



YOUTH STRUCTURED SEASON 2009/2010

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YOUTH STRUCTURED
SEASON 2009/2010



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OVERVIEW

The structured season provides a framework for participants at all levels in clubs and schools, to develop their involvement in the sport through a balance of matches (competitive and friendly) and development (skills and training). The overriding principle is that the needs of young players should come first.

Structured Season

The structured season table shown on page 9 seeks to provide solutions to the following:

- Overplaying and over training of players in the U13-U18 age groups
- Balance between the club, school, representative and player development programmes
- Recognition of the importance of both elite (representative) and community (recreational) rugby within the structured season
- Fixed weeks for CB Schools of Rugby, CB/Divisional development squads and representative matches
- Ensure that sufficient emphasis is placed on coaching individual rugby skills as opposed to playing games
- Balance between coaching/development sessions and matches
- Avoid clashes between dates for national, regional and CB competitions

“THE PROVISION OF A YOUTH RUGBY STRUCTURE THAT WILL DEVELOP THE POTENTIAL OF ELITE AND RECREATIONAL PARTICIPANTS AND RECOGNISES THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTH TO THE GAME’S FUTURE IN ENGLAND.”

RFU STRATEGIC PLAN



YOUTH STRUCTURED SEASON

It must be noted that the first weekend of the season is a registration weekend for club players. All players playing club youth rugby must be registered with the Rugby Football Union (RFU).

The purpose of the Youth Structured Season is to enable training, fixtures and competitions to be planned by the Constituent Body Rugby Development Partnership (CBRDP) within the context of all the participants' requirements. It is intended to assist the co-operation of the parallel strands of youth rugby in schools and clubs.

Schools and clubs should plan on the basis that their better players might be unavailable to them during the weeks identified for CB, Divisional and International activity. League and other important fixtures should be avoided during these weeks but friendly games should not be cancelled.

The structured season should enable a balance of fixtures to be created based on local needs, strengths (and weaknesses). It should go some way to preventing overplaying of the most able, whilst providing meaningful coaching and fixtures for those who will progress no further than the club and school level.

The programme operates on a weekly basis starting on Monday and finishing upon a Sunday with Daily Mail Cup matches and college fixtures to be played midweek on a Wednesday. This should allow for a week of activity for young players to be planned considering demands upon the young player by school, club and representative rugby.

The position of the CB Rugby Development Partnership is central to the success of a meaningful Constituent Body (CB) Youth Structured Season. Within the national framework a CB can be as prescriptive as it wishes to ensure that there are sufficient dates set aside for developmental work to meet recommended RFU good coaching practice, versus the number of competitive games. Agreement across CB boundaries would give a further dimension and thus added strength to the planned playing programmes.

The YSS 2009/10 incorporates the RFUW Girls' Structured Season and the dates for the National U19 Colts Competition.

Under 13 and Under 14

This is a time when children are enthusiastic and receptive to quality coaching opportunities. The emphasis here is on player development where schools and clubs should provide a balance of coaching to fixtures. The Youth Structured Season chart provides further details of the programmes proposed at each age grade and weeks are designated for Club training (CT) when no matches should be played and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

Within these age groups identified players from both clubs and schools will attend the CB School of Rugby to be held during the week to avoid conflict with club and school fixtures on the weekend.

The U14 group will play one CB representative game over the Easter Holiday period.

Under 15

As the Daily Mail fixtures become fewer in the season so the CB needs to provide events/festivals/gatherings at the periods defined to complement this structure. Weeks are designated for Club training (CT) when no matches should be played and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

Within this age group identified players from both clubs and schools will attend the CB School of Rugby to be held during the week to avoid conflict with club and school fixtures on the weekend.

This age group will play two to three inter-CB representative games in total – to be played in the February and Easter vacation periods. Players in this age group will also participate in the CB Regional 12's Festival each year.

On days allocated to CB Representative Games, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging the potential recreational participant.

Under 15 Girls

This age band includes players aged 12, 13 and 14 on 1st September. Club and cluster matches should take place on CTM dates only, and it is advised that clubs carefully consider which dates are used for matches or training, and should not look to play matches on all of these dates.



Under 16

At U16 all players are eligible for national representative honours. CBs must ensure that clubs and schools work together within the CB to ensure that all participants achieve their full potential.

The CB Structured Season, using the RFU defined dates, must be agreed within the CB Rugby Development Partnership. Weeks are designated for Club training (CT) when no matches should be played and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

As with the previous age groups identified players will attend the CB School of Rugby sessions which will only take place after the Christmas to be held during the week to avoid conflict with club and school fixtures on the weekend.

Great importance is placed on the role of the CBRDP in club/school liaison.

This age group will play a maximum of four inter-CB representative games either in festival format or as stand alone fixtures. Post Christmas CBs may play up to two additional representative matches to assist in the development of players not selected for the Division.

CB Squad preparation and inter CB fixtures should be midweek under floodlights with some games at the weekend. Divisions are to determine which matches selectors will view.

The emphasis in the Under 16 year is on increasing participation at all levels whether at club/school/CB/region, whilst providing representative opportunities at divisional/national level for elite players with potential.

On days allocated to CB Representative Games, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging the potential recreational participant.

Players born between 1st September and 31st December 1992 should be encouraged to play within the Under 17 & 18 age group post Christmas.

Under 17 and Under 18

These are key years for retaining participants and also a development year for the aspiring player. CBs should prepare and deliver a joint U17 & U18 two year Development Programme.

To support the retention of U17 players at club level, CB leagues or clusters of CB leagues should be run to provide competitive opportunities for players; these will feed into the National U17s Club Competition. Weeks are designated either for Club training (CT) when no matches should be played and those for inter Club Matches (CM).

At U17 & U18 all players are eligible for national representative honours based upon Calendar year i.e. their being aged Under 18 at midnight on 31st December in the season. CBs must ensure that clubs and schools work together within the CB so that all participants achieve their full potential.

The CB Structured Season, using the RFU defined dates, must be agreed within the CB Rugby Development Partnership. Great importance is placed on the role of the CBRDP in club/school liaison.

CB Squad preparation and inter CB fixtures should be midweek under floodlights, with some games at the weekend. Only three or four inter-CB games are to be played within this period. Divisions are to determine which matches selectors will view.

Post Christmas CBs should have a U17/18 Development Programme which incorporates lads who qualified as U16s born 1st September – 31st December 1992 but who did not achieve National U16 Representative Squads.

On days allocated to Representative Development Squads, CBs and clubs could organise 10/12 a-side festivals for the remaining club players thus encouraging the potential recreational participant.

Under 18 Girls

This age band includes players aged 15, 16 and 17 on 1st September. Club and cluster matches should take place on CTM dates only, and it is advised that clubs carefully consider which dates are used for matches or training, and should not look to play matches on all of these dates.



ACADEMIES & PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

The RFU Age Grade Representation Report provides for the development of the Performance Pathway. This will entail putting the following into effect:

- a) In conjunction with CB Schools of Rugby establish a nationwide junior talent search and the selection programme that identifies players possessing the necessary characteristics for future top level performances;
- b) Provide for identified young players (U13-U16) the first phase of conditioning, skills and psychological development by an outreach programme from the RFU Academies through the CB Schools of Rugby;
- c) Provide for identified young players (U16-U17) targeted for the national development squads, the second phase of player conditioning, fundamental skills, specialist and positional skills and psychological development within RFU Academies;

- d) Working with CBRDP and within CB Schools of Rugby, the Academies will identify 'talented players' who will attend Elite Player Development Groups (EPDG). These will work alongside CB programmes and ensure that the player develops but is not overplayed.

The detail of the EPDG role and its relationship with CB Schools of Rugby will be managed and co-ordinated by Academy Liaison Groups.

Representative Girls Rugby

Almost all CBs now run U15 and U18 Girls Representative teams. Players are nominated from CB/Counties to the RFUW Regional Trials. The Regional Programme takes place from January until April and is a vital part of the player pathway. From the Regional Programme, players are selected into CB Schools of Rugby and RFUW Talent Development Groups, which ultimately provide players into the England U20 squad. For further information about the Girls Player Pathway, please contact tomstokes@rfu.com

COMPETITIONS

The development of meaningful competitions is a fundamental element of the player development process. The correct balance between matches and development activity is planned for in the structured season.

- a) At Under 13 age grade, club and school matches provide 'friendly' games and consideration should be given by CBs/schools and clubs to investigate ways of introducing cluster groups on some match weekends. The emphasis at this age group is on development and there are no inter CB games.
- b) At Under 14 age grade provides a similar format to the Under 13 with the added introduction of one CB match. The emphasis at this age group is on development.
- c) At Under 15 the programme of CB matches is increased. This culminates in a Divisional 12 aside CB Festival at the end of the season in an environment that will challenge their skill and game understanding.

- d) The Daily Mail programme will remain the most important 'open' competition with opportunities for all schools.
- e) Under 16 is an important examination year, so once the international squad is selected, the non-selected players will either be involved in CB Schools of Rugby after Christmas or, if born 1st September - 31st December 1992, in the CB U17/18 two year Development Programme.
- f) Under 17 is a key year for the retention of players requiring 'club cluster' merit table /leagues organised by CBs. (Schools could be involved in this process if complementary playing times can be organised). The season culminates in the RFU National U17 Competition.
- g) Under 15 and Under 18 Girls structure consists of a National Cup Competition and National 7s.



YOUTH STRUCTURED SEASON 2009/2010

2009/2010	W/C Mon - Sun	SUNDAY DATE	UNDER 13	UNDER 14	UNDER 15	DM15	UNDER 16	Nat Rep Pathway	
							COMMUNITY		
AUG	31	6	Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration		Club Player Registration		
SEPT	7	13	Club Training	Club Training	Club training		Club training		
	14	20	CT	CT	CT	R1 (Wed)	CT		
	21	27	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CM		
OCT	28	4	CM	CM	CM	R2 (Wed)	CT CB PD		
	5	11	CT	CT	CT		CM		
	12	18	CM	CM	CM	R3/V1 (Wed)	CT CB PD		
	19	25	CM	CM	CM	V2 (Wed)	CM	CB Match midweek	
H/T	26	1	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT	CB Match	
NOV	2	8	CM	CM	CM		CM		
	9	15	CM	CM	CM	R4/V3 (Wed)	CT	CB Match	
	16	22	CT	CT	CT		CM		
	23	29	CM	CM	CM	R5/V4 (Wed)	CT	CB Match	
DEC	30	6	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CM	Div Devt	
	7	13	CM	CM	CM	R6/V5 (Wed)	CM	Div Devt	
	14	20	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CT CB Sch R	Div Devt	
	21	27	CHRISTMAS						
JAN	28	3	CM	CM	CM		CT		
	4	10	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R		CM	Div Festival	
	11	17	CT	CT	CT	V6 (Wed)	CT		
	18	24	CM	CM	CM	R7/V7 (Wed)	CM	Div Festival	
	25	31	CT	CT	CT		CT		
FEB	1	7	CM	CM	CM	QF (Wed)	CM	INT Sqd	
	8	14	CM	CM	CM		CM		
H/T	15	21	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Match		CT	INT Sqd	
	22	28	CT	CT	CT		CT CB SoR	INT Sqd	
MAR	1	7	CM	CM	CM	Semi F	CM	INT Sqd	
	8	14	CT	CT	CT		CT CB Match		
	15	21	CM	CM	CM		CM	INT Sqd	
	22	28	CM	CM	CM		CM		
APR EASTER	29	4	CT	CT	CT	DM Final 31 March	CT CB SoR	Int'l Matches	
	5	11	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Sch R	CT CB Match		CM	Int'l Matches	
	12	18	CM	CM	CT Regional 10s		CT CB Match		
	19	25	CM	CT CB Match	CM		CM		
MAY	26	2	CT & HSBC Final (Sat)	CM	Divisional CB 12s Tournament		CT		
	3	9							
	24	30							

UNDER 17	UNDER 18	DM U18	Nat Rep Pathway	UI9	RFUW UI5	RFUW UI8	2009/2010	W/C Mon - Sun	SUNDAY DATE
COMMUNITY	COMMUNITY			Nat Colts Cup					
Club Player Registration	Club Player Registration				CT	CT	AUG	31	6
CM	Club training				CT	CT	SEPT	7	13
CT	U17/U18 CB PD	CT	R1 (Wed)		CUP	CTM	CTM	14	20
CT	CT		CB Match midweek		County Dev Day			21	27
CM	CT	R2 (Wed)			CTM	CTM	OCT	28	4
CM	CM		CB Match midweek		CTM	CTM		5	11
CT	CT	R3/V1 (Wed)		CUP	County Training			12	18
CM	CM		CB Match midweek		CTM	CTM		19	25
CM	CT		CB Match/Aust squad we		CTM	CTM	H/T	26	1
CM	CM	V2 (Wed)			County Matches		NOV	2	8
CT	CT	R4/V3 (Wed)	Div Assessment		CTM	CTM		9	15
CM	CM			CUP	County Training			16	22
CM	CT	R5/V4 (Wed)	Div Dev/Aust Squad		CTM	CTM		23	29
CT	CT			PLATE	County Festivals/Tourn		DEC	30	6
CM	CM	R6/V5 (Wed)	Div Dev/Australia Int		CTM	CTM		7	13
CM	CM		Div Devt		CT	CT		14	20
								21	27
CHRISTMAS									
CT	CB PD	CT		Div Festival 2nd-4th			JAN	28	3
CM	CM				PLATE	CTM	CTM	4	10
CM	CM	V6 (Wed)				REGIONAL TRIALS		11	17
CM	CT	R7/V7 (Wed)			CUP/PLATE	CTM	CTM	18	24
CT	CB PD	CM		Nat Squad		NATIONAL CUP		25	31
CM	CM	QF (Wed)				REGIONAL TRAINING		FEB	1
CM	CT				CUP/PLATE	REGIONAL TRAINING		8	14
CT	CB PD	CM		Nat Squad		REGIONAL MATCH		H/T	15
CM	Nat Comp	CT	SF			CTM	CTM	22	28
CT	CB PD	CM		Nat Squad		REGIONAL TRAINING		MAR	1
CM	Nat Comp	CT		Nat Squad		NATIONAL CUP		8	14
CT	CB PD	CM			QTR FINAL	REGIONAL MATCH		15	21
CM	Nat Qtr Final	CT		RP7s	AER Int'l Matches	REGIONAL TRAINING		22	28
CT		CT		DM Final 31 March	AER Int'l Matches			APR EASTER	29
CT	CB Match	CM			Int'l Matches	REGIONAL TOURNAMENT		5	11
CM	Nat Semi Final	CT				SEMI FINAL	CTM	CTM	12
CT	CB Match	CM				NATIONAL CUP FINAL		19	25
CM	Nat Final	CM				CTM	CTM	Bank Holiday	26
								MAY	3
					FINAL 3rd			9	
						Nat7s	Nat7s	24	30

Weeks go from Monday to Sunday to allow activities within the week not exclusively on Sundays

- DM Daily Mail Schools Rounds played in specific weeks
- CT Club Training
- CM CB Club League Competition / Festival

- RP Rosslyn Park 7s
- Div Devt Only two Divisions of the four will use these dates
- CB Sch R CB Schools of Rugby or sub CB
- RFUW CTM Club Training or Match
- CB Matches