

# U11 Training Program

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## SALISBURY RUGBY CLUB UNDER 11's COACHING STRATEGY

### Introduction

1. This U11's coaching strategy for the 2016-2017, builds on the plan from last season and is part of a long-term development program for this group of players<sup>1</sup>. It states goals the U11's will want to achieve and gives us a structure for the season. We will plan the season in training blocks that will allow us to focus our efforts on development of individuals and our team. We should focus on developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and experience to play the game (learning through process and performance)<sup>2</sup>.

### Proposed goals and endstate

2. Our goals:

- Revise the players in 3 man non-contested scrums, rucks and mauls **safely**.
- Teach hooking as scrums will allow hookers to strike for the ball in competition.
- To maintain the rugby basics: running, evasion, catching, passing, tracking, advancing on, tackling an opponent **safely** and exploiting space to score tries.
- Introduce kicking (drop kicks for starts and re-starts after a score); free kick from the hand either tap or kicking to gain ground following an infringement.
- Attitudes - maintain the enjoyment of the game and the rugby values (Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship), ultimately 'let kids be kids' playing the game for the fun of being with their friends and doing something they enjoy.
- Be inclusive - all players will have equal opportunities to play (mixed ability teams but also A and B squads for designated Festivals as stated by the organisers).
- Develop individual and team knowledge, skills and rugby experience.

### What to coach and how

4. These skills have been taken from the New Rules of Rugby for U11's<sup>3</sup> which focus on:

- Run and pass accurately and consistently (attacking play).
- Track, advance on and tackle an opponent **safely** (defensive play).
- Forming a defensive line and marking up man to man; retreating 7 metres after an infringement when a free kick is awarded to the opposition.
- Compete for the ball once the tackled player is on the ground and tackler or next defender is on their feet, allowing them to rip the ball from the grounded player.
- Nearest 3 players form a 3-man scrum (non-contested) as a prop or hooker (making the players Scrum Ready).
- Hooker striking for the ball in a scrum.
- Act as a scrum half, feed the ball into the scrum and pass the ball away from the base of the scrum, ruck or maul.
- Form a ruck (2 supporting players from either side in addition to tackler and ball carrier), clearing away defenders and using feet to win the ball.

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<sup>1</sup>. Coaching Strategy Plan Years 1-3 dated Aug 14.

<sup>2</sup>. Underpinning this strategy is Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning; we are passing on rugby knowledge, skills and attitudes; helping our players to understand before applying them in a game situation. The higher level learning of analysis, integration and evaluation are areas that we, as coaches will help our players understand by looking at their performances (individually and as a team) and then feeding back to them via the coaching process. Through this, we can unlock their potential and maximise their performances.

<sup>3</sup>. <http://www.englandrugby.com/governance/regulations/>.

- Form a maul (2 supporting players from either side in addition to tackler and ball carrier) to hold the opposition ball carrier up and win the ball by ripping it away, or support our ball carrier and retain the ball.
- Contest for the ball against another player (ripping the ball in the tackle or maul).
- Kicking from hand either drop kick, punt or tap by the player to themselves (kicking the ball on the ground is not allowed).
- Actions within the 22-metre line (in reality this is a 15-metre line, but the same principles apply).

## Safety – Scrum Ready

5. The scrum is a restart for the game after a minor infringement such as a knock on, forward pass or ball not emerging from a ruck or maul. Even with a 3-man non-contested scrum, **safety is the prime consideration**. Players, coaches and referees all have a responsibility to ensure the scrum is fair and safe. Our aim is to ensure that all players understand the correct technique for the positions, can collaborate with their opponents to stay on their feet. Players will not take part in the scrum unless the coaches are satisfied they are Scrum Ready. There will be progressive training to ensure all are trained, so they can demonstrate the correct Tower of Power position and scrum technique:

- Solo with no opposition.
- On their knees in a 1 v 1.
- On their feet 1 v 1.
- On their knees as a 3-man unit.
- On their feet as a 3-man unit.
- As a 3-man unit with the hooker striking for the ball, and then against another 3-man unit.

6. Coaches will annotate player profiles with evidence of the necessary scrum skills at the levels above, before players can scrum in a match. Analysis of the requirement in para 3 above defines the individual and team skills we need to focus on and are articulated in Table 1 below. These elements will form the basis of the coaching sessions that we will conduct. Once we have had our first festival we can use that to identify the areas we need to improve, before we prepare for the next festival.

**Table 1: What to coach**

| Ser | Individual Skills  | Team Skills  | Remarks   |
|-----|--|--|---|
| 1   | <b>Tackle:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform a safe tackle through the progressions (kneel, squat, stand, walk, jog).</li> <li>• Perform a safe tackle in a game situation (eyes on thighs, cheek to cheek, ring of steel, drive the legs).</li> <li>• Track an opponent.</li> <li>• Advance on an opponent.</li> <li>• Grasp an opponent to make them pass.</li> <li>• Understand and demonstrate a correct tackle.</li> </ul> | <b>Defend:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defensive Alignment.</li> <li>• Communication between players.</li> <li>• Advance as a solid line.</li> <li>• Line speed keeping the alignment.</li> <li>• Adjusting defensive lines.</li> <li>• Cover tackles.</li> <li>• 2 man tackles.</li> </ul> | <b>Players:</b><br>understand the importance of communication.  |
| 2   | <b>Contest the ball in the tackle:</b> If opponent not taken to ground, the tackler can rip the ball away. If attacker taken to ground then tackler must 'Release, Roll Away'.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-align from defensive line to attack if possession is gained from ripping the ball.</li> </ul>  |   |
| 3   | <b>Jump up tackler</b> - tackler quickly onto their feet so they can rip the ball from the grounded player and help form the defensive line (on your feet to compete).   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a defensive line and move forward to close down space (line speed).</li> <li>• Id which defender will tackle which attacker</li> </ul>   | <b>Principles of Defence<sup>4</sup>:</b><br>Contest Possession.<br>Go Forward.<br>Apply Pressure.<br>Prevent Territory |

<sup>4</sup>. <http://www.irbcoaching.com/page=162>.

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|    |   |   | Gain.<br>Support.<br>Regain<br>Possession.<br>Counter Attack.  |
| 4  | <b>Offload</b> prior to the tackle or pass the ball from the tackled player to another team member.   | Re-align the attacking line quickly.  | Continuity of attack.  |
| 5  | <b>Ball retention</b> skills at the tackle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ball in two hands, on the chest and then passed or presented quickly.</li> <li>Body posn is long and strong to make the Tackle Gate small.</li> </ul>  | Securing the ball and re-align the attacking line quickly.  | Ball quickly away from tackle area.  |
| 6  | <b>Run with the ball and pass:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a supporting player.</li> <li>Be a supporting player running and catching a pass.</li> </ul>   | Running, passing and catching, linking supporting players to exploit space.   | <b>Principles of Attack<sup>5</sup>:</b><br>Gain Possession of Ball.<br>Go Forward.<br>Provide Support.<br>Continuity.<br>Apply Pressure.<br>Score points. |
| 7  | <b>Evade a defender</b> – Avoid contact look for space either side of the defender (space not the face).  | Find space and run into it as part of an attacking line.  | Use the 'Y' tactic to attack space either side of the defender.  |
| 8  | <b>Team structure</b> - Understanding positions and team structure, how they are aligned and how to be a supporting player.   | Support running as an attacking line.   |  |
| 9  | <b>Patterns</b> - Recognise and encourage creativity from players to move a defence to create space.  | Play as a team, supporting each other.  |  |
| 10 | <b>Strong in the tackle</b> - Take the tackle on your terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stable and strong position (ToP).</li> <li>Protect the ball.</li> <li>Go to ground safely (legs, hip, side).</li> </ul>   | Be prepared to support the tackled player being the 1 <sup>st</sup> at the ruck or maul to secure the ball.   |  |
| 11 | <b>Scrums<sup>6</sup></b> - 3 man, no contest, but hooker strikes for the ball:<br><b>Props (TH and LH):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ToP.</li> <li>Bind to a Hooker.</li> <li>Understand and execute the Couch-Bind-Set sequence at the same time as Hooker and the other Prop.</li> <li>Head to the left when engaging.</li> <li>Shoulders higher than hips when engaged.</li> <li>When crouching make sure you are "ear 2 ear" with the opposition Props.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 Man scrums must be able to execute Crouch-Bind-Set as a unit.</li> <li>Each player responsible for keeping the scrum up.</li> <li>Once possession is gained, break up from the scrum safely and then re-align as players in an attacking or defensive line.</li> <li>Attacking or Defensive line of players not in the scrum, they must be 5 m back from rear foot of scrum.</li> <li>Players can only advance once ball is passed away from the scrum.</li> </ul> | Do the same action at the same time, no contest, but once bound to be 'Straight, Square, Safe and Legal'.  |

<sup>5</sup>. <http://www.irbcoaching.com/page=162>.

<sup>6</sup>. Coaching the XV-A-Side Game Level 2 UKCC pages 70-71, 3 Union Coaching (2012).

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|    | <p><b>Hooker:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ToP.</li> <li>• Bind to both props.</li> <li>• Understand and execute the Couch-Bind-Set sequence at the same time as Props.</li> <li>• Head to the left when engaging and “ear 2 ear”.</li> <li>• Adjust posn to be ready to hook the ball.</li> <li>• Hips rotate towards SH.</li> <li>• Weight on left leg.</li> <li>• Look across the tunnel for the ball.</li> <li>• Signal for the ball to be fed into the scrum by Scrum Half, by tapping left hand on LH Prop.</li> <li>• Striking successfully for the ball with right foot.</li> <li>• Once ball struck and possession gained, return to ToP.</li> <li>• On opposition ball strike to win the ball, either by hooking or kicking through causing a problem for the opposition.</li> <li>• Shoulders higher than hips when engaged.</li> </ul> <p><b>Scrum Half:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feed the ball into the scrum, mid way in the tunnel to allow for the ball to be struck by Hooker.</li> <li>• Sequence of the ball feed: SH taps the Hooker’s hand when he is ready to feed the ball in.</li> <li>• Hooker then taps LH Prop to signal the SH to feed the ball in as he is ready to strike.</li> <li>• Ball fed in, hooker strikes and SH moves to the rear of the scrum to collect ball and pass to supporting player 5 m back from base of scrum.</li> </ul> |   |  |
| 12 | <p><b>Rucks - 2 players from each team on their feet, try to win possession using their feet (max 3 players from each side):</b><br/>Attacker taken to ground:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tackler ‘Release, Roll Away’ but can jump up and compete for the ball when he is on his feet by ripping the ball from the grounded player.</li> <li>• Attacker presents ball – long and strong.</li> <li>• Support defenders can ‘drive over’ grounded attacker to secure the ball (ToP, low body posn, strong leg drive) another defender can pick up the ball and pass it away (anticipation and quick pass).</li> <li>• Attacker presents ball, secured by 2 attackers driving over ball to clear away defenders.</li> <li>• Support player secures ball and passes away from tackle area.</li> <li>• Understanding of the ‘Tackle Gate’, the width of the tackled player, ball presentation needs to be ‘long and strong’, not side on.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defence – anticipate the tackle, nearest defenders tries to win the ball by forming a Ruck via the Tackle Gate</li> <li>• Attack – anticipate the tackle, nearest attacker secures the ball by forming a Ruck via the Tackle Gate</li> <li>• When clearing out from a ruck we must drive beyond the ball to allow for the support player to secure it and then pass away.</li> <li>• Support player passes ball away from the tackle area</li> <li>• Line needs to adjust and reform for either attack or defence</li> </ul> |  |

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| 13 | <p><b>Mauls – formed when ball carrier and tackler are joined by 2 players from either side (max 3 players from each team):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attacker tackled but remains on feet.</li> <li>• Stable and strong position.</li> <li>• Protect the ball away from defender.</li> <li>• Supporting attacking players secure the ball from attacker and passes it away from tackle area quickly.</li> <li>• Defender tackles but attacker remains on feet.</li> <li>• Defender can rip the ball away and try to gain possession.</li> <li>• Support defenders can join to help rip ball and pass it away from tackle area.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defence – anticipate the tackle, nearest defender tries to win the ball by forming a Maul from behind the feet of the tackler.</li> <li>• Attack – anticipate the tackle, nearest attacker tries to win the ball by forming a Maul from behind the feet of the tackler.</li> <li>• Support player passes ball away from the tackle area</li> <li>• Line needs to adjust and re-form for either attack or defence.</li> </ul>  |  |
| 14 | <p><b>Attacks Patterns – understanding how to attack from different areas of the pitch, based on where a scrum, ruck or maul occurs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of match.</li> <li>• Re-start by touchline.</li> <li>• Scrum by touchline.</li> <li>• Ruck or maul by touchline.</li> <li>• Scrum in centre of pitch.</li> <li>• Ruck or maul in centre of pitch.</li> </ul> <p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attackers need to anticipate and communicate which way they wish to attack, or use runners around the fringes of rucks and mauls to commit defenders, or attack further away from the break down to use space.</li> <li>• Knowing your posn, adjusting your posn depending on the play, being ready to either carry the ball, pass or support.</li> <li>• Decide and then communicate with each other about which way to attack or defend.</li> <li>• Key decision makers must take charge and communicate the plan.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of match – attacking formation moving the ball to a wing to tie in defenders before moving the ball back to exploit space.</li> <li>• Re-start by touchline – attacking using runners to commit defenders before moving the ball away from the tackle area into space. Short side winger drops back, or covers the line or makes the extra man.</li> <li>• Scrum by touchline – Short side winger drops back, or covers the line or makes the extra man. Line moves from deep at pace into space, moving the ball away from the scrum.</li> <li>• Ruck or maul by touchline – Short side winger drops back, or covers the line or makes the extra man. Line moves from deep at pace into space, moving the ball away from the ruck or maul, or uses runners around the fringes to commit defenders.</li> <li>• Scrum in centre of pitch – split line to cover both sides, but then one side needs to be reinforced to create the extra player to out match the defence.</li> <li>• Ruck or maul in centre of pitch – split line to cover both sides, but then one side needs to be reinforced to create the extra player(s) to overmatch the defence</li> </ul> |  |
| 15 | <p><b>Defence Patterns – understanding how to defend from different areas of the pitch, based on where a scrum, ruck or maul occurs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of match.</li> <li>• Re-start by touchline.</li> <li>• Scrum by touchline.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of match – defending formation moving fwd to close down space (line speed) and identifying the ball carrier to be tackled and taken to ground or held in a maul to slow the attack and re-set the</li> </ul>  |  |

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|    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruck or maul by touchline.</li> <li>Scrum in centre of pitch.</li> <li>Ruck or maul in centre of pitch.</li> </ul> <p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing your posn relative to others and being able to communicate it.</li> <li>Marking and tracking your opposite player.</li> <li>Advancing as a line, closing down space and adjusting your posn relative to others.</li> <li>Tackling – taking a player to ground, rolling away, competing for the ball on your feet and form a ruck; or holding the player up, forming a maul or ripping the ball away.</li> <li>Making the ball available from the rear of the ruck or maul as a scrum half or link player.</li> <li>Understanding which players should cover back to make cover tackles.</li> <li>Decide and then communicate with each other about which way to attack or defend.</li> <li>Key decision makers must take charge and communicate the plan.</li> </ul>  | <p>defence – communication is the key to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-start by touchline – defenders must close the space (line speed), with short side winger dropping back or covering the line or far wing in a cover defence.</li> <li>Scrum by touchline – defenders must close the space (line speed) with short side winger either drops back, covers the line or far wing in a cover defence.</li> <li>Ruck or maul by touchline – defenders must close the space (line speed), with short side winger dropping back or covering the line or far wing in a cover defence.</li> <li>Scrum in centre of pitch – defenders align to mirror the attack and must close the space (line speed), with scrum half covering the line or far wing in a cover defence.</li> <li>Ruck or maul in centre of pitch – defenders align to mirror the attack and must close the space (line speed), with scrum half covering the line or far wing in a cover defence.</li> </ul> |  |
| 16 | <p><b>Kicking – Starts and Re-starts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drop kick to start (must go 7 metres) and re-start after a try has been scored.</li> <li>Drop kick from 15m line, after the ball has gone dead or touched down after being kicked into in-goal area.</li> </ul> <p><b>Kicking from hand from a free kick (Free kick following foul play, offside, hand off, lying on the ball, preventing passing from the ground, pushing in the scrum) or in open play for tactical advantage;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From outside 15m zone, kicking for touch allowing the ball to bounce.</li> <li>From within the 15m zone direct into touch.</li> <li>Kicking, catching, calling a Mark and passing away from the point of catching.</li> <li>Getting back to support the catcher.</li> <li>Following up a kick in a line to close down options.</li> <li>Quick throw in – knowing when to use this.</li> <li>Calling a Mark by catching the ball cleanly and shouting 'Mark!' in open play, anywhere on the pitch.</li> <li>Kicking after a Mark is given to gain tactical advantage.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment for re-starts to receive the kick off, or to kick to the other team from the re-start.</li> <li>Alignment for drop out to receive the ball, or to kick to the other team from a drop out.</li> <li>Receiving a defensive kick and counter attacking, moving the ball quickly away from the catcher as the defence will move to him.</li> <li>Falling back to support the catcher and aligning to move the ball away to attack.</li> <li>Following up a kick as a coordinated defensive line to apply pressure.</li> <li>Quick throw in alignment to move the ball into space and attack.</li> <li>Team alignment when a Mark is given, either in possession or not.</li> </ul>  |  |

7. The initial coaching sessions for next season are listed in Table 2 below; although as experience has shown, we needed to repeat sessions to ensure all the players developed at similar rates. The key requirement is the teams that travel to play at Wooton Bassett must be proficient in their ability to tackle, form scrums, hook for the ball, form rucks and mauls safely as

well as the other elements of play. We can make a judgement on the training progression and then alter the sessions as necessary. The training will look very much like the current sessions that we run from 1000 -1200 hrs on a Sunday. But an area that we will continue to exploit will be small sided games; where the players are put into a conditioned game situation, with the aim of increasing learning through rugby experience.

**Table 2: Initial coaching programme**

| Date      | Activity  | Remarks  |
|-----------|---|--|
| 4 Sep 16  | Registration and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration &amp; New Rules Brief.</li> <li>• Game: Touch rugby – passing, catching, running and looking for space.</li> <li>• Skill: Tackle – Revision (kneeling, stand, walk and jog).</li> <li>• Skill: Rucks.</li> <li>• Game play with tackling and rucks (focus: safe tackles).</li> </ul> | Ground conditions need to be considered when playing contact at this stage.  |
| 11 Sep 16 | Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: Pop Touch rugby – looking for space and support running</li> <li>• Skill: Scrum Ready Skills - hooking.</li> <li>• Skill: Mauls.</li> <li>• Game play with tackling, scrums and rucks (focus: safe tackles and scrums).</li> </ul>   | Pop Touch: once touched attacker and defender both lie down, sp player ball away.  |
| 18 Sep 16 | Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: Egg Ball and Ruck Touch rugby – closing space by line speed (defending).</li> <li>• Skill: Kicking and actions in the 15m zone.</li> <li>• Game play with tackling, scrums, rucks and mauls, linking the phases together (focus: safe tackles and scrums).</li> </ul>  | Egg Ball focuses on the present of the ball. Ruck Touch: BC and defender lie down once touched, long and strong present, sp players ruck, ball away. |
| 25 Sep 16 | Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: Touch rugby – closing space down (defending).</li> <li>• Skill: Continuity, moving the ball away from the tackle area from rucks and mauls, phases (attack).</li> <li>• Game rehearsals – attack and defence.</li> <li>• Contact Game play (focus: safe tackles and scrums).</li> </ul>                      |  |
| 2 Oct 16  | Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game: Touch rugby – defending &amp; attacking.</li> <li>• Skill: Creating patterns to move a defence</li> <li>• Contact Game play (focus: safe tackles and scrums).</li> </ul>   |  |

### Our roles and action plan

8. As coaches, we will continue to model the values of rugby (Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship); it has had a positive impact already. When coaches demonstrate a skill, or drill to show 'what good looks like' it needs to be rehearsed so that players can use it as a model to aid understanding. Sessions will be emailed out the week before training. I will confirm the exact training at the start of the session, prior to briefing the players. Coaches will need make mental notes on the skills players display and record it on a player profile post session. This creates an audit trail to ensure everyone has had the right level of training. Post session the coaching team will reflect on the training to aid planning / development of future coaching (Plan, Do, Review).

### Summary

9. As stated earlier this is a living document that will change as we progress. We want the players to enjoy the game and be safe. This plan gives us a base on which to build a group of players that are committed to playing and having fun.