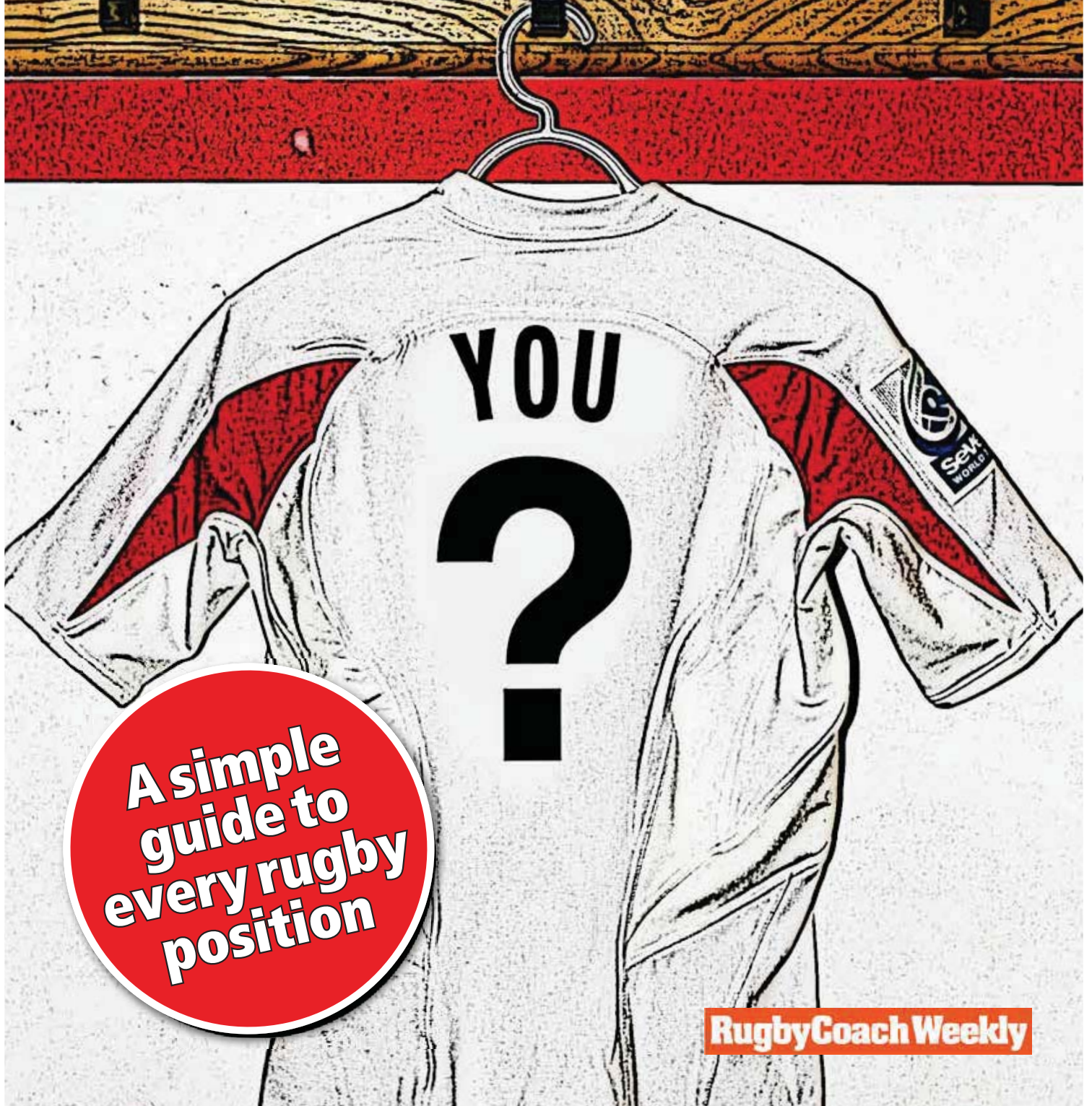


KNOW YOUR ROLE



**A simple
guide to
every rugby
position**

RugbyCoach Weekly

KNOW YOUR ROLE

Rugby is a game for players of all shapes and sizes. That's because there are specific positions on the pitch that require specialised skills. Of course, all players need to be able to run, pass, make tackles and clear out rucks, but some positions will be doing more of one thing than another. In addition, rugby is full of set pieces, such as restarts, lineouts, scrums, kick offs and kicks at goal, at which each position has a certain role.

So, in this guide we give the main set piece attributes for each position, along with attack and defence essentials. We also highlight the 'X factors', those parts of the game where a player can bring a new dimension to a team.

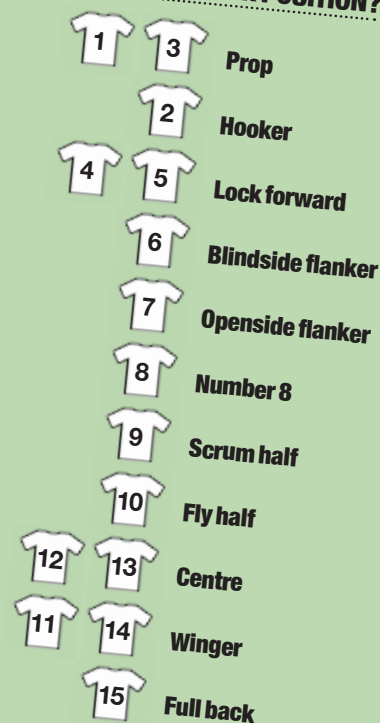
You can use this guide to help your players understand what they should be doing in a game. This is especially helpful if a player is changing positions and is unsure of his new role. Each position is covered on a single sheet, so it's easy to print the sheets out and tape them up next to each player's peg in the changing room. That way, the players get a handy reminder of their roles and responsibilities just before they go out onto the pitch.

Remember these are purely guides. There is no one set template. But, there are basics that the players should be executing. Therefore the guide offers you and your players objectives to aim for. And once your players have a good understanding of their positions, they can look to develop their skills.

You could encourage your team to look at how the top players operate at international level. Ask your props to look at Dan Cole's scrummaging, suggest the flankers take note of Chris Robshaw's dynamic support play, or your centres look at the great running lines of Brad Barritt.

Once the players understand the fundamentals of their position, they can take their play to the next level and beyond!

WHAT'S YOUR POSITION?



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PROP (NO. 1&3)

SCRUM



TIGHT HEAD

OUR BALL: BE THE CORNER-STONE OF THE SCRUM

THEIR BALL: DISRUPT THEIR HOOKER

SCRUM



LOOSE HEAD

OUR BALL: CREATE THE CHANNEL FOR THE STRIKE, PROTECT OUR HOOKER

THEIR BALL: DISRUPT THEIR TIGHT HEAD



KEEP THE HIPS AND FEET SQUARE TO GENERATE MORE POWER

CREATE A CHANNEL FOR THE HOOKER TO STRIKE THE BALL THROUGH

LINEOUT



- SUPPORT JUMPERS
- DRIVE THROUGH ON THEIR BALL

ATTACK



- CLEAR OUT THREATS AT RUCKS
- CARRY THE BALL CLOSE TO THE BREAKDOWN

DEFENCE



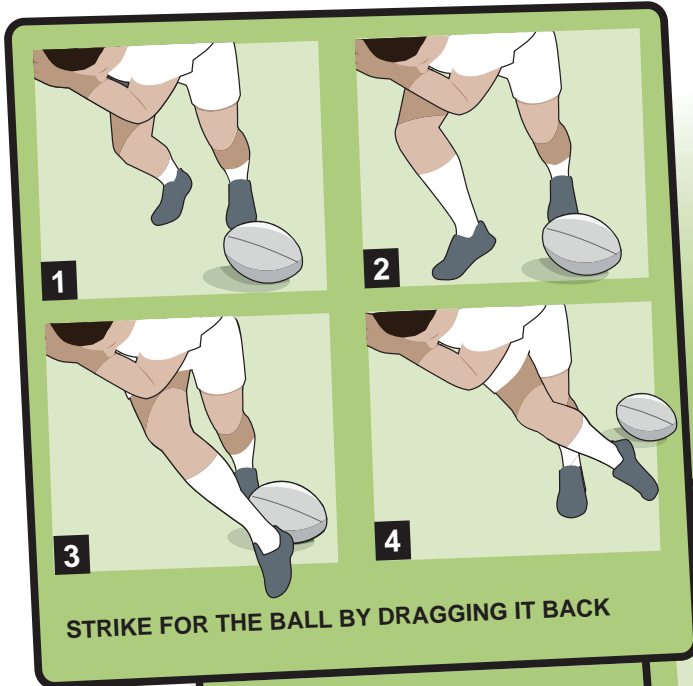
- DEFEND CLOSE TO THE RUCK
- MAKE AGGRESSIVE TACKLES

X FACTOR



- WIN TURNOVERS
- TACKLE ONE OF THEIR BACKS
- OFFLOAD IN THE TACKLE

HOOKER (NO. 2)



STRIKE FOR THE BALL BY DRAGGING IT BACK

LINEOUT



IN DEFENCE

- LIFT OR SUPPORT A JUMPER OR COVER THE 5m CHANNEL

IN ATTACK

- THROW ACCURATELY FIRST
- FOLLOW THROW FOR CATCH AND DRIVE SUPPORT

SCRUM



IN DEFENCE

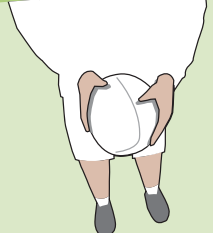
- DISRUPT THEIR HOOKER'S STRIKE BY EITHER CHALLENGING FOR THE BALL OR SCRUMMAGING HARD ON THEIR HOOKER

IN ATTACK

- STRIKE THE BALL AND THEN SCRUMMAGE HARD



SPREAD THE FINGERS ACROSS THE BALL



PUT THE DOMINANT HAND AT THE BACK OF THE BALL



LOOK AT THE TARGET



KEEP THE ARMS AND HANDS RELAXED BEFORE THE THROW

ATTACK



- CLEAR OUT THREATS AT RUCKS
- BE AN ATTACKING OPTION FROM THE EDGE OF RUCKS

X FACTOR



- WIN TURNOVERS
- BE LIKE A FOURTH BACK ROW PLAYER IN OPEN PLAY

DEFENCE



- WIN LOOSE BALL
- BE AGGRESSIVE IN THE TACKLE

LOCK FORWARD (NO. 4&5)

SCRUM



- IN ATTACK
 - SCRUMMAGE FIRST, BUT BREAK QUICKLY TO SUPPORT THE PHASE PLAY
- IN DEFENCE
 - SCRUMMAGE HARD TO HELP DISRUPT THEIR BALL
 - GET OUT OF THE SCRUM QUICKLY TO GET INTO THE DEFENSIVE LINE

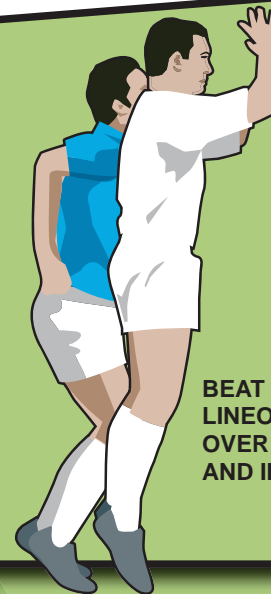


BREAK FROM THE SCRUM AND BE IN POSITION TO SUPPORT THE NEXT PHASE

LINEOUT



- IN ATTACK
 - WIN YOUR THROW BY BEING QUICK OFF THE GROUND
 - DON'T GIVE AWAY YOUR INTENTION TO JUMP
- IN DEFENCE
 - WATCH THE OPPOSITION JUMPERS TO KNOW WHEN TO JUMP
 - GET IN FRONT OF THE THROW TO DISRUPT THEIR LINEOUT



BEAT YOUR LINEOUT MARKER OVER THE GROUND AND INTO THE AIR

DEFENCE



- MATCH UP AGAINST THE BIG RUNNERS IN THE DEFENSIVE LINE

X FACTOR



- TAKE THE HIGH BALL FROM THE KICK OFFS
- ATTACK THE GAIN LINE WITH THE BALL IN HAND, AND BE READY TO USE YOUR SIZE TO OFFLOAD OUT OF CONTACT

ATTACK



- CLEAR OUT THREATS AT THE RUCK
- BE AGGRESSIVE GOING FORWARD WITH THE BALL

BLINDSIDE FLANKER

(NO. 6)

SCRUM

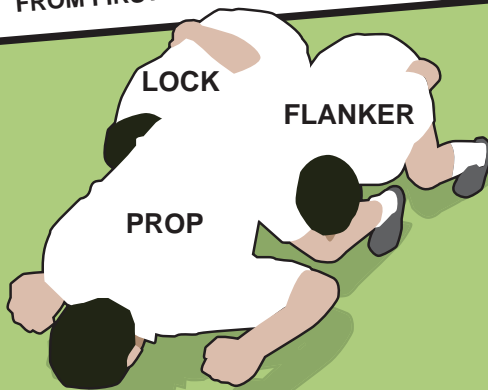


IN ATTACK

- SCRUMMAGE HARD WITH YOUR PROP
- BE AVAILABLE TO TAKE THE BALL ON AT THE FIRST BREAKDOWN ON THE OPENSIDE
- BE READY TO SUPPORT FROM A BLINDSIDE BACK ROW MOVE

IN DEFENCE

- DRIVE HARD WITH YOUR PROP TO DISRUPT THE OPPOSITION SCRUM
- COVER A DESIGNATED OPPOSITION PLAYER FROM THEIR BACK ROW MOVES
- HOLD THE DEFENSIVE LINE FROM AN OPENSIDE MOVE
- COVER FAR SIDE OF THE FIRST RUCK OFF FROM FIRST PHASE



SCRUMMAGE HARD ON YOUR PROP

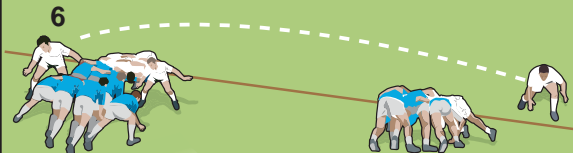
LINEOUT



- WORK ON SUPPORTING THE JUMPER, THEN BE A BARRIER TO PROTECT THE SCRUM HALF
- BE PREPARED TO DRIVE INTO A LINEOUT MAUL

IN DEFENCE

- COVER THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT OR LOOK FOR OVERTHROWS
- DISRUPT THE CATCH AND DRIVE
- COVER THE INSIDE OF THE BALL WHEN IT IS MOVED FROM THE LINEOUT
- BE AN ALTERNATIVE JUMPER



COVER THE FAR SIDE OF THE RUCK AFTER THE FIRST PHASE

ATTACK



- CLEAR RUCKS
- BE STRONG OVER THE BALL AND ON THE BALL
- BE A BALL CARRYING OPTION FROM THE EDGE OF THE RUCK, INSIDE 10

X FACTOR



- BE THE "WORKHORSE", NOT THE "SHOW PONY"
- BREAK THE TACKLE LINE WITH THE BALL
- WIN BACK THE TACKLE BALL

DEFENCE



- BE AN AGGRESSIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE TACKLER
- BE IN THE FRONT LINE OF THE DEFENCE
- COVER THE FAR SIDE OF THE RUCK AFTER THE FIRST PHASE

OPENSIDE FLANKER (NO. 7)

SCRUM



IN ATTACK

- SCRUMMAGE HARD WITH YOUR PROP
- BE THE FIRST AT OPENSIDE BREAKDOWNS
- BE AN OPTION FOR 9 FROM A BLINDSIDE BACK ROW MOVE

IN DEFENCE

- DRIVE IN HARD WITH YOUR PROP TO DISRUPT THEIR SCRUM
- COVER THE INSIDE RUNNER FROM THEIR BACK ROW MOVE
- ATTACK THEIR 10 AND COVER THE INSIDE PASS

LINEOUT

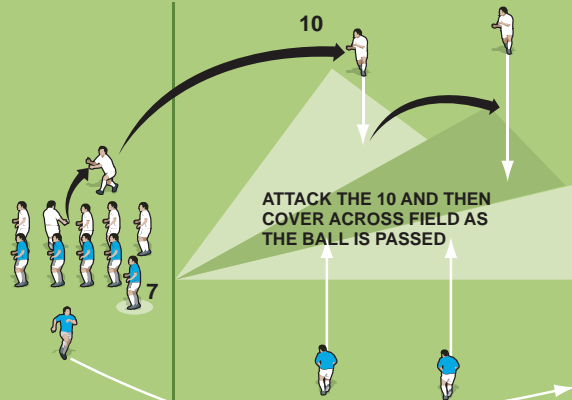
IN ATTACK

- COVER OVERTHROWS
- RUN OUT TO MEET THE BACKS MOVE, NOT TOWARDS YOUR TRY LINE

IN DEFENCE

- LOOK TO GATHER LOOSE THROWS
- GET INTO THE PASSING CHANNEL IF THEIR 9 IS SLOW TO CLEAR
- ATTACK THEIR 10 AND THEN FOLLOW INSIDE THE BALL ACROSS THE FIELD

WIN TURNOVERS IN THE TACKLE



ATTACK THE 10 AND THEN COVER ACROSS FIELD AS THE BALL IS PASSED

DEFENDING FROM THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT

DEFENCE



- MAKE TACKLES, DON'T WAIT FOR THEM
- WIN TURNOVER BALL BY ANTICIPATING THEIR ATTACK AND COMPETING AT THE TACKLE

ATTACK



- BE ON THE BALL, EITHER AS A PASSING OPTION OR SUPPORTING A BREAK
- BE A LINK BETWEEN BACKS AND FORWARDS

X FACTOR

- HANDLE LIKE A BACK
- BE EVERYWHERE ON THE PITCH
- BE AS HAPPY IN THE "DARK PLACES" AS IN THE OPEN FIELD

NUMBER 8

SCRUM



IN ATTACK

- SCRUMMAGE FIRST
- CONTROL THE BALL AT THE BACK FOR 9 TO MAKE EASY PASS
- MANIPULATE BALL FOR EASY PICK UP FOR A BACK ROW MOVE
- BE AN OFFLOAD OPTION FOR A BACK ROW MOVE OR CLOSE BACKS MOVE

IN DEFENCE

- LOCK THE SCRUM IN DEFENCE
- COVER THE INSIDE ATTACKER IF THEY USE A BACK ROW MOVE
- COVER INSIDE YOUR FLANKER IF THEY MOVE THE BALL WIDE



CONTROL THE BALL AT THE BACK OF THE SCRUM FOR 9 TO MAKE AN EASY PASS

LINEOUT



IN ATTACK

- BE A JUMPING OPTION
- BE PART OF A CATCH AND DRIVE

IN DEFENCE

- COVER THROWS TO THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT
- BE A DEFENSIVE OPTION IF THE OPPOSITION BACK LINE CUT THE BALL BACK

BE AGGRESSIVE TAKING THE BALL FORWARD



ATTACK



- BE AN AGGRESSIVE BALL CARRIER
- LINK THE FORWARDS WITH THE BACKS

DEFENCE



- LINE UP TO TACKLE BIGGER PLAYERS AT RUCKS
- IMPOSE YOURSELF AT THE TACKLE COLLISION AREA

X FACTOR



- BE A DECISION MAKER: BACK ROW MOVES, DIRECTION OF PLAY
- BOSS THE KICK OFF RECEIPT
- COVER THE BACKFIELD FOR KICKS FROM THE KICK OFF OR KICK AND CHASE

SCRUM HALF (NO. 9)

SCRUM



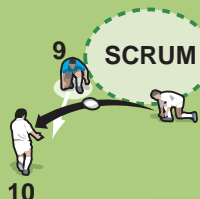
IN ATTACK

- COMMUNICATE THE MOVES BETWEEN BACKS AND FORWARDS
- WORK WITH THE NUMBER 8 ON WHEN TO RELEASE THE BALL
- PASS OFF THE GROUND IF POSSIBLE TO THE FLY HALF FOR QUICKNESS. DON'T PICK UP AND PASS

IN DEFENCE

- HARASS THE OPPOSITION 9
- ON THEIR RIGHT HAND SIDE SCRUMS TRY TO GET INTO THE PASSING CHANNEL
- ON THEIR LEFT HAND SIDE SCRUMS FOLLOW THEIR SCRUM HALF ROUND OR STAND ON THE OTHER SIDE AT THE BACK FEET

AT THEIR LEFT HAND SIDE SCRUM, HARASS THEIR 9 AND TARGET THEIR 10



AT THEIR RIGHT HAND SIDE SCRUM, GET ROUND TO HELP COVER 10



ATTACK



- CONTROL THE ATTACK IN AS MANY PHASES OF PLAY AS POSSIBLE
- LISTEN TO THE FLY HALF TO HEAR WHEN AND WHERE TO PASS
- MIX PASSING WITH RUNS AND KICKS
- BE THE LINK BETWEEN FORWARDS AND BACKS

X FACTOR



- HAVE A MIX OF BEING A BACK AND FORWARD IN YOUR OUTLOOK
- BE ABLE TO BOX KICK
- BE THE LOUDEST PLAYER ON THE PITCH
- COMBINE BEING A FEISTY FIGHTER WITH A GENEROUS TEAM PLAYER

LINEOUT

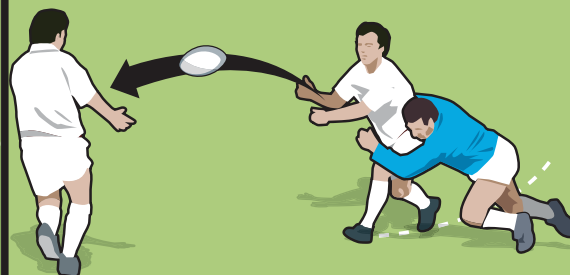


IN ATTACK

- COMMUNICATE THE MOVES BETWEEN BACKS AND FORWARDS
- STAY CLOSE TO THE 5M LINE AS THE BALL IS THROWN
- DECIDE WHETHER TO CLEAR THE BALL TO THE BACKS OR HOLD IT IF IT IS TOO RISKY

IN DEFENCE

- ONCE THE OPPOSITION WIN THE BALL COVER ACROSS BEHIND THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT
- BE READY FOR ANY STOLEN BALL



SOMETIMES PEEL AWAY FROM THE SIDES OF RUCKS TO INTEREST DEFENDERS

DEFENCE



- CONTROL THE DEFENCE AROUND THE EDGES OF RUCKS AND MAULS
- COVER THE FIELD BEHIND THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE

FLY HALF (NO. 10)

SCRUM



IN ATTACK

- EXPLOIT THE 10M SPACE BETWEEN THE BACKLINES
 - VARY YOUR PLAYS DEPENDING ON THE FIELD POSITION. KEEP THE DEFENCE GUESSING
- ### IN DEFENCE
- WORK WITH THE OPENSIDE FLANKER TO COVER OPPOSITION 10 AND 12 CHANNELS
 - LEAD UP THE MIDFIELD DEFENCE WHEN THE BALL COMES OUT OF THE SCRUM
 - BE PREPARED TO TACKLE THEIR NUMBER 8 FROM A BACK ROW MOVE



USE KICKS TO GAIN TERRITORY AND APPLY PRESSURE

LINEOUT

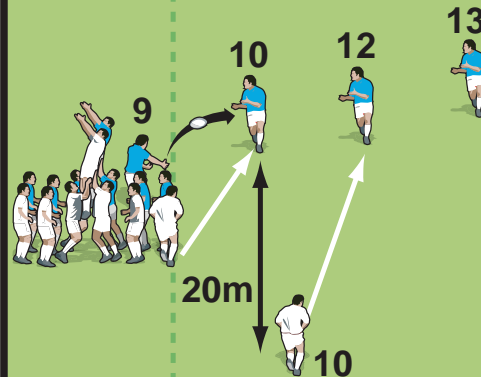


IN ATTACK

- EXPLOIT THE 20M SPACE BETWEEN THE BACKLINES
- GET OUTSIDE THE BACK OF THEIR DEFENDERS AT THE LINEOUT

IN DEFENCE

- WORK WITH YOUR BACK PLAYER IN THE LINEOUT TO DRIFT OUT ON THE INSIDE CENTRE
- BE READY TO GATHER TURNOVER BALL



IN DEFENCE, WORK WITH THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT TO COVER THEIR 12
IN ATTACK, GET OUTSIDE THE BACK OF THE LINEOUT AND EXPLOIT THE 20m GAP

ATTACK



- LEAD THE ATTACKING STRATEGY
- BRING FORWARDS AND BACKS INTO THE GAME FROM THE SECOND PHASE
- KEEP THE OPPOSITION DEFENCE GUESSING WITH KICKS, RUNS AND PASSES

X FACTOR



- ATTACK THE GAIN LINE WHEN YOU RUN WITH THE BALL
- CHANGE YOUR DEPTH SO YOU CAN BE EITHER CLOSE TO THE GAIN LINE OR FURTHER BACK
- KICK WELL WITH BOTH FEET
- KICK DROP GOALS

DEFENCE



- PROTECT YOUR CHANNEL IN DEFENCE
- BE PREPARED TO TACKLE FORWARDS WHO RECEIVE POP BALLS FROM THEIR 10
- USE KICKS TO RELIEVE PRESSURE

CENTRE (NO. 12&13)

SCRUM



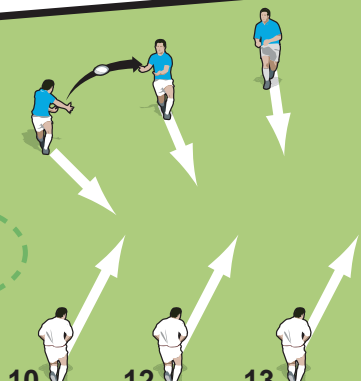
IN ATTACK

- HOLD YOUR RUN SO YOU ARE ATTACKING FROM DEPTH
- MAKE YOURSELF A THREAT EVEN IF THE MOVE MEANS YOU DON'T GET THE BALL

IN DEFENCE

- MOVE UP AND ACROSS IN LINE WITH YOUR 10
- KNOW WHERE YOUR OTHER CENTRE IS

SCRUM



IN DEFENCE, MOVE UP AND ACROSS AS A LINE

LINEOUT

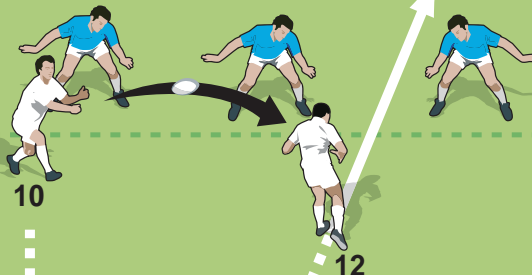


IN ATTACK

- EXPLOIT THE SPACE BETWEEN THE ATTACK AND DEFENCE BY RUNNING SHARP ANGLES AND NOT DRIFTING WITH THE PASS

IN DEFENCE

- STAY IN LINE WITH THE OTHER CENTRE AND 10
- CLOSE DOWN THE SPACE BETWEEN ATTACK AND DEFENCE QUICKLY



USE SHARP ANGLES TO BEAT DEFENDERS

DEFENCE



- BE AGGRESSIVE IN THE TACKLE, THE MIDFIELD WILL NEVER BE PENETRATED
- COMPETE FOR TURNOVER BALL, ESPECIALLY STRAIGHT AFTER OPPOSITION SCRUMS OR LINEOUTS

ATTACK



- BEAT YOUR OPPOSITE NUMBER WITH CHANGES OF ANGLE AND PACE
- RELEASE THE OUTSIDE BACKS WHEN THEY ARE IN SPACE

X FACTOR



- OFFER A KICKING OPTION
- BE THE DEFENSIVE CAPTAIN
- ALWAYS LOOK TO BREAK THE GAIN LINE AND OFFLOAD FROM FIRST PHASE PLAYS

BLINDSIDE WINGER (NO. 11 or 14)

SCRUM

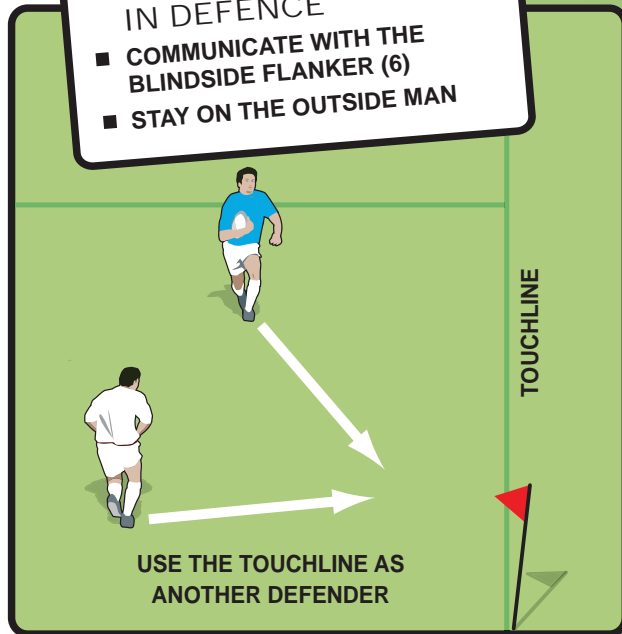


IN ATTACK

- IF THE BALL GOES OPEN, EITHER COVER FULL BACK'S POSITION (IF FULL BACK GOES INTO THE LINE), OR MAKE THE EXTRA MAN IN ATTACK

IN DEFENCE

- COMMUNICATE WITH THE BLINDSIDE FLANKER (6)
- STAY ON THE OUTSIDE MAN



LINEOUT

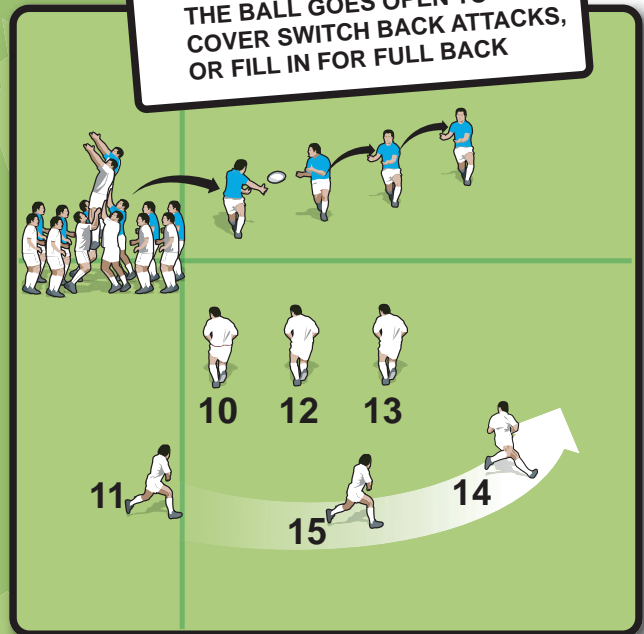


IN ATTACK

- EITHER COVER FULL BACK'S POSITION (IF FULL BACK GOES INTO THE LINE), OR MAKE THE EXTRA MAN IN ATTACK

IN DEFENCE

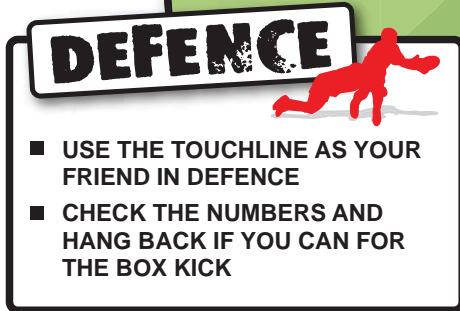
- STAND ON THE 15M LINE TO COVER BOX KICKS
- EITHER STAY IN POSITION WHEN THE BALL GOES OPEN TO COVER SWITCH BACK ATTACKS, OR FILL IN FOR FULL BACK



DEFENCE



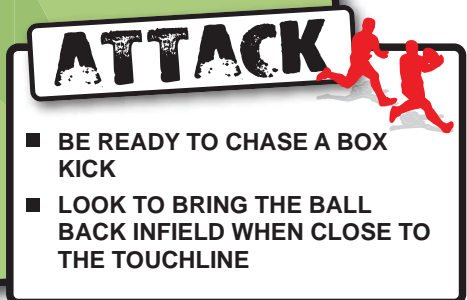
- USE THE TOUCHLINE AS YOUR FRIEND IN DEFENCE
- CHECK THE NUMBERS AND HANG BACK IF YOU CAN FOR THE BOX KICK



ATTACK



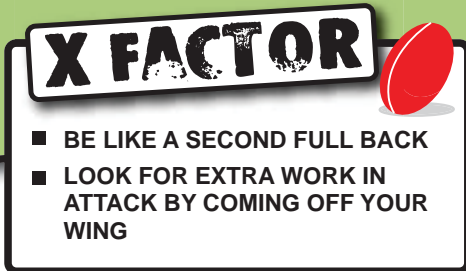
- BE READY TO CHASE A BOX KICK
- LOOK TO BRING THE BALL BACK INFIELD WHEN CLOSE TO THE TOUCHLINE



X FACTOR



- BE LIKE A SECOND FULL BACK
- LOOK FOR EXTRA WORK IN ATTACK BY COMING OFF YOUR WING



OPENSIDE WINGER (NO. 11 or 14)

SCRUM



IN ATTACK

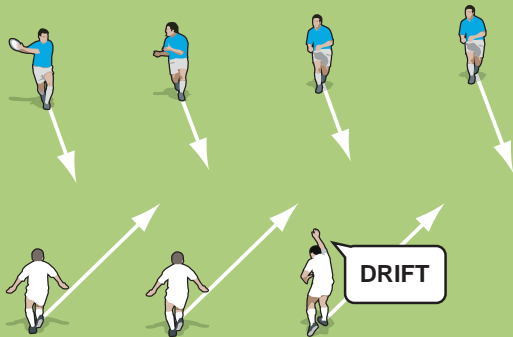
- HOLD YOUR RUN, SO YOU CAN SEE WHEN TO ACCELERATE AND WHERE THE SPACE IS
 - GIVE THE FULLBACK SPACE TO RUN IN BETWEEN YOU AND THE OUTSIDE CENTRE (13)
- ### IN DEFENCE
- COMMUNICATE WITH 13
 - STAY ON YOUR OUTSIDE MAN, UNLESS 15 TELLS YOU TO STEP IN

LINEOUT



IN ATTACK

- HOLD YOUR WIDTH TO DRAW OUT THEIR WINGER
 - DON'T STAND TOO DEEP BECAUSE THERE IS PLENTY OF SPACE BETWEEN YOU AND THE TACKLE LINE
- ### IN DEFENCE
- HOLD BACK FOR KICK
 - COME INTO LINE IF THE BALL IS PASSED BY THEIR 10



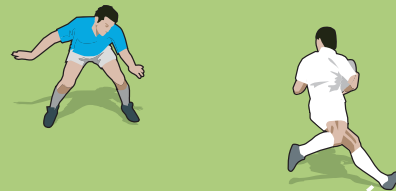
CALL OUT IF THERE IS AN OVERLAP AND YOUR INSIDE BACKS NEED TO DRIFT

DEFENCE



- CALL OUT IF THERE IS AN ATTACKING OVERLAP
- COMMUNICATE WITH 13 AND 15 ON WHETHER TO STEP IN OR STAY OUT

BACK YOUR PACE TO BEAT YOUR OPPOSITE MAN



RUN IN AND OUT TO FIX HIM

CARRY THE BALL IN THE OUTSIDE ARM

ATTACK



- DON'T RUN INTO TOUCH
- CALL FOR THE BALL IF THERE IS AN OVERLAP
- CARRY THE BALL IN THE ARM CLOSEST TO TOUCHLINE

X FACTOR



- LOOK FOR CHIP AND CHASE TO SCORE TRIES
- BACK YOUR PACE OR YOUR SIDE STEP TO BEAT YOUR OPPOSITE MAN

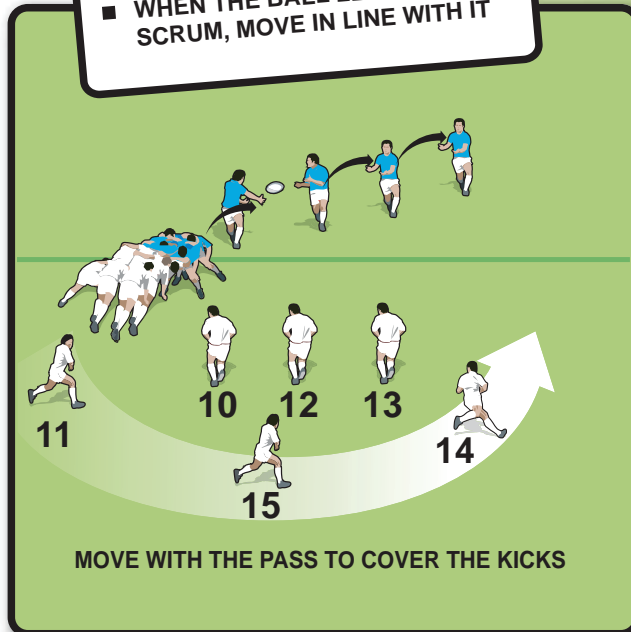
FULL BACK

(NO. 15)

SCRUM



- SET UP 30m BEHIND THE SCRUM, NO FURTHER BACK THAN OWN GOAL LINE, IN LINE WITH THEIR MOST LIKELY KICKER
- WHEN THE BALL LEAVES THE SCRUM, MOVE IN LINE WITH IT



LINEOUT



IN DEFENCE

- SET UP 20M BEHIND YOUR OUTSIDE CENTRE (13), NO FURTHER BACK THAN YOUR GOAL LINE
- IF THE BALL IS MOVED WIDE, STAY BACK TO COVER KICKS

TRY TO GET OFF THE GROUND TO TAKE THE HIGH BALL

KEEP THE ELBOWS TOGETHER

TURN TOWARDS THE TOUCHLINE SO IF THE BALL SPILLS OUT, IT GOES BACKWARDS AND AWAY FROM DANGER



ATTACK



- DON'T START IN THE ATTACKING LINE
- USE YOUR DEPTH TO PICK THE BEST TIME TO ENTER THE LINE
- COUNTER ATTACK IF THE ODDS ARE 1 V 1

X FACTOR



- COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR FRONTLINE DEFENCE ON POSSIBLE WEAK AREAS
- KICK WITH THE FOOT CLOSEST TO TOUCHLINE

DEFENCE



- WORK WITH WINGERS TO COVER THE BACKFIELD KICKS
- ACT AS THE LAST LINE OF DEFENCE AGAINST A BREAKTHROUGH - TAKE THE MAN ON THE OUTSIDE
- KICK AWAY FROM THE OPPOSITION PACK