

Cross kick killer

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Creating another attacking option by using the cross kick (from fly half to far touchline for player in wing position to run onto).
- 2 Improving player's ability, standing in the winger's position, to read the kickers intentions and being in place to field or challenge for the kick.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Kicker, line up shoulders to the direction of kick. Kick on the end of the ball, with the ball in middle of the body.
- 2 Receivers, start wide (outside pitch) and run towards to kick.



what to shout

- "Kick with commitment, follow through to target."
- "Kicker, look up for space and then look down for the ball."
- "Receiver – hands out and shoulders towards ball, but keep hips going forwards."
- "Receiver keep eyes on the ball – not the defending player."



what to look for

- Kick spending too much time in the air, needs to be low enough so that defenders have less time to react.
- Receivers taking their eye off the ball – need to keep focused on the ball and let their peripheral vision find the space.



what to think about

When is the best time to use cross kick? Is it just your fly half who can cross kick in games or can you develop other players? How would you defend against a team that cross kicks? What opportunities arise from the threat of cross kicks? How close to the touchline should a cross kick be? How far behind the defence should your team's cross kicks go? How do the weather conditions affect your decisions to kick?

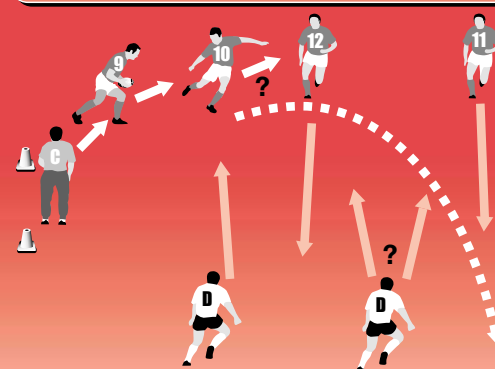
What you get your players to do:

Warm up with players receiving a pass, turning 45 degrees and kicking into a target area suitable for an effective cross kick.

Depending on skills/ability of players, use 2/3 the width of a normal pitch. Four attackers, two defenders.

Attackers are scrum half, fly half, centre and wing (who stands 5m in from touchline). One defender marks the fly half and the second stands in between marking the centre and winger. The coach holds the ball above their head. As soon as they lower the ball, the second defender moves into position to defend wing or centre. The fly half chooses whether to cross kick or pass to beat the defender.

Cross kicks



pass → direction of run → kick →
C = coach D = defender

Development

- 1 Rotate players from different positions into fly half and receiver.
- 2 Add more defenders, with either a defending winger in the line or back defending the kick.

How would I put this into a game situation:

Simple game which tests the accuracy of the kick and the receiver and defenders abilities. One attacker and one defender line 10m away from each other between the 15m and 5m lines. A scrum half passes to fly half (standing about 30 – 40m away) who kicks for the attacker. More advanced players might have secret signals to indicate the length or direction of kick to help out smart the defender.

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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