

# Try savers

## What you tell your players the session is about:

- 1 Prevent tries by tackling effectively very close to the line.
- 2 Score tries when you receive the ball very close to the line.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Tacklers working hard to get body and arms between the ball and the ground.
- 2 Ball carriers drive forward low and turn to get the ball to the ground.



### what to shout

- "Tackler, pull the ball into the ball carrier."
- "Tackler, get your hips level and under the ball carrier's hips in the tackle."
- "Ball carrier, keep ball away from body."
- "Ball carrier, twist and roll as you fall."



### what to look for

- Too few tries being scored – ball carriers and supporters, try to keep some forward momentum going.
- Too many tries being scored – drive the ball carrier back and try to clamp ball between defender and ball carrier.



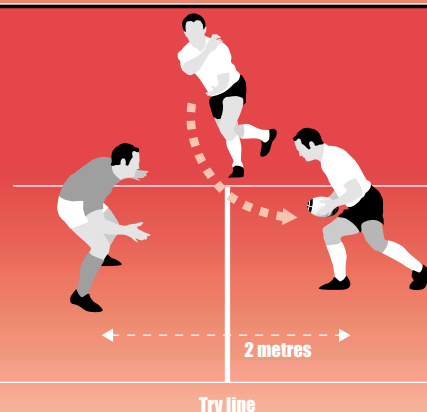
### what to think about

Does the way the players tackle change depending on the relative sizes of ball carrier and tackler? Can the ball carrier change the height they drive for the line and at what stage – too low and they might lose crucial momentum just before line, too high and they become an easier target to drive back? With two players defending the line, how might the players organise where they are going to tackle the ball carrier?

## What you get your players to do:

Two players stand facing each other two metres apart. There is a line between them. Another player stands at the side with a ball. He throws the ball to one of the players who has 5 seconds to try to put the ball down over the line. The other player tries to save the try. Adapt the distances according to success.

### Try savers



### Development

- 1 Vary the height of the pass; some very low, or on the ground, some high.
- 2 Let one of the players start with the ball, though stipulate the position they can start in. For example, ball at their feet, or facing away from the defender.
- 3 Add a player to each side just behind.
- 4 Start the defender one or two metres to the side the attacker, with the attacker a metre further back from the line, to replicate a saving tackle from a covering player.
- 5 Both players move along the line, so the defender tracks the attacker until the ball is passed.

## How would I put this into a game situation:

Three v two, five box game. Set up five boxes of five metres square, with a try line running through one metre from one end (put the boxes across a real try line for instance). You keep a ball by the side of each box. Split into three attackers and two defenders. You run to any of the boxes. The attackers must start from the end furthest from the line in the box and the defenders the other end. You release the ball when you are ready and the attackers must attempt to score over the line. After a couple of sets, change the players around. Don't use any more than five players at one time.

# 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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