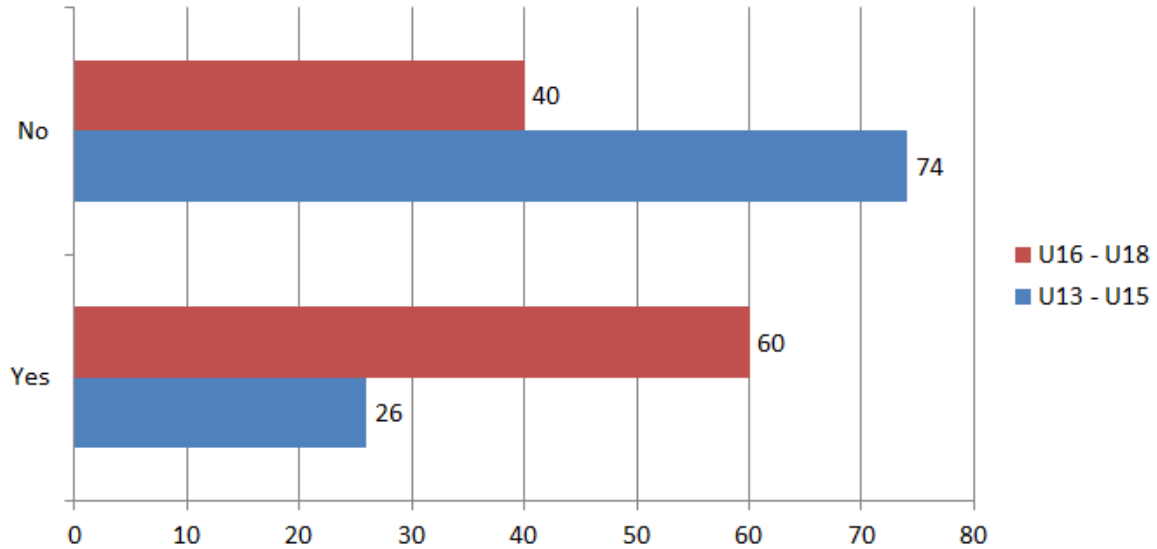
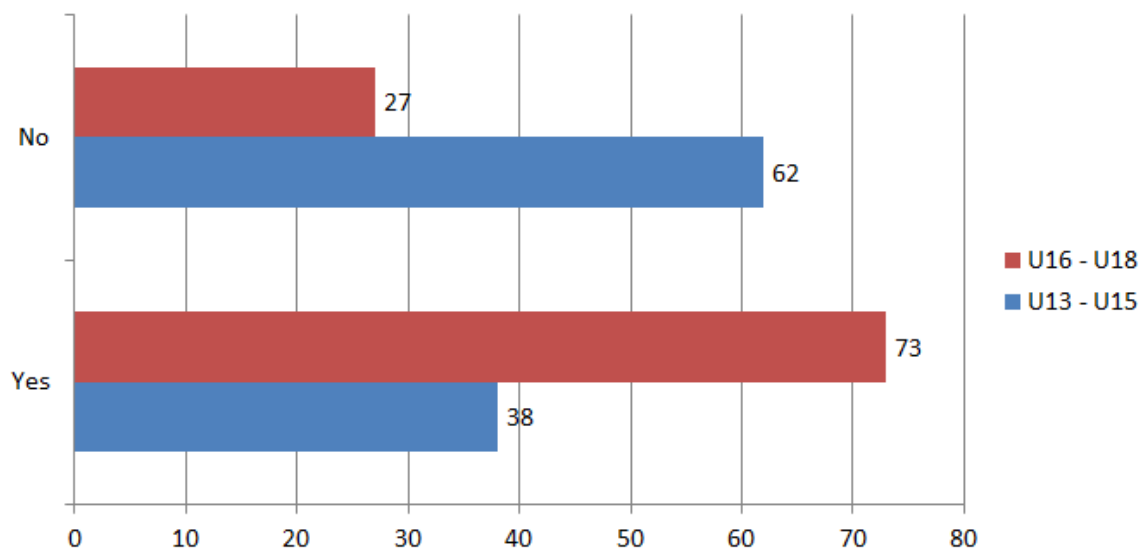


Fig 15: Should knock out cup competitions be provided for U13 – U18 players?



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H. What should the competitive framework look like?

Attendees were asked to consider a range of **competitive framework options** for both U7 – U12 and U13 – U18 year old players. For each age band 4 options were presented for discussion. Each option gave a possible menu of suggested training/competition ratios, suggested level of competition (low/medium/high) for each age, starting age for representative rugby and number of players per side.

This helped to give a sense of where the audience felt the offer should be pitched and if, why, how, where and when any improvements could be made to what is currently in place. These were collated at each roadshow event and the following themes across all 27 came through.

U7 – U12 feedback

At this age band it was felt that there should be a **limited number of festivals teams could enter per year, friendly and triangular matches, with a game/festival opportunity every 3rd week**. This was closest to Option 3. (See appendix 2)

U13 – U18 feedback

A move from the current provision to a mix of options 2 & 3 was the majority position. When collated across all roadshows the conclusion was a position right between the two. This included a **phased introduction of 15 a side rugby, incremental intensity of competitions through the age bands, higher level competition at U15 upwards only and a training:competition ratio in favour of more training than currently**. (See appendix 2)

I. Key Themes from Roadshow Discussions

A number of additional points for attention were common principles and themes across all of the roadshow events.

These were agreed to be considered in looking to develop the shape of U7 to U18 rugby in the future:

- Competition is an important part of our game but emphasise the fun and inclusivity
- Consistency is vital – nationwide decisions should be made and observed – no exceptions
- Clear guidance from RFU for CBs and clubs/schools/colleges as to what they can/can't do
- Schools/colleges and clubs need to play the same game and operate by the same rules
- The RFU should introduce the new rules of play nationwide immediately
- There needs to be a transition from new rules at U12 to 15-a-side rugby at U13/14
- Clearly define festivals and tournaments – festivals to maximize participation and fun, tournaments to find winners

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Roadshow Venues

Date	Location
Tuesday 8th October 2013	The Rose Bowl, Southampton
Thursday 10th October 2013	Broadstreet RFC
Tuesday 15th October 2013	York University
Wednesday 16th October 2013	Gateshead College
Monday 21st October 2013	Berkhamstead School
Tuesday 22nd October 2013	Tuxford Academy
Thursday 24th October 2013	Chesterfield RFC
Monday 28th October 2013	Launceston RFC
Tuesday 29th October 2013	Taunton RFC
Thursday 31st October 2013	Thornbury RFC
Monday 4th November 2013	Chester RFC
Tuesday 5th November 2013	Liverpool St Helens RFC
Thursday 7th November 2013	Isle of Man Sports Institute
Tuesday 12th November 2013	Guildford RFC
Thursday 14th November 2013	Sir Graham Balfour School, Stafford
Monday 18th November 2013	North Dorset RFC
Tuesday 19th November 2013	Brentwood
Thursday 21st November 2013	Preston Grasshoppers RFC
Monday 25th November 2013	Village Hotel, Maidstone
Tuesday 26th November 2013	Bromsgrove School
Thursday 28th November 2013	Broughton Park RFC
Monday 2nd December 2013	Hurstpierpoint College, Brighton
Tuesday 3rd December 2013	Henley RFC
Thursday 5th December 2013	Moulton College
Monday 9th December 2013	West Suffolk College
Tuesday 10th December 2013	Twickenham Stadium
Thursday 12th December 2013	Bradford & Bingley RFC

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Appendix 2: Clubs, Schools, Colleges & Organisations attending the Roadshow

Mini & Youth Rugby Blueprint Roadshow 2013		
Abbey	Claverdon RFC	Haywards Heath RFC
Amphill RFC	Cobham RFC	Heathfield RFC
Andover RFC	Colchester	Hemel Hampstead RFC
Arnold School	Comnor House	Henley
Aurora Care	Consett	Herts RFSU
Aylesbury RFC	CRFC minis	Herts RFU
Baccarameen High School	D & W RFU	High Wycombe
Baildon RUFC	Derby	Hitchin RFC
Bakewell RFC	Didcot	Horsham
Banbury	Ditchling RFC	Hove RFC
Barkers Butts	Doncaster RFC	Huddersfield
Barnard Castle School	Doncore RFC	Huntingdon
Barton RUFC	Dorchester	Hurst College
Bay House School	Dorking RFC	Ilkley
Bedford	Douglas RUFC	Ipswich Y&M
Bees	Droitwich RFC	Ivel Barbarians RFC
Berkshire RFU	Droitwich Spa High School	KE Camp Hill
Berkshire Youth	Dudley Kingswinford	Keighley
Blackburn	East Midlands RU	Kenilworth
Blaydon RFC	East Retford	Keyworth
Bodmin	Eastern Counties	Kidderminster Carrolians
Bradford & Bingley RUFC	Eastleigh	King Williams College
Bramley Phoenix RFC	Eastleigh Pirates	Lancashire
Brentwood RFC	ECB	Lancashire Colts League
Bridgwater and Albion	Eccleshall RUFC	Lancashire Schools RFU
Brightlingsea	Ely	Launceston
Brighton College Prep	England Colleges RFU	Leeds Corinthians
Broadstreet	ERFSU	Leeds School Sports Partnership
Bromsgrove	ERFSU	Leek RFC
Bromsgrove Prep	Essex CSU	Leicestershire
Bromsgrove School	Essex RFU	Lewes RFC
Burnley	Eton Manor RFC	Lichfield RUFC
Burntwood	Farnborough	Lincoln
Burton	Fleetwood	Liverpool Collegiate
Bury	Flyde	Liverpool St Helens
Bury St Edmunds	Garstang	London Irish
Caldy RFC	Gloucestershire RFC	Longton RUFC
Camberley RFC	Gordano RFC	Lowestoft & Yarmouth
Cambridge RFC	Gosford All Blacks	Luctonians RFC
Cambridgeshire	Gosport & Fareham	Lymm
Camp Hill RFC	Grasshoppers	Lymm High School
Cannock RUFC	Guernsey	Macclesfield RUFC
Central College	Guildford RFC	Maldon RFC
Chelmsford RUFC	Hadleigh RFC	Malton
Chesterfield RFC	Halifax	Manchester
Chinnor	Hampshire	Manx RFU Youth Development
Chipping Norton	Hampshire SRFU	Market Rasen
Chipping Sodbury RFC	Hampton School	Marlow RFC
Chobham RFC	Hastings	Matlock RFC
Christ's Hospital	Haverhill	Middlesex Rugby

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Mini & Youth Rugby Blueprint Roadshow 2013		
Minehead Barbarians	Rokey School	Vectic RFC
Mistley	Romford & GP	Walcots RFC
Moseley RFC	Royal Wootten Bassett	Walsall RUFC
Moulsford Prep	Rugbytots	Warrington RFC
New Milton RFC	Rugeley RUFC	Warwickshire
New Zealand	Saffron Walden	Wensleydale
Newark	Salway	West & Aire Wharfe District
Newcastle	Sandal	West Bridgford
Newent RFC	Sandbach RUFC	West Park
Newmarket	Scunthorpe	West Park Leeds
Newport (Salop)	Seaford RFC	Western Vikings RUFC
Newquay Hornets RFC	Sefton	Weymouth RFC
NLD RFU	Shelford	Wharfedale RUFC
North Dorset	Shoreham Academy	Widford Lodge
North Midlands RFU	Sidmouth RFC	Wigton
North Mids Youth	Skipton RFC	Willenhall RUFC
Northern RFC	South Leicester RFC	Wimbourne RFC
Northumberland	South Woodham Ferry	Winchester RFC
Oakmedians RFC	Southend	Windsor
Old Bristolians RFC	Southern Nomads RUFC	Winnington Park RFC
Old Coventrians	Springhill Catholic	Wirral RUFC
Old Leamington	SSRFUR	Wisbech RFC
Old Northamptonians RFC	St Andrews RFC	Witham RUFC
Old Saltleians	Stafford	Witney RFC
Olney RFC	Staffordshire	Woodrush
Ormskirk	Staffordshire CSU	Worcester RFC
Otley	Staines RFC	York House School
OWRFC	Stowmarket	Yorkshire RFSU
Oxford	Sudbury	Yorkshire RFU
Oxfordshire RFU	Surrey RFU	
Panthers RFC	Surrey Schools RFU	
Pershore	Sussex CB	
Peter Symonds College	Sussex CSU	
Petersfield RFC	Sutton Coldfield	
Pinley RFC	Swaffham	
Play Den	Swanage Wareham	
Polborough	Swindon RFC	
Preston Grasshoppers	Tamilar RFC	
Pulborough RFC	Tamworth	
QE Barnet	Telford	
QE II High School	Tottonians	
Ramsey RUFC	Towcester	
Reading	Trentham	
Redditch RFC	Tring	
Reeds Weybridge RFC	Trojans	
RFU Council	Trowbridge	
RGS Newcastle	Twickenham RFC	
Richmond RFC	Tyne Met College	
Rochford 100	Upminster RFC	
Rockcliffe RFC	Vagabond RUFC	

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Appendix 3: Favoured possible competition frameworks

U7 – U12: option 3

Age	Competition	Training:Games	Frequency & Duration of training	Festivals
U 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter club/school friendly Inter club/school triangular Festivals – no knock-out/cup 	3:1	1 hour once a week	2 festivals (one either side of xmas)
U8				3 festivals (one pre and two post xmas)
U9				
U10		5:2	1 hour once a week* *It may be possible to introduce mid-week sessions but these should be skill/movement based and not compulsory	4 festivals (two pre-xmas and two post xmas)
U11				
U12				

U13 – U18: option 2

Age	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18
Numbers	13-a-side	15-a-side				
Frequency of competition Competition hours to training hours	2:5	2:3				
Match time	25 mins each way		30 mins each way		35 mins each way	
Pitch Size	3/4	Full				
Competition Type	Small local tournament	Local cup	Local, regional, national cup	Local, regional, national cup	Local, regional national cup. Leagues	
Max competition per week (mins)	100		120		120	


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U13 – U18: option 3

Age	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U18
Numbers	10-a-side		12-a-side	15-a-side		
Frequency of competition Competition hours to training hours	2:5	3:5	2:3			
Match time	25 mins each way		30 mins each way		35 mins each way	
Pitch Size	1/2		3/4	FULL		
Competition Type	Friendly/Developmental				Local Cup	National Cup
Max competition per week (mins)	100		120		120	

Appendix 4: Competition level descriptors

Low Level

Totally inclusive – not outcome focused
Friendly matches, triangular and festivals

Medium Level

Performance still a focus – governed by ‘competition rules’ (squad size etc.)
Introduction of local tournaments

Medium-High

Performance remains a focus but less inclusive – selected squads governed by competition regulation.
One off knock-out matches on local basis (district/CB)

High – Medium Level

Competition becomes more of a focus
National competition – cup or tournaments and representative rugby
(CB/Divisional/National)

High Level

Leagues & Cup become the focus of participant

Tournaments are where 6 or more teams participate. The total time played should be no more than 80 mins for 13/14 and 90 mins for 15-18

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