



PLAYERS in this stage are aged 13-16 years approx. They are interested, eager to play and focused on their own development. The environment should allow not only sporting development but also that of social skills and self-esteem. With player maturity, coaches are likely to see changes in mood and personality. The coaching role becomes more that of encouraging in order to facilitate learning and understanding. Stage 3 is a major window of opportunity for strength and aerobic development.

The game in this stage is structured in order to facilitate the development of the player. It is still played with reduced numbers but is now a free flowing 13-a-side game while respecting the significant contribution of 1st Phase. The players should be able and encouraged to explore various position specific roles within 1st Phase. The game is still fun, safe and enjoyable with ample running, passing and tackling.



## STAGE 3

**The Player** - Develops  
**The Coach** - Encourages  
**The Game** - Developing

# Train to develop

## Essence of the Player

Players are teenagers aged 13-16 years approx. and are focused on developing their playing abilities. Players should be focused on “Development” and may choose rugby as their sport of choice.

## Essence of the Coach

The coaching focus in this stage is to ‘Encourage’ the players. The coaches’ emphasis should be on encouraging the players while also guiding and teaching. In this way the coach provides positive support and confidence.

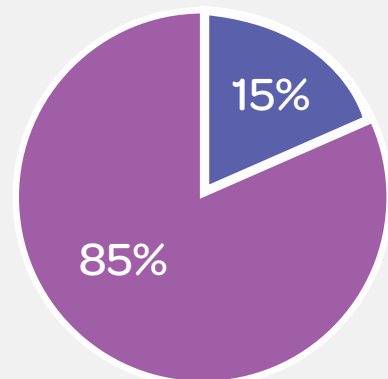
## Game Development

- The game should be free-flowing 13-a-side rugby. Emphasis on continuity and General Movement (85%) while respecting the significant contribution of 1st Phase (15%) should guide the coach at this stage.
- Players should continue to explore various playing positions. As players mature, their body shape and size will change therefore players may begin to identify and choose more suitable playing positions to their physical attributes.
- Due to the emphasis of 1st Phase (15%) players begin to understand the importance of position specific skills, i.e. lineout thrower, scrumhalf and delivery to the backline. Players also begin to understand the specific roles and responsibilities of playing positions.

## Stage 3 - Technical Emphasis

● General Movement

● 1st Phase



## Personal Characteristics

- Interested and Eager: Players will show interest in learning new skills and are eager to improve. Therefore training sessions and coaching processes should aim to meet their needs in this respect.
- Involvement: Players like to be made feel like they are valued and will seek levels of independence. Creating an environment where players can voice their opinions and make choices will facilitate this growing independence.
- Developing social skills, self-awareness and self-esteem is important for girls at this stage and this should be encouraged through positive feedback, communication and parity between coaches and players.
- Different rates and levels of maturity of players must be considered when coaching, team

building, communicating and facilitating a mutually respectful team environment.

- As players enter into their teenage years they may experience significant behavioural mood changes.
- Peer pressure and the need for social acceptance can have a positive or negative effect at this stage.

## Strategic Development

- Stronger links between 1st Phase play and General Movement are developing through this stage. Developing the link between successful 1st Phase play and subsequent General Movement is a key focus. Players begin to understand that the outcome of 1st Phase effects the shape and direction of the play that follows. Players will start to identify specific team set-up formations during 1st Phase (attack/defence) to be successful.
- Developing greater effectiveness of General Movement should occur. Subsequently, developing greater understanding and applying various defence formations and systems to be effective is required.

## Tactical Development

- Players continue to develop their collective and individual decision-making skills in both attack and defence. Attack is developed for 3 groups in General Movement;
  - 'life of the ball group'
  - 'early group'
  - 'late group'
  - The 4th group, 'the axis group' may be introduced to the players once they're familiar with the other 3 groups
  - Further developing an understanding and ability to apply the Principle of Usefulness 'what must I do to be effective?' i.e. understanding where players are in relation to the ball and how they can be effective
- Defence
  - Defending in small groups (more, equal and fewer defenders)
  - Effective positioning (adequate spacing with team-mates, positioning dependent on opposition attack)
  - Moving forward and applying pressure
  - 1st line defence and introduction of 2nd line defence
- 1st Phase development consists of players exploring many playing positions with the aim of providing understanding of varied roles and responsibilities.

## Technical Development

- Continue to develop all skills learned in Stage 2 – Train to Play.
- Players should focus on understanding and performing correct key factors of individual skills.
- Confidence in contact should be further developed through regular and appropriate repetition in training. This should allow players to act confidently and safely when contesting the breakdown and contact areas.

- Position specific skills – focus on performing the correct key factors of position specific skills. Position specific skills relate to the functional skills of positional requirements for effectiveness in Unit performance. Players should continue to explore playing positions depending on size, body shape and speed.

## Physical Fitness

- Most players at this stage are physically maturing and so rapid growth and significant physical differences will exist. However, for some players this will already have occurred in Stage 2. Coaches should take this into consideration when planning their session to ensure the safety of all players.
- This Stage provides a Window of Trainability for Strength development and there is the opportunity to lay down solid strength training foundations for future stages. Correct technique for strength training should be enforced with the introduction of free weights.
- This is likely the most important stage for physical development and when completed adequately, leads to a greater level of physicality and robustness. When completed poorly, can lead to breakdown and increased risk of injury.
- Education on positive eating habits is essential. As players start to seek their own independence eating habits can change. Players should be educated on nutrition, pre-, during and post-exercise.
- When training, there should be an emphasis on quality over quantity, (i.e. how well someone trains not how much training they do).
- Education on injury prevention and recovery is important for girls in this stage of development. A lot of players may be playing numerous sports, sometimes with up to 3 training sessions per day, with recovery seen as unnecessary. In order to prevent player burnout and injury, coaches should educate their players on recovery techniques and the importance of monitoring their training load.

## Mental Development

- At this stage girls may experience rapid emotional, physical and social changes. Rugby provides the opportunity to experience and gain confidence through positive participation, both individually and collectively, providing a vehicle for development of self-esteem and confidence.
- Positive interaction and engagement within collective experiences: Rugby provides the opportunity to shape and comply with group norms, thus creating a positive experience in relation to team work and values.
- Rugby promotes development of self-control.
  - It provides the opportunity for players to manage and control their emotions in a competitive and intense environment.
  - Encourages players to take responsibility for their individual actions and promotes self-regulation.
  - This stage captures the transformation from early teens to young adult and so reflects the challenges outside of sporting environment.



