

## CATCH AND PASS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES BY ALI HEPHER, NORTHAMPTON (ENGLAND) ACADEMY

There are certain principles that should be applied to catching and passing and these apply to players at all levels of the game. It is very important that any coaching system embraces the principles so that players improve and retain better skill levels.

### RECEIVING.

1. Accelerate as quickly as possible in a straight line and attack the defensive line. Always time the accelerating run from the inside attacker and do not start at the first pass. If this occurs, the outside players will probably overrun the ball by the time it gets to them and, if they do manage to get the ball, there will be no time to execute the pass.
2. When taking a pass, show both hands to the passer, creating a target that the passer can hit – ‘meet and greet’ the ball. Place the thumbs so that they are just touching, forming the letter W, spread the fingers and bend the elbows slightly.



3. Catch the ball in front of the body without cushioning it into the body.
4. Maintain pace through the ball. Do not drift with the direction of the pass and do not fall away from the pass.



### PASSING.

5. Push the ball straight across the body towards the intended receiver.
6. Isolate the hand movement from the stride pattern so that the latter is unaltered by the pass.



7. Avoid moving the hands in a semi-circular motion. Imagine that there is a pane of glass in front of the pass, which stops the hands from moving away from the body.
8. The aim should be to catch and pass within one step.

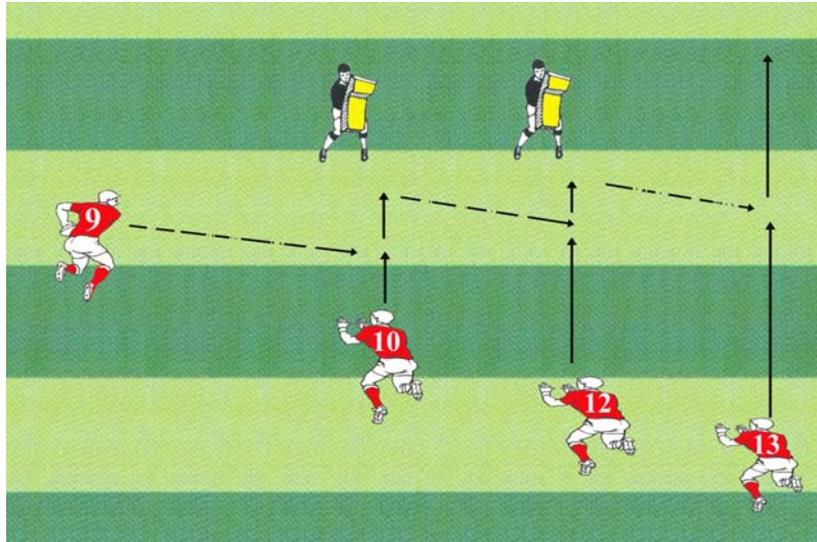
9. Once the pass is completed, continue the line of run so that any drifting defenders have to get around you – and you are also still moving quickly as a support player.



10. Step across to support the pass.

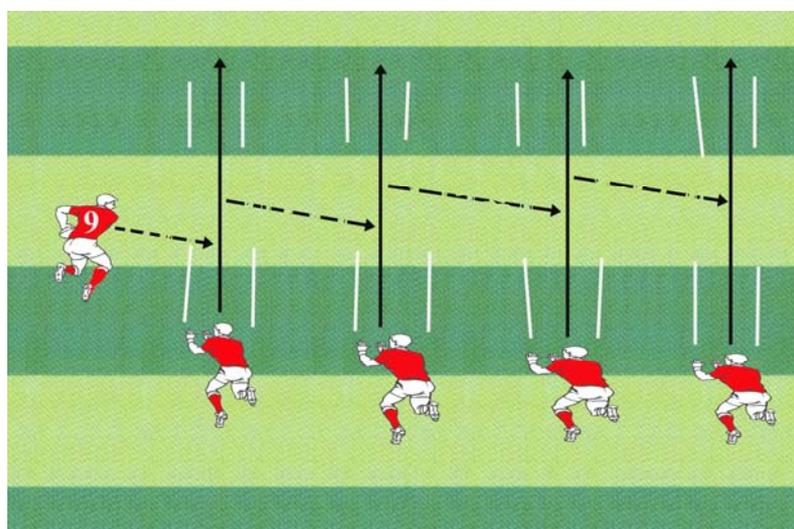
## PRACTICES.

### **PRESSURE HANDS – PUTTING THE PASSING SKILLS UNDER PRESSURE.**



- The scrum half (9) starts with the ball.
- The attacking players line up in a straight line and at an angle that allows enough space to accelerate onto the ball when it comes to them.
- Each player must accelerate onto the ball.
- Each player should be able to catch and pass before making contact with the tackle shield.
- Remember the techniques mentioned in catching and passing above. Accelerate, 'meet and greet', the letter W, run straight and make one-step passes.
- As skills improve, move the attackers closer to the defence but be prepared to move further back (to allow more time and space) if the skill levels break down.

### **DISCIPLINED HANDS.**



- The scrum half (9) starts with the ball.
- The other attacking players outside 9 line up opposite two gates that can be formed with corner posts (even tackle shields on their side). Cones are not as good as the players need to see some part of the defence above the ground so that they do not run and look down at the same time in an attempt to locate the cones.
- 9 passes to the first attacker when he has gone through the first gate, he then passes to the second attacker as he goes through his first gate etc.
- Each player sprints through the second gate, maintaining the pace throughout the sequence.
- The posts/gate will keep the players on a straight line and develop handling skills at the same time.
- As the players improve, move each pair of gates closer together (allowing less time and space for the skills).
- Remember the techniques mentioned in catching and passing above. Accelerate, 'meet and greet', the letter W, run straight and make one-step passes.

These are not complex practices but they can quickly put players' skills under pressure. Always remember to increase the time and space available if success is hard to achieve – do not practise failure for too long. Once the players improve, the coach can slowly take away time and space again to see if the improvement remains when the new boundaries have been set.