

RFU LONG TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT MODEL

• Rugby is a late specialisation sport, which requires a generalised approach to early training.

• During this time, child developmentally read acquire the fundamental movement skills that cornerstones of all at development.

STAGE 1

FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS

SPORTING DEVELOPMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS - U7-U9

The FUNdamental stage has to be well structured and fun! The emphasis is on fundamental movement skills, and the ABCs of athleticism (Agility, Balance, Co-ordination, Speed), the ABCs of athletics (running, throwing and jumping) and the KGBs of movement (Kinaesthesia, Gliding, Buoyancy, Striking).

Participation in as many sports as possible is encouraged - if possible three or four times per week.



Where: Primary school PE, rugby clubs, multi-skill clubs.
Who: 6-8 years.
Why: To capture the magic.

Physical: General physical literacy - develop the ABCs of movement - Agility, Balance, Co-ordination and Speed. Athleticism in running, jumping and throwing.
Technical: Ball acquaintance passing, catching, evading.
Tactical: Fun games developing spatial awareness and working together as a team.

Mental: Introduction to the Laws of the Game, the rules of modified versions and the ethics of playing sport.
Competition: Playing and training to the appropriate rules.

Involvement in sporting activity: Five hours per week across different sporting activities (including PE or games at school).

STAGE 2

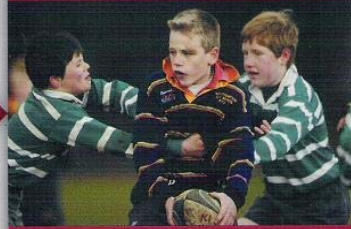
FUNDAMENTAL RUGBY SKILLS

LEARNING TO TRAIN - U10-U12

The emphasis is now on refinement and maintenance of the athlete's physical capacities, fundamental movement skills and the acquisition of rugby specific skills.

This is allied to the continuation of other sporting activities throughout the school year, and during summer and winter multi-sport camps.

Participation in sport twice per week is recommended at this stage.



Where: Primary school PE, rugby clubs, multi-skill clubs.
Who: Boys: 9-11 years, girls: 10-13 years.
Why: To continue the magic for all and capture the talent of some.

Physical: Developing physical literacy and rugby-related fitness, progressing to individual programmes for the more talented.
Technical: Developing the core skills in passing, catching, running, evading, tackling and kicking.

Tactical: Rugby specific games to introduce 'Go Forward, Support, Continuity, Pressure'.
Mental: Develop an understanding of the Laws of the Game and the ethics of playing sport.

Competition: Playing and training to the appropriate rules.
Involvement in sporting activity: 3.5 rugby specific hours plus other PE or games activities in and out of school.

STAGE 3

BUILDING THE POTENTIAL RUGBY SPECIFIC CORE SKILLS

TRAINING TO TRAIN - U13-U15

Young athletes are introduced to the basic technical and tactical skills along with ancillary capacities including warm up and cool down, stretching, hydration and nutrition, recovery and regeneration, mental preparation, taper and peak, integrated pre-competition routines and post-competition recovery.

The major focus of training is on learning the basics as opposed to competing.



Where: Middle and upper secondary school, gifted & talented programmes at rugby clubs and representative player squads.
Who: Boys: 12-14 years, girls: 10-13 years.
Why: Player development and talent identification.

Physical: Strength and conditioning, core stability, running agility exercises. Personalised programme.
Technical: Continuing development of core skills and position-specific skills.

Tactical: Develop an understanding of the principles of play and introduce a 'game sense' approach.

Mental: Introduction to mental preparation.
Goal setting: Coping with winning and losing.
Team preparation: Two training sessions per week.
Competition: One match per week
Hours per week: TALENTED - 10 rugby specific; COMMUNITY - 3-5 hours quality coaching and playing.
Planning: Two periods of training with two periods of competition.

STAGE 4

OPTIMISING THE POTENTIAL RUGBY POSITIONAL AND UNIT SKILLS

TRAINING TO COMPETE - U16-U19

Athletes who are now proficient at performing both basic and rugby specific skills learn to perform these skills under a variety of competitive conditions during training.

The emphasis is now on individual preparation which addresses each athlete's individual strengths and weaknesses.



Where: Secondary school PE and games programmes, age grade representative sides.
Who: Boys: 15-18 years, girls: 14-17 years.
Why: Player retention, development and specialisation.

Physical: Player and position-specific fitness and conditioning programmes.

Technical: Refinement of core skills and position-specific skills.

Tactical: Decision-making tactical awareness, game appreciation, team game analysis.

Mental: Advanced mental training and preparation, refined goal setting.

Team preparation: ELITE - two or more training sessions per week; COMMUNITY - one or two training sessions.

Competition: One match per week.

Hours per week: ELITE - 20.5 rugby specific; COMMUNITY - 4-6 hours quality coaching and playing.

Planning: Two periods of training with two periods of competition.

children are
able to
achieve
their
potential
are the
athletic

• The introduction of the ABCS^{swaths} of athleticism (agility, balance, co-ordination, speed) during this period will lay the foundation of athletic excellence for later years.

• The Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) strategy is based on the required technical, tactical, mental and physiological requirements of sporting performance.



STAGE 5

MAXIMISING THE POTENTIAL

TRAINING TO WIN - 18+

All of the athlete's physical, technical, tactical, mental, and ancillary capacities are now fully established. The focus of training has shifted to the **optimisation of performance**.

Athletes are trained to peak for major competitions.



Where: FE/HE establishments, representative squads, regional & national academies, national age grade & senior representative sides.
Who: Men: 18+ years, women: 17+ years.
Why: High performance.

Physical: Individual fitness programmes for maintenance and improvement.

Technical: Refined core skills - individual positional skill development programme.

Tactical: High degree of decision making, leadership and game analysis skills. Able to adjust tactics and game plan to suit demands of individual matches.

Mental: Self-motivation and discipline. Mentally strong. Understanding of group dynamics.

Team preparation: ELITE - three team training sessions; COMMUNITY - one or two training sessions.

Competition: One match per week.

Hours per week: ELITE - 22.5 rugby specific; COMMUNITY - 6-8 hours quality coaching and playing.

Planning: Multiple periods of training and competition - age group dependant.

STAGE 6

RECRUIT, RETAIN, RETRAIN, THROUGHOUT LIFE

Throughout all the stages of the rugby LTAD model the recruitment, retention and retraining of players, coaches, referees and administrators is key to the continuous development of the game.

Initiatives should be employed to maximise the recruitment and retention within the game at all levels. For some, early identification of individuals by the NGB can mean retention of talented people within the game.



Where: Wherever the game is played.
Who: Men, women and children of all ages and abilities.
Why: For the continuous development of the game at all levels.

Physical: Active.

Technical: Coaching, refereeing and administration skills.

Tactical: The ability to work within a team.

Mental: Self-motivation.

Team preparation: Once a week / once a month.

Competition: Making the club the best it can be.

Hours per week: Indefinable.

Planning: Essential.

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