



# FoRR Tag Rugby Training Manual

# INTRODUCTION

This coaching manual is part of the Friends of Rwandan Rugby Schools' Tag Rugby project, which has been funded by:  
The Bill McLaren Foundation and The Barbarians Rugby Charitable Trust.

This manual contains 9 coaching sessions covering the skills of passing, tagging, evasion, invasion and the game of tag rugby.

Each session is designed to last approximately 30 minutes so this will easily fit into a 40 minute lesson.

Following training delivered by FoRR Rugby Development Officers, teachers are provided with all of the kit they need to deliver a 9 week course of tag rugby with primary school children.





10  
marker  
cones

4  
rugby  
balls

20  
tag belts  
+ tags

Muriteguye  
dutangire



# 1 Focus: Passing 1

## Objective | Key skills:

*Learning to pass a rugby ball*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Jog and Pass

Jog around a square grid. Pass in any direction. Avoid contact.  
Use all balls (minimum of 4).  
Coach calls instructions.

**10**  
min

### Skills session - Pass along the line

4 lines of players spaced apart. Ball passed along the line and then back again.  
Fastest team is the winner. Complete 3 times (5 minutes).

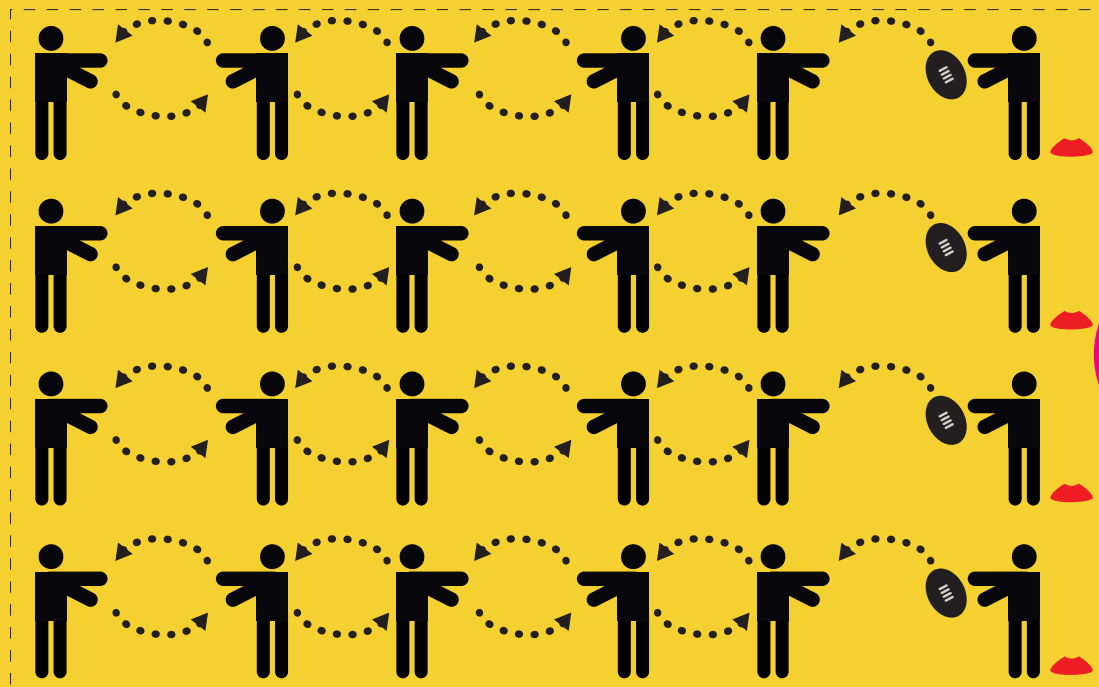
**15**  
min

### Mini game - Keep Ball Static

2 teams. 1 team starts with the ball. Person with the ball cannot move.  
The team with the ball can pass in any direction.  
Defending team must try and intercept the passes.  
The attacking team players look for space to move into and receive a pass.  
The defending team follows the attackers and intercepts the pass.  
Keep score e.g. a point for 5 passes.

### Organisation of children

Divide into 4 teams.  
Two teams play against  
each other for 6 minutes  
and then swap.  
Two games can be played  
at the same time on  
two separate pitches  
if space.



Turn and Rip

Score a Try

Turn and Pop



### Coaching Points

- ✓ Ball Carrier holds the ball in two hands, receiver holds up hand and calls for the ball.
- ✓ **Score a try** - Bend legs and place ball on floor (no bouncing ball), to pick up ball feet either side of ball and use two hands to pick it up.
- ✓ **Turn and Pop** - Ball Carrier turns to face support players and uses two hands to pass ball Receiver of the pass must have hands up ready to catch and calls for ball.
- ✓ **Turn and Rip** - Ball Carrier turns and hugs the ball, support player must get in close and rip the ball whilst also communicating that they are ripping the ball.

# 2 Focus: Passing 2

## Objective | Key skills:

*Develop the ability to pass while moving*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Ball Tag

Use four balls. 4 players are 'it'. Use cones to mark a large grid. Children run and when a person who is 'it' tags them with the ball, they pass the ball to them and they then become 'it'.

**10**  
min

### Skills session - Passing grid in 5s

Team 1 (5 players) runs across a grid passing the ball backwards along the line to the last player of their team who then passes the ball to the player in team 2. Team 1 joins the back of the lines and team 2 runs passing the ball backwards until they reach the opposite line. Half way through, change direction starting with the ball at the other end of the line.

**15**  
min

### Mini game - Keep Ball Active

2 teams. 1 team starts with the ball. Players can move and pass in any direction. The defending team tries to tag the player with the ball with two hands on the hips. The attacking team players look for space to move into and receive a pass. The defending team follows the attackers and tag them if they have the ball. Keep a score e.g. a point for 5 complete passes.

### Organisation of children

Divide into 4 teams.  
Two teams play against each other for 6 minutes and then swap.  
Two games can be played at the same time on two separate pitches if space.



## Game variations

Give the attacking team  
three 'lives'  
Put more players on  
the attacking or  
defending team.

### Coaching Points - Passing

- ✓ Receiver - Hands towards the ball to receive pass.
- ✓ Receiver calls for the ball.
- ✓ Passer - Hands finishing at the target.
- ✓ Passer - Hips facing forward.
- ✓ Running/Scanning. Players must scan left, right and straight ahead in order to make decisions over running lines and timing of passes.



# 3 Focus: Passing 3

## Objective | Key skills:

*Learn to pass a rugby ball backwards and on the move*

### Organisation of children

Divide into 4 teams.  
Two teams play against each other for 6 minutes and then swap.  
Two games can be played at the same time on two separate pitches if space.

## 5

min

### Warm up - Race the Ball

Teams stand in a circle. (Play 2, 3 or 4 teams) Pass the ball around the circle. As soon as a player passes the ball they run around the outside of the circle back to their starting position. Teams count the number of passes. If they drop the ball they start from 1. Winning team is the one with the highest number of passes.

## 10

min

### Skills session - Passing grid in 4s

Continuation from session 2 (Passes are longer because the team is smaller). Team 1(4 players) runs across a grid passing the ball backwards along the line to the last player of their team who then passes the ball to the player in team 2. Team 1 joins the back of the line and team 2 runs passing the ball backwards until they reach the opposite line. Half way through, change direction starting with the ball at the other end of the line.

## 15

min

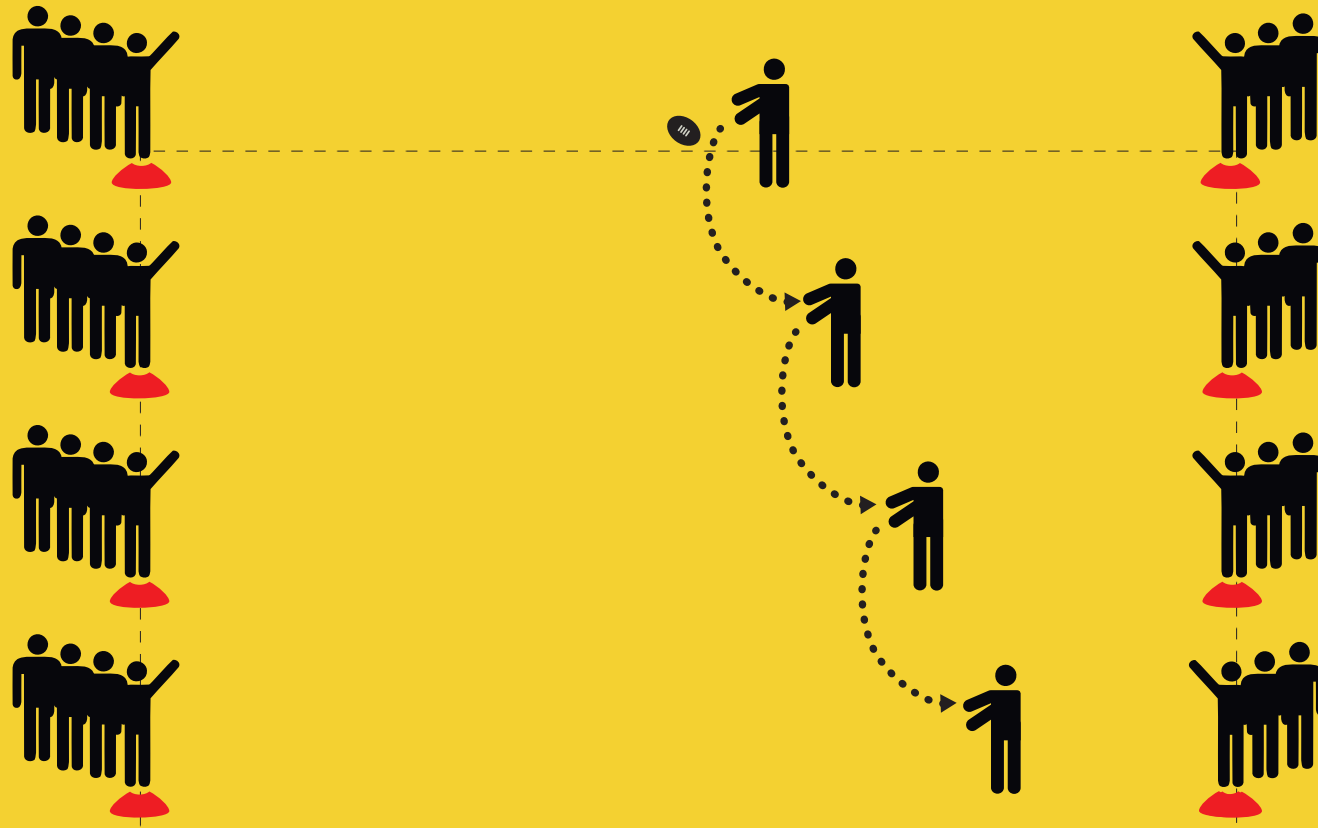
### Mini game - End Ball game

1 team starts with the ball. Players can move and pass in any direction. The team with the ball can pass in any direction. The opposition team must try and tag the player with the ball with 2 hands on the hips. The attacking team players must look for space to move into and receive a pass, while the defending team is looking to follow the attackers and tag them if they receive the ball. Keep a score e.g. first team to complete 5 passes.



## Game variations

Give the attacking team three 'Lives', put more players on the attacking or defending team.



### Coaching Points

- ✓ Ball Carrier holds the ball in two hands, receiver holds up hand and calls for the ball.
- ✓ Passing - Receiver hands towards the ball to receive pass, receiver calls for the ball.
- ✓ Passer - Hands finishing at the target, hips facing forward.
- ✓ Running / Scanning - Players must scan left, right and straight ahead in order to make decisions over running lines and timing of passes.

# 4 Focus: Tagging | Defending 1

## Objective | Key skills:

*Be able to put on a tag belt and tag an opponent*

**5**  
min

*Tag belt demonstration - Show the children how to put on a tag belt*

### **Warm up - Follow the Leader**

Use cones to mark a large grid. Children in pairs – one wearing a tag belt. The pairs jog inside the grid, one following the other. When the coach shouts “tag” the player following attempts to tag the leader before they escape the grid.

**10**  
min

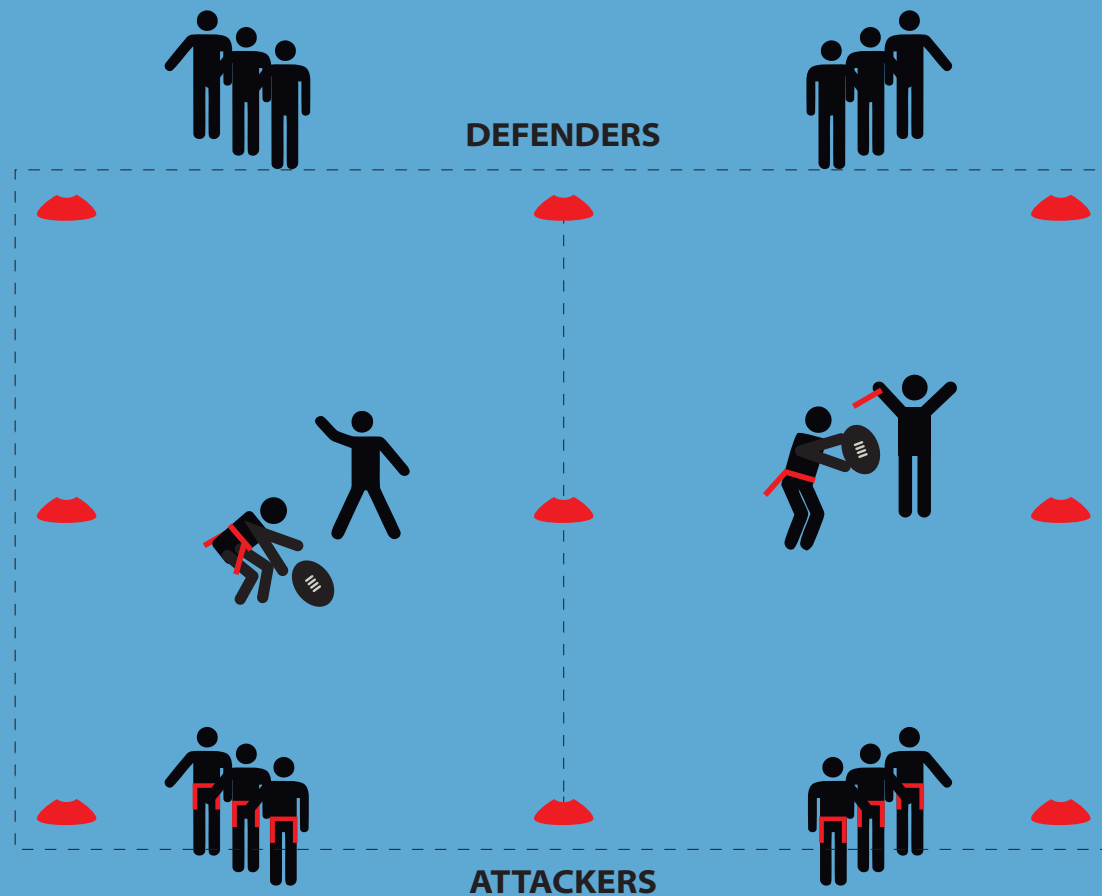
### **Skills session - 1v1**

Mark 2 channels with cones. 4 teams. 2 teams are attackers and wear tag belts. Two teams are defenders. Attackers run one at a time with the ball from one end of the channel to score a try at the opposite end. 1 defender tries to remove the tag from the attacker.

**15**  
min

### **Mini game - Chickens and Wolves**

Mark a large grid. Defenders (wolves) stand in the middle. Attackers (chickens) line up at one end of the grid. On the coach’s command, the chickens run to other side of the grid. The wolves try to tag the chickens. Wolves raise the tag above their heads and shout “tag”. When a chicken is tagged, they become a wolf and defend. Play for a certain amount of time or until all the chickens are tagged.



Not enough tag belts for all children? One group wears tag belts for the Warm up and skills session. Then they swap so the other children wear tag belts for the game.



### Coaching Points

When a player removes the tag they must hold it up in the air and shout “tag”. They must then hand the tag back to the player they removed it from before rejoining the game. The player that has been tagged must wait and place the tag back on their belt before rejoining the drill/game.

- ✓ Go forward
- ✓ Avoid defenders
- ✓ Use evasive footwork
- ✓ Light on feet
- ✓ Identify space
- ✓ Defenders’ hands high (chest height) in order to encourage good tagging technique.

# 5 Focus: Tagging | Defending 2

## Objective | Key skills:

*To be able to tag an opponent, return the tag and develop evasive footwork*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Straight Lines

Line up group behind 7 cones. Coach stands 10 – 15 metres in front. 1 line at a time runs following instructions from the coach and stays in a line with the other 6 players. Coach uses instructions forward, backwards, left and right. Players must not turn their back on the coach even when running backwards.

**10**  
min

### Skills session - Gorillas and Lions

Mark a grid 20m x 20m. Players in pairs and both wear tag belts. Each player stands 1 metre facing their partner in the middle of the grid. 1 side of the grid is called GORILLAS, the other side LIONS. Coach calls e.g. GORILLAS, players would run to their line. LIONS try and tag them before they reach the edge of the grid. Repeat.

If there aren't enough tags and belts, the player can play by touching the opponent's hip.

**15**  
min

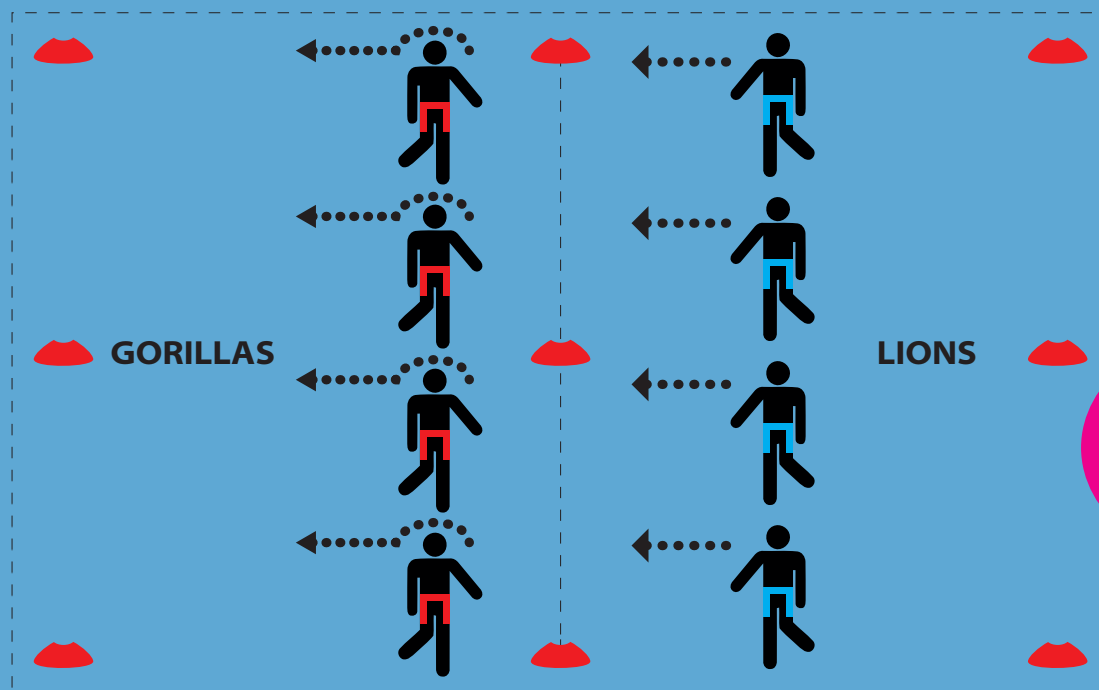
### Mini game - End Ball with Tag belts

Game from session 3 except players use tags and tag belts instead of tagging players by touch.

### Organisation of children

Divide into 4 teams.  
Two teams play against  
each other for 6 minutes  
and then swap.  
Two games can be played  
at the same time on  
two separate pitches  
if space.





### Coaching Points

When a player removes the tag they must hold it up in the air and shout “tag”. They must then hand the tag back to the player they removed it from before rejoining the game. The player that has been tagged must wait and place the tag back on their belt before rejoining the drill/game.

- ✓ Go forward
- ✓ Avoid defenders
- ✓ Use evasive footwork
- ✓ Light on feet
- ✓ Identify space
- ✓ Defenders’ hands high (chest height) in order to encourage good tagging technique



# 6 Focus: Tagging | Defending 3

## Objective | Key skills:

*Be able to tag an opponent, return the tag and develop evasive footwork*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Stuck in the Mud

2 or 3 players are 'it'. They chase the others and try and tag them by touching them with two hands on the hips. A player that is tagged is 'stuck in the mud'. They stand still with both arms out. They can be freed by another player running under their outstretched arms. Increase the number of players that are "it" to make it more difficult.

**10**  
min

### Skills session - 2v1 Introduction

2 teams line up outside the grid at the midpoint. Coach calls two numbers. The first is the number of attackers and the second the number of defenders. Then the coach passes the ball to one team. (These will be the attackers). The players run around a cone at either end of the grid before entering the grid. The attackers attempt to beat the defenders and score a try at the opposite end of the grid. The defenders attempt to tag the attackers. Numbers called eg 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2. Repeat. Change the numbers called and vary which team is attacking.

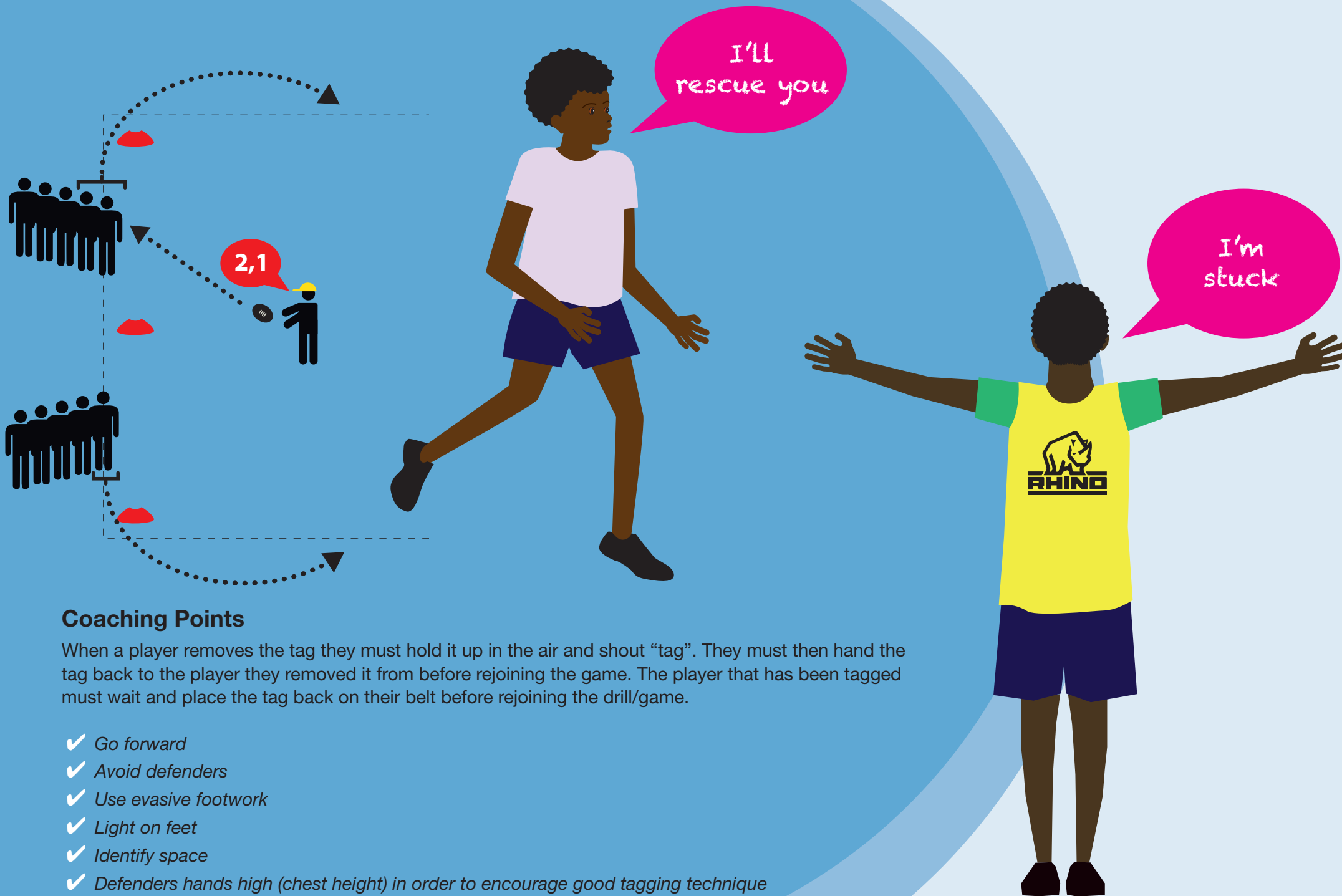
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### Mini game - Tag Rugby

See appendix for rules.

### Organisation of children

Divide into 4 teams.  
Two teams play against each other for 6 minutes and then swap.  
Two games can be played at the same time on two separate pitches if space.



### Coaching Points

When a player removes the tag they must hold it up in the air and shout “tag”. They must then hand the tag back to the player they removed it from before rejoining the game. The player that has been tagged must wait and place the tag back on their belt before rejoining the drill/game.

- ✓ *Go forward*
- ✓ *Avoid defenders*
- ✓ *Use evasive footwork*
- ✓ *Light on feet*
- ✓ *Identify space*
- ✓ *Defenders hands high (chest height) in order to encourage good tagging technique*

# 7 Focus: Tag Rugby | Full Game

## Objective | Key skills:

*Drawing a defender and creating space. Communication*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Chain Tag

Mark a large coned grid. 1 defender starts in the middle of the grid. The attackers start at one end of the grid. On the coach's command, the attackers run to the other end of the grid. If they are touched they become defenders and join hands. When there are 4 defenders in a chain they split into 2 chains of 2. The defenders must stay linked when chasing attackers. The game lasts until all the attackers are caught or for a specific time.

**10**  
min

### Skills session - 2v1

2 teams line up outside the grid at the midpoint. Coach calls 2 numbers. The first number is the number of attackers and the second the number of defenders before passing a ball to one team. (These will be the attackers). The players run around a cone at either end of the grid before entering the grid. The attackers attempt to beat the defenders and score a try at the opposite end of the grid. The defenders attempt to tag the attackers. Numbers called eg 1v1, 2v1, 2v2, 3v2. Repeat. Change the numbers called and vary which team is attacking.

**15**  
min

### Mini game - Tag Rugby

See appendix for rules.







# 8 | 9

## Focus: Tag Rugby | Full Game

Objective | Key skills: *Practice playing Tag rugby*

**5**  
min

### Warm up - Stuck in the Mud

2 or 3 players are 'it'. They chase the others and try and tag them by touching them with 2 hands on the hips.

A player that is tagged is 'stuck in the mud'. They stand still with both arms out. They can be freed by another player running under their outstretched arms. Increase the numbers of players that are 'it' to make it more difficult.

**25**  
min

### Game - Tag Rugby

See appendix for rules. If you have a large group, swap the teams at halfway.

### Sideline skill

Lateral passing in 3s. Pass the ball along a line of 3 players.

Referee skills/score keeper.

Watch the game keeping score and checking for correct play.

### Warm up - Chain Tag

Mark a large coned grid. 1 defender starts in the middle of the grid. The attackers start at one end of the grid. On the coach's command, the attackers run to the other end of the grid. If they are touched they become defenders and join hands. When there are 4 defenders in a chain they split into 2 chains of 2. The defenders must stay linked when chasing attackers. The game lasts until all the attackers are caught or for a specific time.

### Game - Tag Rugby

See appendix for rules.

If the group is large swap players.

### Sideline skill

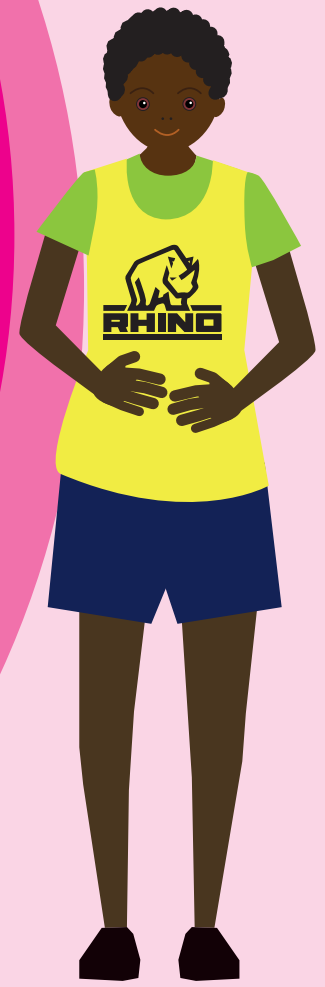
Lateral passing in 3s. Pass the ball along a line of 3 players.

Referee skills/score keeper.

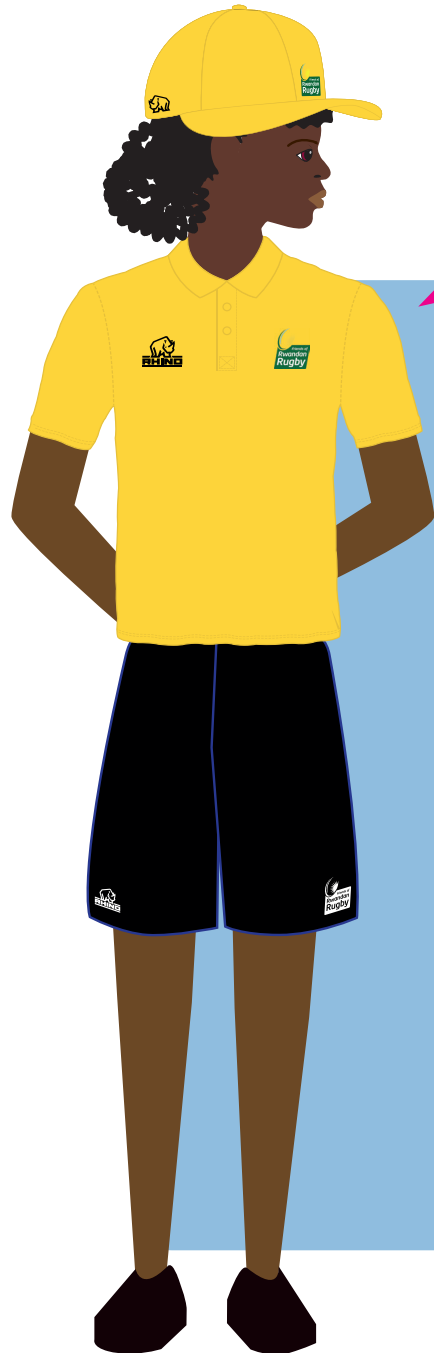
Watch the game keeping score and checking for correct play.



Pasa vuba



# Useful Phrases



Bishimishije

Nitwa – My name is

Amakuru mwese – How are you all?

Dukore uruziga – Make a circle

Byiza cyane – Very good/Perfect/Brilliant

Tumuhe amashyi – Clap for him/her

Bishimishije – Wonderful

Murakoze cyane rwose –  
Thank you very much indeed

Muriteguye dutangire – Ready to start

Dukore umurongo – Make a line

Iruka buhoro – Run slowly

Iruka imbere – Run forward

Iruka cyane – Run quickly

Tanga inyuma – Pass backwards

Simbuka – Jump

Fata umupira n'amaboko abiri –  
Catch the ball with two hands

Tanga umupira n'amaboko abiri –  
Pass the ball with two hands

Iruka mu mwanya wawe – Run straight

Iruka cyane/ Iruka vuba – Run quickly

Hagarara – Stop

Muririmbe – Sing a song

Byiza cyane – Super



# Session Rules

Gukurwaho tag esheshatu mutakaza umupira – **Six tags off it's a turnover**

Reba ahari umwanya – **Look for gaps**

Gutera umupira n'ikirenge ntibyemewe – **Kicking is not allowed**

Guhisha tag ntibyemewe – **Hiding tag & belt is not allowed**

Muze hano – **Come here**

Pasa vuba – **Pass quickly**

Twara umupira n'amaboko yombi – **Carry the ball with both hands**

Guherekanya udapashije ntibyemewe – **Handing over ball is not allowed**

Gutakaza umupira imbere ni ikosa – **It's a knock on if you lose the ball forwards**

Umva – **Listen to me**

Amaboko abiri ku mupira – **Two hands on the ball**

Tanga umupira – **Pass the ball**

Iyo bagukuyeho Tag ntugomba kwiruka metero zirenze 3, ugomba guhita upassa bagenzi bawe when tag removed – **You cannot run more than 3 metres, you have to pass to your team mates.**



# Appendix - Tag Rugby Rules

Game to start with a free pass.

Team conceding try to restart.

6 tags, ball is turned over to opposition.

Tagged player must play the ball (pass) within 3 seconds of being tagged.

Tackler must hand back the tag to the attacking player before continuing to play, persistent infringement will result in the awarding of a penalty.

Players must leave and enter the field of play at the halfway touchline.

They must remove 2 tags and hand them over to substitute entering the field to place upon belt before replacement can effect.

Substitutes must wear tag belts but with no tags.

A player must have 2 tags before scoring a try, however if a tag is removed whilst scoring a try the try is awarded.

If a player crosses the line with 1 tag, he/she is brought back out 5 metres from the try line with the tag count continuing.

Players must stay on feet to score a try.

Spinning out of contact away from the tackler is allowed.

No hand-off allowed.

Strictly no contact.

Free pass for all penalties.

Carrying the ball in 2 hands is encouraged but not a tag rugby rule.

Rolling substitutions are permitted.





*For further information about Friends of Rwandan Rugby and videos of the activities contained in this booklet go to our website: [friendsofrwandanrugby.com](http://friendsofrwandanrugby.com)*

**With special thanks to:**



For funding equipment  
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For booklet design and artwork

