



“HAVING FUN WITH AN OVAL BALL “

How to teach “step by step” the educational aspect of Rugby

for a Secondary School



On the basis of the most common behaviour observed in young people, the game of rugby is analyzed and simplified by the adult in order to maintain the spirit and the particularity of it. In this method some elements are privileged while others, which don't offer an immediate interest to the young, aren't focused on.

General definition of the game : try
rights and duties
holding
forward

Practice and consolidation : freeing the ball in order to continue playing

Static /Dynamic phase : simple line-out (penalty kick)

LESSON 1

HANDLING THE BALL

This activity is designed in order to make the kids familiarize with the oval ball (which will be used in all the other games as well).

- Running in a given space trying to avoid contact and trying to cover as much "surface area" (varying the speed of execution)
- Introduce the ball and make them experiment with the different ways of passing (you will observe the following behaviours: balls often falling on the ground, difficulty in passing the ball in the right direction and with the correct strength, experimenting in passes as American football).

Proposed suggestion: stop kids' movement and explain to them that the ball they are using has a different purpose from a normal "round" ball (soccer ball, volleyball, basketball). When the ball bounces it has an unusual behaviour (as it goes where it wants), therefore the best thing to do is to control the ball and pass it to another teammate in a correct manner.

Consequently the player who is going to receive the ball should

- point out the area in which he /she wishes to receive it (stretching arms with hands in sight),
- call or look at the team –mate in possession of the ball and make him/her aware of his/her own attention.

The player in possession of the ball should be able to recognize these signs and gestures before passing the ball .

It's necessary to carry out short passes in order to have a greater precision.

2. CONTACT GAMES, WRESTLING, FIGHTING

In pairs:

- Pull beyond the line, push ,using hands on opponents' shoulders, beyond the line
- fencing with one foot as an anchor
- cockfighting
- spin the turtle
- crocodile battle

Point out that the contacts coming from this game shouldn't have any negative effects if all the rules are respected and carried out correctly.

In group (5/6 children):

- go out of the circle
- while in a circle: stand up and sit down together at the same time
- hare and hunter.

3. GAME PRESENTATION

RULE NUMBER 1. HOW TO SCORE A POINT.

Divide the children into two teams and make each player score a try in a relay race
Point out that the try is the main aim of the game .

RULE NUMBER 2: RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PLAYERS.

The player in possession of the ball can:

- run with the ball (carry the ball) in order to score a try (FORWARD)
- pass the ball to a team-mate
- kick the ball.

Point out the importance of these three actions (in the above mentioned order).

The players of the team without the ball can **TACKLE** only the person in possession of the ball (in the gymnasium the kids will limit themselves to **BLOCKING** the opponent with the ball).

They cannot trip, grab opponents' neck, punch or slap and pull hair.

Reinforce the point that they play **WITH** the opponent and not **AGAINST** him/her .Therefore they shouldn't do to others what they don't want to be done to them (**MUST BE LOYAL**).

4. GLOBAL GAME

Delimit a playing field according to the space available (in open air max. dimensions 20x40mt.)and make kids play for 5-10 minutes, throwing the ball again when the game ceases(as the ball goes out of the field or when grouping together makes impossible to go on playing).

LESSON 2

1. BALL HANDLING

Place the children in the centre of the gymnasium or field and divide them into groups on the basis of the structures and materials available (minimum 4).

Make pairs of groups having them face each other so that the ways between the pairs will intersect.

- Initially the task consists of carrying the ball to the team-mate (use one ball for two rows) and lining at the end of the row
- Afterwards use a second ball for two rows and the task will become the following one: carry the ball to the first person of the opposite row who is not in possession of the ball
- Repeat the same exercise while reducing distance
- Resume initial distance ; the children of the opposite rows have the task of approaching each other , exchanging the ball by throwing it and giving it to the facing player.

The aim is to allow the warming up at the beginning of the lesson and to improve coordination, gesture and timing.

2. GLOBAL GAME

RULE NUMBER 3: THE HOLDING

Introduce “the holding” specifying that when a player is on the ground , he/she must try to pass the ball to a team-mate or let it available so that another player, who is still standing, can go on playing.

All the players on the floor are considered to be “DEAD”; if they want to continue playing they must get up (the player on the floor cannot defend him/herself).

3. GAME: HAWK

At the signal the players (the preys) cross the field and two “hawks” must try to block and lift as many preys as possible.

The players blocked or lifted will become “Hawks” (in the gymnasium you must limit the game, allowing the “Hawks” only to get closer to the preys, in order to avoid dangerous contacts. The two Hawks should establish a goal and help each other in lifting their preys. You should also try to cause the preys some difficulties by making them start seated after a few passes).

LESSON 3

1. BALL HANDLING

Game on a time basis where players on an opposing team will be eliminated: in a given time a team must be able to eliminate the greatest number of opposing players considering that the person in possession of the ball can only move one foot while the other one is used as an anchor (“pivoting”).

To eliminate a player you must touch him when he is in possession of the ball (if the ball is thrown the player is not eliminated and may continue to escape).

The team-mates of the player in possession of the ball can move in any directions until they receive the ball.

The opponents’ task is not to get themselves eliminated while remaining in the designated area (if they leave the area they will be eliminated).

2. GLOBAL GAME

RULE NUMBER 4: THE FORWARD PASS

Introduce the rule concerning the impossibility of passing the ball to a team-mate who is in front of the player. Difficulties in moving forward will be found here, therefore we suggest to play the following game.

3. GAME: “FLAG”

Divide the group into pairs. First ask the kids to choose a partner, then verify that their physical characteristics are similar.

At first the educator will give the ball to one member of the pair; the player in possession of the ball will try to score a try; the player without the ball must stop the partner from doing that by blocking and trying to get the ball so that they can reverse the roles afterwards.

Variations: who is in possession of the ball can call a team player for help; the player without the ball cannot do that.

Initially help can be asked by the team in possession of the ball and afterwards even the “defence” can ask for help in order to create a more complex situation (this game is important because it allows us to introduce many different situations: 2vs1,2vs2 etc.)

LESSON 4

1. BALL HANDLING

Using the game from the previous lesson we will make a small variation: the game field has a “moving” side that can be varied (increasing or decreasing the playing area) according to the instructor’s movements.

The kids must always stay within the playing field.

Divide the kids in 4/5 groups and make them form a circle in the middle of the field: initially they will pass the ball among themselves while counting the passes done in a fixed time (a kid from that group has the task of counting); then, while passing and counting the number of passes, the groups must move and maintain their formation, following the instructor who has placed himself/herself in the middle of all the groups.

2. GAME: THE WAVES

Through this activity we are trying to further the kids’ knowledge for a better understanding of the problems encountered in passing backwards: different solutions are presented throughout the activity, having a lot of students often difficulty with this section.

- Divide the kids in groups and place them on one side of the field : the task is to score a try on the opposite side while passing the ball backwards in order that each player passes the ball and the last one scores
- The groups are divided on either sides of the field in order to compete with each other, having the goal to score a try first
- Use the first activity again introducing the following change : the try will be scored by those who begin the game and therefore the “wave” must come and go
- Repeat the second game with a double wave.

3. GLOBAL GAME

Make the kids demonstrate the possession of the rules during the game.

You will often notice difficulties in moving forward and therefore we suggest that the game “Flag” should be repeated with the above mentioned variations (2vs1, 2vs2 etc.) in order to help the kids to find out the best solutions.

LESSON 5

1. BALL HANDLING

Game of passes: divide the kids in two teams, establish a number of passes that will allow teams to gain a point if they are able to reach it without making the ball being touched by an opponent or touching the ground.

2. GLOBAL GAME

Organize a mini tournament among the classes: divide the students into teams (at least 3) ; make two teams begin to play ; the first team that scores a try will stay on while the other one will be replaced by another team.

Introduce the “penalty” kick as a way to start playing again after a fault or after getting out of the playing ground.

We must emphasize that we use this method to simplify things, explaining that the resumption of the play is up to the team that is opposite the instructor while the team behind the instructor must be at least 3 metres away.

(If a player is stronger than the others , we will ask him/her to limit his/her strength or we'll penalize him/her if he/she exaggerates).