

# The deepest cut

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

- 1 Ingrain the actions for a switch/scissors/cut.
- 2 Allow players to choose running lines and/or use dummies to create space for the ball carrier.

## What you tell your players to do:

- 1 Ball carrier, change angle, pull defender out of position and use cut pass or dummy pass.
- 2 Supporter, change angle, run behind ball carrier, attack defence, look to receive cut pass.



### what to shout

- "Drag opponent by accelerating at their outside shoulder."
- "Keep defender interested by showing and then hiding the ball."
- "Supporter, run late and expect the ball."
- "Passer, put the ball into the space in front of the receiver."



### what to look for

- Dropped passes – the receiver needs to run closer to the passer than normal, give the passer verbal cues (helps passers peripheral vision) and keep elbows close to the side (to allow flexibility to receive pass).
- Defender reading the cut – the ball carrier should dummy very early, attack the defender's far shoulder and then pass. Don't be afraid to allow players to dummy pass.



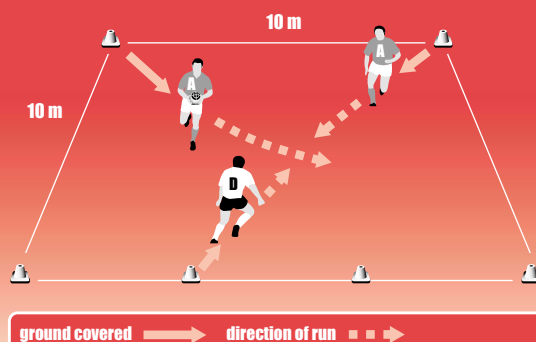
### what to think about

Should a player take contact as they are making a cut pass? Can your players pass the ball with one hand or do they need to keep to two? Who calls the switch or cut? Some coaches want both players to call and some just the passer or the receiver. What line do you want your receiver to take after getting the ball?

## What you get your players to do:

In a ten metre square box, at one end, split the edge in three equal sections. A ball carrier starts at the other end of the box on one corner, and a receiver on the other corner. They run forward, with the ball carrier aiming to run into the far section, with the receiver running behind the ball carrier into the middle section. Start with no passing to get the timing right. After a couple of runs progress to making a cut pass (ball passed behind to receiver running in another direction). Then have the ball carrier dummy pass or pass. For the third progression add a defender. Swap starting corners as the drill progresses.

### The deepest cut - progression 3



### Development

- 1 Secretly tell the defender which section to defend.
- 2 Make the defender more or less active – in other words, they might rush the ball carrier or just shadow them.
- 3 Extend the width of the box by five metres and add another defender and attacker. The first player with the ball must attack the same section as before.

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

Top coaches agree that forcing players to use a switch or cut in a game situation has little merit. However playing a small sided game where players using good switches gain an advantage for their side is better. A good game to play would be "MY RULES" touch. You set the rules, such as the type of touch to affect a tackle, and more importantly what is allowed and not allowed in terms of rugby techniques. For instance, turnover the ball to the other side if the team in possession perform a bad cut pass. Stop the game to explain the decision (or even better, let the players identify where they went wrong). Give points to sides that "cut" well.

# 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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