

DEFENCE TRAINING OVERVIEW by Matt Ryan

Defence

These 5 Defence Training Sessions can be done over a 5 week block with the last session culminating in a game like situation. All Key Factors and Principles should be evident in the last week of training.

Please note that these drills are designed to improve team Phase Play Defence, backline players will need further training on Drift and Man on Man defence patterns.

Individual Tackle

- For players to become familiar with the key factors of the tackle.
- For players to review the basic front on tackle, side on tackle and associated safety components.

Principles of Defence

After the 5 week block of Defence Sessions, players should be familiar with the Principles of Defence and be able to execute them in game situations.

Principles of Defence are;

- Stay on the inside shoulder of the attacker. Defender lines up his outside shoulder on the attackers inside shoulder.
- Defence pattern is essentially up and drift, it is vital that you move forward before you go across. (except where man on man defence is required, ie 5m zone either side of ruck/maul).
- 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 attackers.

Phase Play Defence

After the 5 week block of training, players should be familiar with the Principles of Phase Play Defence and be able to execute them in game situations.

Phase Play Defence Principles are:

- Defensive line must be lined up in a straight line, level with the back feet of the last player in the ruck & maul.
- The defensive line must move up together either side of the breakdown. If one side holds and does not move up with the other side, it provides the attackers an opportunity to bring the ball and attack the side where the space has not been denied.
- Pillar on either side of the breakdown put one of their arms up to give outside players a point to mark up on. Pillars lead up the defensive line when the ball is cleared.
- The 5 metre zone either side of the breakdown is man on man defence, with 2-3 players defending this zone either side of the breakdown.
- Outside this 5m zone players use a very tight drift pattern which is stay on the inside shoulder and don't drift until the ball is gone. (Optional – Junior teams can just keep the straight line across the field and not do the tight drift)