

Push offloads

What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Increase continuity by playing the ball up from the ground in the tackle.
- 2 Develop offload skills with a last gasp pass.

What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Push the ball up from the ground so it hangs in the air to a receiver.
- 2 Get hands under ball, and use elbows as levers.



what to shout

- "Push ball softly, don't force the pass."
- "Pass for the receiver, not to the receiver."
- "Push the ball away from you, so receiver does not need to leap over you."
- "Keep the ball in two hands as you fall, pressing elbows into chest."



what to look for

- The pass not getting enough height – needs a firm, upwards push to beat gravity.
- Receivers getting too close, so over running the ball or not being able to gather the ball effectively – they should stay behind the ball carrier at a distance and then read the best place to support. The tackle can force a player left or right.



what to think about

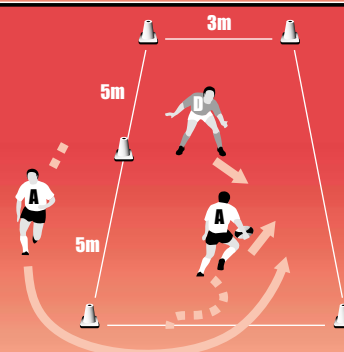
When do players hold on to the ball and when do they push offload? Can your players use one hand if necessary to push the ball up? What sort of communication would your players be using (since calling "left" and "right" becomes more difficult when you are on the floor)? Do ball carriers want to fall so they are going over the shoulder of the defender or so they are falling away from the defender?

What you get your players to do:

Drill one: one player sits on the floor and two players stand about three metres away facing him. One of the standing players throws the ball so the sitting player needs to rock back, catch and return the ball to the second player. Repeat five times each and swap. Challenge the sitting player by getting the other players moving around.

Drill two: in a narrow channel, one defender stands five metres from the start of the channel. Put another player next to him. A ball carrier runs into the channel and tries to beat the defender. In the meantime, the other player runs to the start of the channel and then supports the ball carrier.

Push offloads



ground covered - - - - - direction of run ———
A = attacker D = defender

Development

- 1 Have the defender on their haunches to make the tackle more obvious.
- 2 Make sure the ball carrier at least tries to beat the defender.
- 3 Change the start points to put different pressures on the ball carrier and support player.
- 4 Add another defender who starts with the supporter and either runs around next to them or runs in the opposite direction five metres before running to support their team mate defending.

How would I put this into a game situation:

In a five metre wide by 20 metre long channel place three defenders every five metres. Do the same in another channel. The defenders can move side to side but not backwards or forwards. Have two teams of two attackers race against each other to score a try at the far end of their channels.

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 sessions 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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