

Tips for Coaching Kids Contact Rugby

Coaching contact rugby to kids is probably one of the most challenging roles for any coach, however it is also the most important role. If the coach can manage to coach the contact well the players will have little problems in their rugby career.

Confidence is the Critical Factor

Confidence will determine if the young player will take to rugby or not. It sounds very alarmist, however contact is probably the largest part of the rugby game and if a player is confident with contact they will grow quickly in skills.

How Do You Help a Player to Gain Confidence in Contact?

What seems like a simple action for us adults can seem very scary to a child, therefore we as coaches have to break it down and start at the simplest form. Once a player understands the simplest form then we can progress it further until it is played at the full intensity.

Here are some tips for Coaching Confidence

- **Make it fun** - try and build a challenge into the game or drill so that the players think it is a game
- **Always start with 1v1** - for kids too many numbers is scary, start with low numbers and then add players when they are confident
- **Overload the side you want them to learn** - if a kid thinks they have a chance of completing a skill they will do it confidently, therefore to build confidence quickly give him more help by placing more player on the skill you want him to complete correctly, i.e. more cleaners to clear out at the ruck or tacklers to bring down the players
- **Add variable** - the main 2 variables are
 - > space - start with little space and increase the space as they become more confident
 - > speed - begin at low speed until they understand it then gradually build the speed up until it is full speed

Key Learning Points for the 3 Contact Points in a Game

There are 3 main contact zones in a game of rugby, the tackle, the ball carry and the clean out (ruck). Each of these contact zones have 3 key learning points that the players need to understand if they are going to be successful.

Tackling Confidence

We want to teach the players about 3 key things **GET CLOSE, GET LOW, SQUEEZE BOTH LEGS**

Ball Carry Confidence

We want to teach the players to carry the **FEET** (step into space), **FIGHT** (fight to get in strong position), **FINISH** (long place)

Ruck Confidence

There are 2 key area that a player needs to learn, **PUSH PAST THE BALL, ONLY PICK UP WHEN CLEAR OF PLAYERS.**

Good luck with the rugby season ahead, if you need any game ideas feel free to visit the Ready Rugby website (www.readyrugby.com.au) and check out our manuals.

