

GRASSROOTS



COMMUNITY RUGBY

Season 2008/9

COACHING

"Jim Turley is the best coach in the world. He is really patient and funny but he can be quite strict. He tells us before a match to try our best and he makes playing really fun for everybody."

Charlie Vleck - Rosslyn Park U9s



The best coach in the world!

Inner-city youngsters can get top class coaching



If we are to encourage people, young or old, to play sport, to make their experience enjoyable and keep them involved, we need to provide the best possible coaches.

We want all players to make the most of their game and to reach their full potential and, whether they play for a local club or in the Premiership, they always remember coaches who helped along the way.

England's 2003 World Cup winning lock Ben Kay MBE

has huge affection for Ian Robinson, his coach and former PE teacher at Merchant Taylors in Liverpool, who died in a white-water rafting accident,



Ian Robinson

"Ian was certainly the person who fostered a love for the game in me and he did that with everyone, it wasn't just the guys who were good at rugby. He encouraged us to enjoy the game and that's something I try to remember."

Ben Kay

- This is what the Rugby Football Union is achieving.
- The RFU has some 2.2million players involved in playing every type of rugby at all age groups.
- The RFU has some 35,000 qualified coaches
- Some 25,000 coaches gained RFU Coaching Qualifications between 2005/08

Ben Kay at Merchant Taylors



Starting Young

More and more young people are getting involved in coaching, with the RFU encouraging teenagers to become involved in a special **Community Sports Leaders Award**.

Thousands of youngsters are now coaching tag rugby, running tournaments and events and becoming valued and valuable leaders within rugby union and their communities. They contribute and gain a great deal, creating opportunities for others to play, gaining in confidence and acquiring skills that will help them in future careers.

Brockenhurst College Coaches Alan Steel and Bryn Coslett

"The course has shown players within the sports academy how to deliver specific coaching sessions with their current knowledge. This has already been put to the test with some of the squad helping with sessions at local primary schools and passing on skills to the next generation of players."



Paul O'Brien a pupil at Brockenhurst College in Hampshire

"I was really pleased that my College offers the CSLA course as the experience that I have gained will hopefully help me to gain a place at university and eventually a career in sports development."



Teachers Too

Teachers are also heavily involved in coaching, supported and trained by the RFU. In a single year something like 1,000 teachers are helped to learn how to coach or to improve their coaching through special development days run by the RFU and supported by the Daily Mail and Sportscoach UK. A tremendous range of presenters, including Premiership Academy coaches, give instruction appropriate for either fledgling or experienced coaches.

Coaching Teachers to Coach Tag

Tag rugby is an ideal, non contact game for teachers to introduce to mixed sex, mixed ability and even mixed age groups. The RFU's Tag Rugby Course ensures that teachers are equipped to coach their pupils, with Yazoo and the Child Victims of Crime police charity helping to fund a National Tag Rugby Development Officer and kit for kids.

Safety First

The RFU encourages coaches to concentrate on safe techniques and practices, getting together with the IRB and other Home Unions to launch the IRB Rugby Ready course, supported by Goodyear, and offering practical sessions, a dvd and manual.

"The RFU have been great contributors to the development of Rugby Ready and have taken the delivery and support to coaches to higher levels."

**Mark Harrington,
International Rugby
Board Training Manager**



Within two years the RFU had hit its target of a million children experiencing tag rugby, with police community officers trained to coach the sport alongside community rugby coaches.

Grange Park School, Enfield, reached the RFU's national tag finals in July 2008 and also played a curtain raiser at a Twickenham Stadium international after their teacher Hannah Lay and headmaster Paul Smith coached them to success.

Said Kitan from Year 5,

"I really enjoy playing tag rugby. It keeps me fit and healthy and I like playing matches with my friends against other schools."

Says headteacher Paul Smith,

"Our weekly training sessions involve 75 children, who turn up in all kinds of weather. The mixture of boys and girls helps to break down sporting stereotypes, encouraging teamwork. The self discipline and focus required to play tag is beneficial for children who have challenging behaviour in school. It has a positive impact, they are more attentive, less challenging and make good academic progress."

Keeping Young Players Involved

Students leaving home for university are besieged by a great many leisure attractions, some unhealthy and others positively harmful. Keeping them fit and involved in sport relies heavily on the encouragement of good and dedicated coaches. The RFU is involved in helping coaches run an increasing number of student teams and in a single year as many as 18,000 students run out onto pitches to train and play.

Northumbria University has both men's and women's teams, the latter reaching the national British Universities Sports Association final at Twickenham Stadium in 2007.

Their coach, England women's international prop, Katy Storey says,

"The RFU's courses help immeasurably. Dealing with students, whether cock sure or new to the sport, you need the confidence to know in the right way. It doesn't matter what level of rugby you play yourself different skill set."



A Different Level

In England no less than **5,000** people gain **Level 1** coach status every year and once they have earned this qualification they join a pool of competent and confident coaches countrywide.

Of this constantly expanding group, more than **1,200** go on to qualify as **Level 2** coaches every year.

Talented and senior coaches, running rugby within schools and clubs are encouraged to take their Level 3 coaching qualification.

Among this group are those embarking on the **Level 3 Professional Players Course**

Nigel (Ollie) Redman, won 20 caps for England, captained the British & Irish Lions twice and made 349 first team appearances for Bath. Now he is the RFU's Elite Coach Development Manager and part of the team encouraging elite players to try the **Level 3 Professional Players Course** designed especially for them and delivered largely in their clubs.

Says Ollie, "Getting involved in the course and, ideally, coaching a local club team will tell players if they have got what it takes. They might have an understanding of the game but coaching is all about getting that understanding across. A lot of what coaching awards cover now is the learning preference of those you are dealing with."

Ollie began taking awards while still playing for Bath, starting with "lads and lasses from the local technical college." He now has the highest coaching qualification and is on the lookout for aspiring coaches. "Quite a few of the top coaching jobs are taken by overseas coaches but it's our responsibility to find the right people to train up so that we can put pressure on clubs to contract qualified English coaches," he says.



Nigel Redman



Lawrence Dallaglio and Richard Hill

Among the professional players gaining coaching qualifications are some who have retired and others still playing at the highest level, including the likes of Lawrence Dallaglio, Richard Hill, Mike Catt, Danny Grewcock, Lee Mears and James Haskell.

Always Improving

Mike Umaga, coach of Nuneaton and Birmingham University, and brother of All Black Tana Umaga, has worked through RFU Level 3 and 4 coaching qualifications and says, "What the RFU has in place is top notch. The role of the Coach Development Officer is fundamental. Whenever I have needed it I have always had the support of my local development officer immediately to hand."

Coaches are on the front line when it comes to making sure players enjoy their game and want to keep playing it. We have all had experience of sports coaches who turn people off and are a huge part of the reason they give up. At the RFU we know that it is the coach that makes all the difference.

That is why our coaches are valued, supported and why their continuous personal development is of fundamental importance.

The RFU Red Rose Programme identifies the individual development needs of our top coaches and supports their personal development even after they have gained all the recognised coaching qualifications.

Not only will coaches develop and gain skill and understanding through their coaching awards but the RFU is developing a range of courses designed specifically to help coaches develop a broader understanding of the game and their role within it.

Whether it is working with the front row; helping players to improve their kicking or improving the lineout, coaches will be enabled to undertake training to help develop their expertise at sessions in a convenient location, making them accessible to all.



...ence to know you are giving the right advice and you play yourself, coaching requires a completely

Pathway to Success

The RFU wants to get the very best for their coaches and players and recognises that this is most effectively achieved by working in partnership with others, sharing experience, expertise and combined research.

This is why the Union works closely with sportscoach UK and the Welsh and Scottish Unions.

Chief Executive of sportscoach UK, Pat Duffy, says,

"I have been hugely impressed with the coaching work that the RFU is doing and the way they work in partnership to achieve the best results and take sport's many advantages to players at all levels of the game."

Serious Endeavour

By the time a coach decides to embark on a **Level 4** qualification, it's already understood that this is going to mean a big investment of time, energy and intellectual endeavour.

The programme runs for 18 months and covers everything from the coaching process to strength and conditioning and from psychology to technical and tactical skills. Everyone involved also has to specialise in either lineout, scrum, contact & attack, defence or kicking.

This is the level at which a coach is already skilled and ready to operate at the top level of the sport and often to specialise.



Gary Street

Gary Street, Head Coach of the England Women's Team, felt that Level 4 was an essential stride on the elite coach pathway...

"It helps you to develop and improve over the course of a year and a half, using what you learn along the way. It challenges your thought processes and gives you a good insight into where you can develop further. Level 4 definitely gave me clarity of thought regarding where next, how can I continue to improve?"



Coaching the Coaches

If we want the best possible coaches we must provide the best possible coach education and this is what the RFU aims to do.

The Head of Elite Coach Development and Elite Coach Development Manager work to help the best coaches get even better.

Senior trainers, regional trainers, mentors, coach educators and coach developers are all a fundamental part of the RFU's coach educator team.

At community level a Head of Coach Development oversees the work of three National Coaching Development Managers. These in turn manage particular coaching programmes.

The RFU also employs eight full-time regionally-based Coach Development Officers, who manage a local part time workforce.

- ✱ **94 REGIONAL TRAINERS** make sure that everyone receives the highest quality coach education across their region and that Coach Educators develop and improve and provide good coaching service
- ✱ **500 COACH EDUCATORS** instruct the coaches on the ground and qualify them in awards at Levels 1 – 3, also overseeing their continuous professional development.
- ✱ **42 COACH MENTORS** are trained to support and advise talented coaches who are on the way up as identified by the Coaching Development Officers and coaching committees within each county
- ✱ **958 CLUB COACHING COORDINATORS** are the link between local clubs and the governing body and they ensure that coaches in their clubs have all the help possible. The RFU is constantly building on the numbers to make sure that they have close contact with all club coaches.

In London's inner city, Kilburn Cosmos is a club with a burgeoning senior section and new mini and youth section. Says Chairman, Phil Morgan,

"We have been helped enormously by the Club Coaching Coordinator programme. With access to a network of support in Middlesex I can now match the right people to the right course at the right time - an invaluable help in our development as a club."

Coaching can make a difference anywhere

Prison officer Nigel Seaman Physical Education Officer at Chelmsford Prison and rugby coach was commended in the 2008 national Justice Awards, the country's top awards for the Criminal Justice System after making an "outstanding contribution to working with offenders". Helped by the RFU, he ran a rugby-themed Community Sports Leaders Course for 20 adult prisoners, believed to be the first rugby course of its kind for adult prisoners in the UK.

Around the World

RFU Coaches frequently help out in deprived communities around the world. An RAF sevens squad playing in South Africa went into the townships to provide rugby clinics for local children. Said Coach, Flt Lt Tim Barlow, "We ran it along the same lines as we would a normal session back in the UK. The kids gave it their all. Just to see how enthusiastic they are and how they improve is really moving."



Coach development and licensing scheme

The government's UK Coaching Framework calls on all national governing bodies to "set out and implement the steps needed to establish coaching as a professionally regulated vocation, recognising volunteer and part/full-time roles. As a first step, conduct a detailed feasibility study on the licensing and registration of coaches".

The RFU's groundbreaking coach development programme linked to a registration and licensing scheme, is being piloted in: East Midlands, Leicestershire and Notts, Lincs and Derbyshire for two years from January 2009 and supported by a range of Continuous Personal Development events..

A licence will be granted automatically when a coach gains a qualification and the CPD programme will then help to support the 35,000 RFU qualified coaches at all levels of the game. Licensees can become members of a new RFU Coaches Association with a variety of benefits and discounts available.

Contact details

**For more information on the RFU's coaching initiatives and courses go to rfu.com/coach
For regional contacts get in touch with the RFU's Regional Coach Development Officers**

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