Dorset & Wilts RFU

Coaching Development

Coaching Games To Develop

Lineout Skills

(spacial and tactical awareness)

Coaching Through Small-sided Games

Traditionally, technique has often been over-emphasised within practice sessions. While technique is an important part of the overall skill, it has often been taught in isolation using a drill, without requiring players to think and apply the techniques to the situations required in the game. This is like giving a person the pieces from a puzzle without showing them the picture on the lid. Where does this isolated practice fit the game?

By using a game approach, players are challenged to think about what they are actually doing and why. Players are taught to use the appropriate technique at the right time and place, while under the pressure situations created by a game.

Coaching though small-sided games has been shown to result in improved learning outcomes for players and coaches. Using games as the predominant coaching tool, places an emphasis on the play where tactical and strategic problems are posed in a modified game environment, ultimately drawing upon players to make decisions. It places the focus of the practice on the player in a game situation where cognitive skills such as tactics, decision-making and problem solving are critical. The isolated technique development is utilised, only when the player recognises the need for it.

The skilled coach creates and manipulates the game, specifically to develop the skill that is the primary focus.

Coaching through small-sided games is a tool to:
• Guide players to discover and develop the game
• Increase motivation and enjoyment
• Develop tactical awareness
• Improve individual skills
• Challenge players to think about what they are doing and why
• Encourage creative solution finding.

The games in this resource are starter games and the coach should have the observation and analysis skills to identify an area to develop, through either a progression of the game, or a specific skill development drill or activity. The coach then returns to the game and sees if their coaching intervention has assisted the players to play the game better. The emphasis is always on the coach to create a learning environment.
The coach should observe and allow the players to problem solve before intervention.
Do not stigmatise error, as error allows learning to take place and develops decision making in players.

When Coaching through Games, consider the following:
- What is the main objective/purpose for the activity?
- What skills and tactics do you want to develop?
- What will be the main problem/challenge for the players?
- What are the boundaries and safety laws?
- What questions may you ask to help the players achieve the technical and tactical goals for the session?
- What progression can be used to support each individual?

In order to achieve the above, consider the following:
1. Varying the Playing Area
2. Changing the Starting Space between Attack and Defence
3. Varying the Shape or Positioning of the Attack or Defence
4. Different Starting Positions
5. Introduction of the Ball in Differing Ways
6. Applying Pressure in Different Ways

How do we coach lineout skills at present?

Lineout practice usually consists of one line of players practicing preset calls with choreography that supposedly fools an imaginary opposition. However, the objective of the lineout is to catch the ball in space where no opposition are. This can be achieved by speed or height in the jump and according to the situation or profile of the players.

For lineout practice to be fully beneficial and relevant there should be opposition involvement when practicing. The objective is to beat opposition to space and this can be achieved through reactive training as well as choreographed.

The games in this resource are designed to develop the ability to react to opportunity and simplify the approach to lineout play. The coach should design lineout strategy according to the profile of the players available. This means, if the players are tall, the strategy may be to have good technique and dominate space using height. If the players are shorter, the strategy may be to use speed in preference to height.

The games will also indicate who the best throwers are, who the best jumpers are, regardless of the shirt number.

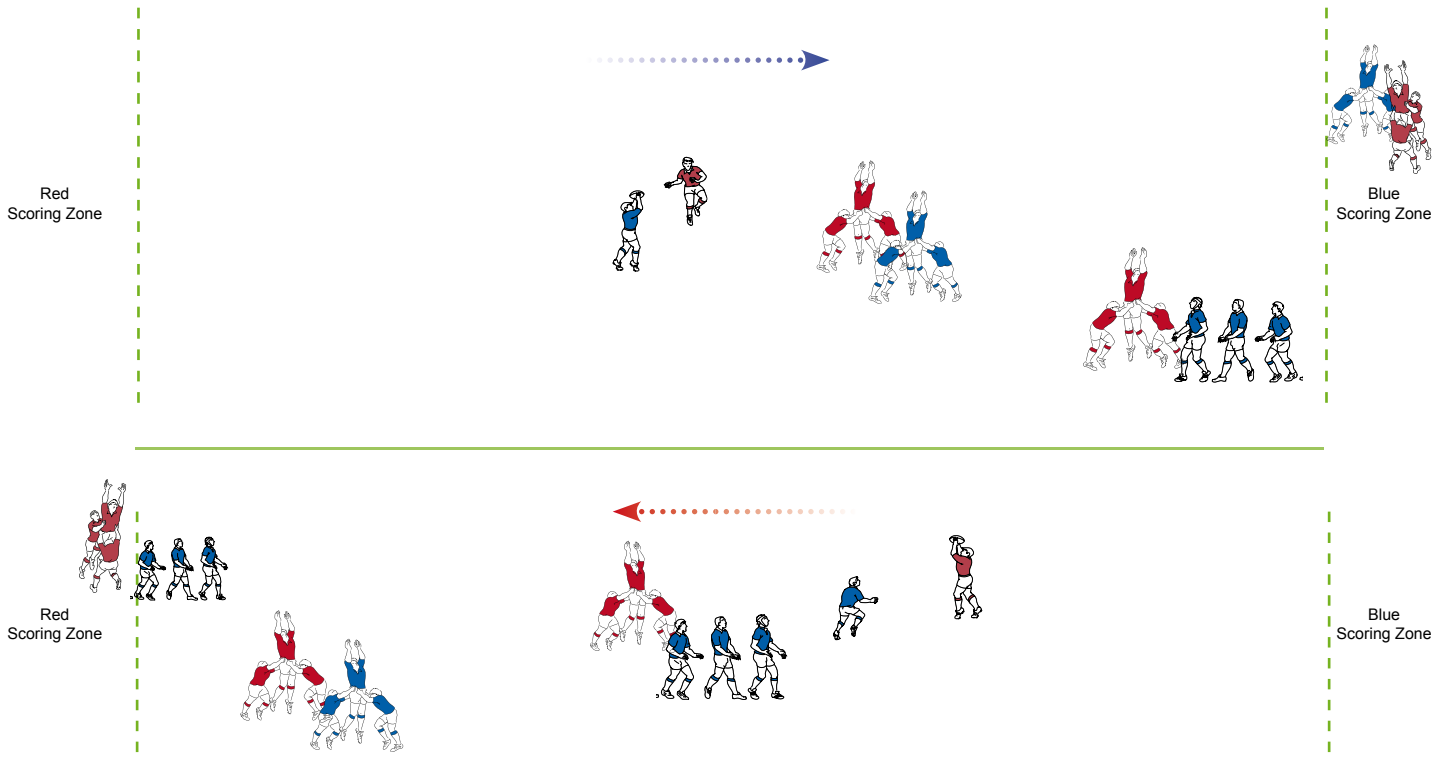
Practice	Lineout - Lose Your Marker & Multi Directional Games
Objective	Developing the principles of finding space and reacting

Equipment				Skill Practice Requirements	
Balls	2	Bags	0	Area	Across pitch
Cones	50	Suits	0	Players	All
Shields	0	Bibs	20	Time	Discretion of the coach

Skill Practice Description

- Either free jumping or with supporting pods depending on age group.
- Each team red & blue has two throwers per team.
- No one can run with the ball.
- The catcher must place the ball on the ground and move to advance up the field.
- The catching team's nearest thrower runs to the ball and looks for a free pod.
- The objective is to catch the ball cleanly beyond the relevant score zone to gain a point.
- The opposition attempt to intercept the throw and play in the other direction.
- The game progression is to narrow the pitch to a channel, more relevant to line out shape.
- Safety issue: Coaches to be aware of fatigue when constantly lifting players in a conditioned game scenario.

Set Up Diagram



Key Coaching Points

- Jumpers to recognise space and jump.
- Support to work together and chase the jump.
- Flex at the hip and knee.
- Supporters to drive up and into the opposite supporter with full triple extension of hip, knee and ankles.
- Hold and lower the jumper. Do not drop even under pressure.
- Be sure to return the jumpers to the ground with a rewind of the lift. Flexion to extension and extension to flexion.

Relevance to the Game

- Working a unit.
- Finding space.
- Over ride set call when opportunity shows.
- Focus on every lineout.

Practice	Lineout Throwing Games
Objective	Throwing Accuracy and Pod Communication under pressure

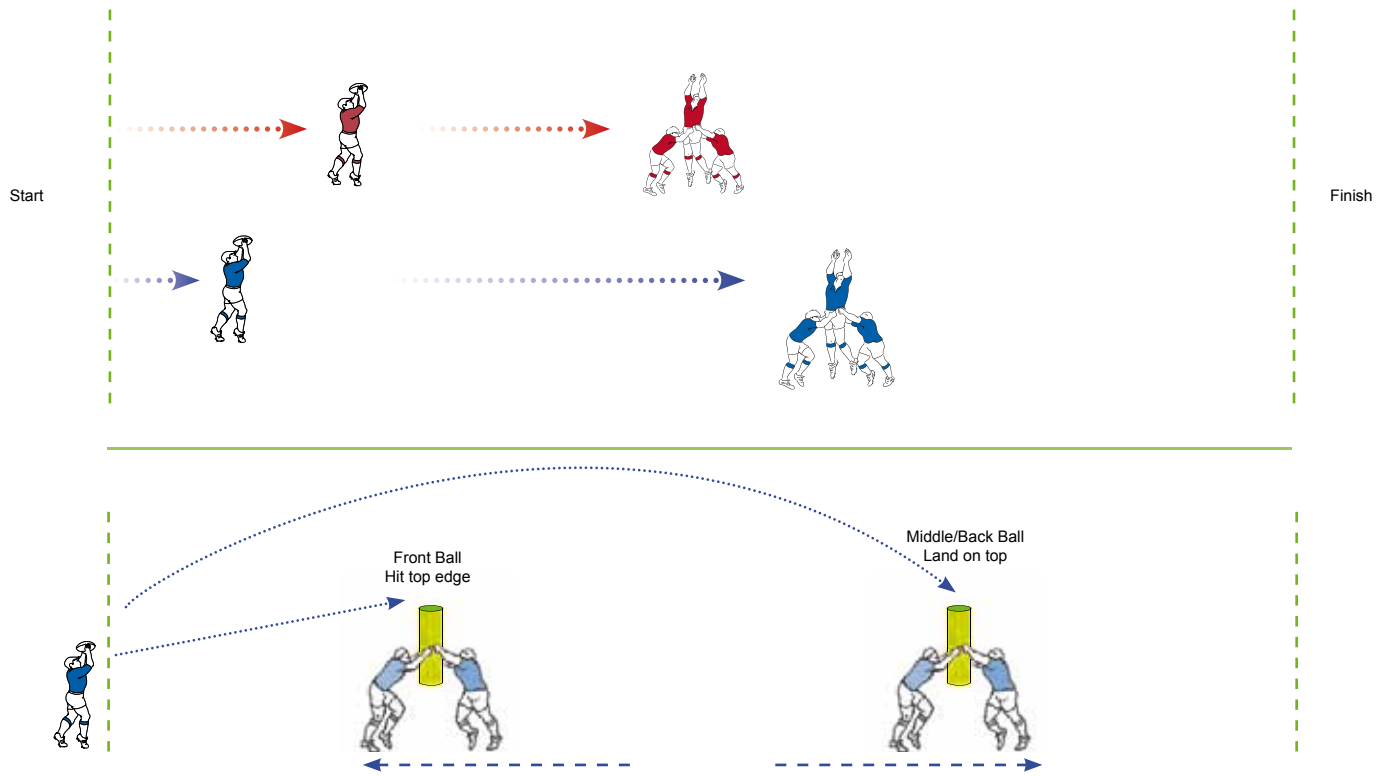
Equipment				Skill Practice Requirements	
Balls	2	Bags	0	Area	Across pitch
Cones	50	Suits	0	Players	All
Shields	0	Bibs	20	Time	Discretion of the coach

Skill Practice Description

- A) Pods and a thrower.
- Race to the finish line.
- When caught cleanly the catcher places the ball at their feet and runs toward the finish for next throw.
- The thrower advances to the ball and throws again.
- Can use a series of short throws or gamble with longer throws.

- B) Two pods using tackle bag as target.
- Front target, the ball must hit the front, top edge of the bag.
- Middle and Back targets, the ball must land on the top end of the bag.
- Pods to move forward or backward and lift the bag. The thrower tests reaction, timing and accuracy.

Set Up Diagram



Key Coaching Points

Thrower:

- Stand with hips square onto the lineout.
- Feet parallel or split stance but both pointing forward.
- Push the chest proud throughout the throw.
- Arch the back and use the abdominals to assist power.
- Hands to follow the ball with follow through.
- Do not allow hands to drop during throw or the ball may
- travel low.
- Use knee and ankle extension to assist.

Relevance to the Game

- Working as a pod and thrower
- Communication skills
- Dynamics in jumping and lifting.
- Accuracy under pressure of time and fatigue.
- Accuracy of throw.