



facilities guidance for

WEIGHT TRAINING AREAS/GYMS





Planning a weight training area or gym or fitness room

A weight training area or gym as it is commonly known, is really an area where the players in a rugby club or school can safely and productively complete planned resistance training programmes. Younger players or age grade players should ideally be supervised at all times when training in the gym. Adult players ideally require supervised and qualified supervision as well but some exceptions can be made for small group use of the gym for adult players. No player of any age or stage of development should use the gym facility on their own without qualified supervision.

This brochure is intended to provide information and guidelines in terms of setting up a gym, the type of equipment that may be used, suggested layouts and some possible alternatives for a resistance training area for clubs that do not have a ready made and available area in their club.

Setting up a gym

There are four key factors that need to be addressed when considering setting up a gym;

- The size and general nature of the facility
- The range of resistance training programmes that will operate
- The costs associated with the facility and the running of the programmes
- Qualified staff to run the facility and programmes

Size and general nature of facility

Size:

Depending on the programmes that are to be undertaken the size of the facility can range from a small room (7m x 7m or approx 50m²) to a comprehensive spacious area that can occupy an area greater than 100m². The general guideline is to allow an area of 5m² for an item (such as a lifting platform, a dumbbell rack, a treadmill or a selectorised machine). Thus a large 100m² area may safely and easily contain 20 items of equipment.

Floor:

The floor surface should be of a strong resilient structure. A timber floor is not a good idea as weight disks and other resistance training items will fall to the floor and damage the surface. Also a non-slip surface is important. The facility should not have any hazards that might cause a player to injure themselves as they move within the facility. There should be a clear entrance area that is clutter free and the area should be well lit.

The resistance training programme

The resistance training programme in operation will be dependent on the players needs and their stage of development. This is an often forgotten factor when a club wishes to set up a gym. The questions that should be asked here include:

- Who will use the facility?
- Will there be small groups or a squad using it at one time?
- Will the programme require basic equipment?
- Is there a need to have clear space for general stretching and stability training?
- Will the physio use the facility to help rehab injured players?

Answering these questions will lead the club administrator or coach or whoever is in charge of setting up a facility to a much clearer understanding of their requirements.

If the users are mainly adult players then the equipment will offer more barbell and dumbbell equipment with olympic bars and perhaps platforms as the designated lifting area. Squat racks and benches will also feature in an adult player gym. For younger players who are learning to train then lighter bars and medicine balls will be required. Again if injured players are to be supervised by a physio or fitness coach then the equipment range may also include wobble or instability boards, pulleys and rubber bands (therabands). See the options for equipment at the end of this brochure.



Equipment

The following range of equipment may be used and included in a gym:

- Free weights
- Platforms
- Selectorised machines
- Cardiovascular equipment including cycle, step, row machines, treadmill
- Additional resistance training equipment including swiss balls, medicine balls, therabands and exercise bands, boxes, punch bags...

The list of equipment is actually endless and will over time be updated and modified depending on the programmes in place.

Suggested layouts

Depending on the type of equipment in mind the layout will vary. Having some cardiovascular training equipment in one section is always sensible and this can also include a small open area where stretching can occur. If exercise or selectorised machines such as leg extension and lat pulldown machines are to be used then these items can be placed in line or in close proximity. Free weights will require storage or stacking areas or stands and the return of any used weight, bar or any item of equipment should be placed or returned and stored in its storage area. This will then allow for a clutter free area at all times. There are health and safety issues when dumbbells, barbells or disks or other items of equipment are left scattered about the facility. Clear signage of rules of the gym and health and safety procedures is also important.



Costs

Should an area be identified then there may be costs associated with modifying the floor area and walls. The floor area needs to be a sturdy resistant structure capable of housing heavy equipment and resistant to weights being dropped to the floor. For clubs that decide on olympic weight lifting equipment then either rubber matted flooring or platforms are recommended. In areas around free weights (barbells, dumbbells, bench press areas) then a rubber matted floor is recommended. The cost of this equipment will vary and so shop around. There are various suppliers of gym equipment and fittings and a competitive price should be sought for equal standard items. The main costs will be the equipment if the facility already exists. Contact details for suppliers of gym related equipment are provided in this brochure.

Qualified supervision - a must

It is important that qualified supervision is in place to manage the programmes that will take place in the gym. Players need to be regularly instructed in exercise technique and in programme progression if they are to properly benefit from a resistance training programme. Studies have shown that when players are supervised by qualified personnel then progression is optimal and safety is ensured.

The IRFU run the certified conditioning coach course for rugby coaches who are interested in managing the general fitness programme for the club or school. The course is a broad based rugby fitness course and provides the participant with the fundamentals and practical training to manage a rugby fitness programme for clubs and schools. More specifically, a weight lifting and resistance training certification is also provided through the IRFU and Setanta College for those who wish to be certified as resistance training coaches. This course is seen as the minimum level that is required to manage a resistance training programme in a club or school. Details of these courses are available from the IRFU and www.setantacollege.com

List of gym equipment suppliers

Company	Address	Phone	Web Page
C.P. Sports Company (D.Lyttle)	75 Kurin Road, Garvagh, Co. Londonderry BT 51 5NT	0044 2829558379	None
Perform Better (Alastair Yuel)	UK	0044 7766112375	www.performbetter.com
SAQ (Jim Kilty)	35 Belmont Lawn Stillorgan C. Dublin	087 2312906	www.saqireland.net
Totally Fitness	1 King Street, Belfast BT 1 1HT	0044 2890230330	www.totallyfitness.co.uk
Sportesse Equipment LTD	No 15, Dyehouse Lane, Glastonbury, Somerset, UK	0044 1458832210	www.sportesse.com
Power Lift	115 Lincoln Way, P.O. Box 348, Jefferson USA	001 800 872 1543	www.power-lift.com
Cyber International, UK	Oak Tree House, Atherstone Road, Measham DE12 7EL UK	0044 8456060228	www.cyberinternarional.com
Fitness Concepts LTD	Unit 16 Deansgrange Business Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin	01 2896912	www.fitnessconcepts.ie
Life Fitness	International	01 2844892	www.lifefitnessireland.com
York Fitness	York Barbell (UK) Ltd. Churchill way Daventry, Northants NN11 4YB	0044 1327878911	www.yorkfitness.com
Donnybrook Health (Consultancy for gym design and equipment)	Donnybrook Health 37 Newlyn Vale, Rochestown, Cork	086 2577875	email: buckleyc@indigo.ie

Facilities guidance for weight training areas/gyms

The factors that decide what resistance/weight training area/gym facility to set up are:

- Quality of supervision
- Stage of development of the player
- Space and finance available

The following equipment lists are for:

Option A (Low Budget)

Description	Young Player
Stage of Development	Fundamental, Learn to Play & Practice and Train to Train
Age	8 to 14 years

Option B (Standard Budget)

Description	Young Developed Player & Adult
Stage of Development	Train to Compete & Train to Win
Age	14 - 16 years

Option C (High Budget)

Description	Young Developed Player & Adult
Stage of Development	Train to Compete & Train to Win
Age	16+ years

Option A

Equipment	Size	Number
Maxi grip Medicine Ball (ensure ball does not slip and have a storage rack)	1 x 2kg 3 x 3kg 1 x 5kg 1 x 7kg	6
Core (Swiss) Ball (Commercial Core balls) (Able to take 175kg)	1x55cm 2x65cm 1 x 75cm	4
Broom Handle	Normal	4
Wobble Board	Normal	4
Thera-band	Depends on ability of Player	4
Rugby Ball	Normal	4
Skipping Rope	Normal	4
Mats	Normal	4
Hurdles	Mini	4
Box	30 cm	2
The equipment below is for the young player 8 - 14 years old and from the Train to Train Stage of Development		
Aluminum Training Bar Grip Diameter 28mm Length 1830mm - Weight Capacity 65kg	7kg	4
Olympic Spring Collars	.5kg	8
Training Disk	2.5	8
Wooden Disk	Wood	8



Option B

Equipment	Size	Number
Option A	As previous page	As previous page
Squat Rack or Power Rack	Adult	1
Platform	Normal	1
Olympic Bench Press	Normal	1
Flat/Incline Bench	Normal	2
Press Squat Standing (Ideal for use in an area where space is an issue)	Normal	1
Chins Bar	Normal	1
Dips Bar	Normal	1
Dumbbells (Rubber coated)	1 set = 2x (2.5kg, 5kg, 7.5kg, 10kg, 12.5kg, 15kg, 17.5kg, 20kg, 22.5 kg & 25kg)	2 sets
Dumbbell Rack	Normal	1
Olympic Bar Grip Diameter 28mm - Length 2186mm - Weight Capacity 350kg min (With needle bearings to ensure a smooth and constant rotation of the sleeves)	20kg	4
Olympic Collars (These collars allow for the weights to be tightened fully)	2.5kg	5 sets
Olympic Disks (Rubber ISO-grip plates) (High quality rubber coated plates improve durability and protects floors and equipment)	1 set = 2x (1.25kg, 2.5kg, 5kg, 10kg, 15kg, 20kg & 25kg)	2 sets
Bumper Plates (High quality solid rubber training bumper plates) (Plate diameter 45cm)	1 set = 2 x (5kg, 10kg, 15kg & 20kg)	1 set
Wooden Disk	Wood	8



Option C

Equipment	Size	Number
Option A	As previous page	As previous page
Option B	As previous page	As previous page
Power Rack	Normal	2
Platform	Normal	1 more
Adjustable Prone Bench	Normal	1
Olympic Bar Grip Diameter 28mm - Length 2186mm - Weight Capacity 350kg min (With needle bearings to ensure a smooth and constant rotation of the sleeves)	20kg	1 more
Glute Ham Raise	Normal	1
Reverse Hyper	Normal	1
Cable Pulley Machine	Depends on brand	1

Summary of guidelines for weight training areas/gyms

The lack of time, space, equipment and competent supervision are the main problems with the implementation of a strength and conditioning programme.

Access

The facility must provide free and unobstructed access. Minimum corridor width should be 1 metre. The facility should ideally have a set of double doors to allow installation of larger equipment. Emergency exits must be clearly visible with signage.

Ceiling Height

This should be 12 to 14ft in height (3.4 - 4.3m) with full clearance needed for overhead exercises.

Flooring

The gym should be set up on the ground floor and the floor should consist of a strong resilient structure. The most common flooring is non-static carpet and rubber flooring.

Equipment Placement

All power and Olympic movements should be away from the windows and collision from other equipment and trainers. Tall equipment should be located beside walls. The middle of the room should be clear to improve visibility and for bodyweight/core exercises.

Free Weights

Manufacturers guidelines should be followed. Platforms should have a one metre minimum clear space at the side and rear of the platforms.

Supervision

A player should be supervised by a qualified strength and conditioning coach. The IRFU run the Certified Conditioning Coach Programme and there is also a more specialised Certificate course for Weight Lifting and Resistance training which is run by the IRFU and Setanta College. Information on these courses can be obtained from Niamh Nash at the IRFU. Contact on 01 6473835 or niamh.nash@irfu.ie or from www.setantacollege.com.



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