

Introduction

All rugby sessions should include a variety of small sided games, particularly in the early stages of a players development. If the coach can develop a series of games with simple laws in a relatively small area of the pitch, there will be ample opportunity for young players to develop their running, handling and support skills - the essence of the game!

The youngsters will score tries or points in a variety of ways, becoming totally involved in the game. Laws should be simple for the players to understand; aspects of fitness will be developed through such enjoyable activity.

Looking at other sports can often unearth a multitude of games and practices which can be of value. Examples of some games which can be incorporated into the rugby practice are outlined in this section.

The coach should always look to be innovative regarding 'thinking up' suitable games. Sometimes a mix of games can be very interesting for youngsters. Coaches should observe the skills taking place within the game and use this as a reference point. Getting the balance between game activity and skills sessions is the key. Stopping the small sided game at suitable times to ask individuals or groups of players why? and how? Questions can often develop a greater understanding of the game for the young player.





TAG



NEW
IMAGE



MINI



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Game On!

Setting up your coaching area

Grids : Grid areas can be marked out by using cones. Grid areas of 5 metres square are useful. The transition of grid size can be achieved by the addition or deletion of certain cones.

Chaser

Size of Pitch: One Grid (appropriately sized)

Teams: 1v3

Aim: Player with the ball (held in 2 hands) tries to touch opponents with ball

- Set-up:**
- Ball always in 2 hands
 - When touched by ball, opponent becomes a chaser
 - Players can run anywhere in grid

- Variations:**
- Players when touched, complete an exercise and rejoin the game
 - Players when touched, crouch down and are released by players from their side picking them up

Key Question: How many opponents can the ball carrier touch in a given time?

Pass and Chase

Size of Pitch: One Grid

Teams: 2 v 2, 5 v 5, 10 v 10 etc

Aim: To make the highest number of passes in a given period of time whilst progressing the ball to the far end of grid area

- Set-up:**
- Players must not run with the ball
 - Ball can be passed in any direction
 - No contact
 - Dropped pass - possession to other team
 - Opposition gain possession by intercepting a pass or from a dropped ball or ball going outside grid

- Variations:**
- Players run with the ball
 - Team making 10 passes scores a try
 - Conditioned passing, i.e. above shoulder height, below waist height or waist height
 - Allow 1 v 1 contact i.e. an opponent may go in and wrestle for the ball
 - Ball passed in 5 seconds
 - Combinations from above

- Key Areas:**
- Communication
 - Support Play
 - Passing

Key Question: How does the team in possession keep possession?

Game On!

Corner Ball

Size of Pitch: One or Two Grids

Teams: 4 v 4, 5 v 5 or 6 v 6

Aim: To touch the opposition with the ball while held in two hands

- Set-up:**
- Players must not run with the ball
 - Defending players may run anywhere within grid to avoid the ball
 - Having passed the ball, attackers may move to a better position
 - Attacking players pass the ball around in order to touch an opponent with the ball held in two hands
 - When players are caught, they can:
 - a) join the chasers
 - b) wait outside the grid
 - c) perform an exercise
 - Game ends when:
 - a) all opposition have been caught, or
 - b) time is up - change around

Key Question: Why is it important to call for the ball in space?

End Ball

Size of Pitch: 2 Grids (appropriately sized)

Teams: 4v4

Aim: To pass the ball to a catcher standing beyond the end line of the grid

- Set-up:**
- Players may pass in any direction
 - Can run with the ball
 - Must pass in 3 seconds
 - Must stay in grid areas
 - Opposition gains possession by:
 - a) intercepting
 - b) dropped ball
 - c) ball or player outside grid

- Variations:**
- Cannot run with ball
 - Must pass when touched
 - Tackling introduced

Key Question: Why is it important to commit the defenders?

Rugby Based Games - Rounders Rugby!

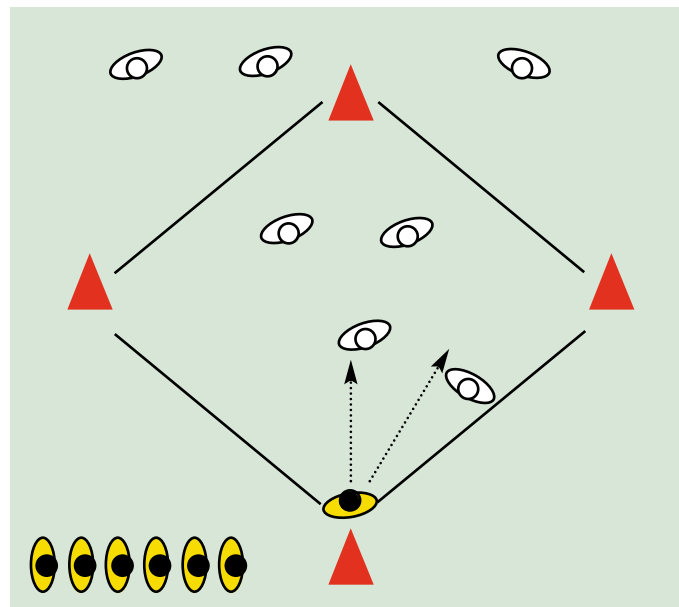
Skills Developed

- Passing and Handling
- Decision Making
- Support Play
- Communication
- Kicking

Explanation

Divide the group into two teams. One team fields whilst the other is the batter. The bowler stands 10m from the wicket (2 cones) and "bowls" by either passing, kicking (straight) in grubber or punt form. Each "bowler" has six "bowls" per over.

The "batter" must catch then pass the ball into the outfield. The "batter" can be caught, stumped, run out or bowled as he progresses round the grid area to each marker. He can stop at any base on the way but must progress from that base when one of his team mates moves towards his base. The batter cannot pass the ball outside the field of play on the full. The batter must run to the next cone or as far around the coned area as possible (similar to rounders).



Rugby Based Games - Cricket Rugby!

Skills Developed

- Passing and Handling
- Decision Making
- Support Play
- Communication
- Kicking

Explanation

Divide the group into two teams. One team fields whilst the other is the batter. The bowler stands 10m from the wicket (2 cones) and "bowls" by either passing, kicking (straight) in grubber or punt form. Each "bowler" has six "bowls" per over.

The "batter" must catch then pass the ball into the outfield, trying to place the ball in a space. The "batter" can be caught, stumped, run out or bowled. The batter cannot pass the ball outside the field of play. The batter must run around another cone 10m away to score 1 run.

Coaching Points

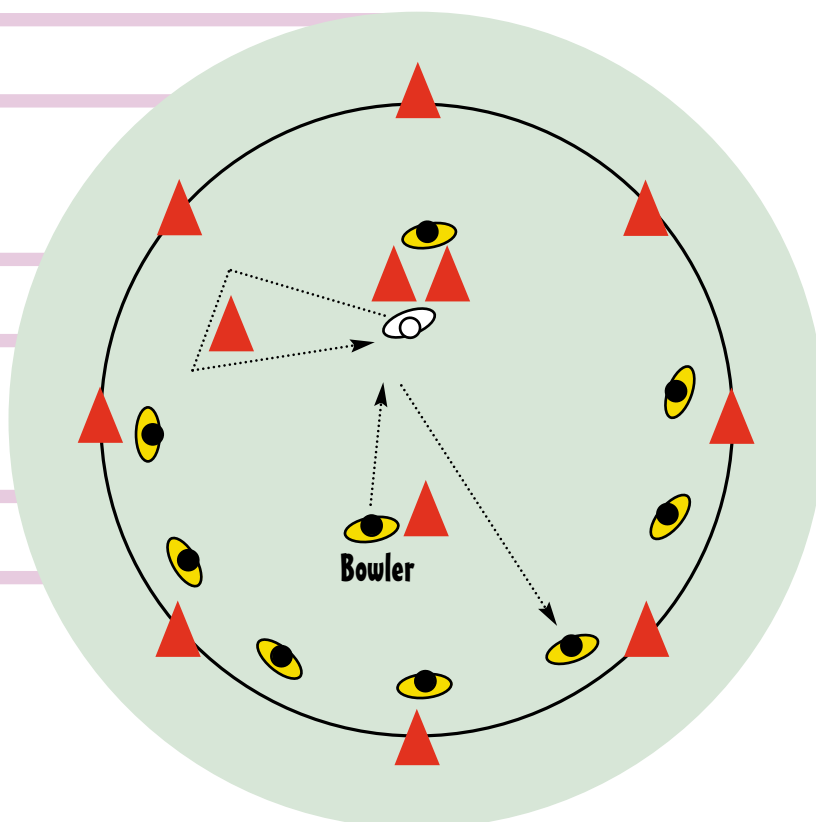
- Ensure correct technique when passing
- Ensure safety when organising

Variations

- Vary length of time or numbers of overs for teams.

Equipment

- 1 Ball
- Cones = 12



Rugby Based Games - Tennis Rugby!

Explanation

Divide the group into two teams.

The ball must be passed across the neutral zone and within the other teams grid. That is it cannot land in the neutral zone, nor can it be passed out of the grid.

The receiving team must catch the ball on the full. If the ball hits the ground then the passing team scores one point.

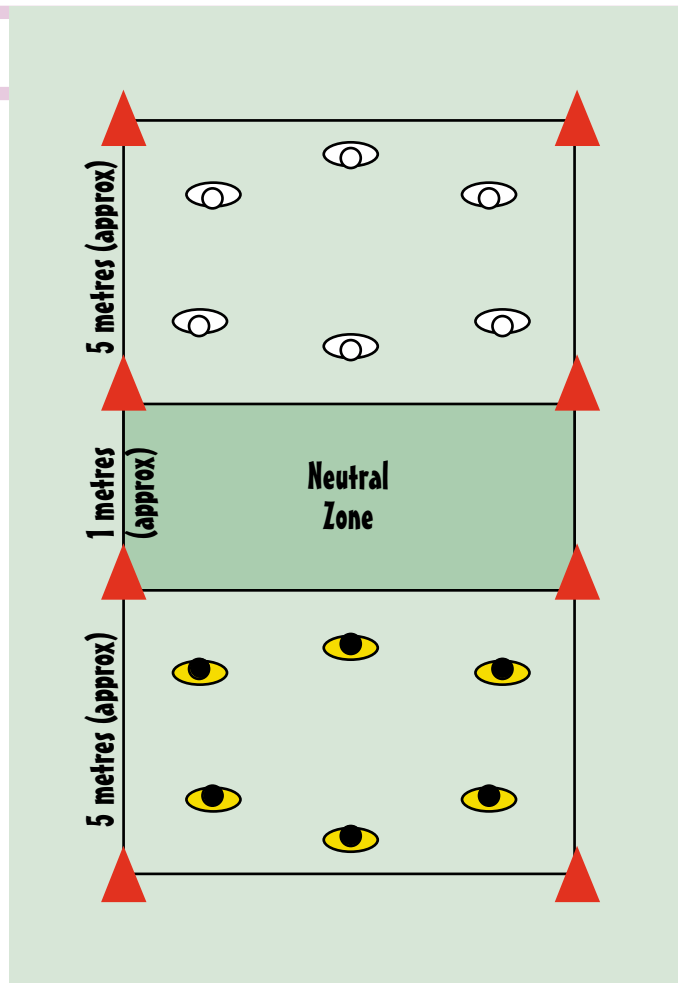
The game is played until one side scores a set number of points.

Variations

- Rather than scoring points, when the ball hits the ground, the player closest steps out. When a team has no players left...they lose.
- Allow one or two passes between a team before a pass goes over neutral zone.

Equipment

- 1 Ball
- Cones = 8



World Beaters

- Organisation:**
- Channel of markers - 4 squares joined together
- Explanation:**
- Defender can only defend the square in front
 - The ball carrier (in a group of 3/4) has to see how far along the channel he can get, beating opponents and passing to team mates as he progresses forward
 - If tackled, one of the supporting players reacts and carries the attack on
 - The attacking 3/4 work as a team to progress the ball through the channel
- Key Question:** Why is timing of the pass important?

Touch Rugby (Five Tackles)

- Organisation:**
- Playing area size depending on age and numbers
- Explanation:**
- No scrums or lineouts
 - When tackled (two handed touch below waist) ball must be passed backwards
- Variations:**
- Possession changes after five tackles

New Image Rugby (with variations)

- Variations:**
- 3 seconds then pass
 - 2 seconds then pass
 - Two touches before you pass (defensive co-ordination)
 - Go to the ground then "push" pass from the ground
 - Pass before going to the ground
- Key Question:** When supporting the ball carrier what are the important points?

Touch Rugby

- Variations:**
- Ball down, next man clearing pass
 - Ball down, next man picks and goes
 - 2 different defenders must touch the ball carrier
 - Defender who touch tackles, retreats to his own goal line before re-entering the game
 - Coach should stipulate the number of touches a team has whilst in possession



"Rucka" Rugby

- Variations:
- Go to ground, support wipes out 1 or 2 defenders, third man operates the clearing pass
 - Go to ground, support wipes out 1 or 2 defenders, third man picks and goes
 - Mix the two games (defenders to make appropriate decisions)
 - Coach should stipulate the number of touches a team has whilst in possession

"Maula" Rugby

- Organisation:
- After touch or semi-tackle, tackled player must stay big (defender cannot contest the ball) support can drive on the ball
- Explanation:
- The supporting player can rip and roll or rip and pass
 - Mini maul can be built up but make sure defending team does not over commit to breakdown
 - Coach should stipulate the number of touches a team has whilst in possession

Rugby Game Progressions

Size of Pitch: Organise according to numbers

Teams: Maximum of 10 v 10

- Aim:
- To score a try, maintaining continuity and highlighting team communication
 - Develop handling and support play

- Laws:
- Five 'touch' tackles
 - If 'touched', pass to team mate (2/3 steps or strides then pass: New Image Rugby)
 - Opposition gain possession after fifth touch, or if ball touches the ground a forward pass or ball out sideline (also if there are infringements)

- Variations:
- When touched, player 'hits' the ground, support player steps in and moves ball away or drives over
 - When touched, turn-stand, support player 'rips' ball and moves ball away
 - When touched, player 'hits' the ground, on his way down, he 'pops' the ball up to support runner
 - Coach should develop a combination of the above i.e. first 3 touches, player hits the ground, next 2 touches, player 'pops' the ball from the ground
 - Introduce tackling

Key Question: What does timing of support run mean?

Keep the Ball Rugby

- Full contact but defenders cannot contest the ball