

Force them wide

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Covering wide attacks.
- 2 Forcing the attack wide without having to tackle.
- 3 Using the touchline as an extra defender.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Force the attack to move the ball wide by showing them space and then filling it.
- 2 Defend on your opposite man's inside shoulder.
- 3 Always move forward first before drifting sideways.
- 4 Stay just inside the ball as it's passed wide.



what to shout

- "Keep your spacing – no gaps."
- "Look around you – be aware of attackers in front and defenders either side."
- "COMMUNICATE – nominate your man as you drift out."
- "Inside defender covers any attackers running back against the grain."
- "TRUST the defender inside you that they will make the tackle."



what to look for

- Defenders moving out of line - either drifting too fast or not fast enough.
- The line drifting too fast – makes it weak against players running back.
- Players having to rush to make their tackles – means they've drifted a man too far.



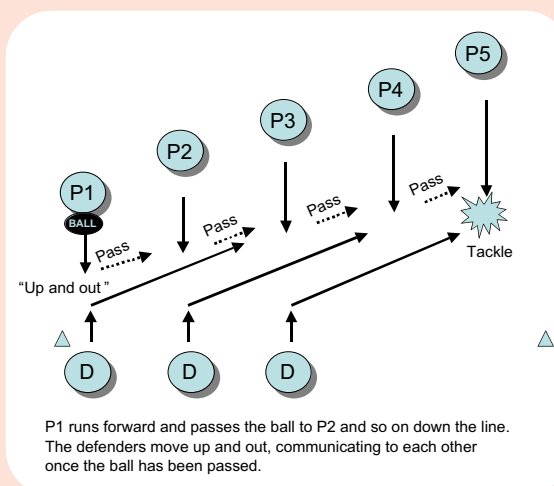
what to think about

What pace do you want your defence to move up at? Where on the pitch should you use this defence? Are there times and areas where you shouldn't use a drift defence? Who should call the drift? Who sets the pace for the drift? Can you use a drift defence off 2nd and subsequent phases of play?

What you get your players to do:

Five attackers attack 3 defenders in an area about 20m wide, the ball starts at P1 and as the attackers move forward the ball is passed down the line.

As the attacker starts to move the defenders move forward and then drift (staying inside the ball) until the last defender makes the tackle on P5. Then reset and start the ball at the other side. Start with touch or scrage tackles.



Development

- 1 The attacking players throw miss passes, dummy passes and run switches to try to outwit the defenders.
- 2 Move attacker 5 into a full back position – they can attack the line wherever they like and the defenders must cover them if they get the ball.
- 3 Build up to full contact.

How would I put this into a game situation:

Drift Defence game: 8 attackers play against 4 defenders in a pitch about 30m wide, the attacking team must avoid contact at all costs and can only score if they get round the outside of the defenders.

The defenders must drift left and right to cover the attack at the same time they must be pushing forward to pressure the attackers into making mistakes. This can be played as touch, scrage or full contact, the numbers can be varied to suit although the attackers must outnumber the defenders and there must be enough width for the attackers to get round the defence.

How to use smart sessions

Print off the session and take it to training. It should take you less than five minutes to read the instructions, set up the session, and then you are ready to communicate what happens to your players.

Number of players

You only need six players to complete a session, though it can easily be expanded to meet your needs. With lots more players you could have a number of grids working at the same time.

Timings

The timings are for a twenty minute session, but it can be expanded or reduced to meet your needs. It's your call.

As a rule of thumb 10 minutes would be enough time for a well executed first drill, development and feedback. Any shorter and you have not explored the full skill range or asked enough questions of the players. Longer is fine as long as you feel the session is developing. The game related element adds another 10 minutes.

Equipment

The equipment used is simple. A set of cones (or trainers or tops) as markers and a couple of balls.

You can add in tackle bags, suits and rucking shields where you feel you need them – we just assume that you don't have them because sometimes the shed is locked or another coach is using them.

Training area

The size of the training area is left for you to decide. Smaller players need a smaller area, but the session will never need more than a 20m x 20m grid for initial drills. The smaller the area the more intense the training.

The standard and age groups

Smart sessions are based on the core skills of rugby. They will challenge any standard because a player can always perform the core better.

The "development" ideas can be used to differentiate between the different standards of your players; the "think about" section can challenge the more advanced; the "game related situations" can change the contact situations the teams face.

Elements of the session

What to tell your players the session is about:

This is your introduction and outlines the objectives of the session. Just read this out. The players then have an objective. Return to this at the end of the session to see if you have achieved your objectives.

What you tell your players to do:

This is how you want your players to achieve the objectives. You can tell the players straight away how to achieve the objectives, or you can tease it out of them as the session goes on.

What you get your players to do:

This shows you how the session is going to work. Depending on what is going to be achieved, it sets out what actions the players are going to take. There are no exact measurements, or complicated patterns – the approach is "simple, stupid, successful". Slow motion the first few patterns – get the drill right and the skill right first before speeding up. Use the "What to shout" prompts to keep the players focused. Use the "What to look for" to keep your eye on why the players might be failing.

Development

No session is worth doing unless there is some form of progression. Normally there will be an increase in pressure, say by adding more defenders, or by restricting the time available. Other areas for you to think about are: Where do I stand as coach? Do I throw the ball into the grid?

How would I put this into a game situation?

All the elements of the session are geared to the game, but this section puts the session one step away from a full game, with attack, defence and a goal line.

What to shout

Have the words handy, because apart from the usual words of encouragement, it is good to shout the key factors to players. Of course you can hold some of these "shouts" back and ask the players to identify how they can improve.

What to look for

You need to keep your eyes open for "best practice". This section helps you identify quickly where players might go wrong so you can quickly put them right.

Think about

Here you have the chance to challenge the players and situation, either by using feedback or just asking yourself the questions. It is a little more advanced and might not be appropriate for your players.

Where does it fit:

To help you file and order our coaching we have given you the core areas of individual and team skills that the session covers.



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Dan Cottrell

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