

NLD SCHOOLS OF RUGBY



SCHOOL OF RUGBY PLAYER (& PARENTS) HANDBOOK



NLD SoR U15's East Midlands Champions 2008-09

**“Improving Young Potentially Elite Players’
Basic Skills and Game Understanding”**

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1. What are Schools of Rugby (SoR)?

Background

In April 2006, the RFU Council agreed to the formation of Constituent Body (CB) Schools of Rugby (SoR). The recommendation which was approved reads:

*'Constituent Body Schools of Rugby will be established to **replace** existing CB Development Squads and England Player Development Centres (EPDCs), and will have responsibility for delivering a core rugby curriculum. Based on geographical districts at U13, U14, U15 & U16 levels, they will be supported by Regional Academy staff and CB accredited personnel.'*

The objective is to develop generations of well tutored and skilled rugby players, some of whom will go on to play International rugby and become professional players; and some who will play in the Community Game, driving up skill levels throughout the sport.

CB Schools of Rugby are focussed towards high performance, potentially elite players. There will be just 15-25 of the top players in the CB, who demonstrate the potential to go on and play at the highest level, at each of the four age groups (U13-U16*). It is important to understand that the Schools of Rugby replace the CB development squads – they are not CB development squads by another name. However, whilst overplaying should be avoided, SoR participants can play for CB representative squads, Schools and Clubs in appropriate games. (In NLD the individual County 'Sub CB' squads continue to operate and will be proactively used as a selection / reassessment programme for SoR.)

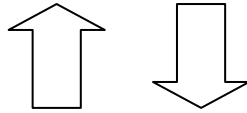
This program focuses on **skill development** in young players, not match preparation. The core curriculum for players **focuses on basic skills done well** – i.e. running, carrying, passing, catching, decision making, tackling, contact skills and continuity. There *are* CB Playing Opportunities for SoR players and additional players of "CB Standard" as competitive opportunities are considered a key element to players' development.

* (In NLD SoR resources are focussed on U13-U15, with U16 development via the NLD U16 squad development.)

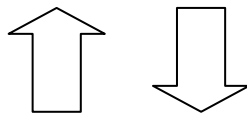
The Tigers / RFU Academy will be involved from the outset, providing coach mentoring and tutoring, physiotherapy backup, and ensuring the quality of player selection and program delivery throughout the program. The Academies have a vested interest in the

The Player Pathway

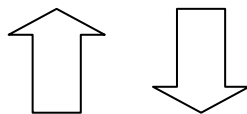
England Teams



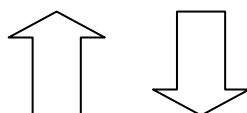
**Leicester Tigers EPDG
& Midlands Division**



Notts Lincs & Derbys SoR



County Squads



Club/School Rugby

program, as the Schools of Rugby are a key step towards identifying and potentially joining the academy's Elite Player Development Group (EPDG) and potentially progressing to higher honours.

2. The Selection, Review and Feedback Process.

Young rugby players (Under 13) are selected to attend the NLD School of Rugby, following Assessment days. Nominations for assessment will be as a result of recommendation by club coaches and/or school teachers. Once a boy or girl is a student then he is subject to ongoing assessment throughout all SoR sessions and matches.

Under 13's are invited to attend assessments during May-September and we ask each club and school to recommend up to 5 players. In addition to this the SoR selectors attend the NLD Under 12 tournament to spot talent. We also invite recommendations from Community Rugby coaches and other CB SoR coaches. EPDG and SoR selectors also attend all NLD Tournaments. We are always watching out for new and rising talent.

The Under 14's and 15's are all assessed during the SoR sessions and CB matches. The annual County matches between Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire are used to reassess boys which may result in boys moving in and out of the SoR. These matches are also used to select boys to fill in positions not covered by the existing students, for end of season SoR tournaments with Leicestershire and East Midlands.

If County coaches believe they have players who should be considered for the SoR then they will inform the SoR appropriately.

Should players not be selected at the Under 13 stage they should not be too disappointed since we will always reassess talented players using the various processes above – for subsequent inclusion. There is always room for late developers.

Equally players released from the SoR will be provided with feedback on key areas which they need to improve. They will go back to their club/ school where they should work to improve in these areas. They will also have the opportunity to show these improvements in the CB or County games, assuming they are selected. If they show sufficient progress in these areas they could be invited back into the SoR.

3. Why are players selected?

All players are selected as being with above average playing qualities. What we are looking for at the SoR, are players with:

1. The right attitude towards coaching & developing as a player
2. Physical Potential – speed, strength, power and agility.
3. Good Core Skills
4. Game Understanding

In more detail:

1. MENTAL ATTRIBUTES

- Work Rate - Hunger. Effort. Frequency of involvement. Always in evidence. Looks for work if not coming his/her way during natural course of a game.
- Courage - Makes personal sacrifices in favour of the team. Puts themselves in physically exposed positions in matches and contact training.
- Confidence - Trusts in his/her skills. Takes risks. Assertive in communication.
- Ambition - Wants to be the best player he/she can possibly be.

2. PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

- On-field Physical Presence - quick, strong, powerful, agile and fit.

3. TECHNICAL SKILLS

RUNNING

- Evasion (Ball Carrier) - beats opponents with variety of footwork: steps, spins, swerves, jinks, change of pace. Confuses opponents. Uses team mates as diversions. Changes direction comfortably off either foot.
- Into Space (as receiver) - sees space and gets into positions to receive passes. Picks good running lines. Gives ball carrier options. Times runs into the attacking line.

HANDLING

- Passing Technique - puts the ball into the space where support runners are. Passes equally well off either hand. Support runners don't have to check stride or over-reach. Chooses the right pass for the situation. Knows when not to pass.
- Passing Variations - disguises passes. Confuses opponents. Has a range of passes.
- Pass Receipt - good hand positioning to receive passes. Varies pass receipt to facilitate own passing variations. Minimises dropped passes. Collects awkward passes.

DEFENCE

- Tackling Technique - correct technique in executing a range of tackles, with either shoulder or hand.
- Contests Possession - gets hands on opposition ball. Makes turnovers. Makes interceptions. Secures loose ball.

CONTACT

- Controlling the Contact Area - doesn't spill the ball in contact. Carries in the correct hand going into contact. Ensures the ball comes back on his/her side quickly. Goes forward on impact. Doesn't get turned over.
- Ball Presentation - shows the ball for support runners to anticipate. Knows when to keep driving to re-cycle and not attempt to off-load.
- Off-loading - controls ball and keeps it clear of tacklers to get off-loads away before, during and after contact. Aware of where support is.
- Secures Possession - gets to ball carrier and secures ball.
- Clears Out - reacts quickly to breakdowns. Clears out opposition players at rucks. Stays on feet. Shows good technique and body position.

POSITION SPECIFIC SKILLS

- See following sheet

4. GAME UNDERSTANDING IN ATTACK & DEFENCE

- Communication - Communicates clearly and accurately.
- Decision Making - Strategic. Reads the game well.
- Vision - Sees scoring opportunities. Makes ground when he/she breaks. Sees support runners. Aware of defenders. Uses overlaps. Doesn't get isolated.
- Support - Gets in the right place at the right time, in attack and defence.
- Leadership - Takes responsibility. Leads by example. Stands out when things go wrong. Encourages team mates. Players respect and respond to him/her.
- Knowledge of Laws - Learns from referee's decisions. Plays to the laws.

Positional Skills Sheet

<p>Prop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body position in set piece • Contact Skills (ruck & maul) • Leg Drive in contact • Work rate/mobility • Defence at breakdown • Handling skills 	<p>No 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletic Ability/work rate • Defence • Handling, offload & link skills • Contact Skills (ruck & maul) • Leg drive in contact • Leadership 	<p>Wing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed, agility, footwork • Tackle / Contact Skills • Passing • Kicking • Jumping Skills • Tactical awareness
<p>Hooker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throws ball straight and accurately • Strikes ball cleanly • Work rate/mobility • Body position in set piece • Handling Skills • Defence 	<p>Scrum Half</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body position in set piece • Passing off both hands – all situations • Athletic ability, work rate, change of pace • Defence/tackle Awareness • Communicator • Kicking ability • Tactical awareness 	<p>Full Back</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed, agility, footwork • Tactical awareness • Running Lines • Kicking • Defence • Passing (range and type)
<p>Lock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body position in set piece • Athletic/Jumping ability • Contact skills (ruck & maul) • Leg drive in contact • Defence at breakdown • Handling skills 	<p>Fly Half</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed, agility, footwork • Tactical awareness • Running Lines • Kicking • Defence • Passing (range and type) 	
<p>Flanker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletic Ability/work rate • Competes for ball at breakdown • Defence • Handling, offload & link skills • Change of pace • Contact Skills (ruck & maul) 	<p>Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running Lines • Contact skills (ruck & maul) • Defence • Tactical awareness • Speed, agility, footwork • Passing (range and type) 	

4. When & where to attend and what can be learnt?

Nottinghamshire: Mansfield RUFC www.mansfieldrugby.co.uk
Mansfield RFC, Eakring Road, Mansfield, Notts NG18 3EW Tel. 01623 649834

Lincolnshire: Sleaford RUFC www.srfc.org.uk
Sleaford RFC, Ruskington Road, Sleaford, Lincs NG34 8SP Tel. 01529 303335

Derbyshire: Moorways Centre (Derby) & Chellaston School
www.derby.gov.uk/...../moorways
Moorways Stadium, Moor Lane, Allenton, Derby, DE24 9HY Tel. 01332 205659

NLD Sessions: Mansfield RUFC and/or Newark RUFC tbc

All sessions start at c.19.00 and finish at 20.30
(unless otherwise informed)

Core Curriculum

1. Handling & Contact Skills
2. Tackling & Contact Skills
3. Tackling & Handling Skills
4. Handling & Tackling Skills
5. Contact & Handling Skills
6. Contact & Tackling Skills
7. Contact Handling & Tackling
8. Handling Contact & Tackling
9. Tackling Contact & Handling

5. What to bring to sessions?

- **Kit** - Training will be in normal rugby shirt/shorts. Ensure you bring a warm top and training bottoms so you don't get cold between sessions. Bring spare kit in case it rains, and a change of clothes to travel home in.
- **Boots & Trainers** - Sessions will take place on mixed surfaces. Long metal studs are *not* suitable - short studs, moulded soles or blades are all fine. Trainers are only suitable outdoor if they are good quality running trainers AND the weather is dry.
- **Health & Safety** - You must bring a gum shield, a 1 litre water bottle (personally marked) and any supports advised by a qualified physiotherapist. Suncream will prevent sunburn in hot weather, so bring your own and apply it when advised. Any padding or other protective kit worn must be RFU approved and marked as such. Ensure you have contact details of a parent or carer, in case of injury or emergency.
- **Personal Health** – Do not attend sessions if you are ill or injured, unless attendance is agreed, to visit the SoR physiotherapist. Notify the SoR Manager by e-mail or phone if you cannot attend. Also notify them if you have on-going medical conditions such as allergic issues, asthma, etc. and ensure you have necessary medications with you.

6. Basic Sports Nutrition.

The fundamentals

Maintaining good nutrition is essential for everyone but for serious sports participants, it can make all the difference. Talent and training aside, nutrition is the most important factor in improving sporting performance. These notes provide advice on nutrition and how it can affect performance, covering the importance of energy and hydration, and what can be done before, during and after sport to help improve performance.

Why do we need to eat?

Food provides energy and nutrients needed to keep the body healthy and active. Nearly every process in the body needs energy, so it's essential we have a constant supply.

The four main reasons we need to eat:

- (i) Development and growth**
- (ii) Body function**
- (iii) Physical activity**
- (iv) Supply of nutrients**

What do we need to eat?

To help stay healthy, we need to eat a balanced diet containing foods from all nutrient groups – carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals – in the right proportions.

(i) Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are essential for energy, and glucose produced by carbohydrate digestion is the body's preferred energy source as it is easily absorbed, quickly getting to where it's needed in the body.

Carbohydrates are vital for the maintenance of blood glucose levels during exercise and also for replacing glycogen stores.

(ii) Protein

Most of the protein in the body is stored in tissues, particularly muscle tissue. Proteins are required for tissue growth and repair, so for serious sports participants, protein requirements are slightly higher than those of non-participants. Protein should comprise about 15% of the total energy intake for sports participants.

(iii) Fat

Fat is also used for energy. It is a concentrated energy source and an important part of our diet as it provides fat soluble vitamins and essential fatty acids as well as energy to help fuel endurance exercise. However fat intake should be relatively low and should comprise no more than 25-30% of total energy intake - with less than 10% coming from saturated fat. Many foods contain fats, including oil, butter, dairy products, meat and nuts.

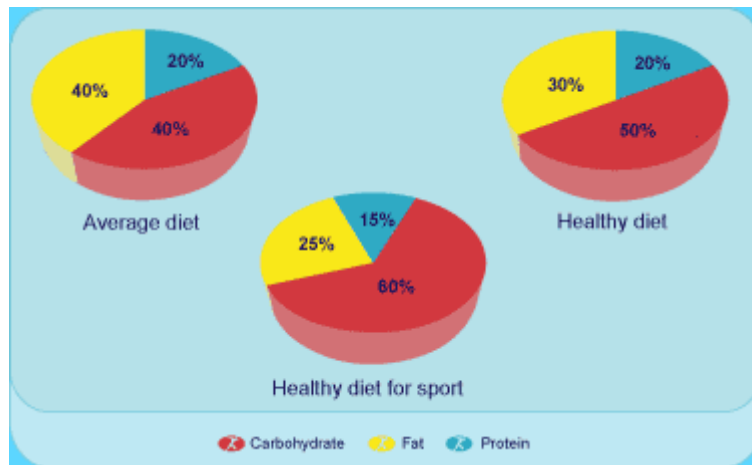
(iv) Vitamins and minerals

Vitamins and minerals are essential for converting other food sources into energy and are vital for maintaining the overall good health of the body. Vitamins and minerals can be obtained from all natural food sources, including fruit and vegetables, red meat and dairy products. While not directly providing the body with a source of energy, vitamins and minerals play a vital role in energy production. They also help maintain strong bones, support the immune system, protect body tissues and repair muscle tissue after exercise.

Nutrient group % intake

The pie charts below show the proportion of energy that should be obtained from the three main nutrient groups – carbohydrate, protein and fat.

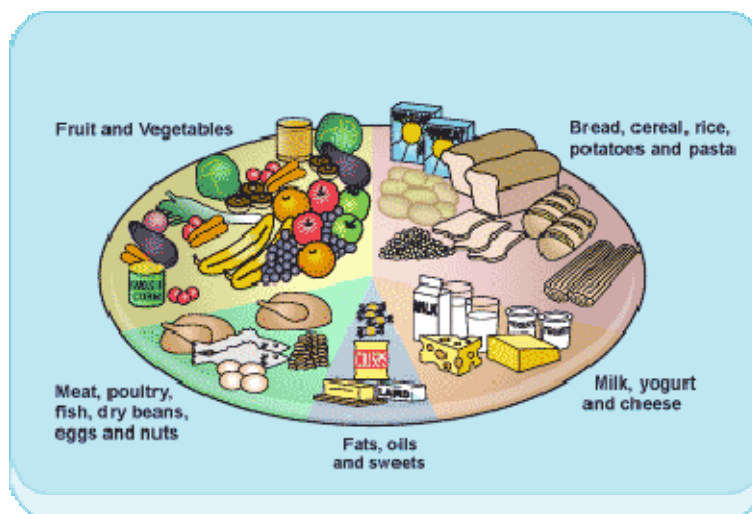
As the charts indicate, sports participants need to increase the amount of carbohydrates in their diet in order to meet their body's increased energy requirements – most of this carbohydrate should be in the form of 'starchy' carbohydrate such as bread, pasta, rice and cereals rather than 'sugary' carbohydrates such as sweets (brown bread, pasta & rice are best).



The Food Plate model

What type of foods should we eat?

The food plate model illustrates the types of food we need for a healthy diet and the proportions we should eat them in every day. As the chart shows, carbohydrates such as bread and pasta, and fruit and vegetables should make up the largest part of our daily food intake.



Adapted from an original chart by the Food Standards Agency

How much do we need to eat?

How much you need to eat varies considerably from person to person. It depends on your age, gender, build and other physiological factors as well as your daily energy expenditure.

What happens to food when we eat?

Before your body can make use of the food you eat, it must be broken down into its constituent parts, or 'digested'. These simple units can then easily cross the intestinal wall into the blood stream by a process called absorption. From here they can be distributed all around the body.

Hydration

High levels of exercise and sweating result in substantial fluid losses – leading to dehydration and quickly affect performance. We should **drink at least 2 litres of fluid per day** to maintain body functioning and hydration, but **regular sports participants should also take in additional fluid** to replace sweat loss during exercise.

Other Sources of information

LSSA Sports Nutrition - www.thelssa.co.uk/lssa/sports/
www.gatorade.co.uk
www.brianmac.co.uk (*specifically.. /rugby*)

7. What is expected from Players?

Minimum Standards / Code of Conduct

Punctuality – All players are expected to attend sessions on time.

Communication – If players are running late / unable to attend (due to holiday, injury or illness) they should inform the SoR Manager prior to the session. Regular lack of attendance will lead to players being released from the SoR. The minimum expected requirement for fit players is to attend 6 out of the 9 sessions.

Attitude – These sessions are aimed at potentially elite players and those attending are therefore expected to arrive with the right attitude. Players are expected to listen to the coaches, push themselves to try new things and show what they can do in this competitive environment.

Skills – Players are expected to take away the advice they are given at SoR Sessions and put new learnings into practice in their game play. If areas of low skill are identified with players, they are expected to focus on this at their club/school – if players do not show improvements from one session to the next they may be released from the SoR.

Fitness – All players will be expected to maintain a high level of physical fitness. Key areas to focus on are Aerobic Endurance, Speed, Agility and Strength (through Body Weight exercises such as push ups, pull ups, dips, one leg squats, tuck jumps)

8. Injury Management Advice.

If injured during a session or a game, it is important you obtain treatment from a designated first aider or qualified physiotherapist as soon as possible, to ensure no permanent damage is caused and help improve recovery rates. Always listen to the advice given, and follow any rehabilitation programmes advised.

Basic Injury Management consists of 6 principles:

1. PREVENTION: Try to stay injury free by through appropriate strength and conditioning. Always do DYNAMIC stretches before and after training.

Ensure you REHYDRATE fully after every session.

If you are injured, follow these basic principles for the first 72 hours.

2. REST: keep the injured area still for the first 24hrs, then gradually and gently get it moving over the next 48hrs. Do not 'push through pain', or try to 'play it off'.

3. ICE: apply ice to the area for 15 minutes ever 2-3 hours for the first 72hrs

4. COMPRESSION: apply a compression bandage to the area, during the day.

5. ELEVATION: elevate the limb 30 minutes every 2 hours if swollen.

6. REHABILITATION: most simple injuries should repair naturally, but will need rehabilitation exercises to ensure you regain fitness and the injury does not recur.

If an injury persists you MUST obtain professional medical advice.

If any of the following occur, remove yourself from the session or game immediately:

- Head, Back or Neck pain.
- Nausea/Vomiting/Dizziness or Vision Problems
- Pins and Needles or Numbness
- Inability to bear weight (e.g. if an ankle you should be able to stand on one leg)

WHAT TO DO FOLLOWING CONCUSSION

Common symptoms associated with a mild concussion are:

- headache, feeling dazed or "in a fog" - balance problems, dizziness
- hearing problems
- vision problems
- nausea or vomiting
- drowsiness - lethargy
- more emotional/irritable than usual
- difficulty concentrating and/or remembering
- confusion - "don't feel right"

If a player has any of these symptoms they should **NOT** continue to play.

Following a head injury or concussion, further serious problems can arise over the first 24 hours:

- The player should not be left alone and should be monitored regularly. They should be woken during the night to ensure symptoms haven't deteriorated.
- Players should consult a doctor following a suspected concussion.
- A player who has been concussed **MUST NOT** play for a minimum of 3 weeks.
- AND should only return to play or training with medical clearance.

This applies to all teams a player may belong to. It is his or her/parents or carers responsibility to advise any other associated teams of the concussion.

“If in doubt, sit out”

If symptoms/ headaches persist you **MUST** obtain professional medical advice.

9. School of Rugby Staff & Contact Details

Who's Who ?

	Manager	Head Coach
Nottinghamshire	John Fuchs 07780726500 johnfuchsrugby@ntlworld.com	John Fuchs 07780726500
	Coaches	Laura Jane (LJ) Adams
		Henry Diamond
		Brian Dobb
		Chad Hamlett
		Mike Powell
Lincolnshire	Debbie Byrne 07759302854 debbie.byrne@ntlworld.com	Nathan Smith 07921283223
	Coaches	Andrew Dowling
		Ben Ennals
		Lofty Holmes
		David Jackson
		James Offer
		Mike Phillips
		Jim Scott
Derbyshire	Kath Bates 07767764880 katherine.bates@derby-college.ac.uk	Gary Rudkin 07957140054 garyrudkin@hotmail.com
	Coaches	Steve Bembridge
		Glyn Castledine
		Gareth Cogan
		Phil Eades
		Mick Hicks
		Scott Johnson

RFU Coach Development Officer: Nick Scott 07738029112

RFU Talent Identification & Development Coach: Darren Gourley 07912541852

NLD Schools of Rugby Director: Dave Spencer 07980214343

For further information see www.rfu.com & www.nldrfu.co.uk

SESSION NOTES

Key Skills Covered

-
-

Things I did best

-
-

Things to work on most

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