

## GCE Physical Education – Exemplar Materials

### Unit 4: The developing Sports Performer (6PE04)

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#### Task 4.1 – Development Plan (Rugby)

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### Commentary

**Overview:**

This is a well thought out and completed plan with clear aims and structure as the candidate undertakes the development in her role of leadership as a rugby coach. The candidate has been able to apply the knowledge and understanding gained from her research with some success into the field of coaching and has identified both her strengths and weaknesses on completion. The candidate was confident and was able to offer insight into her learning and coaching through verbal questioning and validated coach appraisals.

**Planning and Research: 18**

As a coach candidates would be expected to research into the 'profession' of coaching and identify the key characteristics of how to coach and what makes a good coach. This will involve the logistics of coaching and designing appropriate practice sessions, aspects of communication – both verbal and non-verbal, positioning and what styles of coaching might best suit certain situations. To this end the candidate has satisfied this requirement with well researched, referenced and clearly written evidence of her findings and extended these by exploring the theoretical knowledge of how performers learn, analysis of coaching sessions and examining the technical knowledge needed to impart learning and player development on a particular topic or theme.

The candidate has a record of coach education with passes of recognised governing body courses, leadership, sports specific coach training and first aid qualifications undertaken to support and supplement the candidate's coaching experiences. Provisions were made for the players to evaluate the coaching process and the success and weaknesses of their sessions. One observation would be the planning detail suffered from a lack of clarity and the candidate could have included a more professional planning outline. In addition, more information on the benefit and knowledge obtained from these courses could have been included.

**Performing and Recording: 18**

The candidate provided a clear timetable for the plan, carried out an appropriate health and safety review and produced her own recording sheets which reflected the aims of the plan. Each session included an appropriate warm up and cool down. The sessions took into account the logistics of coaching young players, detailed technical language and development. Incorporated into the plan was the application of the coaching sessions through notational analysis of the training and match play – this is an aspect missing from many development plans. One observation would be that the candidate could have included annotated Mpegs from the a recorded video and even supplied a series of clips to demonstrate the qualities of her coaching from the outset to the final session.

**Review and Evaluation: 4**

The detail of the review and evaluation is frank and honest with independent observation completed from the lead assessor in the centre and from other qualified sports coaches. A centre written assessment form which detailed key observation point allowed for discussion and review of the candidate's performances in an objective orientated manner but this could have been summarised and included in type format from the centre assessor. The candidate was

prepared to listen and act on advice throughout the plan with ongoing evaluations of each session as well as through terminal review. Included in the plan were the completed reviews of the candidate undertaken by the two coaches attached to the particular team highlighting the successes of the sessions, the progress of the candidate and linked to the aims of the candidate. However, the candidate failed to include detailed data obtained from the questionnaires and notational exercises and full comment from those observing as a focal point for this section. This was a successful and well presented GCE A2 Development Plan however the candidate could have included more factual data in this section drawing together her own subjective comment with the objective data produced.

Planning and Research	<b>18/20</b>
Performing and Recording	<b>18/20</b>
Review and Evaluation	<b>4/5</b>
Total	<b>40/45</b>

# Development Plan



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY LEADERSHIP IN RUGBY**

**A TECHNICAL STUDY OF COACHING THE LAWS AND  
TECHNIQUES OF RUCKING IN UNDER 11'S RUGBY**

**Planning**

**and**

**Research**

## Introduction:

I currently coach the Under 11's rugby team at Leighton Buzzard Rugby Football Club (LBRFC) every Sunday morning and have done since I was 13. I also coach the girl's rugby team at school with players ranging from age 13-16. I coach grassroots which allows me to develop the player's skills from the beginning and give them the fundamental skills they can build on.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

### Why we analyse our performance?

I analyse my performance to pick out the aspects of my performance that need improving and take these skills and see how I can improve them to improve as a coach. It is also useful to analyse performance to see what my strengths are, so I can recognise what I am good at as a coach and take confidence from this.

### **STRENGTHS**

From the evidence from my coaches' reports (see appendix) I found that my strengths as a coach are my praise giving skills, verbal communication, improvising skills, decision making and knowledge of the laws.

**Verbal communication and praise-** I use effective vocals when giving praise, with praise being specific to an individual such as 'good use of a target in that catch' or general to a larger group of players, for example 'Good communication in that session'. When giving praise to an individual, eye contact is important so the player knows that they are being directly spoken to and praised for something specific they have done, this is something I need to improve and am working on at the moment to help me improve as a coach and create a good relationship with the players.

**Improvising skills and decision making skills-** My strengths in improvising are when players find the task either too hard or too easy and the task needs to be changed to suit their needs. I also am confident when it comes to taking a player aside who is struggling and helping them individually to improve a particular skill. For example, if a player keeps dropping the ball, I will take them aside and go back to basics with them and ensure they are confident in that skill before re joining the group task.

## **WEAKNESSES**

My weaknesses are my non verbal communication skills, confidence and feedback skills. These skills, especially confidence, are mostly psychologically based and therefore I need to change my mind set to improve these.

**Confidence-** This is the weakest part of my coaching and a hurdle I need to get over as if I conquer this then I will improve hugely as a coach. I believe that confidence will come as I get older and gain more experience, I also think that working with two older and more vocal coaches makes it more difficult. I therefore need to be more vocal in coaching sessions and try to play a larger role in the coaching team and by undertaking my development plan I will be able to do this. However, I am most confident when working with small groups of players and individuals.

**Non-verbal communication-** I believe that non-verbal communication is a skill that I need to work on. When giving praise non verbal gestures such as thumbs up or a high five are very important, not only to congratulate the player but also to build a relationship up with the players you are coaching. Non verbal communication is also very important when demonstrating a new skill to the players, as it helps them to understand the task they are going to do more easily. I also need to improve my non verbal communication, such as eye contact and hand gestures, as it is necessary when verbally communicating with a player as the player will be more engaged and pay more attention to you. Non verbal communication has been one of my main focuses this season and I make a conscious decision to use this as much as possible as I find that players respond well to it.

**Feedback skills-** This is partially a psychological aspect of coaching as feedback must be effectively. Feeding back isn't just telling a player what they didn't do well on in either a session or a game it is also about giving them praise and confidence on what they did do well in. I need to improve on telling players their areas of improvement. This will help the players to develop but will also feeding back effectively will help build respect up from the players by creating an open and honest atmosphere during training sessions.

My evidence for these strengths and weaknesses has come from coaches' reports and my own personal viewpoint. (See appendix)

## Aims:

My main aim is:

- **To improve rucking in Leighton Buzzard Under 11's team in training and in competitive situations.**

My sub aims are:

- 1) To attend a 'Saracens Coach Education Course'**
- 2) To improve my knowledge and understanding of coaching the laws and techniques of rugby.**
- 3) To improve knowledge, understanding and confidence of rucking in training sessions.**
- 4) To improve rucking success in game situations.**

I have chosen my main aim as I believe that this is the area that the Under 11's team need to work on the most, I discussed the aims with the head coach and he agreed that rucking is an essential part of the game, if rucking is improved, general play will be improved. If they can improve their rucking ground can be increased, leading to more chance of a try. Also, rucking provides a chance to turn over the ball and re-gain possession if it has been lost, to turn from defending to attacking.

By attending a coaching course, this will allow me to improve my knowledge of the laws and learn from professional coaches who can provide me with ideas of how to improve my coaching; this will help improve the players as they will be being coached to a better standard. I may also learn new drills and practises which I can use in my coaching sessions.

By improving the players knowledge, understanding they will improve as they will feel more confident about the laws of the ruck, the technique to use, when to form a ruck and what to do after the ruck has broken down. Having this knowledge will lead to more successful rucks within training and in game situations.

## Personal Profile:

I achieved Tag RFU Rugby Coaching Award at 13 and went on to achieve Level 1 RFU Rugby Coaching Award a year later; I have attended Continual Professional Development courses (see appendices) to constantly improve my knowledge and coaching skills by learning from professionals. I have also achieved ERLA Level 2 RFU Officiating award and RFU Young Officials award. By undergoing these courses, I have learnt and experienced the laws of the game relevant to the players I am coaching and refereeing, this will allow them to have an understanding of these laws. I am also the official first aider for the Under 11's LBRFC team; I have gained this role by completing two St. Johns First Aid awards, one which was sports specific. I have also completed two Sports Leaders UK awards; Junior Level 1 in Sports Leadership Award and Level 2 in Community Sports Leaders Award and gained experience by working with both young and disabled children.

The reason why I coach is because I can no longer play rugby due to injury but still want to be involved in the game. I played for LBRFC from the age of 6 until I was 12; I had to stop due to girls not being allowed to play with boys at junior level. I then turned to coaching and followed that route (as mentioned above). I then played again for half a season, however I had to stop due to injury so I just continued coaching the under 11's. I also feel that I have the relevant skills which allow me to coach players and to teach them the skills and techniques which may lead to them becoming skilled rugby players. Coaching has also helped develop my confidence as I have had to both lead young people as well as work with older coaches.

The reason why I have chosen to coach rugby is that I have also always had a passion for the game and feel great intrinsic rewards from coaching young players and helping them develop. I understand the generic principles of coaching such as communication, building relationships with players and have combined these with my specific knowledge of the technical laws of the game in order to coach the players effectively.

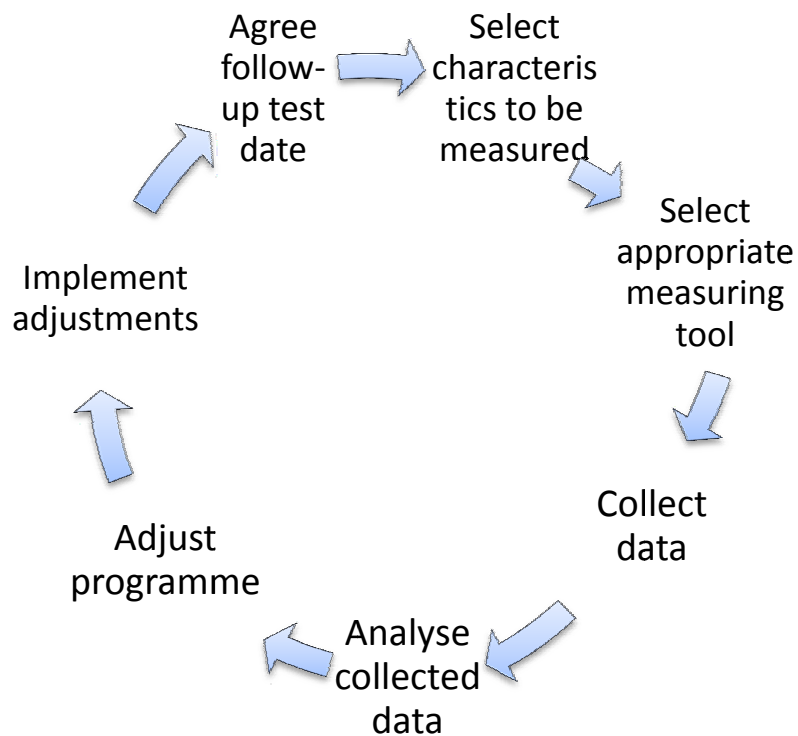
I have chosen to coach grassroots rugby and an under 11's team as this is the age group that I believe players learn the fundamental skills which allow them to develop greatly when they are older, if the players have not got these skills at a young age, I believe that this will affect them later in their playing career. Grassroots level also interests me as it was the time where I enjoyed rugby the most and I want to allow other players to experience this love of rugby by reflecting my passion through my coaching.

I believe in a participant-centred philosophy. Where the players are seen as individuals with their own individual needs, coaching must be suited to manage and improve the players separately and by doing this; the whole team will see improvements.



## Tests and Evidence:

### The Process of Testing:



This cycle provides a format to fitness testing. I will follow this format when testing and analysing.

Morc Coulson and David Archer, *Practical Fitness Testing*, 2009, London, pg. ix.

One important thing to consider when using tests is reliability and validity.

- **Reliability-** 'The reliability of a test refers to how reproducible the test is.' (Coulson and Archer, 2009)
- **Validity-** 'The degree to which a test or instrument measures what it purports to measure' (Thomas and Nelson, 2001)

I will be applying these to my tests to ensure that all of them are as reliable and valid as possible.

**Aims 1 and 2:** To show that I have attended a coaching course I will provide evidence of attendance and show evaluation of the courses (see appendices). By attending these courses, my knowledge of coaching the laws and techniques of rucking will be improved, through being coached by and observing high level coaches.

**Aims 3 and 4:**

I will be using a combination of tests to monitor the progression of the player's ability to ruck:

**Test 1: Questionnaires** (See appendices)

To monitor the knowledge, understanding and confidence of the players rucking I will be using questionnaires (see appendix), they will be filling these in at the beginning of the 10 weeks, in the middle and then again at the end. I will then analyse these questionnaires and assess whether or not they have improved, I will know if they have improved or not by looking at their overall score on the questionnaire and comparing this score to the beginning and middle of the season. If the score has increased then I will know that they feel more confident and have a better knowledge and understanding of rucking.

Reliability- A questionnaire will create a great amount of quantitative data which will be easy to analyse and draw conclusions from, however the qualitative data will be harder to analyse, although lots of detail will be gained from this data. I will be ensuring that reliability will be maintained throughout the ten week period by using the same questionnaire each time.

Validity- The problem with questionnaires is social desirability as people may lie to make themselves look better, for example, they may say that are more confident in the ruck than they actually are, this therefore may affect results and the validity of the tests. I will make sure the questionnaire is valid as I will remove any other factors which may affect the results of the test to ensure that the questionnaire's answers are only affected by the players' answers.

**Test 2: Notational Analysis** (See appendices)

To test their improvements in the rucking success within a game and training situation I will be using notational-analysis. The notational analysis will be used in game situations as I will be monitoring the number of successful rucks within the game. The notational analysis will also assess different factors of rucking such as; the number of rucks performed, if they have got each technical stage of the ruck correct and whether it was successful or not and the reasons for the outcome of the ruck.

Reliability- The test itself is easily replicable due to the layout of the notational analysis sheet. I will be using the same sheet for each of the match analyses and the same investigator will be used; myself.

Validity- The test is valid as it tests what it says to test, as rucking is being directly analysed. However, the results for each will have a great variation due to external, environmental factors as well as internal, biological and psychological factors. As the environment will change each time the test is done, factors such as wind, temperature and pitch conditions will affect the results of the test. Also, internal factors such as mood, emotions and tiredness of players will affect their performance and therefore the test. Also, how many matches they have played that day will affect performance. One factor that will be different is also the opposition. These different factors are known as **extraneous variables** and may affect the results of the notational analysis, therefore affecting the internal validity.

### **Test 3: Coaches' reports** (See appendices)

I will get a coaches report from the head coach of the team about their rucking at the beginning, middle and end of the 10 week period, I will then assess this and decide whether or not he thinks they have improved. As well as looking at the improvement of the player's ability to ruck, the coaches' report will also be on my ability to coach the rucking technique successfully. I will be assessed on factors such as communication, motivation, knowledge and understanding of the laws and techniques, feedback skills and confidence whilst coaching.

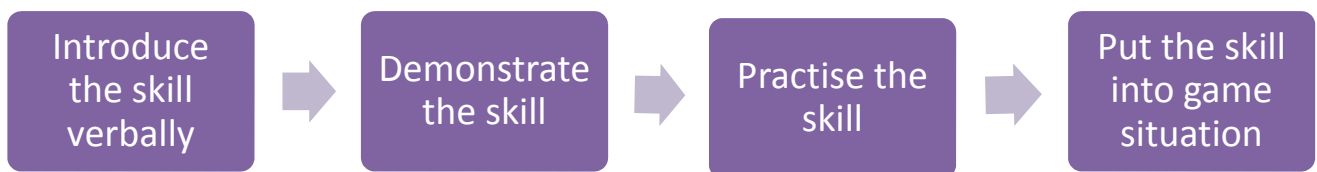
Reliability- This test is reliable as the same criteria will be used to assess my coaching. Therefore, the same areas of both my coaching and the players rucking will be assessed, making the results easy to analyse.

Validity- As the coaches have specific areas to focus on within rucking; they will be testing them directly which will result in a high validity. Although, as it is their own opinion, the results will be objective not subjective; making it harder to prove that they are correct.

## Coaching Methods:

### What makes a good coach?

To coach a new skill successfully a coach must use stages to ensure that the players understand the skill and can therefore put this skill into their game, these stages are:



Key skills that coaches need to be successful are-

- **Know yourself**- if you know what you want to achieve then you can put this into your planning and sessions
- **Have a good understanding**- by having a good understanding and knowledge of the game then you will be confident when coaching the skills
- **Be enthusiastic**- show your love of the sport and this will get passed onto the players resulting in enthusiastic, positive players.
- **Vary your sessions**- by using a variety of games and drills while coaching will prevent tedium.
- **Involve everybody**- make sure that all players are involved at all time, this way no one will be sitting out. Use smaller groups rather than one large one.
- **Use body language**- by using non-verbal communication to back up the verbal communication players will respond well. Smile and use hand gestures to keep them interested
- **Lead by example**- as you are a role model to the players you must behave, dress and have the attitude of a role model and this will be reflected in your players.

Source: Sports Coach UK, (2008), What makes a successful coach?, *The Successful Coach*, Leeds, Pg. 3.

## Code of Conduct:

There are four principles you must consider regarding the Code of Practice for Sports Coaches. These are:

<b>Code of Practice for Sports Coaches – Key Principles</b>
<b>Rights</b> – coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.
<b>Relationships</b> – coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.
<b>Responsibilities: personal standards</b> – coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.
<b>Responsibilities: professional standards</b> – to maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.
<i>Code of Practice for Sports Coaches (2005)</i>

These principles apply to all coaches within any sport, they are also particularly important when coaching children. I will therefore follow these principles when coaching the players by recognising that each individual player has the right to play rugby and I should therefore give them all equal opportunities to both train and play in game situations. I will develop relationships with players by listening to the players views, being honest with them; treat them with respect in order to create a positive environment to play in whilst coaching. I will behave properly whilst coaching to maintain personal standards regarding my responsibilities; I will do this by talking to the players, coaches and parents with respect and not behave inappropriately. To maintain responsibilities on a professional level I will minimise risks to the players by keeping high health and safety standards, I will attend regular coaching courses to keep a high and up to date level of knowledge and understanding.

## Process of Coaching:

### The Role of the Coach-



The coach has many roles; in these roles they will also have many expectations:

**Teacher-** Teach the basic skills of the game.

**Trainer-** Improve player's physical abilities.

**Organiser-** Organise the training sessions, Planning is necessary here.

**Role Model-** Lead by example in every way, e.g. Manner, language used, dress and behaviour.

**Referee-** Need to coach within the laws of the game

**Safety Officer-** Provide a safe environment that the players can learn in

**Psychologist-** Help improve both mental and physical skills in the player ensure that the player has the right 'mental state' to perform in.

**Philosopher-** By understanding the reasons why each individual plays, planning of sessions can be tailored to this.

Compiled from: Hollman, B, (2001), *Basketball Level 1 Coach Award, Candidate Resource Manual*, England Basketball, Sheffield, pg. 7.

## Process of Coaching:

The process of coaching is made up of three elements:

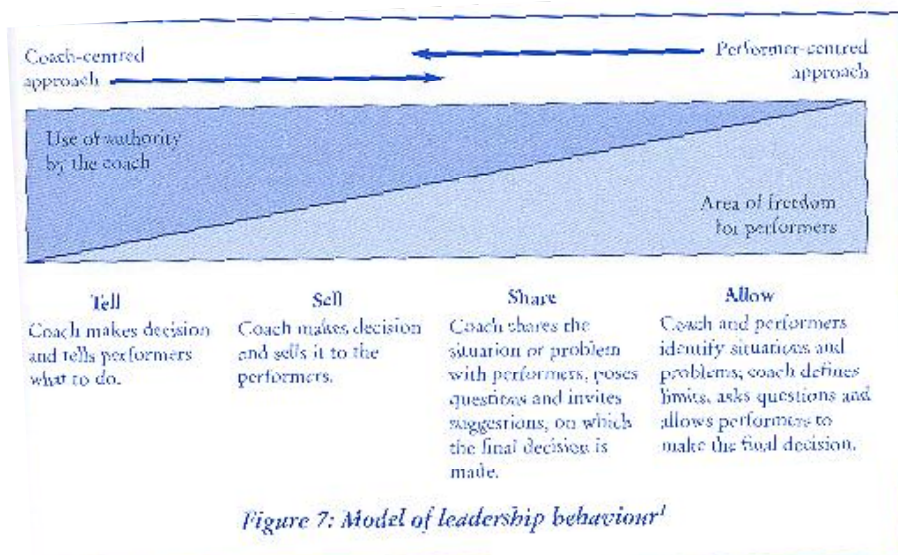
**Planning-** when planning sessions I will need to consider the long term goals while focusing on short term goals by using SMARTER to help achieve the goals set. These goals will be specific to rucking and will be altered every week to help the team develop in the most effective way possible. I will also agree these goals with the head coach every week to make sure they are still relevant and specific enough; the goals will be focusing on each individual's ability and aims, the team as a whole aims and both long and short term goals.

**Delivering-** this is the stage where the session is delivered, in this stage I will be putting my planning, coaching methods and knowledge of how players learn into practise. During the session I will be constantly evaluating the individual players and offering advice about how to solve problems and improve. I will be adapting my coaching style and session to suit the needs of the individual players, how the whole team is reacting to the coaching style (for example if they aren't responding well I will make it more exciting and give more encouragement), the number of players I have and the environment they are training in.

**Evaluating-** the evaluation stage is very important as it allows me as a coach to see how each player is progressing and it allows me to plan the next session and to make it specific to the individuals needs. I will keep written records of each session and as well as evaluating the players; evaluate myself to monitor my progress as well.

## Coaching styles-

Sports Coach UK, 2008, *The Successful Coach*, Leeds, pg. 43



**TELL-** In this style of coaching, the coach is making all of the decisions and simply telling the player what to do. This style allows a high level of control over the sessions and is easy to plan for as the coach can structure each part of the session. However, this style



may discourage players as they may not enjoy the sessions as much. This style of coaching is need if a health and safety issue arises and for their own safety, players are taught in this way. For example, when coaching the technique in a ruck, the body position must be correct, if not then players can injure themselves and others.

**SELL-** This style allows the coach to make the decisions, demonstrate the skill and give explanations, however players are encouraged to ask questions and from these questions the players will be able to develop an understanding of it and how it applies to them.

**SHARE-** Here, the coach gives the players a situation and allows them to make suggestions about how to deal with this problem. The coach then makes decisions based on the player's suggestions.

**ALLOW-** The coach will pose a situation or problem and will then let the performers make their own decision and will not offer help, apart from questioning the players as well as part of the process. This style allows players to make decisions for themselves, whilst being guided. It also encourages team work and builds confidence as eventually; players start to believe in themselves as they see that they can make correct decisions.

Due to the age group I will be coaching, I will be using a 'share' style of coaching as I believe that this style allows both the coach and the players to work together to identify and resolve the problems faced. Whilst the players are 10/11 years old and in the second stage of the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, I feel that this has the right balance of authority from the coach and freedom for the players, in my experience if this balance isn't correct then the session isn't as successful. If the coach purely 'tells' or 'sells' then the players won't fully understand what they are doing and won't learn from it, however, if coaches use an 'allow' approach then I find that the players are allowed too much freedom and cannot work out the solution out for themselves.

Morley investigated into Mosston and Ashworth's 'Teaching Styles' which relate to the coaching styles above, the style I am using is similar to the Convergent Discovery Style, where the coach will propose a problem to the players and allow the players to learn from it and work out a solution for themselves, coaches may offer feedback but cannot provide answers. This style has cognitive, creative, social, personal and physical benefits to the players. From a cognitive point of view the players develop their understanding through doing the task themselves and understand the underlying principles, creatively, the players will use previous knowledge of the task and build on this to solve the issue, socially the players will learn as they will have to work together and work on skills such as communication and teamwork, personally, the players will have to be disciplined and self aware in order to try to find an answer and finally the players will be constantly physically developing as well mentally.

Source: <http://gifted.youthsporttrust.org/page/teaching-styles/index.html>

<b>Convergent discovery style</b>					
	<b>Cognitive ability</b>	<b>Creative ability</b>	<b>Social ability</b>	<b>Personal ability</b>	<b>Physical ability</b>

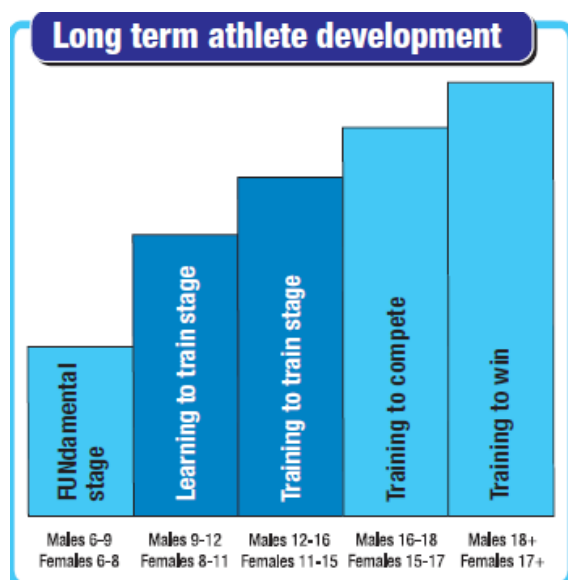


## Planning Programmes and Sessions:

Rugby Coach, LTAD,

[http://www.rugbycoach.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=3:ltad-for-rugbv&catid=6](http://www.rugbycoach.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3:ltad-for-rugbv&catid=6)

### Long Term Athlete Development-



The age group I will be coaching are currently Under 11's and are therefore at Bayli's 'Learning to Train' stage of the LTAD model. At this stage, the emphasis is on learning how to train and not on the outcome of this training, there is an element of competition but the result isn't important at this level. This LTAD model has been adapted to the RFU and the group are at Stage 2 of the RFU LTAD, they are at the fundamental stages of the model and are 'Learning to Train'. 'Learning to Train' is for the Under 10's-12's and therefore is applied to the team I will be coaching. At this stage the players are now encouraged to refine and maintain their physical abilities, as well as building on their

fundamental skills and developing rugby specific skills. There are 6 key areas which the LTAD model focuses on, these are:

<b><u>Physical:</u></b>	Developing physical literacy and rugby-related fitness, progressing to individual programmes for the more talented.
<b><u>Technical:</u></b>	Developing the core skills in passing, catching, running, evading, tackling and kicking.
<b><u>Tactical:</u></b>	Rugby specific games to introduce 'Go Forward, Support, Continuity, Pressure'.
<b><u>Mental:</u></b>	Develop an understanding of the Laws of the Game and the ethics of playing sport.
<b><u>Competition:</u></b>	Playing and training to the appropriate rules.
<b><u>Involvement in Physical Activity:</u></b>	3.5 rugby specific hours plus other PE or games activities in and out of school.

Table compiled from:  
[http://www.rugbycoach.com/documents/RFU LTAD Booklet.pdf](http://www.rugbycoach.com/documents/RFU_LTAD_Booklet.pdf)

The table above shows the general LTAD model for the age group I will be coaching and is therefore not specific to rugby, however what follows is the areas that the RFU specific LTAD model focuses on with an under 11's team, there are three areas; handling, running and kicking.

Handling- Within handling the areas that are covered are catching, passing, basic ball control and co-ordination. At this age, it is important to make these skills varied and to develop the basics into a more complex skill level to allow the players to have a deeper understanding of the skills.

Running- The areas covered are swerving, sidestepping, speed, hopping, leaping and jumping. It is important for the players to start to understand to look and run into space by using the techniques above, this will allow them to create a game that flows better instead of constantly running into contact.

Kicking- Kicking is introduced at Under 11's but it is discouraged unless it is necessary, for example a conversion or it is being used tactically. Players are encouraged to run with the ball instead of kicking at this age as it will create more effective rugby, kicking can be introduced in the later stages of the LTAD once players understand when it can be effective. However, at under 11's the areas that the model focuses on are; basic ball control whilst kicking and game skills such as grubber, punt and drop kick.

### The Benefits of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)-

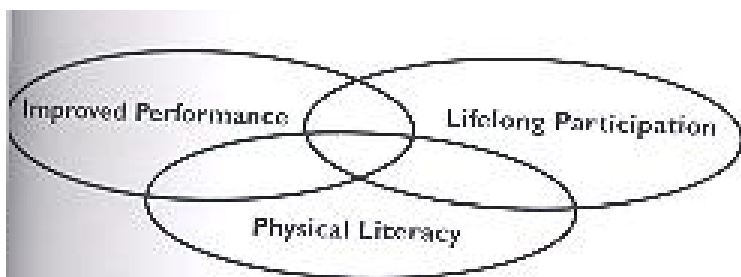


Figure 1: Key outcomes of LTAD

By following the stages of the LTAD model it benefits the performer in terms of encouragement of further participation, it provides opportunities to improve and achieve and it promotes sport to be a valuable activity which leads to a healthy and active lifestyle.

## Physical, Physiological and Social Development of Coaching Young Performers:

Coaching young performers is different to coaching adults due to many different factors. A young performer is anyone up to the age of 18, as they are under 18 this means that there are extra duties that the coach must be aware of such as protection and duty of care. The performers are also still developing and maturing and the coach must facilitate to this by understand each performers ability and tailoring the training around this with the aim of improving them as players whilst never compromising their development.

As well as protecting the players, coaches who coach young performers need to protect themselves by being Police Checked, never be alone with individual players without the presence of another coach or adult, behave correctly around the players, for example, never use abuse language, reduce the amount of physical contact as much as possible and treat all players equally, all of these will ensure that coaches protect themselves against allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

Coaches must be aware of the physical developments of the players. The player's development can differ due to their 'age', there are three types of ages that influence a child's developments these are:

<b>Chronological age</b>	Their actual age in years
<b>Development age</b>	The extent to which their emotional, physical or social development compares, exceeds or falls short of that of a typical child of that age
<b>Training age</b>	The number of years' experience they may have gained through regular, structured training.

Table compiled from: Sports Coach UK, (2010), *Coaching Young Performers*, Leeds, pg.1

To account for these physiological needs, as a coach one way is to modify the games to make them suitable for young players. Factors that you need to consider when modifying games are:

**The playing area and times** : Changing the pitch size to make it smaller, 60m by 43m is the regulation for under 11's and 12's midi rugby, there should also be a 5 metre gap between pitches. Younger players also have a time limit on sessions and matches to ensure that the players aren't over worked. For the Under 11's

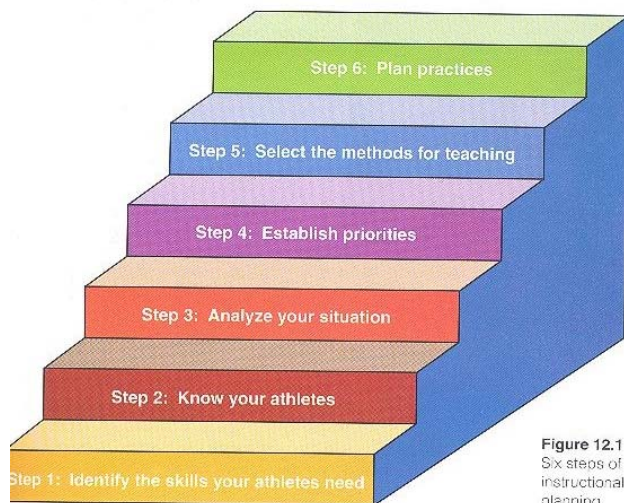
these are; 120 minute training session limit and for matches two 20 minute halves are played.

**The equipment:** The ball size for under 11's is a size 4, this is one size smaller than a standard size 5 ball which is used for adults. The reason for the change of ball size is to allow players to be able to learn the skills and put them into practise without having to use oversized and heavy equipment. By increasing the size of the ball as the players go up the age groups, this lets players gradually adapt to the standard regulations.

**Rules and regulations:** The laws of the game are simplified and as they go up the age groups, new laws are introduced to gradually develop players without over loading them with complex laws from a young age. By having simplified laws, the players can develop a strong understanding and use this as a base as they move up the LTAD model.

**Group size:** The group size is different for each age group. For the under 11's, the team size is a maximum of 12. This increases as you move up through the age groups, new positions are introduced to allow players to develop technical and tactical skills.

### Planning the sessions:



Rainer Martens, (2004), *Successful Coaching*, United States, pg. 237.

#### **Step 1: Identify the skills your athletes need:**

By creating a list of the specific skills needed for rucking I can put these skills into my coaching plan. I will be making this list by talking to the head coach as well as understanding the technical, tactical, mental skills needed in order to coach the ruck sequence.

#### **Step 2: Know your athletes:**

By knowing the players and abilities and knowledge I can plan a coaching session that will be relevant and suitable for the age group I

am coaching. I will need to consider the age of the players, their level of physical, psychological and social maturity, how well the team work together and how much experience they

have had.

#### **Step 3: Analyse your situation:**

Before planning the session I will need to be aware of the situation I will be coaching in. For example, the age category, how many sessions they will have a season, the facilities I will be coaching in, how many players I will be coaching and what tournaments they will be playing in.

#### **Step 4: Establish Priorities:**

This section of planning is specific to the skills that I will be coaching. As I am concentrating on rucking, my priorities are improving the teams overall rucking ability, with smaller aims such as improving knowledge and confidence of rucking.

#### **Step 5: Select the Methods for Teaching:**

I have already selected a 'Convergent Discovery' style of coaching.

#### **Step 6: Plan Practices:**

This part of the plan is where it is written down onto paper. When writing the plan, the elements I will need to consider are; the time, place and length of the sessions, the objective, the equipment needed, the warm up, the main session activities, the cool down and then the feedback of coaches comments. Also, once the session is over, I will need to evaluate the session.

### **Delivering the sessions:**

When the session has been fully planned and prepared the next stage is to deliver it, here are some factors that make an effective delivery:

- Be fully prepared
- Verbally introduce new activities then demonstrate them
- Give feedback to help players improve
- Stay focused on your aims for the session
- Manage the players behaviour
- Evaluate the situation as you go along
- Give a general debrief at the end
- Adapt and develop the session
- Use appropriate language and vary the volume at which you speak
- Maintain a good pace throughout the session

## How I am going to assess myself on the delivery of the sessions:

I will be using coaches' reports to assess myself on my coaching techniques. Within these coaches' reports, they will be commenting on various different techniques including how successful the delivery of the sessions was.

## The Learning:

When coaching young players, coaches must be aware of how children learn and the stages of learning:

### 3 stages of learning a new skill:

#### **Stage 1- Cognitive phase**

At this stage while the performers are still getting used to the fundamental ideas and movements of the new skill it is important for coaches to give lots of feedback. This feedback should be limited to the most important things that need addressing, as too much specific feedback may confuse the performer and discourage them.

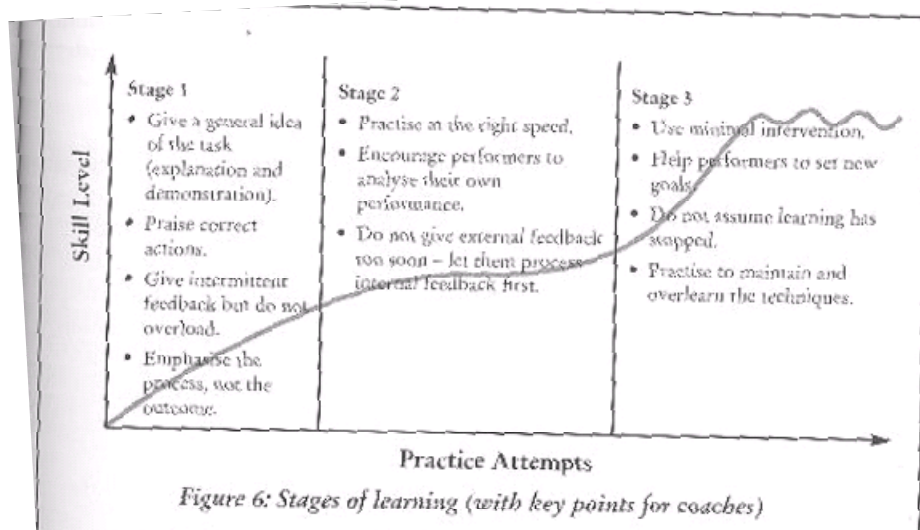
#### **Stage 2- Associative phase**

As performers get used to the movements of the skill, they will be able to perform this skill in different conditions. Here feedback should be more specific and based upon allowing the performer to learn what is correct and what is incorrect with that movement. This is the stage where performers will respond best to feedback.

#### **Stage 3- Autonomous phase**

Once the full movement of the skill is learnt, the third stage comes in. As the movement at this stage is well practised, movement will be fluid and dynamic and the performer will need little cognitive input whilst performing the skill. This means that they can focus on other external aspects such as different conditions, tactics and adapting the skill to beat the opponent. Feedback is still

important at this stage as it allows performers to continually learn, however it should be given later on to allow performers to reflect on their performance and learn for themselves, instead of always



waiting for feedback to be given.

Sports Coach UK,  
(2008), *The Successful  
Coach*, Leeds, pg.35

### Analysis Process:

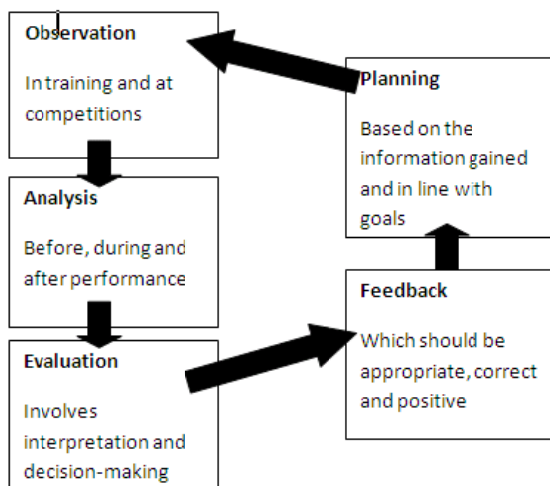


Figure 9: The performance analysis process, *The Successful Coach*, Sports Coach UK

The performance analysis process will help performers learn and develop if it is done effectively. If the coach follows this process and gives feedback and plans the sessions based on this feedback, the learning will be specific to the players needs and subsequently the players will have targeted coaching and will learn quickly and effectively.

Performers learn best when they are:

- Actively involved in the learning
- Able to recognise how and when techniques are used
- Able to build on their own experience and skills
- Interested and motivated
- Able to see their own experiences

As a coach, if you can get your players to do the above then they will be more engaged and involved in their own learning.

To aid with the players learning coaches must:

Demonstrate	Analyse	Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives a visual image</li> <li>• Provides the correct technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good analysis involves good observation combined with a good understanding of the skill</li> <li>• Analysis can be given during or after training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaches should give praise and build on strengths and reduce errors</li> <li>• Feedback should be specific and constructive</li> </ul>

Th

Source: Sports Coach UK, (2010),  
*Coaching Young Performers*, Leeds

## Coaching Session-

### Warm Up:

There are three main objectives whilst warming up, these are:

**To prepare the body both physiologically and mentally for the oncoming performance-** During this stage the performer must consider the following objectives in order for it to be successful; choice of activity, the manner in which they are carried out, the time allowed to carry them out, the perceived success of carrying them out. If these are achieved, then the performer can move onto the next stage.

**To improve performance-** By warming up, it allows your body to be fully prepared for the oncoming performance and by being better prepared you will be more likely to perform at your optimum level.

**To reduce the risk of injury-** By changing the body gradually to a changing environment, it is less likely to experience trauma.

### The 4 stages of the warm up:

A warm up consists of 4 stages, these are; initial preparation, injury prevention, skill practise and sport-specific.

**Initial Preparation:** The first stage of this process is the 'Gross Motor Skills', this is to introduce stress gradually to the body resulting in lowering the risk of injury as well as raising the temperature of the body. This can be achieved by doing a cardiovascular exercise such as jogging. This exercise is



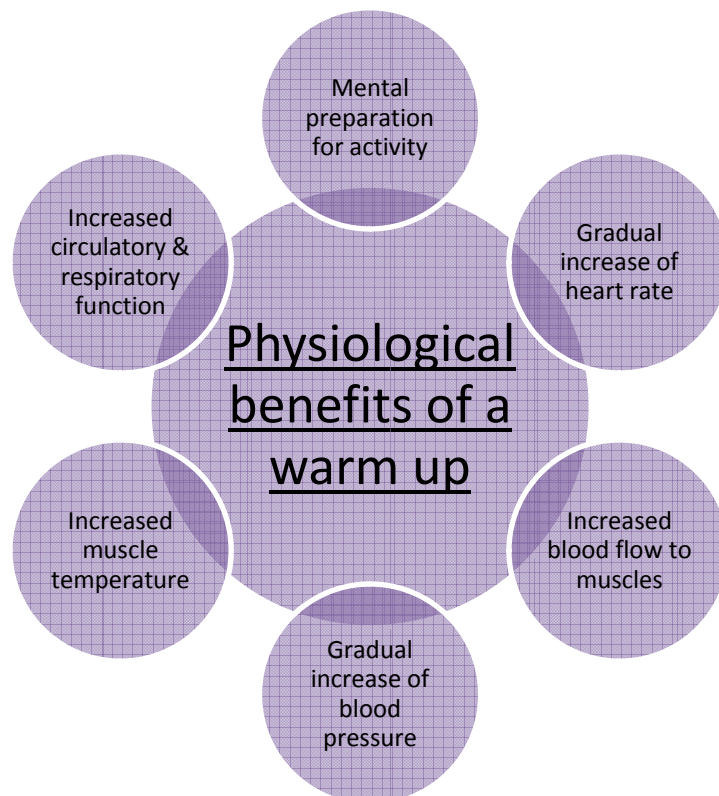
also a pulse raiser which will increase the heart rate to allow responses to occur such as pumping blood to the working muscles.

**Injury Prevention:** This stage's aim is to decrease the risk of injury and increase flexibility by using mobility exercises to increase elasticity in the specific muscles being used. This stage should involve dynamic stretches.

**Skills Practise:** This stage is linked to the skills that you will be using in the upcoming activity. For example, in rugby the movement of passing the ball may be practised.

**Sport-Specific:** This stage is linked to the previous stage as it also allows you to practise skills that will be used in the activity that the players about to do. It allows psychological preparation as well as physiological, as it allows performers to think and practise under the circumstances they will be playing in.

The warm up can be combined into 2 stages, the initial preparation, skills practise and sport specific can be achieved by doing a game such as 'touch rugby' which increases the heart rates of the players whilst also practising skills they will be using in the session such as passing, defending, communication and team work which also makes it sport specific. The injury prevention is then carried out by doing dynamic stretches along the pitch then stretching the upper body, as this is something that is very important when playing rugby. This can be done with a partner and I will be using this method in my coaching sessions.





Warm up game designed to raise pulse and be sport specific

Upper  
body  
stretch  
es



Pictures: Author's own

## Cool Down:

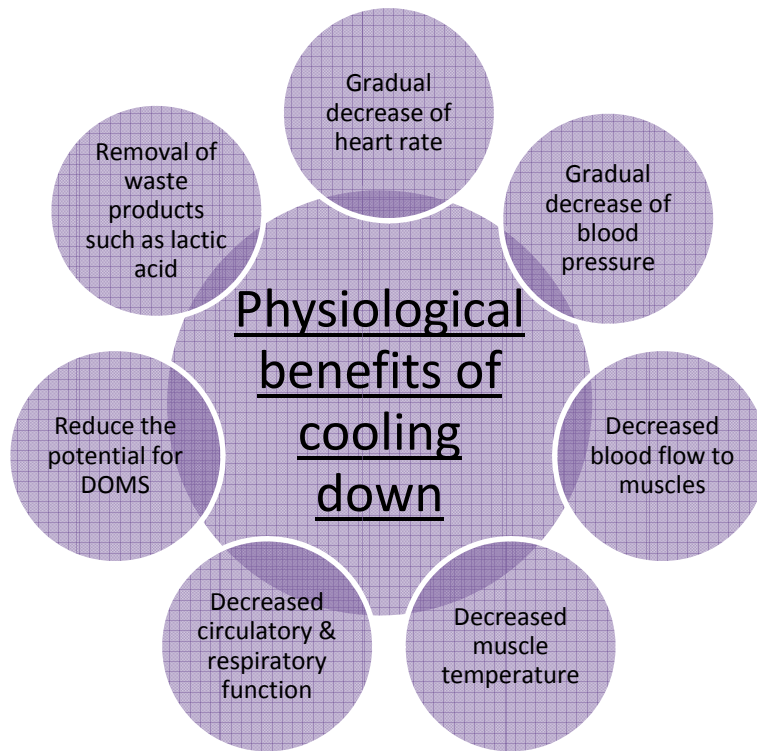
### Why cool down?

The purpose of a cool down is to allow the body to return to pre-exercise conditions.

### The stages of a cool down:

**Light exercise-** Such as jogging, this should be done for 5-10 minutes, to help decrease the heart rate, jogging also removes lactic acid from the working muscles which will decrease the risk of DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness.)

**Stretching-** This should also be done for 5-10 minutes. Static stretching (this involves lengthening the muscle then holding it in that position) and PNF stretching (a combination of passive and isometric contractions) are usually best for a cool down.



Jog to cool down at the end of the session

Pictures: Author's own

Planning for  
Participant  
Development:

### Goal Setting:

I am going to use the SMARTER goal setting technique and apply this to my main and sub aims as this will be specific and give enough depth about my goals.

My main aim is: **To improve rucking in Leighton Buzzard Under 11's team in training and in competitive situations.**

My sub aims are:

**To attend a series of 'Saracens Coach Education Courses', to improve my knowledge and understanding of coaching the laws and techniques of rugby, to improve knowledge,**

**understanding and confidence of rucking in training sessions and to improve rucking success in game situations.**

**SPECIFIC:** My goals must be precise to make them easy to measure, which is why I have divided my main aim into three sub aims, as separately, these are more specific.

**MEASURABLE:** As I have split the main aim into three sub aims, I have devised a way to measure each sub aim with its own test. I am using notational analysis, questionnaires and coaches reports to measure and analyse each aim to see if they have been achieved.

**AGREED:** I agreed the aims with my head coach before I started my 10 weeks of coaching. I did this to make sure that they were realistic for the needs of the participants in the team.

**REALISTIC:** The aims set are realistic as they can be achieved by the team, however, the training that they will do in order to achieve them will challenge the teams technical skills as both individuals and when working in a team.

**TIME:** Each aim will be achieved by the end of the 10 week period.

**EXCITING:** The coaching sessions I have planned will be varied to keep the interest high and to ensure that the players aren't bored.

**RECORDED:** I will test the players at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the 10 weeks and will write down and analyse the results as I go along.

### Process of Planning:

In order to be able to plan I must consider different components of planning and how they are going to affect my goals. This is a systematic process to planning:



Reference: Sports Coach  
UK, (2007), *Planning and Periodisation*,  
Leeds, page 2.

### The Resources needed for Planning:

Coaching Environment	Equipment	Human Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to know:</li> <li>• What facilities are available</li> <li>• How much space there will be</li> <li>• How close to other teams you will be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to understand what equipment is available before you plan the session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to know if you will have other coaches available to help with the coaching.</li> <li>• Planning needs to consider what these coaches will be doing and the player-coach ratio.</li> </ul>

There are three categories of resources which need to be considered before planning, these are:

### Principles of Training:

Sports Coach UK,( 2007),*Planning and Periodisation*, Leeds, pg. 60

#### Specificity

The training must be specific to the area I am going to focus on; rucking. This means that every training session and every exercise within this will be related to aspects of rucking.

#### Progression

Progression will be relevant as the knowledge of rucking will be developed through the weeks as the players build up more knowledge and experience.

#### Overload

In order to see an improvement in the players, I will have to plan the sessions so that the training load is higher than usual.

#### Reversibility

The effects of the training will be lost if they are not maintained. Also, to maintain a constant level, training will have to continue at the same level after the 10 weeks.

#### Recovery

Recovery is an important part of training, this becomes more important as training load increases.

#### Variation

The training must be varied to prevent tedium, this means devising a variety of exercises within the training session.

#### Adaptation

The body and mind must adapt to the training programme. By doing this the performer is more able to cope with the stresses of training.

#### Individual Differences

Different performers will react to training in different ways. As the team are under 10's, the training will be adapted to their needs as young performers.

## The Overcompensation Model:

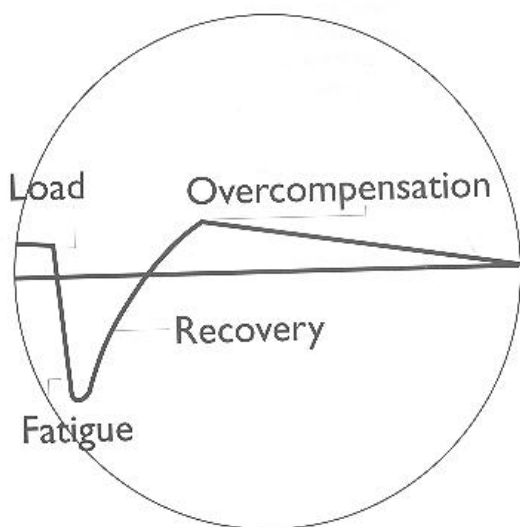


Figure 9: The overcompensation model

This is the process of adaption during the recovery period following training. Loading, recovery and overcompensation are essential parts of training if it is to be effective. After the recovery phase when the adaptations or overcompensations take place, a performer will be able to train at a higher intensity, resulting in an increased performance over a period of time.

Sports Coach UK,( 2007),*Planning and Periodisation*, Leeds, pg. 66

Key factors of the model include:

- There may be loss of training effect if the time between training is too long- therefore any adaptations which may have occurred may be lost and the performer will relapse to the initial level before training. Therefore, it is important to regularly attend training to see improvement. I will apply this to my development plan by making sure that players attend training each week to ensure that any improvements aren't lost.
- If the load is applied without allowing enough time for recovery, overtraining may occur which can lead to injury. This is important as I must make sure that the training level is relevant to the age group of the under 11's and that they aren't being overworked; however, by only training once a week, this is not likely to happen.

It is essential that coaches understand this model in order to maintain a balance between optimal training, competitions and recovery for the performers.

It is also important to remember that for young performer, such as the under 11's team, the length and intensity of training will need to be much less than an adults session.

**Performing**

**and**

**Recording**





# Evaluation

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# Development Plan



**THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY LEADERSHIP IN RUGBY**

**A TECHNICAL STUDY OF COACHING THE LAWS AND  
TECHNIQUES OF RUCKING IN UNDER 11'S RUGBY**

**Planning**

**and**

**Research**

## Introduction:

I currently coach the Under 11's rugby team at Leighton Buzzard Rugby Football Club (LBRFC) every Sunday morning and have done since I was 13. I also coach the girl's rugby team at school with players ranging from age 13-16. I coach grassroots which allows me to develop the player's skills from the beginning and give them the fundamental skills they can build on.

## Strengths and Weaknesses

### Why we analyse our performance?

I analyse my performance to pick out the aspects of my performance that need improving and take these skills and see how I can improve them to improve as a coach. It is also useful to analyse performance to see what my strengths are, so I can recognise what I am good at as a coach and take confidence from this.

### **STRENGTHS**

From the evidence from my coaches' reports (see appendix) I found that my strengths as a coach are my praise giving skills, verbal communication, improvising skills, decision making and knowledge of the laws.

**Verbal communication and praise-** I use effective vocals when giving praise, with praise being specific to an individual such as 'good use of a target in that catch' or general to a larger group of players, for example 'Good communication in that session'. When giving praise to an individual, eye contact is important so the player knows that they are being directly spoken to and praised for something specific they have done, this is something I need to improve and am working on at the moment to help me improve as a coach and create a good relationship with the players.

**Improvising skills and decision making skills-** My strengths in improvising are when players find the task either too hard or too easy and the task needs to be changed to suit their needs. I also am confident when it comes to taking a player aside who is struggling and helping them individually to improve a particular skill. For example, if a player keeps dropping the ball, I will take them aside and go back to basics with them and ensure they are confident in that skill before re joining the group task.

## **WEAKNESSES**

My weaknesses are my non verbal communication skills, confidence and feedback skills. These skills, especially confidence, are mostly psychologically based and therefore I need to change my mind set to improve these.

**Confidence-** This is the weakest part of my coaching and a hurdle I need to get over as if I conquer this then I will improve hugely as a coach. I believe that confidence will come as I get older and gain more experience, I also think that working with two older and more vocal coaches makes it more difficult. I therefore need to be more vocal in coaching sessions and try to play a larger role in the coaching team and by undertaking my development plan I will be able to do this. However, I am most confident when working with small groups of players and individuals.

**Non-verbal communication-** I believe that non-verbal communication is a skill that I need to work on. When giving praise non verbal gestures such as thumbs up or a high five are very important, not only to congratulate the player but also to build a relationship up with the players you are coaching. Non verbal communication is also very important when demonstrating a new skill to the players, as it helps them to understand the task they are going to do more easily. I also need to improve my non verbal communication, such as eye contact and hand gestures, as it is necessary when verbally communicating with a player as the player will be more engaged and pay more attention to you. Non verbal communication has been one of my main focuses this season and I make a conscious decision to use this as much as possible as I find that players respond well to it.

**Feedback skills-** This is partially a psychological aspect of coaching as feedback must be effectively. Feeding back isn't just telling a player what they didn't do well on in either a session or a game it is also about giving them praise and confidence on what they did do well in. I need to improve on telling players their areas of improvement. This will help the players to develop but will also feeding back effectively will help build respect up from the players by creating an open and honest atmosphere during training sessions.

My evidence for these strengths and weaknesses has come from coaches' reports and my own personal viewpoint. (See appendix)

## Aims:

My main aim is:

- **To improve rucking in Leighton Buzzard Under 11's team in training and in competitive situations.**

My sub aims are:

- 1) To attend a 'Saracens Coach Education Course'**
- 2) To improve my knowledge and understanding of coaching the laws and techniques of rugby.**
- 3) To improve knowledge, understanding and confidence of rucking in training sessions.**
- 4) To improve rucking success in game situations.**

I have chosen my main aim as I believe that this is the area that the Under 11's team need to work on the most, I discussed the aims with the head coach and he agreed that rucking is an essential part of the game, if rucking is improved, general play will be improved. If they can improve their rucking ground can be increased, leading to more chance of a try. Also, rucking provides a chance to turn over the ball and re-gain possession if it has been lost, to turn from defending to attacking.

By attending a coaching course, this will allow me to improve my knowledge of the laws and learn from professional coaches who can provide me with ideas of how to improve my coaching; this will help improve the players as they will be being coached to a better standard. I may also learn new drills and practises which I can use in my coaching sessions.

By improving the players knowledge, understanding they will improve as they will feel more confident about the laws of the ruck, the technique to use, when to form a ruck and what to do after the ruck has broken down. Having this knowledge will lead to more successful rucks within training and in game situations.



## Personal Profile:

I achieved Tag RFU Rugby Coaching Award at 13 and went on to achieve Level 1 RFU Rugby Coaching Award a year later; I have attended Continual Professional Development courses (see appendices) to constantly improve my knowledge and coaching skills by learning from professionals. I have also achieved ERLA Level 2 RFU Officiating award and RFU Young Officials award. By undergoing these courses, I have learnt and experienced the laws of the game relevant to the players I am coaching and refereeing, this will allow them to have an understanding of these laws. I am also the official first aider for the Under 11's LBRFC team; I have gained this role by completing two St. Johns First Aid awards, one which was sports specific. I have also completed two Sports Leaders UK awards; Junior Level 1 in Sports Leadership Award and Level 2 in Community Sports Leaders Award and gained experience by working with both young and disabled children.

The reason why I coach is because I can no longer play rugby due to injury but still want to be involved in the game. I played for LBRFC from the age of 6 until I was 12; I had to stop due to girls not being allowed to play with boys at junior level. I then turned to coaching and followed that route (as mentioned above). I then played again for half a season, however I had to stop due to injury so I just continued coaching the under 11's. I also feel that I have the relevant skills which allow me to coach players and to teach them the skills and techniques which may lead to them becoming skilled rugby players. Coaching has also helped develop my confidence as I have had to both lead young people as well as work with older coaches.

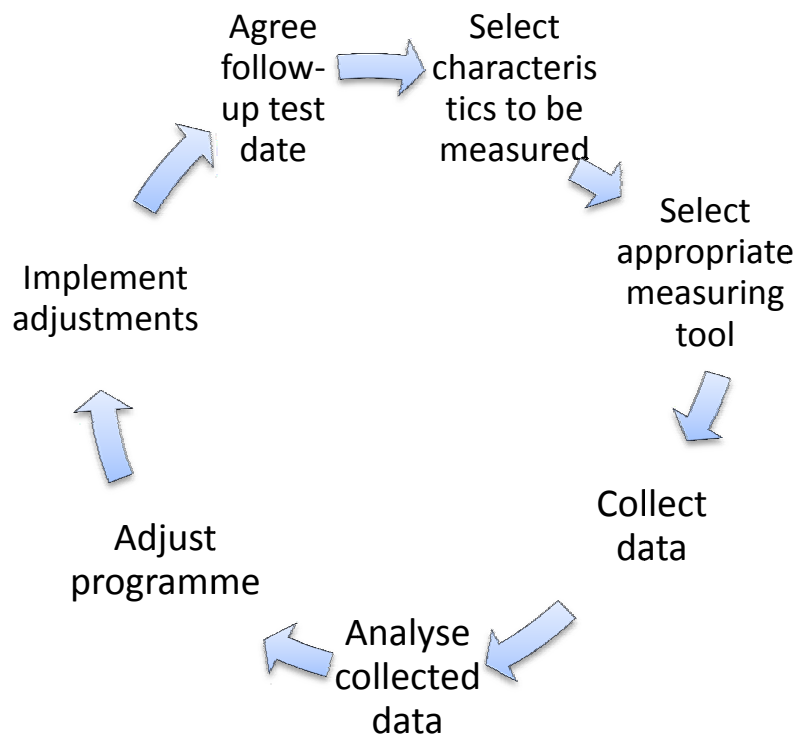
The reason why I have chosen to coach rugby is that I have also always had a passion for the game and feel great intrinsic rewards from coaching young players and helping them develop. I understand the generic principles of coaching such as communication, building relationships with players and have combined these with my specific knowledge of the technical laws of the game in order to coach the players effectively.

I have chosen to coach grassroots rugby and an under 11's team as this is the age group that I believe players learn the fundamental skills which allow them to develop greatly when they are older, if the players have not got these skills at a young age, I believe that this will affect them later in their playing career. Grassroots level also interests me as it was the time where I enjoyed rugby the most and I want to allow other players to experience this love of rugby by reflecting my passion through my coaching.

I believe in a participant-centred philosophy. Where the players are seen as individuals with their own individual needs, coaching must be suited to manage and improve the players separately and by doing this; the whole team will see improvements.

## Tests and Evidence:

### The Process of Testing:



This cycle provides a format to fitness testing. I will follow this format when testing and analysing.

Morc Coulson and David Archer, *Practical Fitness Testing*, 2009, London, pg. ix.

One important thing to consider when using tests is reliability and validity.

- **Reliability-** 'The reliability of a test refers to how reproducible the test is.' (Coulson and Archer, 2009)
- **Validity-** 'The degree to which a test or instrument measures what it purports to measure' (Thomas and Nelson, 2001)

I will be applying these to my tests to ensure that all of them are as reliable and valid as possible.

**Aims 1 and 2:** To show that I have attended a coaching course I will provide evidence of attendance and show evaluation of the courses (see appendices). By attending these courses, my knowledge of coaching the laws and techniques of rucking will be improved, through being coached by and observing high level coaches.

**Aims 3 and 4:**

I will be using a combination of tests to monitor the progression of the player's ability to ruck:

**Test 1: Questionnaires** (See appendices)

To monitor the knowledge, understanding and confidence of the players rucking I will be using questionnaires (see appendix), they will be filling these in at the beginning of the 10 weeks, in the middle and then again at the end. I will then analyse these questionnaires and assess whether or not they have improved, I will know if they have improved or not by looking at their overall score on the questionnaire and comparing this score to the beginning and middle of the season. If the score has increased then I will know that they feel more confident and have a better knowledge and understanding of rucking.

Reliability- A questionnaire will create a great amount of quantitative data which will be easy to analyse and draw conclusions from, however the qualitative data will be harder to analyse, although lots of detail will be gained from this data. I will be ensuring that reliability will be maintained throughout the ten week period by using the same questionnaire each time.

Validity- The problem with questionnaires is social desirability as people may lie to make themselves look better, for example, they may say that are more confident in the ruck than they actually are, this therefore may affect results and the validity of the tests. I will make sure the questionnaire is valid as I will remove any other factors which may affect the results of the test to ensure that the questionnaire's answers are only affected by the players' answers.

**Test 2: Notational Analysis** (See appendices)

To test their improvements in the rucking success within a game and training situation I will be using notational-analysis. The notational analysis will be used in game situations as I will be monitoring the number of successful rucks within the game. The notational analysis will also assess different factors of rucking such as; the number of rucks performed, if they have got each technical stage of the ruck correct and whether it was successful or not and the reasons for the outcome of the ruck.

Reliability- The test itself is easily replicable due to the layout of the notational analysis sheet. I will be using the same sheet for each of the match analyses and the same investigator will be used; myself.

Validity- The test is valid as it tests what it says to test, as rucking is being directly analysed. However, the results for each will have a great variation due to external, environmental factors as well as internal, biological and psychological factors. As the environment will change each time the test is done, factors such as wind, temperature and pitch conditions will affect the results of the test. Also, internal factors such as mood, emotions and tiredness of players will affect their performance and therefore the test. Also, how many matches they have played that day will affect performance. One factor that will be different is also the opposition. These different factors are known as **extraneous variables** and may affect the results of the notational analysis, therefore affecting the internal validity.

### **Test 3: Coaches' reports** (See appendices)

I will get a coaches report from the head coach of the team about their rucking at the beginning, middle and end of the 10 week period, I will then assess this and decide whether or not he thinks they have improved. As well as looking at the improvement of the player's ability to ruck, the coaches' report will also be on my ability to coach the rucking technique successfully. I will be assessed on factors such as communication, motivation, knowledge and understanding of the laws and techniques, feedback skills and confidence whilst coaching.

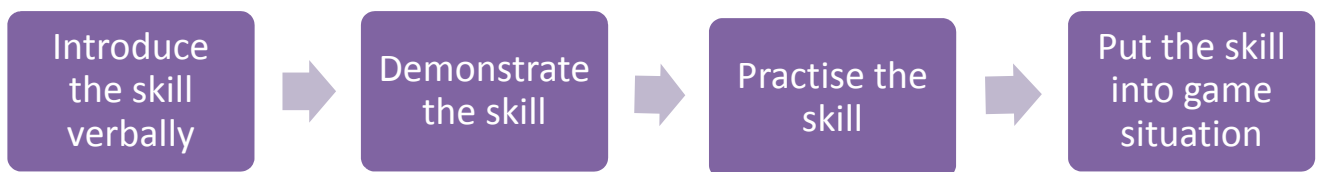
Reliability- This test is reliable as the same criteria will be used to assess my coaching. Therefore, the same areas of both my coaching and the players rucking will be assessed, making the results easy to analyse.

Validity- As the coaches have specific areas to focus on within rucking; they will be testing them directly which will result in a high validity. Although, as it is their own opinion, the results will be objective not subjective; making it harder to prove that they are correct.

## Coaching Methods:

### What makes a good coach?

To coach a new skill successfully a coach must use stages to ensure that the players understand the skill and can therefore put this skill into their game, these stages are:



Key skills that coaches need to be successful are-

- **Know yourself**- if you know what you want to achieve then you can put this into your planning and sessions
- **Have a good understanding**- by having a good understanding and knowledge of the game then you will be confident when coaching the skills
- **Be enthusiastic**- show your love of the sport and this will get passed onto the players resulting in enthusiastic, positive players.
- **Vary your sessions**- by using a variety of games and drills while coaching will prevent tedium.
- **Involve everybody**- make sure that all players are involved at all time, this way no one will be sitting out. Use smaller groups rather than one large one.
- **Use body language**- by using non-verbal communication to back up the verbal communication players will respond well. Smile and use hand gestures to keep them interested
- **Lead by example**- as you are a role model to the players you must behave, dress and have the attitude of a role model and this will be reflected in your players.

Source: Sports Coach UK, (2008), What makes a successful coach?, *The Successful Coach*, Leeds, Pg. 3.

## Code of Conduct:

There are four principles you must consider regarding the Code of Practice for Sports Coaches. These are:

<b>Code of Practice for Sports Coaches – Key Principles</b>
<b>Rights</b> – coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.
<b>Relationships</b> – coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.
<b>Responsibilities: personal standards</b> – coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.
<b>Responsibilities: professional standards</b> – to maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.
<i>Code of Practice for Sports Coaches (2005)</i>

These principles apply to all coaches within any sport, they are also particularly important when coaching children. I will therefore follow these principles when coaching the players by recognising that each individual player has the right to play rugby and I should therefore give them all equal opportunities to both train and play in game situations. I will develop relationships with players by listening to the players views, being honest with them; treat them with respect in order to create a positive environment to play in whilst coaching. I will behave properly whilst coaching to maintain personal standards regarding my responsibilities; I will do this by talking to the players, coaches and parents with respect and not behave inappropriately. To maintain responsibilities on a professional level I will minimise risks to the players by keeping high health and safety standards, I will attend regular coaching courses to keep a high and up to date level of knowledge and understanding.

## Process of Coaching:

### The Role of the Coach-



The coach has many roles; in these roles they will also have many expectations:

**Teacher-** Teach the basic skills of the game.

**Trainer-** Improve player's physical abilities.

**Organiser-** Organise the training sessions, Planning is necessary here.

**Role Model-** Lead by example in every way, e.g. Manner, language used, dress and behaviour.

**Referee-** Need to coach within the laws of the game

**Safety Officer-** Provide a safe environment that the players can learn in

**Psychologist-** Help improve both mental and physical skills in the player ensure that the player has the right 'mental state' to perform in.

**Philosopher-** By understanding the reasons why each individual plays, planning of sessions can be tailored to this.

Compiled from: Hollman, B, (2001), *Basketball Level 1 Coach Award, Candidate Resource Manual*, England Basketball, Sheffield, pg. 7.

## Process of Coaching:

The process of coaching is made up of three elements:

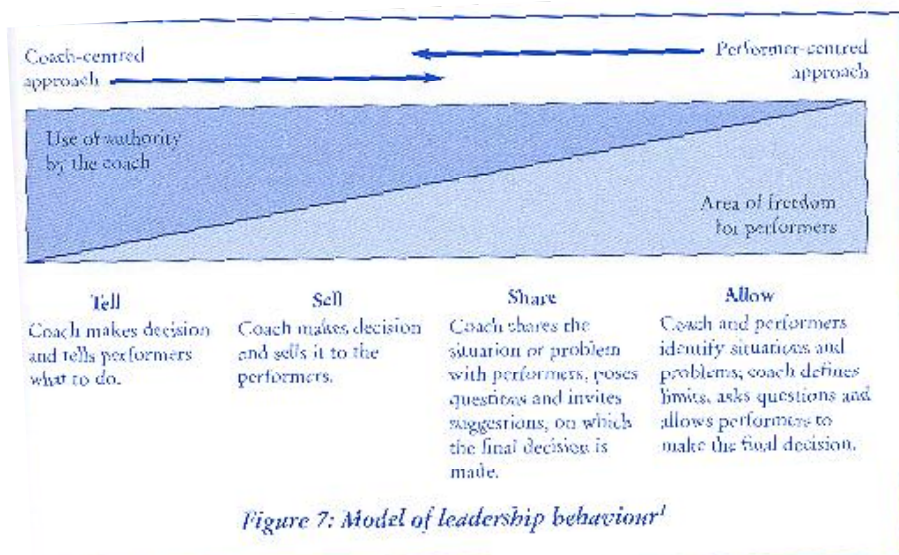
**Planning-** when planning sessions I will need to consider the long term goals while focusing on short term goals by using SMARTER to help achieve the goals set. These goals will be specific to rucking and will be altered every week to help the team develop in the most effective way possible. I will also agree these goals with the head coach every week to make sure they are still relevant and specific enough; the goals will be focusing on each individual's ability and aims, the team as a whole aims and both long and short term goals.

**Delivering-** this is the stage where the session is delivered, in this stage I will be putting my planning, coaching methods and knowledge of how players learn into practise. During the session I will be constantly evaluating the individual players and offering advice about how to solve problems and improve. I will be adapting my coaching style and session to suit the needs of the individual players, how the whole team is reacting to the coaching style (for example if they aren't responding well I will make it more exciting and give more encouragement), the number of players I have and the environment they are training in.

**Evaluating-** the evaluation stage is very important as it allows me as a coach to see how each player is progressing and it allows me to plan the next session and to make it specific to the individuals needs. I will keep written records of each session and as well as evaluating the players; evaluate myself to monitor my progress as well.

## Coaching styles-

Sports Coach UK, 2008, *The Successful Coach*, Leeds, pg. 43



**TELL-** In this style of coaching, the coach is making all of the decisions and simply telling the player what to do. This style allows a high level of control over the sessions and is easy to plan for as the coach can structure each part of the session. However, this style



may discourage players as they may not enjoy the sessions as much. This style of coaching is need if a health and safety issue arises and for their own safety, players are taught in this way. For example, when coaching the technique in a ruck, the body position must be correct, if not then players can injure themselves and others.

**SELL-** This style allows the coach to make the decisions, demonstrate the skill and give explanations, however players are encouraged to ask questions and from these questions the players will be able to develop an understanding of it and how it applies to them.

**SHARE-** Here, the coach gives the players a situation and allows them to make suggestions about how to deal with this problem. The coach then makes decisions based on the player's suggestions.

**ALLOW-** The coach will pose a situation or problem and will then let the performers make their own decision and will not offer help, apart from questioning the players as well as part of the process. This style allows players to make decisions for themselves, whilst being guided. It also encourages team work and builds confidence as eventually; players start to believe in themselves as they see that they can make correct decisions.

Due to the age group I will be coaching, I will be using a 'share' style of coaching as I believe that this style allows both the coach and the players to work together to identify and resolve the problems faced. Whilst the players are 10/11 years old and in the second stage of the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, I feel that this has the right balance of authority from the coach and freedom for the players, in my experience if this balance isn't correct then the session isn't as successful. If the coach purely 'tells' or 'sells' then the players won't fully understand what they are doing and won't learn from it, however, if coaches use an 'allow' approach then I find that the players are allowed too much freedom and cannot work out the solution out for themselves.

Morley investigated into Mosston and Ashworth's 'Teaching Styles' which relate to the coaching styles above, the style I am using is similar to the Convergent Discovery Style, where the coach will propose a problem to the players and allow the players to learn from it and work out a solution for themselves, coaches may offer feedback but cannot provide answers. This style has cognitive, creative, social, personal and physical benefits to the players. From a cognitive point of view the players develop their understanding through doing the task themselves and understand the underlying principles, creatively, the players will use previous knowledge of the task and build on this to solve the issue, socially the players will learn as they will have to work together and work on skills such as communication and teamwork, personally, the players will have to be disciplined and self aware in order to try to find an answer and finally the players will be constantly physically developing as well mentally.

Source: <http://gifted.youthsporttrust.org/page/teaching-styles/index.html>

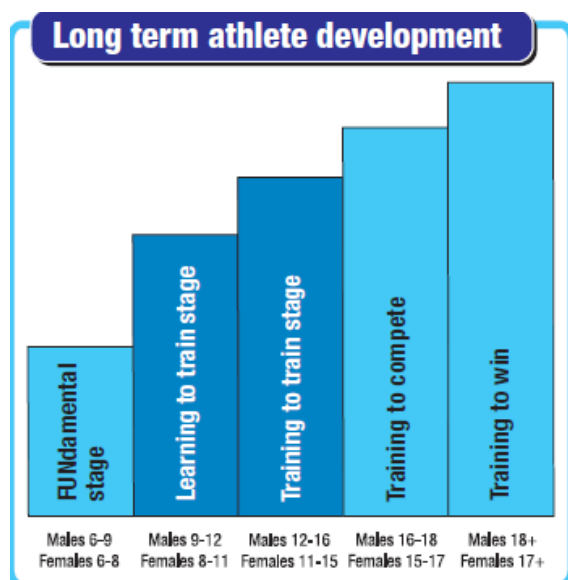
<b>Convergent discovery style</b>					
	<b>Cognitive ability</b>	<b>Creative ability</b>	<b>Social ability</b>	<b>Personal ability</b>	<b>Physical ability</b>

## Planning Programmes and Sessions:

Rugby Coach, LTAD,

[http://www.rugbycoach.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=3:ltad-for-rugbv&catid=6](http://www.rugbycoach.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3:ltad-for-rugbv&catid=6)

### Long Term Athlete Development-



The age group I will be coaching are currently Under 11's and are therefore at Bayli's 'Learning to Train' stage of the LTAD model. At this stage, the emphasis is on learning how to train and not on the outcome of this training, there is an element of competition but the result isn't important at this level. This LTAD model has been adapted to the RFU and the group are at Stage 2 of the RFU LTAD, they are at the fundamental stages of the model and are 'Learning to Train'. 'Learning to Train' is for the Under 10's-12's and therefore is applied to the team I will be coaching. At this stage the players are now encouraged to refine and maintain their physical abilities, as well as building on their

fundamental skills and developing rugby specific skills. There are 6 key areas which the LTAD model focuses on, these are:

<b><u>Physical:</u></b>	Developing physical literacy and rugby-related fitness, progressing to individual programmes for the more talented.
<b><u>Technical:</u></b>	Developing the core skills in passing, catching, running, evading, tackling and kicking.
<b><u>Tactical:</u></b>	Rugby specific games to introduce 'Go Forward, Support, Continuity, Pressure'.
<b><u>Mental:</u></b>	Develop an understanding of the Laws of the Game and the ethics of playing sport.
<b><u>Competition:</u></b>	Playing and training to the appropriate rules.
<b><u>Involvement in Physical Activity:</u></b>	3.5 rugby specific hours plus other PE or games activities in and out of school.

Table compiled from:  
[http://www.rugbycoach.com/documents/RFU LTAD Booklet.pdf](http://www.rugbycoach.com/documents/RFU_LTAD_Booklet.pdf)

The table above shows the general LTAD model for the age group I will be coaching and is therefore not specific to rugby, however what follows is the areas that the RFU specific LTAD model focuses on with an under 11's team, there are three areas; handling, running and kicking.

Handling- Within handling the areas that are covered are catching, passing, basic ball control and co-ordination. At this age, it is important to make these skills varied and to develop the basics into a more complex skill level to allow the players to have a deeper understanding of the skills.

Running- The areas covered are swerving, sidestepping, speed, hopping, leaping and jumping. It is important for the players to start to understand to look and run into space by using the techniques above, this will allow them to create a game that flows better instead of constantly running into contact.

Kicking- Kicking is introduced at Under 11's but it is discouraged unless it is necessary, for example a conversion or it is being used tactically. Players are encouraged to run with the ball instead of kicking at this age as it will create more effective rugby, kicking can be introduced in the later stages of the LTAD once players understand when it can be effective. However, at under 11's the areas that the model focuses on are; basic ball control whilst kicking and game skills such as grubber, punt and drop kick.

### The Benefits of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)-

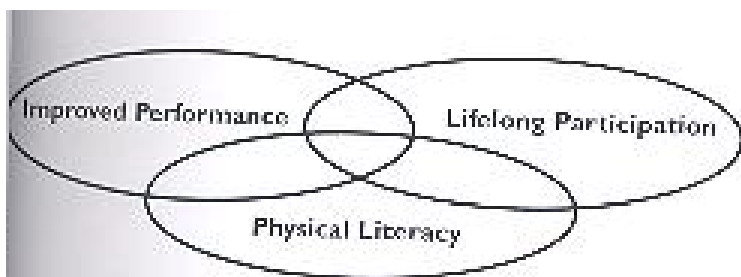


Figure 1: Key outcomes of LTAD

By following the stages of the LTAD model it benefits the performer in terms of encouragement of further participation, it provides opportunities to improve and achieve and it promotes sport to be a valuable activity which leads to a healthy and active lifestyle.

## Physical, Physiological and Social Development of Coaching Young Performers:

Coaching young performers is different to coaching adults due to many different factors. A young performer is anyone up to the age of 18, as they are under 18 this means that there are extra duties that the coach must be aware of such as protection and duty of care. The performers are also still developing and maturing and the coach must facilitate to this by understand each performers ability and tailoring the training around this with the aim of improving them as players whilst never compromising their development.

As well as protecting the players, coaches who coach young performers need to protect themselves by being Police Checked, never be alone with individual players without the presence of another coach or adult, behave correctly around the players, for example, never use abuse language, reduce the amount of physical contact as much as possible and treat all players equally, all of these will ensure that coaches protect themselves against allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

Coaches must be aware of the physical developments of the players. The player's development can differ due to their 'age', there are three types of ages that influence a child's developments these are:

<b>Chronological age</b>	Their actual age in years
<b>Development age</b>	The extent to which their emotional, physical or social development compares, exceeds or falls short of that of a typical child of that age
<b>Training age</b>	The number of years' experience they may have gained through regular, structured training.

Table compiled from: Sports Coach UK, (2010), *Coaching Young Performers*, Leeds, pg.1

To account for these physiological needs, as a coach one way is to modify the games to make them suitable for young players. Factors that you need to consider when modifying games are:

**The playing area and times** : Changing the pitch size to make it smaller, 60m by 43m is the regulation for under 11's and 12's midi rugby, there should also be a 5 metre gap between pitches. Younger players also have a time limit on sessions and matches to ensure that the players aren't over worked. For the Under 11's

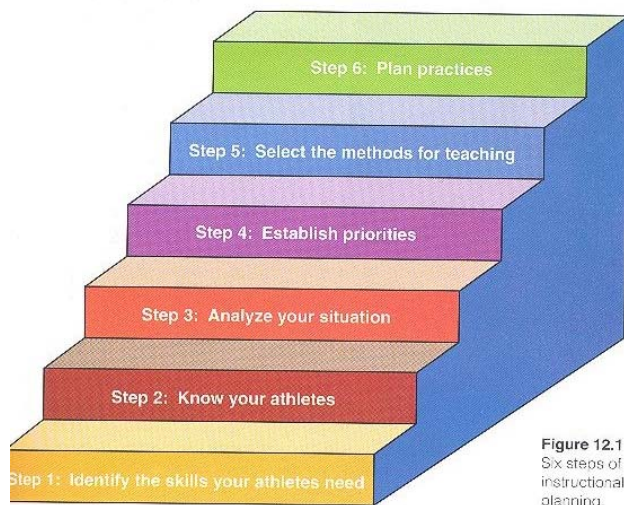
these are; 120 minute training session limit and for matches two 20 minute halves are played.

**The equipment:** The ball size for under 11's is a size 4, this is one size smaller than a standard size 5 ball which is used for adults. The reason for the change of ball size is to allow players to be able to learn the skills and put them into practise without having to use oversized and heavy equipment. By increasing the size of the ball as the players go up the age groups, this lets players gradually adapt to the standard regulations.

**Rules and regulations:** The laws of the game are simplified and as they go up the age groups, new laws are introduced to gradually develop players without over loading them with complex laws from a young age. By having simplified laws, the players can develop a strong understanding and use this as a base as they move up the LTAD model.

**Group size:** The group size is different for each age group. For the under 11's, the team size is a maximum of 12. This increases as you move up through the age groups, new positions are introduced to allow players to develop technical and tactical skills.

### Planning the sessions:



Rainer Martens, (2004), *Successful Coaching*, United States, pg. 237.

#### **Step 1: Identify the skills your athletes need:**

By creating a list of the specific skills needed for rucking I can put these skills into my coaching plan. I will be making this list by talking to the head coach as well as understanding the technical, tactical, mental skills needed in order to coach the ruck sequence.

#### **Step 2: Know your athletes:**

By knowing the players and abilities and knowledge I can plan a coaching session that will be relevant and suitable for the age group I

am coaching. I will need to consider the age of the players, their level of physical, psychological and social maturity, how well the team work together and how much experience they

have had.

#### **Step 3: Analyse your situation:**

Before planning the session I will need to be aware of the situation I will be coaching in. For example, the age category, how many sessions they will have a season, the facilities I will be coaching in, how many players I will be coaching and what tournaments they will be playing in.

#### **Step 4: Establish Priorities:**

This section of planning is specific to the skills that I will be coaching. As I am concentrating on rucking, my priorities are improving the teams overall rucking ability, with smaller aims such as improving knowledge and confidence of rucking.

#### **Step 5: Select the Methods for Teaching:**

I have already selected a 'Convergent Discovery' style of coaching.

#### **Step 6: Plan Practices:**

This part of the plan is where it is written down onto paper. When writing the plan, the elements I will need to consider are; the time, place and length of the sessions, the objective, the equipment needed, the warm up, the main session activities, the cool down and then the feedback of coaches comments. Also, once the session is over, I will need to evaluate the session.

### **Delivering the sessions:**

When the session has been fully planned and prepared the next stage is to deliver it, here are some factors that make an effective delivery:

- Be fully prepared
- Verbally introduce new activities then demonstrate them
- Give feedback to help players improve
- Stay focused on your aims for the session
- Manage the players behaviour
- Evaluate the situation as you go along
- Give a general debrief at the end
- Adapt and develop the session
- Use appropriate language and vary the volume at which you speak
- Maintain a good pace throughout the session

## How I am going to assess myself on the delivery of the sessions:

I will be using coaches' reports to assess myself on my coaching techniques. Within these coaches' reports, they will be commenting on various different techniques including how successful the delivery of the sessions was.

## The Learning:

When coaching young players, coaches must be aware of how children learn and the stages of learning:

### 3 stages of learning a new skill:

#### **Stage 1- Cognitive phase**

At this stage while the performers are still getting used to the fundamental ideas and movements of the new skill it is important for coaches to give lots of feedback. This feedback should be limited to the most important things that need addressing, as too much specific feedback may confuse the performer and discourage them.

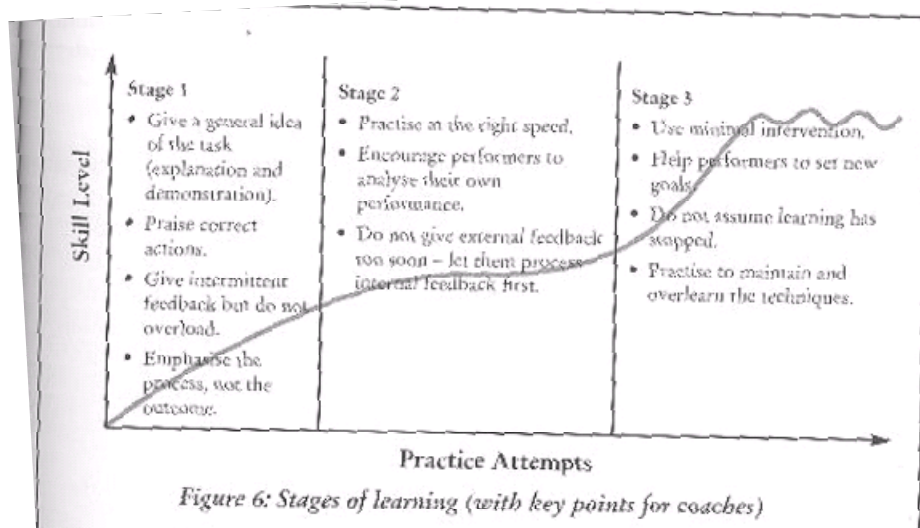
#### **Stage 2- Associative phase**

As performers get used to the movements of the skill, they will be able to perform this skill in different conditions. Here feedback should be more specific and based upon allowing the performer to learn what is correct and what is incorrect with that movement. This is the stage where performers will respond best to feedback.

#### **Stage 3- Autonomous phase**

Once the full movement of the skill is learnt, the third stage comes in. As the movement at this stage is well practised, movement will be fluid and dynamic and the performer will need little cognitive input whilst performing the skill. This means that they can focus on other external aspects such as different conditions, tactics and adapting the skill to beat the opponent. Feedback is still

important at this stage as it allows performers to continually learn, however it should be given later on to allow performers to reflect on their performance and learn for themselves, instead of always



waiting for feedback to be given.

Sports Coach UK,  
(2008), *The Successful  
Coach*, Leeds, pg.35

### Analysis Process:

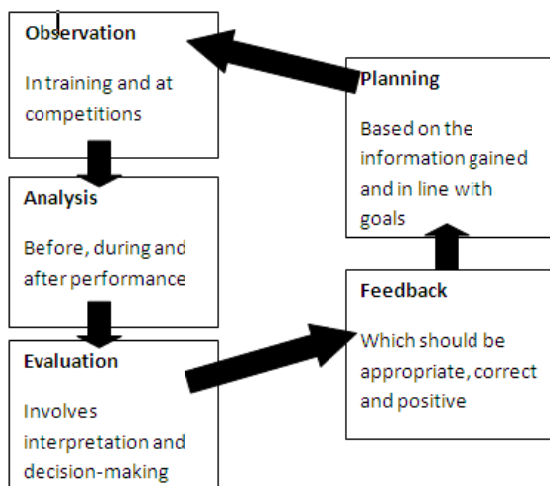


Figure 9: The performance analysis process, *The Successful Coach*, Sports Coach UK

The performance analysis process will help performers learn and develop if it is done effectively. If the coach follows this process and gives feedback and plans the sessions based on this feedback, the learning will be specific to the players needs and subsequently the players will have targeted coaching and will learn quickly and effectively.

Performers learn best when they are:

- Actively involved in the learning
- Able to recognise how and when techniques are used
- Able to build on their own experience and skills
- Interested and motivated
- Able to see their own experiences

As a coach, if you can get your players to do the above then they will be more engaged and involved in their own learning.

To aid with the players learning coaches must:



Demonstrate	Analyse	Feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives a visual image</li> <li>• Provides the correct technique</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good analysis involves good observation combined with a good understanding of the skill</li> <li>• Analysis can be given during or after training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaches should give praise and build on strengths and reduce errors</li> <li>• Feedback should be specific and constructive</li> </ul>

Th

Source: Sports Coach UK, (2010),  
*Coaching Young Performers*, Leeds

## Coaching Session-

### Warm Up:

There are three main objectives whilst warming up, these are:

**To prepare the body both physiologically and mentally for the oncoming performance-** During this stage the performer must consider the following objectives in order for it to be successful; choice of activity, the manner in which they are carried out, the time allowed to carry them out, the perceived success of carrying them out. If these are achieved, then the performer can move onto the next stage.

**To improve performance-** By warming up, it allows your body to be fully prepared for the oncoming performance and by being better prepared you will be more likely to perform at your optimum level.

**To reduce the risk of injury-** By changing the body gradually to a changing environment, it is less likely to experience trauma.

### The 4 stages of the warm up:

A warm up consists of 4 stages, these are; initial preparation, injury prevention, skill practise and sport-specific.

**Initial Preparation:** The first stage of this process is the 'Gross Motor Skills', this is to introduce stress gradually to the body resulting in lowering the risk of injury as well as raising the temperature of the body. This can be achieved by doing a cardiovascular exercise such as jogging. This exercise is

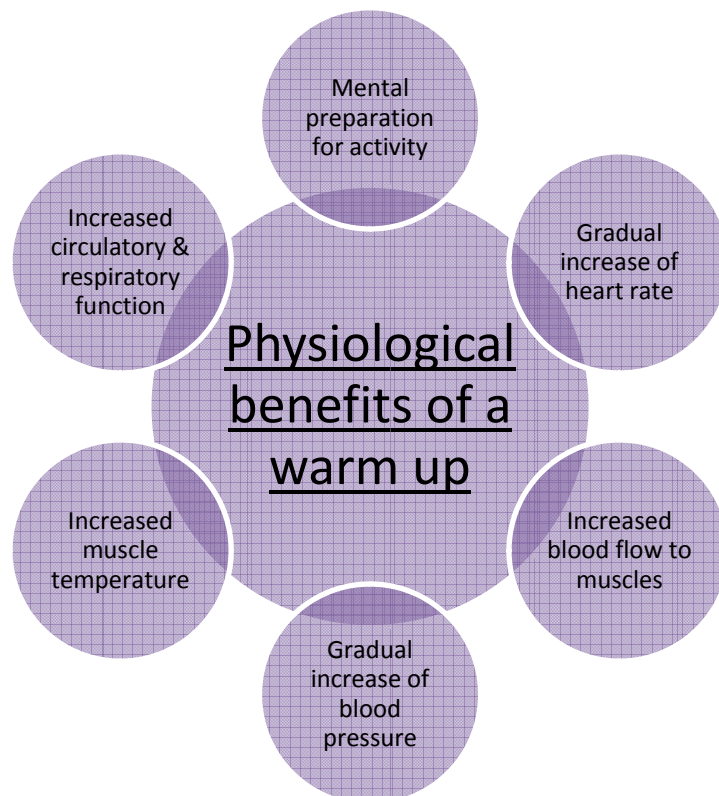
also a pulse raiser which will increase the heart rate to allow responses to occur such as pumping blood to the working muscles.

**Injury Prevention:** This stage's aim is to decrease the risk of injury and increase flexibility by using mobility exercises to increase elasticity in the specific muscles being used. This stage should involve dynamic stretches.

**Skills Practise:** This stage is linked to the skills that you will be using in the upcoming activity. For example, in rugby the movement of passing the ball may be practised.

**Sport-Specific:** This stage is linked to the previous stage as it also allows you to practise skills that will be used in the activity that the players about to do. It allows psychological preparation as well as physiological, as it allows performers to think and practise under the circumstances they will be playing in.

The warm up can be combined into 2 stages, the initial preparation, skills practise and sport specific can be achieved by doing a game such as 'touch rugby' which increases the heart rates of the players whilst also practising skills they will be using in the session such as passing, defending, communication and team work which also makes it sport specific. The injury prevention is then carried out by doing dynamic stretches along the pitch then stretching the upper body, as this is something that is very important when playing rugby. This can be done with a partner and I will be using this method in my coaching sessions.





Warm up game designed to raise pulse and be sport specific

Upper  
body  
stretch  
es



Pictures: Author's own

## Cool Down:

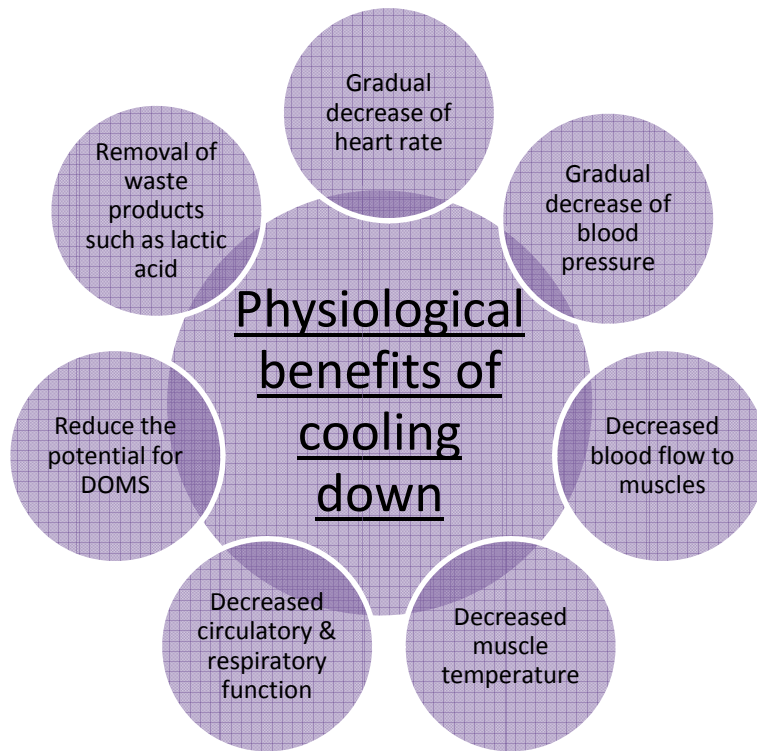
### Why cool down?

The purpose of a cool down is to allow the body to return to pre-exercise conditions.

### The stages of a cool down:

**Light exercise-** Such as jogging, this should be done for 5-10 minutes, to help decrease the heart rate, jogging also removes lactic acid from the working muscles which will decrease the risk of DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness.)

**Stretching-** This should also be done for 5-10 minutes. Static stretching (this involves lengthening the muscle then holding it in that position) and PNF stretching (a combination of passive and isometric contractions) are usually best for a cool down.



Jog to cool down at the end of the session

Pictures: Author's own

Planning for  
Participant  
Development:

### Goal Setting:

I am going to use the SMARTER goal setting technique and apply this to my main and sub aims as this will be specific and give enough depth about my goals.

My main aim is: **To improve rucking in Leighton Buzzard Under 11's team in training and in competitive situations.**

My sub aims are:

**To attend a series of 'Saracens Coach Education Courses', to improve my knowledge and understanding of coaching the laws and techniques of rugby, to improve knowledge,**

**understanding and confidence of rucking in training sessions and to improve rucking success in game situations.**

**SPECIFIC:** My goals must be precise to make them easy to measure, which is why I have divided my main aim into three sub aims, as separately, these are more specific.

**MEASURABLE:** As I have split the main aim into three sub aims, I have devised a way to measure each sub aim with its own test. I am using notational analysis, questionnaires and coaches reports to measure and analyse each aim to see if they have been achieved.

**AGREED:** I agreed the aims with my head coach before I started my 10 weeks of coaching. I did this to make sure that they were realistic for the needs of the participants in the team.

**REALISTIC:** The aims set are realistic as they can be achieved by the team, however, the training that they will do in order to achieve them will challenge the teams technical skills as both individuals and when working in a team.

**TIME:** Each aim will be achieved by the end of the 10 week period.

**EXCITING:** The coaching sessions I have planned will be varied to keep the interest high and to ensure that the players aren't bored.

**RECORDED:** I will test the players at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the 10 weeks and will write down and analyse the results as I go along.

### Process of Planning:

In order to be able to plan I must consider different components of planning and how they are going to affect my goals. This is a systematic process to planning:



Reference: Sports Coach  
UK, (2007), *Planning and Periodisation*,  
Leeds, page 2.

### The Resources needed for Planning:



Coaching Environment	Equipment	Human Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to know:</li> <li>• What facilities are available</li> <li>• How much space there will be</li> <li>• How close to other teams you will be</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to understand what equipment is available before you plan the session</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to know if you will have other coaches available to help with the coaching.</li> <li>• Planning needs to consider what these coaches will be doing and the player-coach ratio.</li> </ul>

There are three categories of resources which need to be considered before planning, these are:

### Principles of Training:

Sports Coach UK,( 2007),*Planning and Periodisation*, Leeds, pg. 60

#### Specificity

The training must be specific to the area I am going to focus on; rucking. This means that every training session and every exercise within this will be related to aspects of rucking.

#### Progression

Progression will be relevant as the knowledge of rucking will be developed through the weeks as the players build up more knowledge and experience.

#### Overload

In order to see an improvement in the players, I will have to plan the sessions so that the training load is higher than usual.

#### Reversibility

The effects of the training will be lost if they are not maintained. Also, to maintain a constant level, training will have to continue at the same level after the 10 weeks.

#### Recovery

Recovery is an important part of training, this becomes more important as training load increases.

#### Variation

The training must be varied to prevent tedium, this means devising a variety of exercises within the training session.

#### Adaptation

The body and mind must adapt to the training programme. By doing this the performer is more able to cope with the stresses of training.

#### Individual Differences

Different performers will react to training in different ways. As the team are under 10's, the training will be adapted to their needs as young performers.

## The Overcompensation Model:

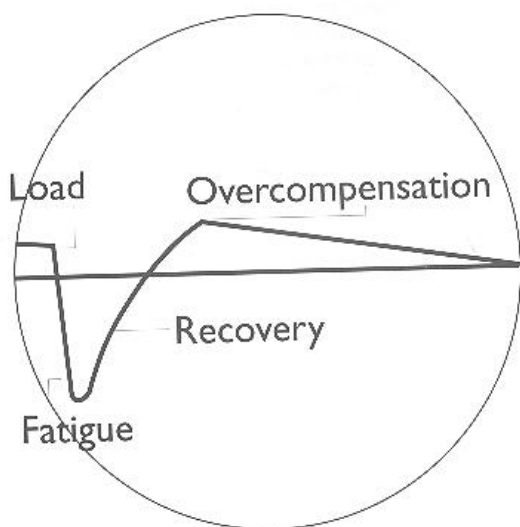


Figure 9: The overcompensation model

This is the process of adaption during the recovery period following training. Loading, recovery and overcompensation are essential parts of training if it is to be effective. After the recovery phase when the adaptations or overcompensations take place, a performer will be able to train at a higher intensity, resulting in an increased performance over a period of time.

Sports Coach UK,( 2007),*Planning and Periodisation*, Leeds, pg. 66

Key factors of the model include:

- There may be loss of training effect if the time between training is too long- therefore any adaptations which may have occurred may be lost and the performer will relapse to the initial level before training. Therefore, it is important to regularly attend training to see improvement. I will apply this to my development plan by making sure that players attend training each week to ensure that any improvements aren't lost.
- If the load is applied without allowing enough time for recovery, overtraining may occur which can lead to injury. This is important as I must make sure that the training level is relevant to the age group of the under 11's and that they aren't being overworked; however, by only training once a week, this is not likely to happen.

It is essential that coaches understand this model in order to maintain a balance between optimal training, competitions and recovery for the performers.

It is also important to remember that for young performer, such as the under 11's team, the length and intensity of training will need to be much less than an adults session.



**Performing**

**and**

**Recording**



# Evaluation

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