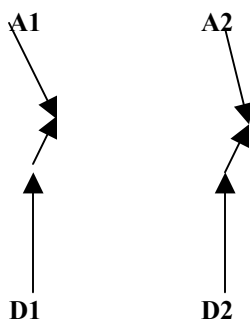


Backline Defence By Matt Ryan

Man on Man Defence

- • Stay on the inside shoulder of the attacker. Defender lines up his outside shoulder on the attackers inside shoulder.
- It is vital that you move forward before you go across.
- Never get beaten on the inside.
- Stay square on to the trylines, turning sideways whilst drifting is an invitation for the attackers to turn the ball back and drop an angle on the sideways player.
- In defence players must always be square on to the trylines, moving up on the balls of their feet and not sitting back on their heels waiting for the attackers.
- Golden Rule is don't slide until the ball is passed. Stay on your man until the ball is gone.
- Extra players such as fullback and blindside wing entering the attacking line must be covered by their opposite number when man on man defence is called.
Example if fullback sees the opposition fullback entering the line he must come up into the defensive line and cover him.

Example:



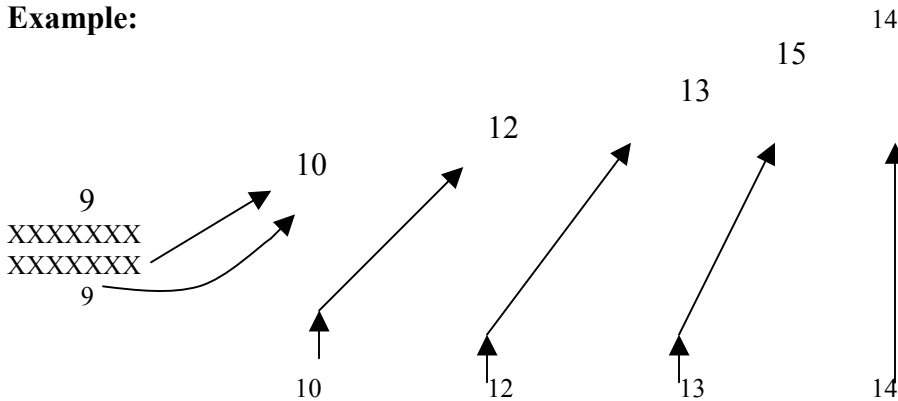
The diagram shows attackers A1 and A2 and defenders D1 and D2. As you can see D1 and D2 stay on the inside shoulder of their attackers and their first movements are forward. The second arrows show the movements of D1 and D2 after the ball is gone they slide and provide inside cover for the outside defender.

Backline Defence

Drift Defence

- Defenders start on the inside shoulder of their opposite attacking number.
- First 2 steps are forward but then the defenders must drift quickly.
- The drift is not a sideways movement the defender must stay square on to the trylines as much as possible.
- Players cannot drift unless there is clear communication that the inside player is covering the outside opposition player.

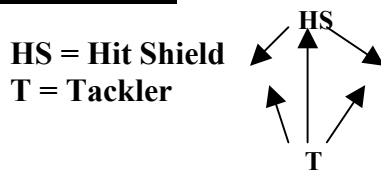
Example:



- This example shows drift defence from a lineout.
- The call is made for drift so the backline gets off the mark and moves forward and then drifts quickly to cover the next outside man.
- The opposition fullback entering the line is easily covered by the defending 13, who is confident that his opposite 13 is being covered by his team mate 12.
- The man at the back of the lineout is initiating the drift by covering 10.

Man on Man Defence Drills

Drill 1 – Hit Shield Tackle

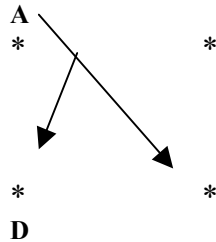


1. Pair up Players with a hit shield between each pair.
2. Partners line up opposite each other, attacker has the hit shield.
3. Attacker runs at the defender front on for the first 4 contacts then moving to the left and right across the face of the defender for 4 contacts on left and right shoulder.
4. The drill is emphasising shoulder contact so the tackle is not followed through.
5. The key factors of the Tackle should be reviewed throughout the drill.

Backline Defence

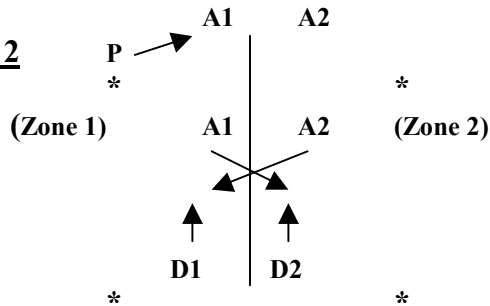
Drill 2 – 1 on 1

A = Attacker
D = Defender



- 1) Players pair up and stand opposite each other 10m apart in a 10m square , 1 player designated the attacker with the ball and the other player designated the defender. Before commencing the ball carrier puts up his inside arm, giving the tackler his inside shoulder target area, the defender puts up his outside arm to acknowledge.
- 2) The attacker runs at the defender and attempts to evade the tackle and score a try by running to the outside or inside. The defender try's to stop the attacker with a shoulder hit using the Principles of Defence, most importantly don't get beaten on the inside.
- 3) The defender to complete 4 hits on the left shoulder and 4 hits on the right shoulder. To do this the attacker will need to start from both sides of the square.

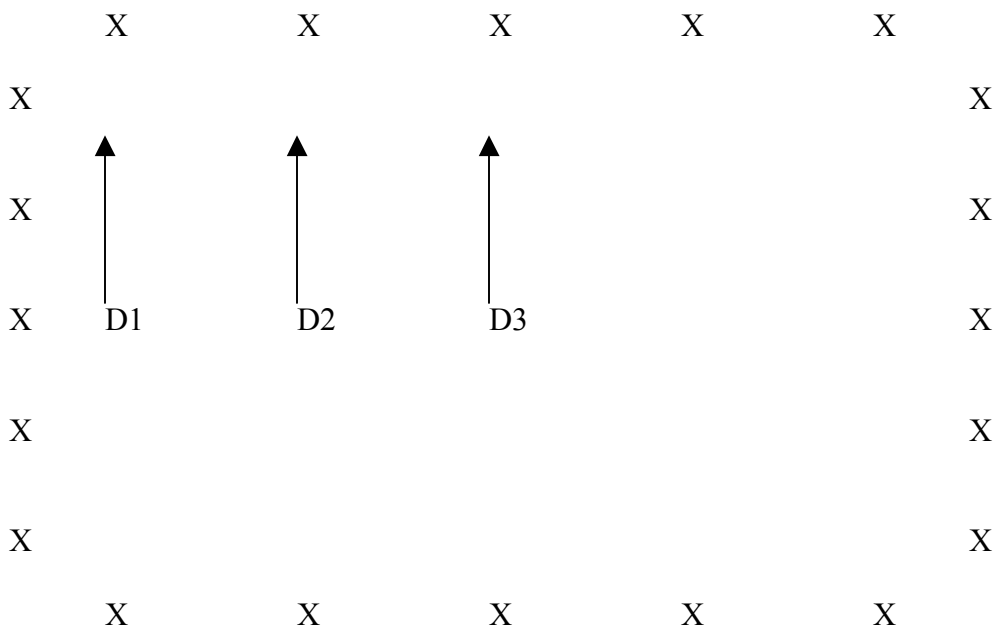
Drill 3 – 2 on 2



- 1) Drill is commenced by a pass from P to Attacker 1, A1 and A2 attempt to score a try. (Use 15m square for this Drill)
- 2) Defenders 1 and 2 attempt to defend their tryline by using Principles of Defence, very important that they don't get beaten on the inside.
- 3) If A1 and A2 switch it very important that D1 and D2 stay in their respective Zones.
- 4) D1 and D2 must communicate, if A1 switches and moves into D2's Zone, D1 must not follow, A1 then becomes D2's tackle.
- 5) Defenders defend for 6 sets then swap, 3 sets left, 3 sets right.

Backline Defence

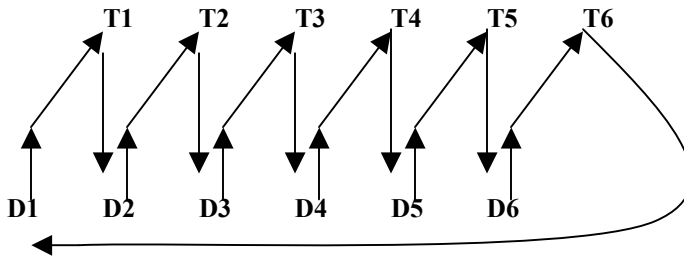
Drill 4 – Box Drill



- 5 Attackers (X) on the 4 sides of the square facing 3 defenders (D).
- The 3 defenders have to push the 5 attackers to the outside and not get beaten on the inside using man on man defence.
- The last attacker on the end of the line passes the ball to the first attacker in the next line of 5.
- The defenders have to immediately realign to mark the next group of 5 attackers coming from a different side.
- The drill is continuous and the defenders have to constantly realign as the 4 sides of the square constantly attack them.

Drift Defence Drills

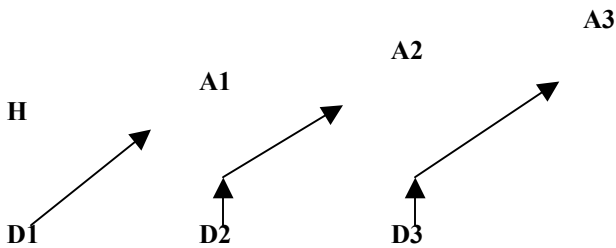
Drill 1 - Tackle Bag Drift



T = Tackle Bag or Hit Shield
D1-D6 = Defenders

- Tackle bags are set up offset with the first tackle bag opposite D2.
- The defenders move forward to a marker 2m from their starting position they drift to the outside to make a tackle on the outside tackle bag.
- They rotate through the drill with D6 becoming D1 after each tackle.

Drill 2 – 3 on 3 Drift

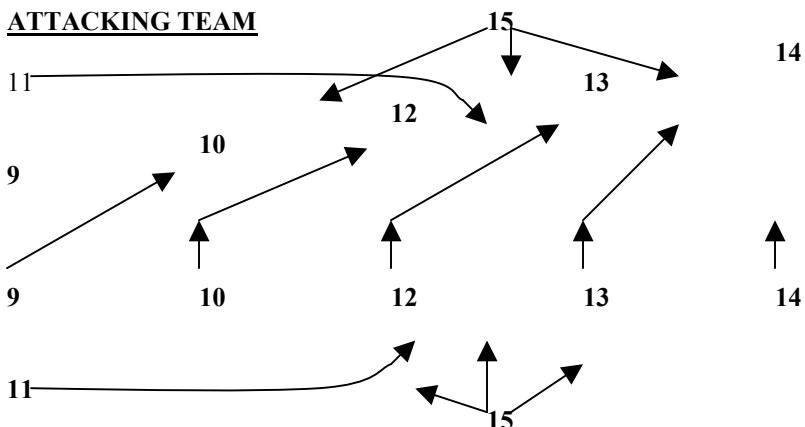


H = Halfback
A = Attackers
D = Defenders

- Drill set up as above, space used can be varied from small grid to large grid.
- The Halfback on the attacking team initiates the drill by passing to A1.
- D1 drifts straight away simulating a flanker, D2 and D3 move forward then drift.
- The attackers attempt to make line breaks on the inside and the outside.

Drill 3- Covering the Extra Man

ATTACKING TEAM



DEFENDING TEAM

Notes on Pattern

- 2 backlines facing each other, 1 defending the other attacking.
- The defending team uses drift defence to prevent the attacking team from making a line break.
- The attacking the fullback can enter the line at any point to receive a pass.
- The difficulty can be increased by giving the attacking fullback an extra ball this means that the defending team has to defend 2 footballs entering the line.
- The difficulty can also be increased by having 2 attackers entering the line simulating a blindside wing and a fullback entering the backline.
- The coach can stand behind the defending line and indicate with hand signals where in the line he wants the extra men to attack.
- The drift pattern should comfortably contain 1 extra attacker entering the backline. If the fullback and the blindside wing enter the line, the defending blindside wing should follow. Last resort is the defending fullback moves up to the line to defend.