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# COACH Talk



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## WAYNE BENNETT - BRISBANE BRONCOS COACH

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*Wayne Bennett's credentials as a coach are well known and he is highly respected throughout the Rugby League community. His successes are well known and would be partly due to his ability to communicate successfully with players and to keep the game as simple as possible to play.*

*It is well known that Wayne prepares his players to a high level of skill and their ability to understand and read play together with the freedom to express their own flair results in a very attractive style of play.*

*Throughout this interview Wayne Bennett has been able to pass on some of his ideas which would be applicable at any level.*

### **RLCM How do you structure your half-time talk**

**W.B.** I have two speeches, one for when we are winning and one for when we are losing. It is difficult to say, and does depend on the situation, it is a combination of team talk and one on one situations with players.

### **RLCM Have you been able gain anything from your visits to the American Football Clubs?**

**W.B.** Some reinforcement of what we are doing. At the same time we can draw parallels with what we are doing in Australia. A comparison can be drawn with what we do, too what the best professional teams in the world do. I haven't come back with too many American ideas, we are not far behind them if we are behind at all. Their game is totally different from ours but you can draw parallels. Rugby League is a game of spontaneity and their game is structured. Some coaches do coach structure into our game.

### **RLCM Do you have any guidelines for teams that have to travel away from home for games?**

**W.B.** It is hard to define, what may work some days may not work on others so you really must experiment with that and come up with what is best for your team. There is no set formula, some teams travel on the day and are successful others find travelling the night before suits them. The important thing is that if you do something that works stick with it. Think the situation through and plan as much as you can.

### **RLCM What are your thoughts on impulse play versus structured play?**

**W.B.** There is a lot of predictability in the game right now because that is what coaches are coaching. Coaches are concerned about keeping their jobs and the easy way is to control what your team does making the team more predictable and making you as coach feel better, because you are in control. I don't see that changing as long coaches have to get results to keep their job. We work on the skills necessary to create impulse play.

### **RLCM When you are in the player market what type of player are you looking for.**

**W.B.** You are looking for the player that every other club is. That is the big, strong and fast player, everybody can see him and he is a pretty hot commodity. The player that others can't see is probably the player we want, you have to be able to see something in a player that nobody else can see. It becomes a bit of a 'gut instinct' and then you have to persevere with them. We have had players in this category who with some experience and perseverance on our part have shown something and finally come good.

### **RLCM How do you choose a Captain?**

**W.B.** It depends on what you are looking for. If you have a team that needs somebody to take the ball forward and to lead by example then you pick that player. If you need somebody to talk the team up and help build the team up and lead with his mouth then

you pick that player. There are many things in our game, together with a personal philosophy you may have, there is no set formula to selecting a captain. Alan Langer gets the ball and goes forward for us and says follow me, so he leads by example.

**RLCM Do you make much use of videos?**

**W.B.** They have been the greatest innovation to the game since I have been coaching, they have really changed the game. Jack Gibson used videos some 25

**RLCM Can you give an opinion on game plans?**

**W.B.** Keep them simple, some coaches have plans which might confuse themselves, let alone the players. Let players play their natural flair.

**RLCM Do you use a defence pattern, and does it change at all?**

**W.B.** We have one pattern and that's it, we don't use any multi system, we use it every week and don't change it.

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Young players should be given the opportunity to play in more than one position. If you have players who are multi skilled then playing more than one position is beneficial to them.

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years ago before any other coach and that gave him a distinct advantage at the time, which I am sure was partly responsible for his success. They allow you to give feedback, you can watch something 4 to 5 times on a video and it allows you to see much more than with the naked eye.

**RLCM In terms of feedback to players do you find that players are able to analyse their play successfully, and give you feedback?**

**W.B.** I don't think that is a problem, they can't analyse the teams performance but they certainly can analyse their own performance. They know what they should have done in a game and what they did do. I do not have a problem getting information from the players.

**RLCM When moulding a representative side as compared to coaching a team on a weekly basis. Is there any particular formula, for example, a junior representative side could use to prepare for a carnival?**

**W.B.** Play a lot of games with kids to allow them to become good mates with each other. Giving them jobs to do in defence is the key because you obviously don't have much time. If they have organised defence then they have a chance as their natural football skills will take over, with a few instructions on play.

**RLCM When talking about off the ball skills, do you do any work on this aspect of the game?**

**W.B.** It is an issue that Rugby League could do more work on. There are too many players that stand around until they get the ball and it becomes a habit which is not good for the game. Players must learn that putting themselves in a position to get the ball is what really matters.

**RLCM How important is the mental aspect of the game for players performance?**

**W.B.** The game requires a skill component and a fitness component so there should also be a mental component. It is an important issue, if you neglect it and work only on the other components then performance may not be what it should unless you get the balance right.

We have a sports psychologist involved at a low key level but he is there as a back up for all of us and we find it beneficial.

**RLCM How would you describe mental toughness?**

**W.B.** I don't think there is a standard answer, we all see it differently and it means different things to different people.

**RLCM** There are players in your club that can play in more than one position. Should junior coaching encourage this in younger players?

**W.B.** Yes they should do. It is a sad situation where a young player is labelled and told to play a position. Young players should be given the opportunity to play in more than one position. If you have players who are multi skilled then playing more than one position is beneficial to them. Each position requires different qualities and therefore allows players the chance to have a better all round game.

**RLCM** How do you see your relationship with players on and off the field. Is there a fine line that you have to walk between the two situations?

**W.B.** I don't try walking the line, I just try to be me. If there is a problem we have to talk about, then we talk. If I am unhappy with something then I will tell them or we will have a drink together if necessary. That is something that I have been able to do really well and I don't have a problem with it. If they can't be natural with me and they try to be someone else that is their problem.

**RLCM** What do you regard as the major factors that enable you to keep coaching at the Broncos?

**W.B.** Very good question, the bottom line is we produce winning football teams. I don't kid myself at all anymore, if we weren't a winning football club I would be long gone. My longevity there will be determined by that, we might have a bad season and things don't work out for us, that could happen. It would not be the end of me but I would not want to have two of them.

**RLCM** The expectations of the team would be very high after last year, how do you maintain the high standards for players to perform back to back?

**W.B.** The expectations have always been high so we don't worry about that anymore, we don't make that an issue. My expectations for 1999 is to be a top team again, I am not worried about what we did last year and if the players worry about it they may find themselves out of the team. Challenges are there to be

met and it won't be any easier than last year, it's going to be tougher. We just have to get out there and do it, there is no easy answer and no soft way to get there, it will be hard work. The players have climbed the mountain before, they have realised it will not be easy and they have developed a state of mind that they want to be on top. The easy part is getting there, the hardest part is to stay there. This team has been there before and won back to back Premierships, it is not over for this team because there are still players there who can perform and have been there through that era.

**RLCM** After more than 10 years at the Broncos is there any difference in today's game to what there was when you started.

**W.B.** I know that if I coached today the same way I did 10 or 11 years ago I would not be still there now. The things that haven't changed are my values and philosophies to the way I believe football should be played. We changed our game in some ways to meet the times by having to make small adjustments here and there to the way we play, some adjustment to personnel. I know I would be vulnerable as a coach and as a team if we didn't grow and learn. I need to keep an edge and keep making changes where necessary not just for change sake, and if I don't I may not survive. One thing that I was personally very pleased with in 1998 was the opportunity to coach State of Origin it has been ten years since I last coached Origin football. I felt that I have kept in touch with the modern game and hadn't lost anything over that period of time, so I hope in ten years time I get the call up again.

**RLCM** What advise would you give to coaches coming into the game?

**W.B.** I have two pieces of advise. One would be to be your own man and believe in yourself. Secondly, perseverance, I am here today because I persevered. There have been coaches over time who have had some tough times and a lot have walked away, well I didn't walk away I hung in there. There have been times when I thought I couldn't do it but I kept going because I believed that it was what I wanted to do. The more pressure you are under the more vulnerable you become to being your own man. Go with what you believe in.

# Skill Scene

## The Scissor Pass

*Developing the techniques of the scissor pass could provide a coach with the skill necessary to develop variety in attacking play and encouraging players to use the techniques to change the angle and point of attack, as well assisting in breaking defence. The skill would be best taught to international game players.*

By Don Oxenham  
ARL Level 4 Coach

### Coaching Points

- (a) Good ball security and ball handling skills by the ball carrier.
- (b) Ball carrier and support player, through judgement and perception, knowing when to change their angle of run.
- (c) Ball carrier to turn body toward receiver before passing football.
- (d) Target area for pass, (in front of support player) to be focused on.
- (e) Delivery of the football (the pass) at the correct time.
- (f) Good Communication between players.
- (g) Ball carrier to effectively draw the defender toward him to create space for the support player to run into.
- (h) Players to maintain good speed throughout the execution of the skill.

### 1. The Scissor Movement

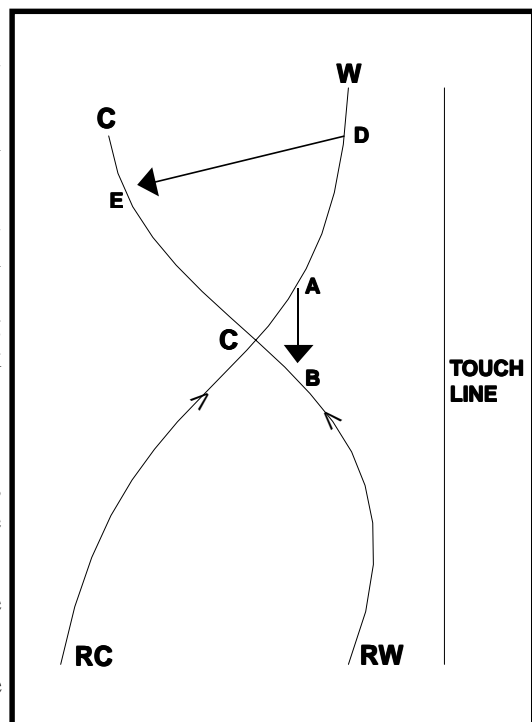
The following is an example of the application in the game. However there are other applications between other players where this could be used effectively.

Here the movement is described as carried out by the centre and wing positions.

The centre runs as hard as possible for the gap between the opposing wing and centre, and then swings outward at an even greater angle, drawing, if possible, both defenders toward him. With good timing the winger suddenly turns inward and, running behind the centre receives a short pass, the direction of the attack being changed. The winger then utilises his speed.

The pass from the centre may be given in three ways:

- (a) **Before crossing.** The centre turns his back on his opponents and passes the ball to the winger just before they cross. In the diagram this pass is shown by the line AB.
- (b) **As they cross.** The back, or 'flick' pass is delivered at the point of intersection (point C in the diagram).
- (c) **After crossing.** The centre passes inside to the winger. The pass is denoted by the line DE in the diagram.



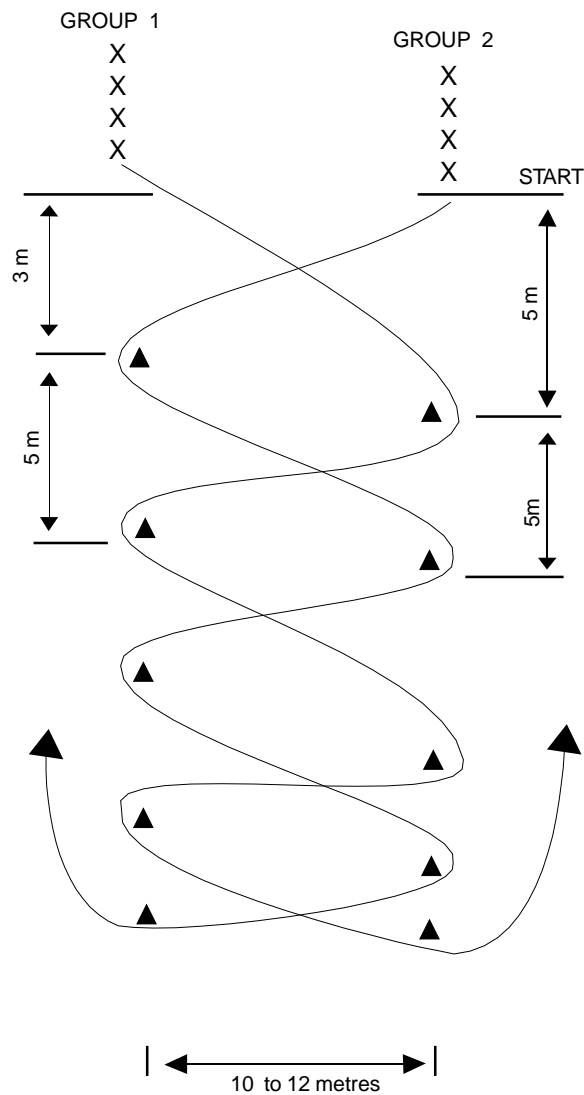
Whichever pass is utilised split second timing is called for, and the players must devote a great deal of time to practising this move if it is to be carried out successfully.

## Drill 1

# Scissor Passing Drill

Setting: 2 groups of players  
10 markers  
4 footballs

Two lines of witches hats are placed approximately 10 to 12 metres apart... in front of 2 groups... 1 and 2, as shown.



The first group of P2 player commences the drill by running across (with the ball in his two hands) toward the outside of the first marker.

He shows the ball to group 1 player - prior to executing a scissors pass.

The first group 1 player commences running a little later than the first group 2 player... he should time his run so as not to over-run the ball as he receives a scissors pass. Both players continue down the grid effecting a scissor pass each time they cross. Players return to opposite groups

N.B. Coach the coaching points during the drill.

## Drill 2.

### Scissor and Straight Passing

Setting     Grid 15 metres x 15 metres  
              4 markers  
              16 - 20 players in four equal numbered groups  
              1 football

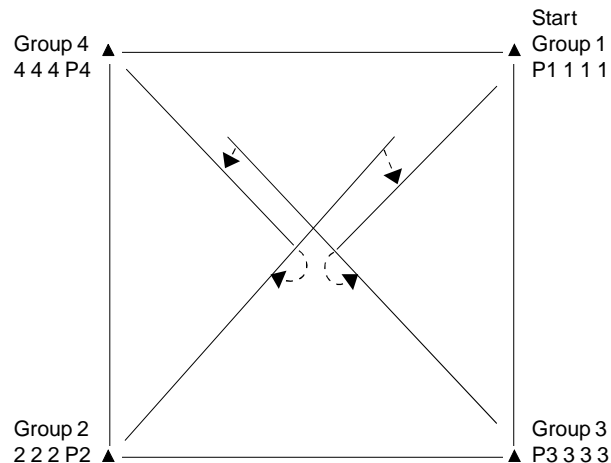
P1 runs with ball and P3 moving in behind, receives a scissor pass.

P3 then gives a straight pass (from an outside position) to P4 moving across and parallel.

P4 continues running with the ball, and a player P2 moves in behind to receive the (2nd) scissor pass.

P2 gives a (2nd) straight pass to the next group 1 player for him to continue.

(No's 1 and 2) and (No's 3 and 4) players, after completing their turn, continue on to their opposite groups (ie. 1 to 2, 2 to 1, 3 to 4, 4 to 3) ready to continue the drill.

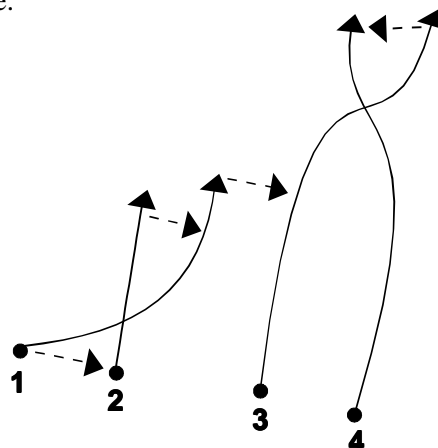


## Drill 3.

### Scissor Fours

Setting:     Open space  
              Groups of 4 players  
              1 football per group

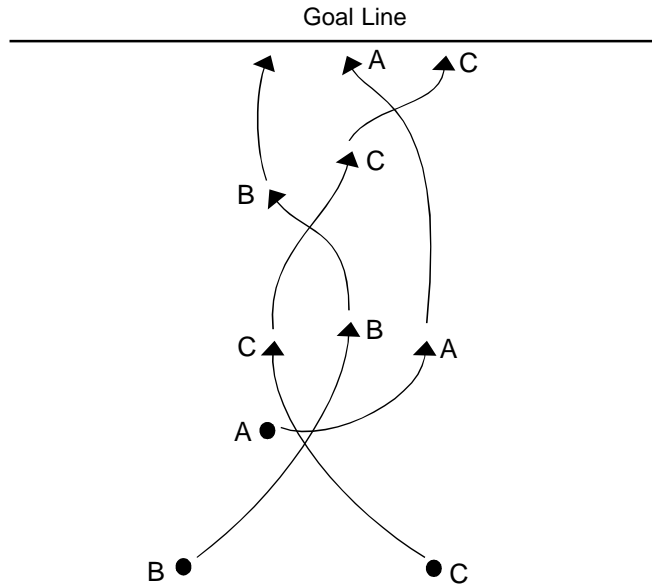
four players move upfield "mixing" up their methods of support - e.g. here, (1) passes to (2), "wraps" to regain ball and passes to (3) who inpasses to (4) on a scissors move.



## Drill 4.

# Support Play with Scissors

Setting: Open space  
Groups of 3 players  
1 football per group



Groups of 3 players. They commence in a triangle formation with the ball at the apex of the triangle (player A). All players proceed towards the far goal line at what ever speed the exercise can be successfully "handled". Player A passes the ball to player B; player B passes to player C in a scissors movement: C to A and so on.



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## NOTES

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# DESIGNER GAMES

This article is reprinted with the permission of Dr Ric. Charlesworth, Australian Women's Hockey Coach. The purpose of reproducing this article in a Rugby League magazine is to give coaches another aspect of coaching by emphasising to them, the need to develop and implement their own designer games applicable to their own team and training.

The challenge for all coaches is to provide an environment in which tactical, technical, psychological, competitive and physical skills can be nurtured optimally. Where athletes aren't full time many of these aspects need to be "chunked" together in order to efficiently use the time available.

While specialised and individual skill sessions can achieve much, we must remember always that hockey is a team game requiring complex and often confusing interactions. These interactions occur between team mates and opponents and are difficult to reproduce on the training track.

## CAN YOU DESIGN YOUR OWN GAMES?

It is distinct from a one-on-one situations or other drills which endeavour to simulate match situations. Unlike flow exercises, tackling box exercises, channelling drills with two-on-three or three-on-four and various other practice techniques, teams are trying to win.

While the designer game can be played in a small area, it is not generally a small game situation and from my experience the most realistic results can be obtained by using larger areas or the full field. Equally, these games can be constructed to include the goalkeepers playing in their circle to simulate match conditions. Where goalkeepers are otherwise occupied then smaller goals are employed.

## A designer game can be any situation where the score is kept and there are four or more players

Chunking which can be an economical necessity, is often best for simulating match conditions. Such situations have the added advantage of putting fun into training while honing skills and specifying the fitness requirement of the coach. I will outline how many of these objectives can be satisfied by using the Designer Game.

Designer games can be constructed specifically and with imagination to meet the aims of the coach and the requirements of the training phase. A large number of variables can be manipulated to satisfy those aims.

## What is a Designer Game?

Principally, it is a contest between teams in which a result (win/loss) is sought. The teams must strive to win while the design emphasises particular aspects of hockey-craft in that competitive environment.

A variety of games can be constructed by manipulating the following parameters:

1. Number of players and number of teams.
2. Shape and size of the pitch.
3. Number, size, and type of goals and scoring rules.
4. Special rules eg - must pass forward - "silence" - no go zones

### 1. Number of players and number of teams

A designer game can be any situation where the score is kept and there are four or more players. Both teams must have passing options (one-on-one and one-on two situations do not allow this).

Ideally teams of three or more will participate, allowing for more variety, and as many as 30 players could be accommodated on the full pitch.

Two or three teams can participate. Using four teams can cause confusion and hamper alliance building.

However, in a four-goal, four-team match, where teams can share the scoring and defend their own goal territory, is feasible. Theoretically, even more teams could be used but my experience of any more than three is not encouraging.

## **2. The shape and size of the pitch**

This is often determined by the squad size, and training environment, and the required fitness outcomes.

From the traditional rectangular shape to squares, triangles to circles, and a hexagon there are no limitations. The goals are generally placed on the perimeter but scoring “gates” and “boxes” may be inside. Also, if a free-flowing aerobic game is desired, it is often best to allow scoring from both sides of the goals and to ignore the perimeter and pursue a “play on every-where” approach.

## **3. Number, size and type of goals and scoring rules**

Here the possibilities are legion. While more than four formal goals can be too confusing, scoring gates and boxes can provide even more options and stimulate inventiveness and flexibility.

Importantly normal goals housing a goalkeeper, or a variety of small goals, gates, boxes and targets, can be used. Scoring can be via the traditional method or crossing the line, possession within an area, hitting a target or some special rule.

## **4. Special rules**

Special rules can emphasise the coach’s objectives. They can apply to all players or even be restricted to particular individuals or teams. “Silence”, obligatory forward passing, or tracking or no go zones are all examples of such rules. These rules focus on penetration, searching skills or option taking.

# **What Can Be Achieved**

## **A. General Achievements**

Globally the gains are in the areas of fitness, transition, strategic judgement and prioritisation teamwork, competitive toughness and playreading.

### **Strategic Judgement**

Any situation with more than two goals or more than one way of scoring, elusive boundaries, different rules yet competitive opponents, is “unusual” . As such it requires heightened risk assessments in both attack and defence. Strategic judgement and tactical option selection are tested and horizons lifted.

## **Fitness**

Rotation of numbers or difficult scoring tasks can share the load among the whole group. Heart rate monitors and simple pulse checks confirm the likely fitness training effect of our sessions. Clearly, anaerobic or aerobic gains are likely to be specific to hockey.

## **Teamwork**

Forming alliances (as in a three team game) and judging risks is enhanced in these matches. Unless the team aim (to win) is recognised, the task will be overwhelming. Likewise, sharing the score in the three-team game should accentuate the need for co-operation. Rarely can specialised skill sessions match the chaotic reality of match play. The designer game reinforces this critical, but rarely acknowledged, aspect of hockey craft.

## **Transition**

In my view, perhaps the most critical aspect of real game situations is best catered for in competitive designer games as play doesn’t stop until a goal is scored. In too many artificial training drills there is “a relaxation phase” not found in the competitive game. The metamorphosis from defender to attacker and back again is continuous and unrelenting and can not be given enough emphasis.

## **Competitive Toughness**

Recent feedback from the senior Australian Women’s team revealed a desire for even more competitive training situations. It undertook Designer Games with relish and enthusiasm. Keeping the score and good natured rivalry ensured tempo and commitment to the tasks set.

Overloading via player numbers, fatigue, task difficulty etc, could be manipulated to require players to compete under stress and learn to never yield. The complexity and physical demands added to the win/loss scenario ensured stresses similar to match conditions.

## **Playreading**

It is interesting to stop the game and ask teams what is going on. Often I will instruct one team to play a particular way and wait to see how long their opponents take to work out what is happening. Such questioning stimulates players to be more analytical during the game.

## **B. Specific Achievement**

Elements of hockey skill can to be taught and practised in many ways. However, I believe at the elite level such elements can only be considered finalised when they are introduced into match play. As players often

do not have the confidence or opportunity to practise or experiment in club situations the designer game is the ideal opportunity to master such elements.

Following are a handful of elements which can be emphasised in the game situation while players benefit in a global way as outlined above:

- Penetration
- Dribbling and tackling for possession
- Scanning or searching skills
- Goalscoring and circle defence

### **Penetration**

Require players to make forward passes. This “special rule” encourages penetrating leads and superior preparation when anticipating a team mate gaining possession. Both the leading and passing are reinforced and emphasised. The principle can be introduced gently by initially requiring only every second pass to be forward but, once mastered, pursue the more difficult task.

In my view, nothing distinguishes us more from our European opponents than our capacity to penetrate with incisive passing. Indeed a short session in which no forward passes are allowed, quickly reinforces the need for such offensive capacity.

### **Dribbling and Tackling for Possession**

Playing games where the ball must be passed first time emphasises the benefits of quick changes of ball direction as the ball is moved on to another player. Achieve the contrary effect by requiring every player track with the ball for a least five metres before passing. This encourages running with the ball to possess or take on opponent's and equally reinforces tackling and channelling skills. half a point can be scored for every clear elimination.

A game played in three thirds, where the teams play “one touch”, “must track with ball” and “normal”, demonstrate to the players, the advantages and disadvantages of each situation.

### **Scanning, Searching Skills**

Talking for information and encouragement is an essential part of team play. Players should be constantly expected to participate. However, by blotting out verbal communication via enforced silence or the use of earmuffs, players are forced to concentrate and search much more for the non-verbal cues. “Head up” searching or scanning skills are emphasised and early preparation becomes even more crucial in both attack and defence. The coach is able to modify the game parameters according to whether all players or just one team or selected individuals are targeted.

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Searching and preparation are also heightened by numbering the players of one team and requiring them to count up in sequence as the ball passes between them, (ie from two to three to four to five etc). This variation requires special attention from those leading to become available in their turn. Physically, it can be demanding, especially if opponents are aware of the requirement.

### **Goalscoring and Circle Defence**

A goalkeeper can be included in a designer game in which goal shots, free hits and corners are all part of the action. Four to six attackers try to score against the goalkeeper and, three to five defenders inside the 25 metres. A goal for the attackers is scored by beating the “keeper” but a five metre gate where each circle meets the backline allows the attackers to score a half point if they can penetrate that area. Similarly a corner earned is worth half a point. Additionally, rebound nets at each side of the goal provide for many interesting “play on” situations stimulating alertness and follow up by attackers.

The defence, however, can also score via gates on the 25 or by passing directly to any of a number of targets which, if hit directly, attract half a point. Also any overhead which is not dangerous and clears the half line earns half a point. Sixteen metre hits require the goalkeeper to keal with a “pass back” with all other players outside the circle to start. Again an interesting challenge.

### **Equipment**

Most of these games can be constructed using simple equipment such as cones, goals, numbered coloured bibs and existing markings. However, velcro ground marking tape, ear muffs, targets and rebound screens may require some expense or improvisation. No doubt, many more ideas can be generated.

### **Conclusion**

A variety of possibilities can establish an interesting training environment which economically uses the time available. Designer games are in my view one of the best.

Any number of training drills can emphasise skills and/or provide physically taxing tasks. However, few offer the continuity of the designer game and none provide the competitive, strategic, distracted and “decision-laden” environment in which to do it. That is why these situations are found to be challenging and fun by players. Many comment that it's almost “not like hockey training”.

It is my hope that the options and few ideas which I have presented will stimulate discussion to expand further the possibilities for even more interesting designer games.

# MINI-COACHING

## 'Real Coaching'

By Matt O'Hanlon  
ARL Level 3 Coach

*In my last article titled 'Coaching the Mini-Mod Team' I finished by presenting an outline of the development of exposure to the demands of the team game. In that development a sequence was demonstrated for the skill of drawing the man that could be used from the basic skill, right through to the game. As with all theory it is great on paper but in the real world and in coaching mini players the coach is at the very centre of the real coaching world, there is often a fair gap between theory and practice.*

*In this article I am going to focus on the mini coach and some steps, drills, activities and practices I have found useful in coaching kids in the mini age groups. As you prepare for coaching your mini team, I will provide some things I have found helpful and that you may like to try.*

### **Checklist Before Training Commences**

An important job for any coach is to be prepared, but when coaching 6-7 year olds this is even more important from both a position of control, and from your position of responsibility. If possible all players should bring their own water bottle, and a football, if impossible encourage players to bring water bottles and the club to buy footballs. Markers that are colour co-ordinated (I would suggest 16 with 4 of each colour and numbered with thick Nikko pen) essential for any mini-mod session. It is always handy to have a parent rostered on for each session. Once these issues have been attended too you as coach are ready to get on with the job. That is to teach and coach the kids, not only how to play, but also to develop an appreciation of sport in general and rugby League specifically.

### **Development of Coaching Method**

#### ***a) Exposure To Demands of a Team Game***

Using the outline for the development of exposure to the demands of the team game set out below and discussed in 'RLCM' Book 9 we can, as Rugby League Coaching Magazine

coaches, try and prepare our sessions around development of the skills and techniques required to play the mini game.

### **Outline For Skill Development**

1. Basic skills
2. Sequence
3. Opposition - Token
  - Controlled
  - Competitive
4. Practice
5. Conditioned game
6. Game

Obviously this program will be heavily oriented to basic skills, token opposition, and conditioned games but there is still a requirement to develop a knowledge of the game and this can only be acquired during your training sessions. So what basic skills are essential for the mini player. I concentrate on the following:

- Tackling
- Passing
- Catching
- Falling

Falling may cause some debate but it is the fear of falling that causes kids to just throw the ball. While

many may be adept at falling without a football, falling with the football under the arm is a skill we cannot assume is inherent. Therefore when teaching these skills it is necessary that the children are falling correctly. Here are some progressions for the mini player that follow the above outline in the key areas of tackling, passing and catching.

### ***b) Tackling***

**AIM - To build confidence and develop technique.**

Tackling is a skill which requires most work because of the variety of skills of your players. Some will be effective tacklers whilst others will have no idea at all. As coach, focus on the key components of each of the tackles you are using - front on, side on and behind and then give the players plenty of practice so that confidence can grow. This is the basic skill, don't be afraid to use

with lesser ability and coach their technique by giving instruction and demonstration. By modifying the rules to spider tackle you can use it in either the controlled or competitive opposition more. Finally when you are satisfied, use a game like ruck play (see last article Sept '98) as a conditioned game, and hopefully you will see results in the game the next time they play. Remember if you don't tackle properly at training you don't tackle properly on game day.

### ***c) Passing and Catching***

**AIM - Improve skills so that catching and passing can flow on into the game situation.**

Catching and passing can be treated together with the mini player. Explain the skills individually but when practising passing, it is logical to have someone catching so you can focus on that skill as well. The first point to stress to your players is for them not to spin the ball. This is significant

*It is easy to become obsessed with winning rather than developing the abilities of our players.*

the tackling bag or sand pit to emphasise technique. In the game situation often your best player will do most of the tackling, and this situation is not a good one. In training aim for every player to do 15 to 20 good tackles. Here is a game for mini's that allows for each player to perform tackles for you to monitor.

### **Spider Tackle Game**

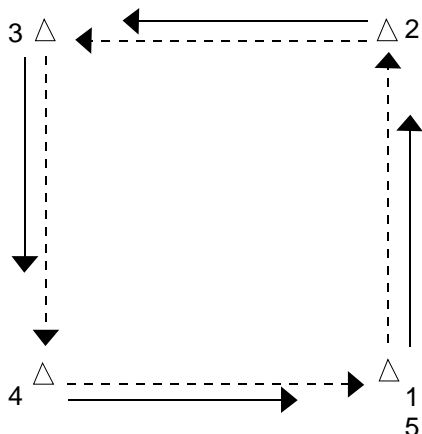
Mark out a grid suitable for the number of players you have and allowing a fair amount of running space. Nominate two spiders and their job is to tackle everyone else. When tackled, players move out and form a web on the ground by touching hands, head, feet etc. Spiders can then move through to choose prey and when all have been caught, these prey become the new spiders. If you have enough footballs make prey carry them. A simple game adapted for mini football but a confidence booster that builds fun into your program. As coach you can concentrate on kids

because the floating pass is a lot easier to catch than the spiral, especially for young children. With mini football you will have to revise the basic skill continually, try and use words that sum up what you are trying to teach and be very repetitive with these words so as to condition your players to their meaning. E.g. in catching emphasise a word like 'target', explaining to your players that this means to get your hands up prior to the ball being passed to you. Over time players will react automatically to the word. You can develop your own words or simple phrases to go with many parts of the basic skill. Single words with clear meanings are an effective way to develop techniques. Once the young players have a basic idea you can then develop basic sequences. For example, passing off the ground to the first receiver. Here is a simple pass of the ground drill.

### **Dummy Half Relay**

Mark off two squares of 5 metres. Each group has 5 players in it, when you say go player 1 passes

off the ground to player 2 who places the ball at his feet. Player 1 runs to player 2 and passes to player 3 and so on. When player 1 passes to player 5, 5 becomes the new runner by passing to player 2 who will place the ball on the ground. Player 5 completes one circuit of the grid then passes to player 2 who completes a circuit. Player 1 takes 2's position on grid and drill continues. When everyone has had a go you can then reverse the pass. Once players are familiar with the drill you can make it a relay.



You can devise other games that practice these skills in the token, controlled and competitive modes and these can be used to not only provide enjoyment, but also improve skills.

## CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL MINI COACHING

Often as coaches we are under prepared for the rigours of coaching mini players. It is easy to become obsessed with winning rather than developing the abilities of our players. Having been a player and knowing the technique may make you qualified to coach but it does not necessarily mean that you can create a good environment for the kids in your group. Often this is just as important in the delivery of your message. As coaches we need to be sure that our environment is appropriate in a number of areas, developmentally we are not asking our players to do things they are not capable of. Emotionally yelling to increase motivation may have a reverse effect. Here is a simple checklist I have modified off the internet you can use when evaluating your coaching sessions or games.

## Checklist For Better Coaching

- I thank players for just turning up.
- I focus on positives
- I accept kids will make mistakes.
- My expectations are reasonable and realistic.
- I remind kids not to be too hard on themselves.
- I remember not to take myself too seriously.
- I model good sportmanship.
  - win without gloating
  - lose without complaining
  - treat opponents and officials with fairness
  - generosity and courtesy

The website for this was <http://www.tutorway.com> you may find it interesting to read if you have access to the internet.

Finally after being prepared before training, having a program of skill development, and coaching in a positive manner as a mini coach you are ready for success. Not in terms of winning or losing but in encouraging kids to play the game. Sport is a great provider of lessons in life and for those of us reading this magazine, Rugby League is a great sport through which this can happen. I will leave you with the following thought to apply to your coaching that I think is quite apt.

'As coaches we are able to be far more animated in our responses to negatives than in our reactions to positives. Turn this around and we will be successful and the mini's we are coaching will turn up ready to have fun and learn at the same time.'



# Stretching to Prevent Injury

Part 3

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By Brad Walker, Associate Diploma of Health Science

*So far Brad has reviewed the role of stretching in injury prevention, the importance and benefits of stretching, the dangers of poor flexibility, the different types of stretching, and the rules for safe stretching. A review of these topics can be found in the previous two editions of the 'Rugby League Coaching Magazine'.*

*The following is a brief look at the particular 'how to's' of stretching.*

## When to Stretch?

As discussed in a previous edition it is important to stretch both before and after exercise. But when else should you stretch? Why not stretch periodically throughout the entire day? It's a great way to keep loose and help ease the stress of everyday life.

One of the most productive ways to utilise your time is to stretch while you are watching television. Start with five minutes of marching or jogging on the spot then take a seat on the floor in front of the television and kill two birds with one stone.

be at its best just before competition. Too many injuries are caused by the sudden exertion which is needed for any sort of competitiveness sport. Get strict on your stretching before competition.

## Frequency and Duration

The most commonly asked questions when discussing the topic of stretching are:

- How long should I hold each stretch?
- How long should I stretch for?
- How often should I stretch?

**Too many injuries are caused by the sudden exertion which is needed for any sort of competitiveness sport. Get strict on your stretching before competition.**

Stretching needs to be as important as the rest of the training. If you are involved in any type of competitive sport or exercise then it is crucial that you make time for specific stretching work-outs. Set time aside to work on particular areas that are tight or stiff. The more involved and committed you are to your exercise and fitness the more time and effort you will need to commit to stretching.

Competition is a time when great demands are placed on the body, therefore it is vitally important that you are in peak physical condition. Your flexibility should

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Although there are conflicting responses to these questions, through a study of research literature and personal experience, I believe what follows is currently the most correct and beneficial information.

The question causing the most conflict is, **how long should I hold each stretch?** Some text will tell you as little as ten seconds is enough. This is a bare minimum. Ten seconds is only just enough time for muscles to relax and start to lengthen. For any real benefit to your flexibility you must hold each stretch for at least thirty seconds and for maximum benefit the recommendation is up to sixty seconds.

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The time you commit to your stretching will be relative to your level of involvement in your particular sport. So, for people looking to increase their general level of health and fitness, a minimum of ten to twenty seconds will be enough. However, if you are involved in high level competitive sport you need to hold each stretch for at least forty seconds and start to extend that to sixty seconds and beyond.

The principal of adjusting your level of commitment to your level of involvement in your sport applies to the number of times you should stretch each muscle group. For example the beginner should stretch each muscle group two to three times. However, if you are involved at a more advanced level in your sport you should stretch each muscle group three to five times.

**How long should you stretch for?** The same principal applies. For the beginner, about ten to fifteen minutes is enough. For the professional athlete, anything up to two hours. If you feel you are somewhere between the beginner and the professional adjust the time you spend stretching accordingly.

Please don't be impatient with your stretching. You don't get fit in a couple of weeks, so don't expect miracles with your stretching. Looking long term, some muscles and tendons may need a minimum of three months of intense stretching to see any real improvement. So stick with it, it is well worth the effort.

## Sequencing of your program

When starting a stretching program it is a good idea to start with a general range of stretches for the entire body, instead of just a select few. The idea of this is to reduce overall muscle tension and to increase the mobility of your joints and limbs.

The next step should be to increase flexibility by starting to extend muscles and tendons beyond their normal range of movement. Following this, work on specific areas that are tight or important for your particular sport. Remember, all this takes time. This sequence of stretches may take up to three months for you to see real improvement, especially if you have no background in agility-based activities or are heavily muscled.

No data exists on what order you should do your stretches in. However, it is recommended that you start with sitting stretches, because there is less chance of injury while sitting, before moving on to standing stretches. To make it easier you may want to start with the ankles and move up to the neck or vice versa. It really doesn't matter as long as you cover all the major muscle groups and their opposing muscles.

## Posture while stretching

Posture while stretching is one of the most neglected aspects of stretching. It is important to be aware of how crucial it can be to the overall benefits of your stretching. Bad posture and incorrect technique can cause imbalances in the muscles which can lead to injury.

In many instances a major muscle group can be made up of a number of different muscles. If your posture is sloppy or incorrect your stretching may put more emphasis on one particular muscle in that muscle group, thus causing an imbalance which could lead to injury.

For example, when stretching the hamstrings (the muscles at the back of the legs) it is imperative that you keep both feet pointing up. If your feet fall to the side this will put undue stress on one particular part of the hamstrings which will result in a muscle imbalance.

(Note: The Stretching Handbook contains a picture and description of 100 different stretches for every major muscle group in the body. Orders can be made by referring to the ad in this article.)

# *The Stretching Handbook*

Retail Cost is

**\$14.95**

plus \$2.95 postage and handling

**Orders can be posted to**  
Walkerbout Health & Leisure,  
PO Box 3063,  
Robina Town Centre 4230  
*Cheques made payable to*  
*Walkerbout Health & Leisure*

**For Credit Card Orders**

Phone (07) 5525 3543

Fax (07) 5525 3526



# Coach's INSIGHT

**RIC  
CHARLESWORTH**

**Australian Women's  
Hockey Coach**

By Ryan Ellem

*Ric Charlesworth, coach of the Australian Women's Hockey team, the Hockeyroos, recently spoke to staff of the Rugby League Coaching Magazine. Under Charlesworth's coaching the Hockeyroos have won gold medals in two World Cups and two Olympic Games*

As found in our discussion, Charlesworth's approach to coaching athletes in a different sporting realm provides some interesting insights for coaches of Rugby League.

As coach of the Australian Women's National Hockey team and having been an elite sportsperson himself at hockey and cricket, Charlesworth has seen the nature of athletes of both sexes.

"Women are very team orientated, whereas men seem to be more egocentric," Mr Charlesworth said.

"Women aren't as analytical in a game as men are. Women know how they feel after a game but may not be able to recall events which occurred. However, even young boys seem able to recount specific situations of the game. If a team loses by one point, that's unlucky, and vice versa. Athletes have to look beyond the result and concentrate more on the actual performance itself.

"Culturally, men are often less willing to share their emotions with team mates than women are. Women will open up to other players about their personal life if they believe it pertains to their performance, but men will often keep their emotions to themselves."

Charlesworth encourages coaches to make their players more analytical of their performances. He believes athletes prefer to read about their performances in the next day's paper rather than watching match videos.

"Athletes must analyse their movements and decisions throughout a game. They should question what would have happened, for example, if they moved two steps more to the right instead of staying stationary? By questioning their movements and decisions, players will hopefully carry their knowledge into their next game, and if a similar situation presents itself, the player should act more effectively.

"What tends to go unnoticed is where players should be and what they should be doing when they're off the ball. A Rugby League match goes for 80 minutes, yet the average player may only have possession of the ball for 1-2 minutes during the entire match. Therefore, they should be spending the remaining time either defending, acting as support players or positioning themselves in anticipation of a movement."

When Charlesworth entered the role of coach for the Hockeyroos, he soon discovered some of the more discernable differences between junior and senior players rather than just experience.

"Whenever you're changing the structure or approach of a team in their game plan, you'll often find that senior players are less receptive to change than junior players. Junior players are eager to learn new approaches to the game whereas it is difficult for older players to adopt new attitudes and disregard the old ones which have been embedded in their playing style."

Whilst appearing in stark contrast to each other, Charlesworth states that both hockey and rugby league players require similar physical and mental attributes.

Charlesworth describes the desirable team as one where all players are able to do everything. The Hockeyroos coach believes that the theory of each player having a role within the team doesn't always work.

"In hockey you want people who are able to both attack and defend. Similarly in cricket, you would prefer all-rounders to be batting towards the tail rather than bowlers who can't bat.

"If everyone in a rugby league side had the ability to tackle, sprint, score tries and kick, the team is obviously going to perform well. Having specific roles however, such as scoring tries or purely defending can be limiting."

Instead of recruitment, coaches should improve the weaknesses of individual players. Even in a side of elite athletes, it is rare that a player will possess all the skills of the game at an exceptional standard.

Charlesworth believes coaches can often get caught up in seeing recruitment as the way to creating the perfect side, whereas they should be concentrating on improving the players they have, even at an elite level.

"Australian basketball sides often see recruiting an American player as one of the solutions to a side that isn't performing well. Instead of recruitment, coaches should improve the weaknesses of individual players. Even in a side of elite athletes, it is rare that a player will possess all the skills of the game at an exceptional standard.

"Many players rise to the highest levels of the game as a result of their excellence within a narrow area of the game. It is the coaches role to highlight and reward the player on their strengths, whilst still reprimanding them on their weaknesses. People who earn \$50,000 a year work roughly 40 hours per week, therefore, a

player earning \$200,000 a year should spend at least 40 hours a week training, both with their team, and concentrating on their individual flaws, ie kicking, in their own time."

Charlesworth employs the Designer Game approach to coaching with the Hockeyroos which sees realistic game-like scenarios test the mental capacity of the players.

"Firstly we get the players physically tired, and then we begin to complicate the game. For instance, we may introduce an extra goal for each side to defend and attack, adding confusion to the exercise. The players ask themselves questions like, 'what would happen if I shifted the attack to the other goal?'. Players like to be in control, and when we eliminate their control and place them in situations of confusion it assists in bettering their reactionary skills, mental and tactical capacities in actual games."

Charlesworth concedes that there is no magical solution to transform players into elite sportspeople. However, Charlesworth states that it is paramount that coaches insist upon quality from their players in all aspects of their respective sport.

"Coaches must demand a consistent level of quality and concentrate on reproducing this level of quality. Repetition is the key to building a strong side. A strong side is able to display skill and technical ability under pressure.

"However, despite how much influence a coach wishes he or she could have on their team's performance, factors happen within the match, such as dropping the ball, often see the team's game plan abandoned and the players adopting ad lib approaches. Designer Games is helpful when this occurs, for it lets the players re-evaluate the situation under-pressure, and adopt a new approach."

## NOTES

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# Behavioural Aspects of Coaching

**T**he coach needs to appreciate that there is a *coaching process* and a *definite structure to this process*. A coach must be able to coach with, control and develop a number of behavioural factors which derive from the fact that he is attempting to develop "a team" from a number of "individuals".

The process of coaching can be defined as including, at least, the following aspects:

- Identifying skills and tactics
- Assessing and interpreting skills and tactics
- Developing and implementing skills and tactics
- Evaluate and reorganise

The structure of the coaching includes the following aspects

- Organisation
- Structuring the training session
- Simulating game/skill situations
- Plan and implement strategy
- Objective evaluation of performance
- Reorganise and plan for improvement

The coach must also be able to comprehend and utilise the fact that players are people and as such respond in certain predictable, and unpredictable ways in certain circumstances.

Basic to this understanding is the appreciation of the fact that whether a person be 10 or 50 years of age there are a number of common human behavioural characteristics. These can be classified as:

IDENTITY as opposed to Anonymity  
STIMULATION as opposed to Boredom  
SECURITY as opposed to Anxiety

If a coach can accept these factors as constant aspects of human behaviour he must also be able to accept that for a successful interaction to develop between

coach - team, coach - player, and player - player, a coach must show that he is *approachable* and *accessible* to his team and that he is competent and has a good knowledge of the game. It is upon these attributes that a coach can develop his influence and gain the respect of the team.

If one could summarise the skills required of a coach, they would read something like this:

The coach requires

- knowledge of skills
- knowledge of tactics
- knowledge of people
- a consistency of approach
- an ability to communicate to

individual players and groups

of players. (In order to do this he needs to understand individual behaviour, team behaviour, club behaviour and his own behaviour.)

Too frequently the coach ignores the fact that he is also a teacher who teaches and rewards players. In this sense he must appreciate that most players, need to be taught fundamentals before any tactics or elaborate moves can be understood, let alone implemented. As a teacher the coach must be able to identify the skills to be taught, weaknesses to be corrected and tactics to be used. He must then explain and demonstrate these things in order that the "model" of performance he is attempting to develop in the players and team is clearly understood. He must then be able to apply the things he has taught in training and consolidate the skills, tactics etc., so as to implement them in the actual game.

The point of repeating a skill/tactic until it functions perfectly and is understood by each player involved cannot be stressed too much.

Following the performance of the skill at training and

in the game the coach must then be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning by assessing how the skill is applied.

In all the aspects of teaching mentioned above the coach should realise that he needs to reward players by verbal acclaim for the performance by their feeling of mastery of a skill or tactic and to develop a team and individual security in ones ability to execute the skill in a game situation.

The coach must also understand something of team or

working together in a team situation

- Rugby League emphasis shared responsibility
- Units of operation can be formed (backs, front row etc.)
- Each player has a level of individual competence and a level of ability
- Each player should know his particular team and positional responsibility as well as that of all other members of the team
- An individual's expectations of his own ability may exceed his actual ability

## A coach should always seek to stretch and explore the limits of an individual and a teams ability and the expectation level is in the pursuit of peak performance

group dynamics. He must understand that frequently individuals react differently when placed in a team situation; at times more cohesively and constructively; at other times more reluctantly and cautiously. The exact effect is not always predictable but the coach must make every endeavour to understand and cope with the players reaction. Generally, players who wish to and are used to working together display less anxiety and tension and more liable to work together harmiously enhancing both team and individual skill - to support each other and accept a shared responsibility for success and failure. The extent to which this eventuates is however related to the particular team/club approach and the expertise of the coach and club officials to provide an atmosphere where a player feels that he has an identity and is valued as a person.

In summarising group interaction, the following points deserve attention:

- Rugby League is a game of individuals

- A coach may well have expectations which are too high for an individual and a team ( based upon actual ability)
- A coach should always seek to stretch and explore the limits of an individual and a teams ability along with the expectation levels in the pursuit of peak performance

As far as training sessions are concerned, it is necessary to consider the positive advantages which derive from:

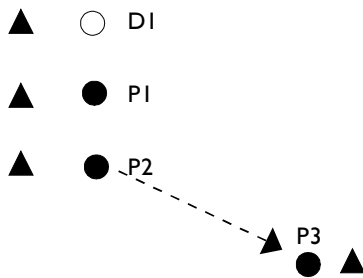
- structure of training
- pattern of training
- units of players
- consistency of coaching and selection
- objectivity of selection
- non-training rule
- team cohesion/team discussions of tactics

Too frequently a "good" player is described a someone who makes a "strong run", brings off a startling tackle or makes a "break" from loose play. Too frequently the player carrying out his task in a workmanlike way is ignored because he is not "observable" to selectors.

### NOTES

# PLAY THE BALL (Fours)

SETTING: Open Space  
Groups of four players  
1 football per group



**GUIDELINES:**  
Player 1 plays the ball to P2 the acting half back. P2 passes to P3. D1 is the defence marker.  
Rotate the position of each player after each play the ball.  
Ensure proper technique in the play the ball.  
Marker can apply pressure to the play the ball.  
Player playing the ball should start from a tackled position on the ground.

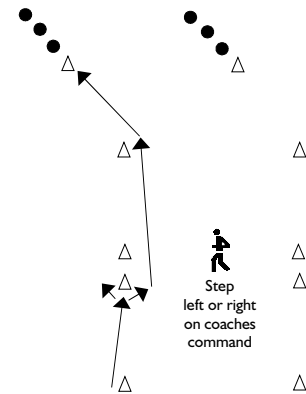
## COACHING POINTS

1. Tackled player (P1) to regain feet as quickly as possible.
2. Football held securely.
3. Football placed on ground correctly.
4. Control of football with the foot.
5. Good even roll of the ball back with foot.

# SIDE STEP (TECHNIQUE)

## GAME SKILLS:

- Sidestep
- Speed
- Hand Off Pass



## GUIDELINES:

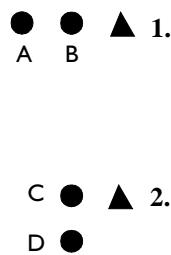
- Set up two sets of markers as per diagram, with approximately 6 players per team, with 3 at each end.
- On a signal, the players with a ball run to the first marker and sidestep to run to the second dome where they step again, either foot
- Players step again at the last marker and hand off the ball to the next player and so on until the relay is completed.

## NOTE

- Many players will attempt to shuffle around markers rather than step. Keep correcting.
- Young players may need to start with a simpler version to assure correct technique.

# PLAY THE BALL RELAY

SETTING:  
2 Markers  
4 Players  
1 Football



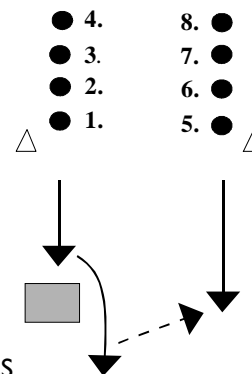
## GUIDELINES:

- Distance between markers 1 - 2 metres
- Player A plays the ball to player B.
- Player B passes the ball off the ground to player C.
- Player A runs behind player D.
- Player C passes (standing) the ball back to player B.
- Player B keeps ball and moves to player A's original position.
- Player c runs to marker and takes up player B's original position.
- Drill is repeated involving player B, C and D and so on...

N.B. Change drill so that players are passing left to right.  
No 'baby passes'.

# HIT and SPIN

SETTING: Open space  
2 Markers  
1 Bump shield (Hit pad)  
1 Football



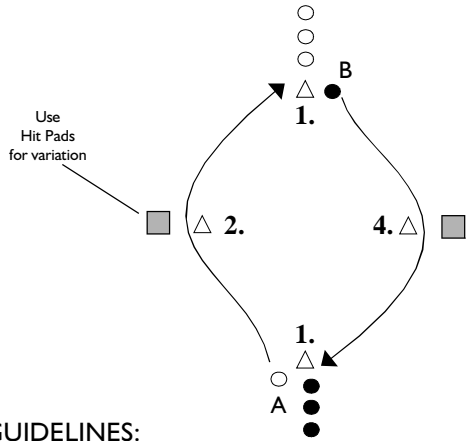
## PASSING PAIRS

No 1 runs with the ball in both hands and bursts onto the shield that is held at waist height by another player.

He hits, spins and passes to support that has come with him on left. both players then retire behind their respective lines.

Another pair of lines are set up similarly but pass in the opposite direction.

# SWERVE RELAY



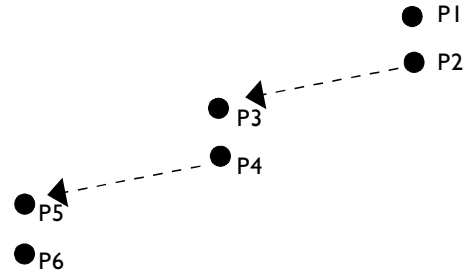
## GUIDELINES:

- Player A starts running from marker 1 around marker 2 and handing off to player B at marker 3.
- Player B repeats the exercise in the opposite direction rounding marker 4 and handing off to player C at marker 1.
- Once a player has run they must return to the end of the line.
- The drill can be run as a relay race between two teams competing on different courses.
- The cycle is reversed regularly to ensure right and left swerves are developed.
- Keep drill as small as possible to reflect a game situation.

**VARIATION** Hits pads on markers 2 and 4 to apply running pressure and promote running balance.

# PLAY THE BALL (Sixes)

**SETTING:** Open Space  
Groups of six players  
1 football per group



## GUIDELINES:

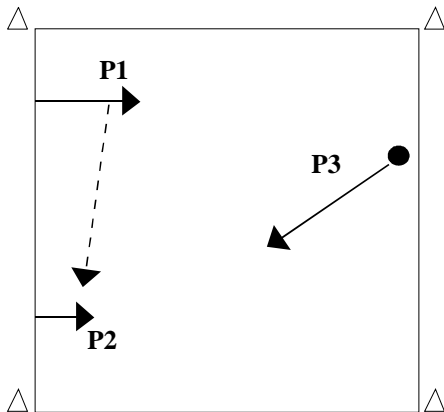
Player 1 commences on the ground. On the command P1 regains his feet and quickly plays the ball to P2. P2 passes to P3 from the ground. P3 falls to the ground then regains his feet and plays the ball to P4, then P5 and P6 continuing drill.

When P6 receives the ball all players about turn and the ball is worked back along the line in the same way until P1 regains possession.

Ensure good technique is practiced.

# 2 on 1 EVASION

**SETTING:** Grid 10m X 10m  
3 Players

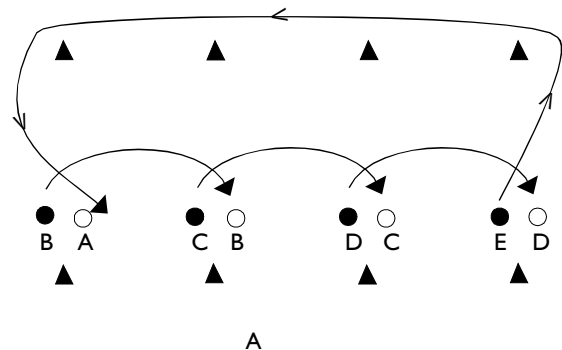


Three players to a grid 10m x 10m. player 1 passes to 2 with plenty of room to move and he attempts to beat 3 with a fend, swerve, side-step or change of pace. 3 attempts to tackle him although he is not allowed to start defending until the ball has left player 1's hands.

**N.B.** While player 2 gets the ball early, player 3 must wait for the ball to leave player 1's hands before moving.

# SNAKES & LADDERS (TECHNIQUE)

**SETTING:** Grid 15m X 5m  
8 Markers  
5 Players  
1 Football



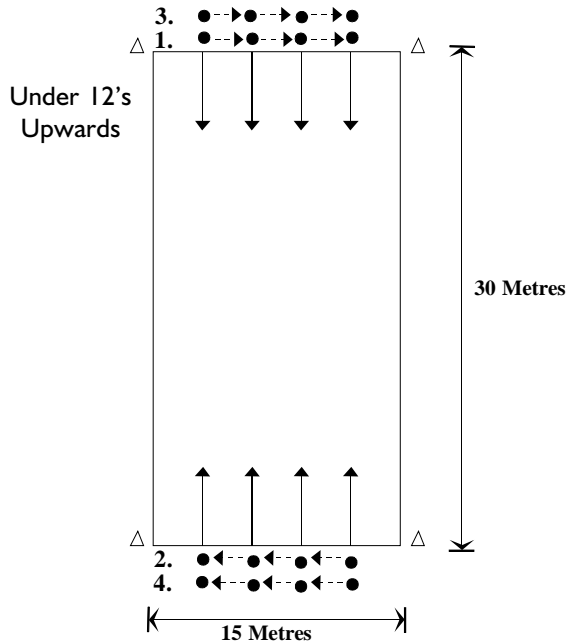
## GUIDELINES:

- Player A starts and plays the ball to player B.
- Player B runs out and around in front of player C. Player B then plays the ball.
- Player C then runs out and around in front of player D. Player C then plays the ball.
- Player D then runs out and around in front of player E. Player D then plays the ball.
- Player E then runs around the side of the grid and runs out and around in front of player A. Player E then plays the ball to player A who begins the routine again.

## PASSING KAMIKAZE DRILL

SETTING: 4 Footballs, Groups of 4 players, 4 markers

GAME SKILLS: Passing, Evasion, Vision, Communication



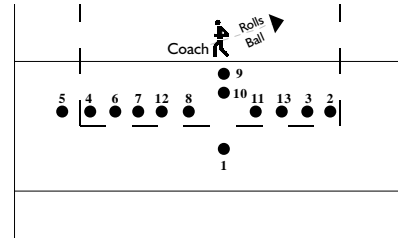
Teams 1 and 2 commence jogging and passing, on reaching the halfway mark, teams 3 and 4 commence.

On approaching, teams will avoid each other but continue to pass as they run between the on-coming team.

## DEFENSIVE LINE POSITIONING

SETTING: Field Positions

GAME SKILLS: Organisation, Communication

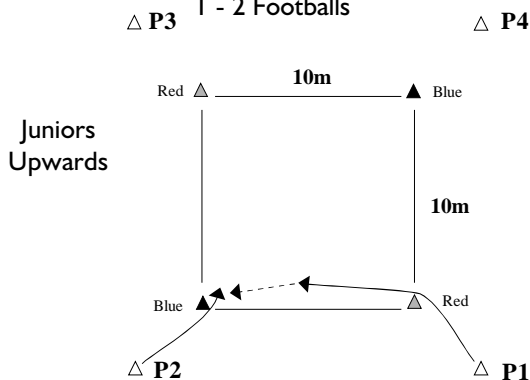


- Players line up as a team in their appropriate defensive line positions (diagram is simply a suggestion).
- Coach who starts with the ball rolls it anywhere on the field.
- The defensive line advances and the two nearest defenders drop on the ball.
- This represents a tackle.
- Meanwhile the rest of the defensive line should reposition themselves accordingly.
- The fullback (1) should communicate with the line to ensure there are no obvious gaps.
- The ball is then given back to the coach in a new position and the sequence commences again.

N.B. Ensure that the coach varies the distance and angle of the roll.

## WARM-UP HANDLING DRILL

SETTING: Grid 10m X 10m  
4 Groups of players  
1 - 2 Footballs



### VARIOUS BALL HANDLING EXERCISES

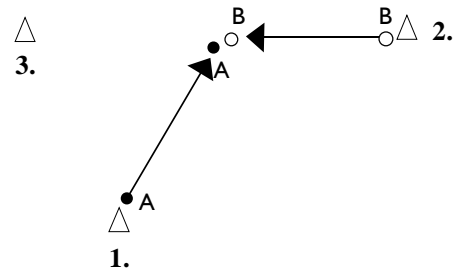
Start

1. Player from group 1 commences running and passes off to P2 who times run from marker to accept an inside pass from P1, P2 - P3, P3 - P4 etc.
2. Inside pass at each corner.
3. On blue markers ball placed on ground, then picked up from ground by blue marker player and passed off at red marker.

VARIATIONS: i) Introduce 2 footballs  
ii) Change direction of run

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## SIDE ON DEFENCE (TECHNIQUE)



GUIDELINES:

- Player B walks with ball in a direct line from marker 2 to marker 3
- Player A approaches from marker 1 and pushes player B with his left shoulder

N.B. Player A has his arms pointing straight out like an aeroplane and aims to hit the thigh of player B

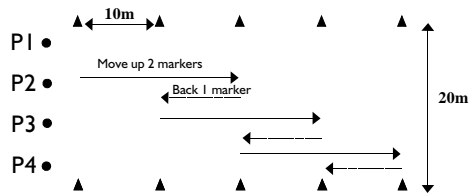
VARIATION:

- Player B runs from marker 3 to marker 2 so that A uses his right shoulder
- Performed in the same manner as drill A except both player A and B are jogging not walking.
- This time using the same basic drill A effects a tackle on player B. Both players are jogging.

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## DEFENCE LINE COMMUNICATION

**SETTING:** Open space or suggested channel approx. 40m x 20m  
4 to 6 players; 10 markers

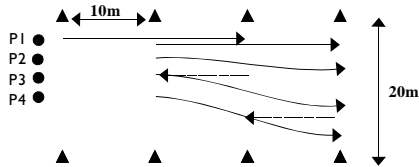


- 4 Players form a line at one end of channel.
- Players at end of channel move up 2 marker distances
- Then retreat back 1 marker by half turning to run back to line then turning to face front again.
- Drill continues length of channel. (ie up 2 back 1)

### OBJECTIVE

- Communication
- Adjustment of defensive line
- Speed back to regroup line.
- Working together
- Speed of the line

### (b) PROGRESSION

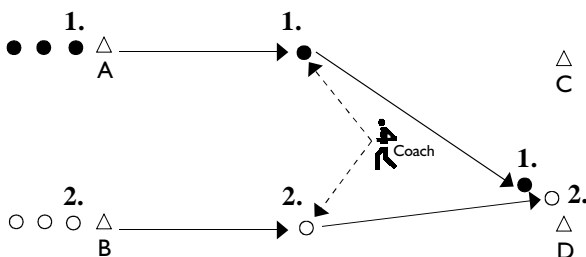


Similar to (a) except players alternate start on either left or right side of channel compressed together. As they move forward players spread out to cover the full width of the channel. As they move back they adjust to compress the defensive line before moving forward again.

## BEHIND TACKLE

(TECHNIQUE)

**SETTING:** Players in 2 teams  
Open space distance determined by age group  
1 Football  
4 Markers



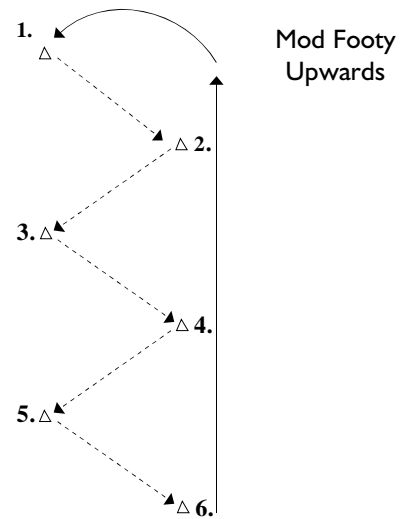
- Players form two equal lines behind markers A and B
- On call players 1 and 2 run in a straight line
- The coach chooses to pass to either player
- The player who receives the ball attempts to score a try between markers C and D
- The defending player attempts to tackle his opposite from behind.

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## ZIG ZAG RELAY

**SETTING:** Groups of 6 players  
Distance will depend on age group  
6 Markers, 1 Football

**GAME SKILLS:** Handling, Passing,  
Running with the ball



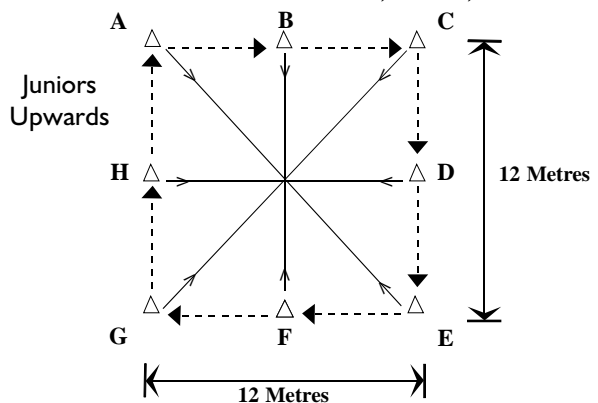
The ball starts at Position 1. The ball is passed in Zig Zag fashion to Position 6. The player at 6 in possession of the ball runs to Position 1 while all other players shuffle to the next station.

**VARIATION:** Player at Position 6 perform a Grubber or Chip kick while running to position 1.

## NEIGHBOURS

**SETTING:** 12m X 12m grid, 2 Footballs  
8 Markers

**GAME SKILLS:** Passing, Handling  
Communication, Vision, Reaction



Eight players take up positions next to the markers. Players on positions A and E begin with the ball.

On the command "go" players A and E pass to their left and then swap positions. F and B receive the ball and pass to the left and then swap positions. The drill continues with the ball moving clockwise around the rectangle and players swapping with their direct opposite. Attempt to work for three minutes.

**VARIATIONS:** i) Players pass anti-clockwise  
ii) Start ball at H and E and use "cut-out" pass, follow your pass and take up that station.



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