

Community Youth
Structured Season
2011-12

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Overview

The Youth Structured Season (YSS) provides a framework for participants at all levels in clubs and schools to develop their sport through a balance of competitive and friendly matches and development skills and training.

The overriding principle is that the needs of young players should come first.

Structured Season

The Youth Structured Season narrative and calendar incorporates the recommendations of the Player Development Pathway Task Group approved by the RFU Council in June 2010. Under this RFU Policy all Clubs, Schools and Constituent Bodies are expected to give precedence to the activity designated within the specified week of the YSS calendar.

The Youth Structured Season seeks to provide solutions to the following:

- Over playing and over training of players in the U13-U18 age groups.
- Balance between the club, school, representative and player development programmes;
- Recognition of the importance of both representative and recreational rugby within the structured season.
- Fixed weeks for CB Schools of Rugby, CB/Divisional development squads and representative matches.
- Ensure that sufficient dates are set aside for coaching and emphasis is placed on coaching individual rugby skills and game understanding as opposed to match preparation and playing matches.
- Balance between coaching/development sessions and matches in line with RFU good coaching practice.
- Avoid clashes between dates for national, regional and CB competitions.



Youth Structured Season

It must be noted that the first weekend of the season is a registration weekend for club players. All players playing club youth rugby must be registered with the RFU.

The purpose of the Youth Structured Season is to enable training, fixtures and competitions to be planned by the Constituent Body Rugby Development Partnership (CBRDP) within the context of all the participants' requirements. It is intended to assist the co-operation of the parallel strands of youth rugby in schools and clubs.

Schools and clubs should plan on the basis that their better players might be unavailable to them during the weeks identified for CB, Divisional and International activity. League and other important fixtures should be avoided during these weeks but friendly games should not be cancelled.

The structured season should enable a balance of fixtures to be created by the CBRDP based on local needs, strengths and weaknesses. It should go some way to preventing overplaying of the most able, whilst providing meaningful coaching and fixtures for those who will progress no further than the club and school level.

The programme operates on a weekly basis starting on Monday and finishing on Sunday, with Daily Mail RBS Cup matches and college fixtures to be played midweek on a Wednesday. This should allow for a week of activity for young players to be planned, taking into account the demands the young player by school, club and representative rugby.

The position of the CB Rugby Development Partnership is central to the success of a meaningful CB Youth Structured Season. Within the national framework a CB can be as proscriptive as it wishes to ensure that there are sufficient dates set aside for developmental work to meet **recommended RFU good coaching practice ratio** versus the number of competitive games.

Agreement across CB boundaries would give a further dimension and thus added strength to the planned playing programmes.

The YSS 2011-12 incorporates the RFUW Girls' Structured Season, dates for the Daily Mail RBS Schools Competitions, for the AASE League, for the National U17 Competition and the National U19 Colts Competition.

Under 13 to Under 18

Under 13 – School Year 8

This is a time when children are enthusiastic and receptive to quality coaching. The emphasis here is on player development, with schools and clubs providing a balance of coaching and fixtures (at least two coaching session in preparation for each match). The Youth Structured Season calendar provides dates for each activity and weeks are designated for Club Training (CT) **when no matches should be played** and those for inter Club/School Matches (CM).

This is the first year of the CB Schools of Rugby (SoR), and the age where the first large scale talent identification takes place. There are no Elite Player Development Group (EPDG) activities at this age. However, it is important that talent identification is enhanced and developed in clubs and schools to ensure that the right pupils are enrolled in the SoR.

Selection for the SoR **should not take place** earlier than Christmas of the U13 season to allow players to remain within their clubs and schools for longer and allow new players to develop their skills and understanding. CB Schools of Rugby to be held during the week to avoid conflict with club and school fixtures on the weekend.

Under 14 – School Year 9

The emphasis here is on player development where schools and clubs should provide a balance of coaching to fixtures (at least two coaching sessions in preparation for each match). The Youth Structured Season calendar provides dates for each activity and weeks are designated for Club Training (CT) **when no matches should be played** and set weeks for inter Club Matches (CM). It is at this age that players first start to really demonstrate talent and elite potential. Players from both clubs and schools will attend the CB School of Rugby to be held during the week to avoid conflict with club and school fixtures on the weekend.

Players in the SoR with the most potential should be identified through effective practice and placed into England Rugby Regional Academy Elite Player Development Groups (EPDGs) as determined by the Academy Manager based on recommendations from CBs. **This will normally be a small number of players from each SoR.**

Under 15 – School Year 10

School of Rugby activity will continue, within the designated windows in the calendar as will EPDG activity

The Daily Mail RBS fixtures are to be played in the designated week. Weeks are designated for Club Training (CT) **when no matches should be played** and set weeks for inter Club Matches (CM).

SoR players should join other county players and participate in three CB U15 matches during the designated representative rugby window. This important activity will allow England Rugby Regional Academy and CB SoR coaches to benchmark player performances.

Those players not chosen for the England Rugby Regional Academy 12-a-side tournament in May each year will participate in a CB U15 Regional 12-a-side on the Mayday weekend with each England Rugby Regional Academy entering one team

On days allocated to CB Representative Games, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging recreational participants.



Under 15 Girls – School Year 10

This age band includes players aged 12, 13 and 14 on 1st September. Club and cluster matches should take place on Club Training or Match (CMT) dates only, and it is advised that clubs carefully consider which dates are used for matches or training, and should not look to play matches on all of these dates.

Players are nominated from CBs to the RFUW Divisional Trials. The Divisional Programme takes place from January until September and is a vital part of the player pathway. From the Divisional Programme, players are selected into Talent Development Groups at U15 which ultimately provide players into the England U20 squad.

All players selected for U15 Divisional squads will be invited to attend CB Schools of Rugby. For further information about the Girls Player Pathway, please contact tomstokes@rfu.com

Under 16- School year 11

The emphasis in the Under16 year is on increasing participation at all levels whether at club/school/CB/ region, whilst providing representative opportunities at divisional/national level for players with potential.

This is the first year where male players with elite potential are effectively removed from the community game representative rugby structures. The Elite Department will name an England Academy U17 squad, based on a 1st January birth date. This squad will have no more than 26 players.

All other U16 male players are eligible for national representative honours. CBs must ensure that clubs and schools work together within the CB to ensure that all participants achieve their full potential.

The CB Structured Season, using the RFU defined dates, must be agreed within the CB Rugby Development Partnership. Weeks are designated for Club training (CT) **when no matches should be played** and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

It is recognised that the majority of school rugby takes place in the 1st term of the school year. There is also a need to support club rugby at this age group by not removing players in the early part of the season to allow clubs to get their season established. **So all representative rugby activity (trials, preparation & matches) will take place during set designated “representative windows” in the YSS calendar**

The purpose of CB rugby at this age should be for providing opportunities to non-SoR players, the benchmarking of SoR players’ progress, and providing a showcase for Divisional selection. It is important to prepare players sufficiently at each level to ensure they find the experience rewarding and are afforded the opportunity for selection to the next level. Preparation should be kept to a minimum with no more than two to three training/preparation sessions recommended before each match.

The purpose of Divisional Rugby at this age is to provide a showcase for England U16 selection.

On days allocated to CB Representative Games, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging the recreational participants.



Under 17- School year 12

These are key years for retaining participants and a development year for the aspiring player. CBs should prepare and deliver a joint U17 & U18 two-year development programme.

To support the retention of U17 players at club level, CB leagues or clusters of CB leagues should be run to provide competitive opportunities for players; these will feed into the National U17s Club Competition.

Weeks are designated either for Club Training (CT) **when no matches should be played** and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

At U17 **all players not in the England Academy U17 squad**, are eligible for national representative honours at England Clubs & Schools U18 based upon their being aged Under18 at midnight on 31st August in the season. CBs must ensure that clubs and schools work together within the CB so that all participants achieve their full potential.

CB Squad preparation and inter CB fixtures should be midweek under floodlights, with some games at the weekend. Only three or four inter-CB games are to be played within this period. Divisions in partnership with the U18 National Delivery Team are to determine which matches selectors will view.

On days allocated to Representative Development Squads, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging recreational participants.

Under 18- School year 13

The emphasis in the Under18 year is on retaining young players participation at all levels whether at club/school/CB/ region, whilst providing representative opportunities at divisional/national level for players with potential.

It is recognised that the majority of school rugby takes place in the 1st term of the school year. There is also a need to support club rugby at this age group by not removing players in the early part of the season to allow clubs to get their teams established. **So all representative rugby activity (trials, preparation & matches) will take place during set designated “representative windows” in the YSS calendar.**

All U18 male players, other than the Elite Department’s England U18 squad, are eligible for national representative honours. CBs must ensure that clubs and schools work together within the CB to ensure that all participants achieve their full potential. Only players who participate in U18 County representative squads would be eligible for upward selection.

It is possible that there will be tensions between CBs, AASE Colleges and England Rugby Regional Academies surrounding player release for county squads. For the avoidance of doubt, all players except those named in the England U18 squad would be eligible for the programme laid out here. However, it is important to recognise that participation in county squads would be a matter of individual choice for each player.

Under 18 Girls - School year 13

This age band includes players aged 15, 16 and 17 on 1st September. Club and cluster matches should take place on CTM dates only, and it is advised that clubs carefully consider which dates are used for matches or training, and should not look to play matches on all of these dates.

Players are nominated from CBs to the RFUW Divisional Trials. The Divisional Programme takes place from January until September and is a vital part of the player pathway. From the Divisional Programme, players are selected into RFUW Talent Development Groups at U18 which ultimately provide players into the England U20 squad.

For further information about the Girls Player Pathway, please contact tomstokes@rfu.com

Competitions

The development of meaningful competitions is a fundamental element of the player development process. The correct balance between matches and development activity is planned for in the structured season.

Under 13 - School year 8 - boys

Club and school matches provide 'friendly' games and consideration should be given by CBs/schools and clubs to investigate ways of introducing cluster groups on some match weekends. The emphasis at this age group is on development and there are no inter CB games.

Under 14 - School year 9 - boys

Provides a similar format to the Under13 programme with the emphasis at this age group is on development.

Under 15 - School year 10 - boys

The programme of CB matches is increased. This culminates in a Divisional 12-a-side CB Festival at the end of the season in an environment that will challenge their skill and game understanding.

The Daily Mail RBS programme is the most important 'open' competition with opportunities for all schools.

Under 16 - School year 11 - boys

This is an important examination year, so once the international squad is selected, the non-selected players will either be involved in CB Schools of Rugby after Christmas or in the CB U17/18 two year development programme.

Under 17 - School year 12 - boys

This is a key year for the retention of players requiring 'club cluster' merit table /leagues organised by CBs. (Schools could be involved in this process if complementary playing times can be organised). The season culminates in the RFU National U17 Competition.

Under 18 - School year 13 - boys

The Daily Mail RBS programme is the most important 'open' competition with opportunities for all schools.

Under 15 and 18 Girls

Competition structure consists of a National Cup Competition and National 7s.



Community Youth Structured Season 2011-12

2011	W/C MON - SUN	Sunday date	UNDER 13	UNDER 14	UNDER 15	DM RBS U15	UNDER 16 COMMUNITY	Clubs & Schools Pathway	
AUG	29	4	Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration		Club Player Registration		
SEPT	5	11	Club Training	Club Training	Club training		Club training		
	12	18	CT	CT	CT	R1 (Wed)	CT		
	19	25	CT	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CM		
OCT	26	2	CM	CM	CM	R2 (Wed)	CT		
	3	9	CT	CT	CM		CM		
	10	16	CM	CM	CT	R3 (Wed)	CT	CB PD	
	17	23	CM	CM	CM		CM		
H/T	24	30	CT	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	CB Match	
NOV	31	6	CM	CM	CM		CT	CB PD	
	7	13	CM	CM	CM	R4 (Wed)	CM		
	14	20	CT	CT	CT		CT	CB Match	
	21	27	CM	CM	CM		CM		
DEC	28	4	CT	CT CB Sch R	CM CB Sch R		CM		
	5	11	CM	CM	CM	R6/V5(Wed)	CM		
	12	18	CT	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	CB PD	
	19	25	Christmas						
2012 JAN	26	1	CT	CT	CT		CT		
	2	8	CM	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	CB PD	
	9	15	CT	CT	CT	V6 (Wed)	CT	CB Match	
	16	22	CM	CM	CM	R7/V7(Wed)	CM		
	23	29	CT	CT	CT		CM	DIV Trials	
FEB	30	5	CM	CM	CM	QF (Wed)	CM		
	6	12	CT	CT	CT		CM	DIV DEV	
	13	19	CM	CM	CT		CT	DIV DEV	
H/T	20	26	CT	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	Eng Prep	
MAR	27	4	CM	CM	CM		CM		
	5	11	CT	CT	CT		CT		
	12	18	CM	CM	CM	SF	CM		
	19	25	CT	CT	CT		CM	CB PDev	
	26	1	CM	CM	CM		CM		
APR	2	8	CT	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	CB Match	
	9	15	CT	CT	CT	FINAL 4th	CT	Eng Prep	
EASTER	16	22	CM	CM	CT		CM	CB PD midweek	
	23	29	CT	CT	CM		CT	CB Match	
MAY	30	6	Divisional CB 12s Tournament						
	MayDay7								




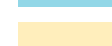

Weeks go from Monday to Sunday to allow activities within the week not exclusively on Sundays.

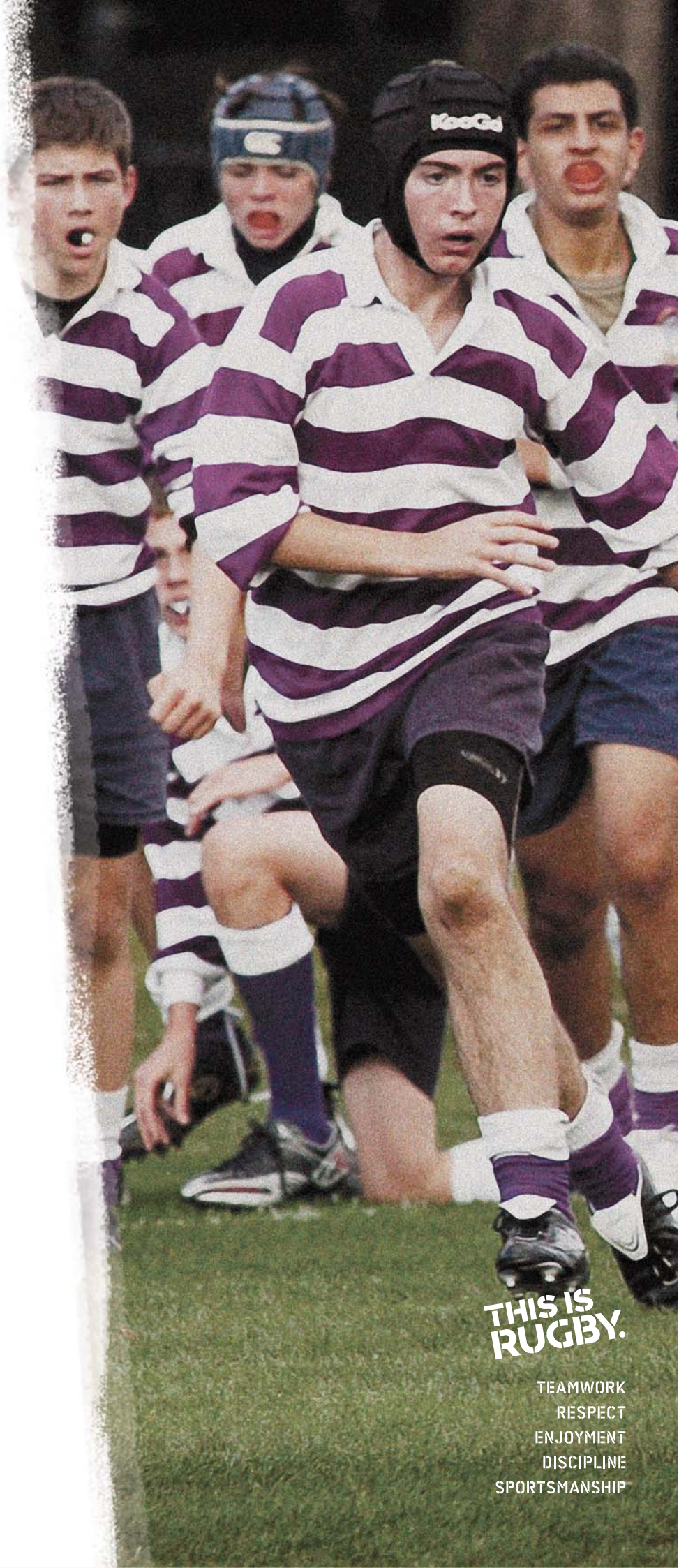
DM Daily Mail Schools Rounds played in specific weeks

CT Club Training

CM CB Club League Competition/Festival

UNDER 17 COMMUNITY	UNDER 18 COMMUNITY	DM RBS U18	Clubs & Schools Pathway	AASE League	U19 Nat Colts Cup	RFUW U15	RFUW U18	2011	W/C Mon-Sun	Sunday date	
Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration					CT	CT	AUG	29	4	
Club training	Club training					CT	CT	SEPT	5	11	
CT	CT	R1 (Wed)		Festival 1		CT	CT		12	18	
CM	CM				CUP	CB/DEV Training Day			19	25	
CM	CM	R2 (Wed)		Rd 1		CTM	CTM	OCT	26	2	
CM	CM					CTM	CTM		3	9	
CT	CT	R3/V1 (Wed)	CB PD	Rd 2	CUP	CB Match			10	16	
CM	CM					CTM	CTM		17	23	
CT	CT		CB Match			CTM	CTM	H/T	24	30	
CT	CT	V2 (Wed)	CB PD			CB Match		NOV	31	6	
CM	CM	R4/V3 (Wed)		Rd 3		CTM	CTM		7	13	
CT	CT		CB Match		CUP	CTM	CTM		14	20	
CM	CM	R5/V4 (Wed)		Rd 4		CTM	CTM		21	27	
CT	CT				PLATE	CTM	CTM	DEC	28	4	
CM	CM	R6/V5 (Wed)		Rd 5		CB Match			5	11	
CT	CT		CB PD			CTM	CTM		12	18	
Christmas											
CT	CT					CT	CT	2012 JAN	26	1	
CT	CT		CB PD			CTM	CTM		2	8	
CT	CT	V6 (Wed)	CB Match	Rd 6	PLATE	CTM	CTM		9	15	
CM	CT	R7 /V7 (Wed)		Rd 7	CUP/PLATE	DIVISIONAL TRIALS			16	22	
CT	CM		DIV TRIALS			CTM	CTM		23	29	
CM	CM	QF (Wed)		Rd 8	CUP/PLATE	CTM	CTM	FEB	30	5	
CT	CB PD		DIV DEV			DIV TRAINING	DIV TRAINING		6	12	
CT	CB PD		DIV DEV			DIV MATCH	DIV MATCH		13	19	
CT	CB Match		Eng Prep			CTM	CTM	H/T	20	26	
CM	Nat Comp			Rd 9	CUP/PLATE	CTM	CTM	MAR	27	4	
CT		SF		Rd 10		CTM	DIV MATCH		5	11	
CM	Nat Comp				QTR FINAL	CTM	CTM		12	18	
CM				Festival 2		DIV TRAINING	CTM		19	25	
CM	Nat Qtr Final		RP7s	Play Offs		DIV TOURN	DIV MATCH		26	1	
CT	CB PD		FINAL 4th	Int'l Prep		SEMI FINAL	CT	CT	APR	2	8
CT	CB Match			Int'l Prep		CTM	CTM	EASTER	9	15	
CM	Nat Semi Final			Int'l Prep/Matches		CTM	CTM		16	22	
CT				Final		CTM	CTM		23	29	
CT	Nat Final					NATIONAL 7'S TOURNAMENT		MAY	30	6	
					FINAL 3rd				MayDay7		

-  RP Rosslyn Park 7s
-  Div Devt Only two Divisions of the four will use these dates
-  CB Sch R CB Schools of Rugby or sub CB
-  RFUW CTM Club Training or Match
-  CB Matches



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