

The RFU Coaching Department are delighted to be in partnership with Goodyear with safety being at the core of both brands.

Outlined below is how tyres can be used in establishing good body positions and core strength – not just in the scrum but for tackle, ruck and maul, with these exercises and tips being as valid for the winger as for the prop.

Figure 1



Graham Rowntree, England and British Lions Scrum Coach demonstrates how it should be done at a Rugby Ready course in the West Midlands.

Straight back and looking up through the eye brows, feet shoulder width apart, straight back with shoulders above hips.

The tyre is easier to move if the correct body position is adopted.

Figure 2



This position is as easy to adopt at the community level as for the elite game.

The player pictured may wish to lift the head very slightly, but even so this is a very strong position and by holding this position for a few seconds repeatedly the coach can correct inaccurate technique and the players can build their core strength.

As for any activity it is important to get a balance and it is advisable that short intensive bursts are preferable to prolonged activity

Figure 3



The heavier the tyre is the more difficult it is to push – most especially if the incorrect position is adopted.

Here both participants have focused more on “racing” than on technique. The tyres are going away from them and as a consequence the shoulders have dipped below the hips.

Placing sand filled bags or weights inside the tyre will assist in remedying this, and the coach should continually monitor technique

Figure 4



In Figure 4 the young player has managed to maintain a good body position.

However, as in Figure 3 (above) the player – in his haste to move forward has taken large steps.

If this is related to the scrum or contact situation, it is not desirable to have one foot off the ground for long as this will reduce drive and make the player vulnerable to a counter push. Players should be encouraged to take short and quick steps.

Figure 5



The tyre can be used for more than one player, and up to 4 players can be accommodated.

The players pictured are trying to move the tyre (virtually impossible) whilst maintaining good body position, enhancing core strength and increasing isometric strength.

Peer coaching is an effective method of reinforcing good technique.

The use of tyres has been widely recognised as an effective way of increasing core strength and good body position

Strange as it may seem, it is often more difficult for bigger, heavier players to move the tyre - unless they are in the correct position - than smaller and lighter players. This is caused by the amount of weight pushing down on the tyre (causing more friction) than behind the tyre.

This is an important point for coaches to be aware of as lighter players – most especially children – can move the tyres fairly easily without necessarily being in a good position. Increased weight on the tyre (weight bag, sand bag) and a concentration on technique rather than movement can assist in overcoming this.

Although competitive “races” can be used it does encourage a focus on forward movement rather than technique and big, elongated steps are taken rather than the desired shorter quick steps. It may be possible to use bands to remedy this, although care should be taken to ensure that it does not cause abrasions or discomfort for the player.

Insisting on correct technique is paramount for the players and coach.

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