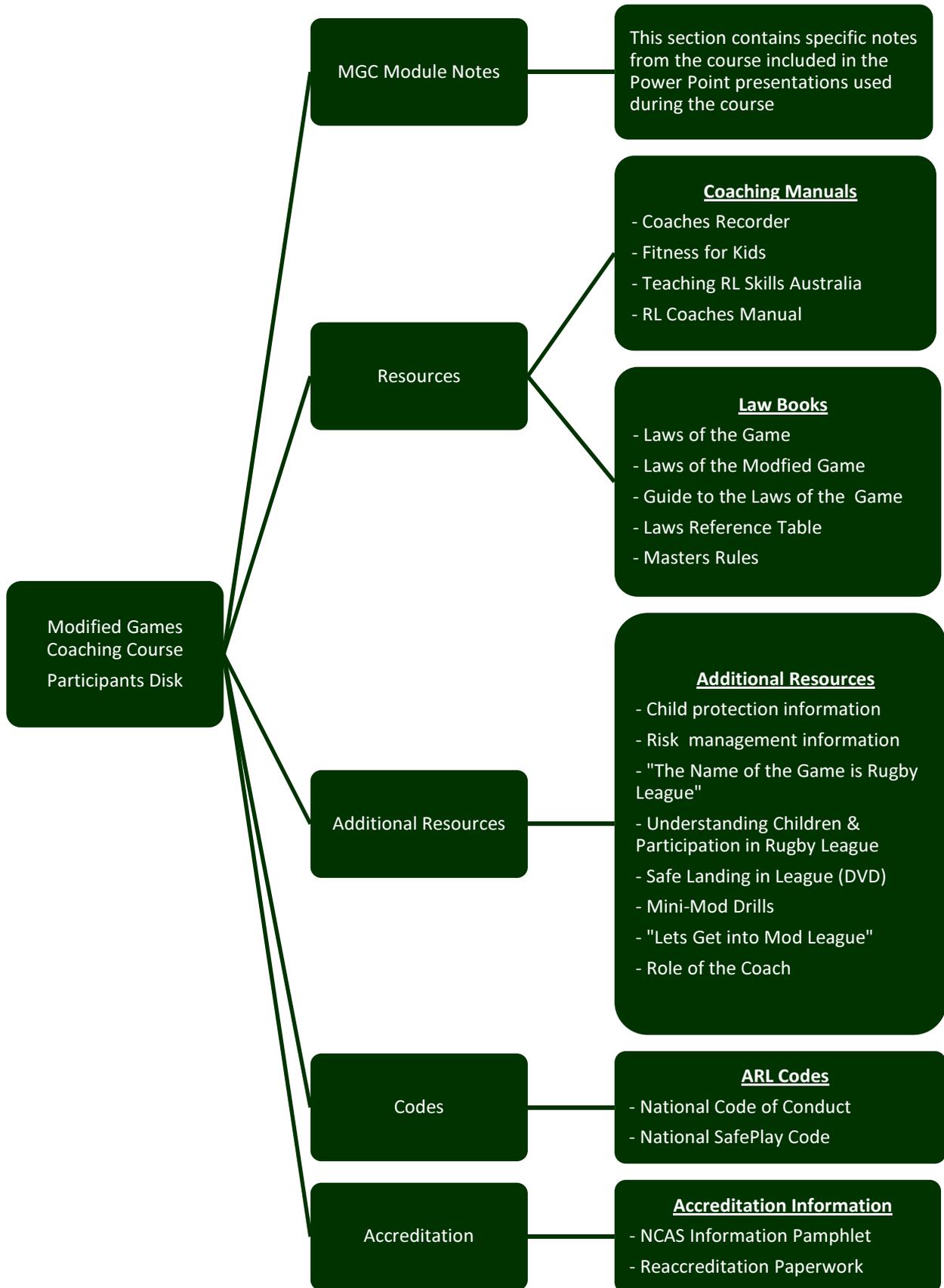




# TEACHING RUGBY LEAGUE SKILLS





# TEACHING RUGBY LEAGUE SKILLS

## D.E.P.E. Teaching Method

### DEMONSTRATION

#### **'Teaching Points':**

*The main points of a skill which, through explanation and practice will allow a participant to perform the skill.*

- Tell the players exactly what you are going to teach them.
- Show the players what you are going to teach them through the use of a demonstration.
- The demonstration must be of high quality, so a skilled performer must be used.
- The coach does not have to always be the demonstrator, and coaches are encouraged to seek the assistance of skilled performers if they are unable to perform the skill competently.

### EXPLANATION

#### **'Key Words':**

*Words or phrases that can be used to describe a set of teaching points for a skill or movement. By setting up and using the key words during feedback, coaches can quickly correct a movement/skill performance with the use of one word or phrase which acts as the summary of the teaching point.*

- This stage involves explaining the main **teaching points** of the skill to the participants.
- Only the main points need to be explained, too much information can be confusing.
- The use of **key words** is important at this stage.

### PRACTICE

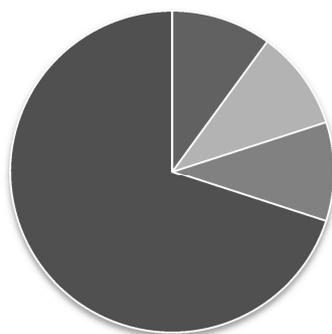
- Players perform the skill.
- Ensure that the activity/drill being used to perform the skill is allowing the players to perform it correctly.
- Allow the players time to practice and develop confidence before providing large amounts of feedback.
- **Concurrent feedback** can be used while the players are actually participating in the activity.

### EVALUATION

#### **'Concurrent Feedback':**

*Concurrent feedback occurs when the coach provides the feedback to the players while the players are actually performing the skill. This might occur during a game or drill at training.*

- Should be linked back to the **key words** used in the demonstration.
- Most effective when supplied immediately after participation.
- Can be done concurrently with participation, or following participation.
- Can be followed by further participation to practice the feedback supplied by the coach.



- Demonstration - 10%
- Explanation - 10%
- Evaluation - 10%
- Practice - 70%





## Whole-Part-Whole Teaching Method

This teaching method is a good way to teach complex skills that are comprised of a number of smaller movements or skills that can be taught separately.

### **Demonstrations:**

*It is not unusual for a coach to be unable to demonstrate all the skills of the game at a high level. In these cases it is recommended that coaches seek assistance from within their club. Other coaches or older and more experienced players can assist in this area.*

### **'Game-Specific':**

*Making practice game-specific involves making drills/games and activities as close to an actual game of Rugby League as possible. This might involve adding defenders into a passing activity or support-players into a tackling activity. This can be achieved gradually as the player's performance of the skill improves.*

### **STEP ONE – Demonstrate the Whole Skill**

- Demonstration of the whole skill will provide the players with an idea of what the completed skill should look like.
- An explanation should outline some key points of the skill and when/where the skill would be used in a game.
- Demonstration should be of high quality so the use of a skilled performer is recommended.

### **STEP TWO – Teach Separate Parts**

- It is recommended that the parts be taught sequentially (in the order that they will be performed when the complete skill is performed.)
- The D.E.P.E. teaching method can be used to teach the separate parts of the skill where appropriate.
- The separate parts of the skill can be gradually linked to create larger parts in an effort to move closer towards completion of the complete skill.

### **STEP THREE – Practice the Whole Skill**

- Eventually the parts can be joined to allow for practice of the complete skill.
- Errors in skill performance can often be corrected by identifying the separate part of the skill where the error is occurring and practicing only that part, before practicing the complete skill again.
- Remember that it is important to practice skills in conditions similar to the game. This can be achieved by gradually adding 'parameters' that make practice more **game-specific**.
- Concurrent feedback can be provided during skill practice.





## Game Sense

### What is Game Sense?

Game Sense is an approach to coaching which involves the use of games to develop an understanding of tactics and game concepts, while enabling the performance of skills in a realistic environment.

Game Sense makes a game the focus of a practice session rather than technique. It challenges the players to think about what they are actually doing and why. The coach/teacher becomes a facilitator, setting tasks to be solved and creating situations where players take on the responsibility of finding solutions for themselves.

### Why use Game Sense?

Traditionally, we have taught skills to young players in isolation, and have not always considered the tactical components of the skill (knowing when and where to actually use the skill or what changes need to be made to the skill during the game to make it effective).

Game Sense coaching focuses on the performance of skills in game situations and allows players to develop tactical and strategic thinking, decision making, problem solving through tactical awareness and understanding.

While there is an important place for technical coaching and skill development, the Game Sense method encourages players to use their basic skills as well as develop strategies or tactics themselves.

### How to use Game Sense?

Game sense involves the principle of moving from simple challenges in games to progressively more complex ones. This progression can involve the movement from a relatively structured environment to a more open one.

For example:

<b>FEW RULES</b>		<b>MANY RULES</b>
<b>ONE OPPONENT</b>		<b>MORE THAN ONE OPPONENT</b>
<b>ONE TEAM MATE</b>		<b>MORE THAN ONE TEAM MATE</b>

### Example Game Sense Activity/Progression:

1. *Players play a one-on-one try scoring game, with the aim of scoring a try past a single defender.*
2. *Introduce a second attacker to the game (two-on-one).*
3. *Introduce a second defender (two-on-two).*
4. *Increase the number of chances that a team has to score.*
5. *Introduce a third attacker into the game.*
6. *Introduce a third defender into the game.*
7. *Make the players 'play-the-ball' following each of their chances in the game.*
8. *Continue to introduce players and*

(Reference: Australian Sport Commission, 1999, 'Game Sense Cards: 30 games to develop thinking players'.)





## Principles for Better Practice

### **Make the practice game-specific and use the Game Sense approach frequently**

- Games are enjoyable for the participants and the learning transfers well to the player's performance in matches.

#### **Proper Planning:**

*Proper planning is the key to ensuring that your players have a positive and effective learning experience at every training session. Planning will enable coaches to consider the use of each of the 'Principles for Better Practice' in each session.*

### **Keep practices short and frequent**

- Variety in activity will assist in maintaining the player's interest level and will improve their learning as well as the sessions more fun.

### **Make maximum use of equipment, facilities and assistants**

- The less time that players spend waiting around, the more time they get to participate and learn. This will make your sessions more fun and allow the players to get the maximum benefits of both learning and physical activity.
- Coaches should aim to have maximum player involvement in all activities.

#### **Player Involvement:**

*Coaches should aim to have all players involved throughout the session. Maximum player involvement enhances player interest and enjoyment and ensures that ALL players are enjoying the experience.*

### **Provide proper feedback and correction**

- Coaches must not forget their role of providing proper corrective feedback during all skill practice. This will ensure that players continue to improve their skills at every session.
- Feedback must be considered and planned. Coaches should not rush into providing feedback until they have thought about the message and how they plan to deliver it.

### **Make sure that the players achieve reasonable success at every session**

- It is important that all players leave each session having felt that they have achieved and improved. Coaches can ensure that this occurs through providing appropriate positive feedback and planning sessions so that players complete each session on a successful note.





## Providing Proper Feedback

Feedback to your players must be:

### **Reflective Questioning:**

*By asking questions to players about their performance, coaches can achieve better results from feedback than would have been achieved by simply telling the players what they need to do to improve.*

### **Timing of Feedback:**

*Coaches need to allow players to make mistakes and to learn from their own mistakes. To allow this process to happen, coaches should not be too willing to 'rescue' their players by providing feedback immediately following every mistake. If there is no immediate danger to the players (for instance: if a tackling technique is incorrect) coaches are encouraged to allow players to identify and correct some of their own errors. Feedback can then be used if the errors become consistent.*

### **1. Specific and concise**

Make sure that your feedback is specific and accurate and does not include too much general information. Feedback is best when it only concentrates on a few small points of a skill performance rather than the skill performance as a whole.

### **2. Positive and immediate**

It is beneficial if your feedback occurs immediately after a skill performance. This will allow players to consider your feedback while the performance is fresh in their memory. Positive feedback is important to build and maintain the confidence of your players.

### **3. Constructive (performance-based)**

Feedback must be concentrated on areas of performance that players can physically improve in their next performance. Constructive feedback needs to concentrate on areas like movement and positioning during skill performances.

### **4. Individual and/or group**

Feedback can be provided to both individuals and groups and can be based on both individual and group performances. It is often beneficial to provide positive feedback to the group and individual corrective feedback directly to individual players.

### **5. Offering remedial solutions**

Feedback must offer corrections rather than criticisms. Feedback should be used to encourage and correct performance and therefore the players must be able to physically act upon your feedback to improve their performance.

### **6. Encouraging self-assessment/reflection**

Coaches are encouraged to use questioning as a method of enabling players to improve their performance. Rather than telling the players what to do, coaches are encouraged to ask the players about their performances and work together to develop corrective actions.





# MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## Duty of Care

Coaches have a **duty of care** to the health and safety of their players. By ensuring that the following statements are implemented, coaches will be able to maintain the safety of their players at both training and in matches.

### **'Duty of Care':**

*An obligation that a sensible person would have in the circumstances when acting toward others and the public. The actions of a coach should be made with care, attention, caution, and prudence.*

### **Keep Adequate Records:**

*As part of a coach's duty of care, all coaches must keep adequate records of any injuries/incidents that occur at both training sessions and matches. This resource will assist coaches to fulfil this obligation.*

1. Provide a safe environment
2. Plan activities adequately
3. Evaluate any injury or incapacity
4. Do not mismatch players
5. Provide safe and proper equipment
6. Warn of inherent risk
7. Supervise well
8. Know first aid
9. Develop clear rules for training and general behavior
10. Keep adequate records

This resource is an important tool in maintaining a safe training and playing environment. Coaches are encouraged to use this resource to:

- Record player details and medical information.
- Seek permission from parents to administer injury/illness management in consultation with qualified First Aid Officer.
- Plan training sessions and match days.
- Review training sessions and match day activities.

***Using this resource to consistently plan and review coaching activities throughout the season enables coaches to regularly evaluate their coaching activities against the statements above.***





# MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## Basic First Aid Procedures

The notes below are to provide a reference point for coaches and in no way replace the knowledge gained through the completion of Australian Rugby League's accredited LeagueSafe and Sports Trainer Courses.

### ARL On-Field Policy:

The Australian Rugby League On-Field Policy States that:

1. All official personnel over the age of fourteen (14) years who enter the Field of Play to attend a player, must possess a 'LeagueSafe Certificate of Attendance' or an accredited ARL Sports Trainers certificate of attainment

2. No person other than an accredited ARL Sports Trainer, or those with appropriate and acceptable qualifications, shall administer first aid or offer advice to an injured/ill player. Personnel with other qualifications must be ratified by the National Safety Education Manager and equate with ARL Sports Trainer Certification.

3. All injuries/illnesses must be recorded in an Injury Report Booklet

When you attend the scene of an incident/injury, follow the DRABC action plan:

#### **DANGER**

#### **Check for Danger:**

- To yourself
- To others/bystanders
- To the casualty

#### **RESPONSE**

#### **Check for a Response:**

- Is the casualty conscious or unconscious?

#### **AIRWAY**

#### **Check the Airway**

- Is the airway clear and open?

#### **BREATHING**

#### **Check for Breathing**

- Look, listen and feel
- Look to see if the chest is rising and falling
- Listen for the sound of breathing
- Feel for air from nose or mouth

#### **IF NO BREATHING, GIVE TWO (2) BREATHS**

#### **CPR**

**If there are no signs of life (casualty unconscious, unresponsive, not moving and not breathing normally) commence CPR.**

- CPR protocol: Thirty (30) compressions, followed by two (2) breaths (rate of approximately one hundred (100) compressions per minute)

#### **DEFIBRILLATOR**

**Apply a defibrillator if available**





# MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

After assessing the patient using the DRABC action plan, the next assessment that is required is the TOTAPS assessment:

- TALK** Ask the injured player:
- How did it happen?
  - Where does it hurt?
  - How did you land? Twisted/straight?
  - Did you hear or feel clicking, locking, grating, snap, rip, tear or giving way?
  - What kind of pain? Throbbing, burning, searing pain? Pins and needles? Toothache pain?
  - Ask any other questions relevant to the players suspected condition.

- OBSERVE** Look for the following:
- Bones: alignment, deformity or unusual shape.
  - Soft tissue: contours, shape, comparing both sides.
  - Note any swelling.
  - Colour: redness, inflammation, pale or bluish colour.

- TOUCH** This should only occur after the above has been completed.
- Be gentle and consider player comfort.
  - Do not drag the player to his/her feet.
  - Is it tender to touch?
  - Start away from the injured site and work towards and beyond.
  - What is the extent of the painful area?
  - Try to locate the exact site and relate it to a particular anatomical structure.

- ACTIVE-MOMENT**
- Ask the player to move the injured limb until restricted by pain.
  - Significant restriction indicates possible serious injury.

- PASSIVE-MOVEMENT**
- You, as the examiner, gently move the injured area to the point of pain or restriction.
  - Return to play should not be considered unless pain free full range of movement is evident.

- SKILLS**
- Ask player to stand unaided
  - Ask him/her to walk, jog and carry out specific skills related to the injured part.
  - Return to play if pain free

## ARL On-Field Policy (Continued):

4. The accredited Sports Trainer shall at all times, whilst a game is in progress, be situated on the sideline in a position to respond quickly should an injury/illness occur.

5. The accredited Sports Trainer shall have the final say on whether a player should continue in the game and when to resume playing in that game. If a doctor is in attendance at a game venue, he/she shall make decisions in conjunction with the Sports Trainer. The doctor will make the final decision on a player's welfare. In the event of a serious injury, as defined by the Sports Trainer, a doctor's certificate must be obtained by the player and handed to the Sports Trainer prior to the player resuming playing.





# MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## **ARL On-Field Policy (Continued):**

6. An accredited ARL Sports Trainer will be attached to a team. It is advisable that at least two (2) be available in case one is required to attend a player or not be available on game day.

7. It will be the responsibility of the Club and/or Ground Officials to ensure the above policy is adhered to.

8. If the above personnel are not in attendance, the game shall not commence UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES until such persons are available.

9. Each player shall complete a Medical Advice Card before training or playing. This will be the responsibility of the designated Sports Trainer(s) to ensure all cards are up to date. All privacy laws must be adhered to.

## **Management of Injuries (R.I.C.E.R. Management Cycle)**

### **REST: Withdraw from the game**

Continued activity increases the severity of the injury.  
Rest reduces the volume and pressure of blood through the damaged vessels to the injured area.

### **ICE: Apply ice to the injury**

Ice reduces bleeding by slowing down the blood flow to the injured area, thus reducing swelling.  
Ice must be applied as soon as possible after injury.  
Application: Apply regularly for 10-15 minutes, for first 24-72 hours

### **COMPRESSION: Apply a compression bandage**

Most effective method of controlling bleeding.  
Should be applied during and after icing.  
Use a stretch bandage above and below the injured area.  
Apply from beyond the injury upwards (towards the heart) and from inside to outside.  
Must be continued after icing.

### **ELEVATION: Elevate the injured area above the heart where practical**

Elevation assists in: Reducing the pressure through the injured limb and reducing blood pooling

### **REFERRAL: Refer the player to appropriate medical personnel**

At all times refer the player to appropriate medical personnel.  
Correct an immediate management is essential for a quick recovery.

### **There are certain practices that should not be undertaken in the acute stages of injury management to a soft tissue injury:**

**HEAT:** Application of any form of heat will dramatically increase bleeding.

**ALCOHOL:** Consumption of alcohol dilutes the blood vessels thus increasing blood flow, swelling and pain.

**RETURNING TO PLAY:** Returning to play with a soft tissue injury will result in delayed healing, or an increase in the severity of the injury.

**MASSAGE:** Massaging an acute soft tissue injury will increase bleeding or may re-start bleeding.





# MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## Head Injury & Concussion

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain. A blow to the head usually causes it. Most of the time it doesn't involve loss of consciousness.

***An ambulance should be called if it suspected that a player has suffered a concussion.***

### What are the signs of a concussion?

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Ringing ears
- Nausea
- Vision disturbance
- Loss of balance
- Memory loss (amnesia)
- Difficulty concentrating

### What should I watch out for?

- Stiff neck
- Repeated vomiting
- Difficulty walking, speaking or using arms
- Numbness/tingling or altered sensations to extremities
- Seizures/convulsions
- Unusual drowsiness or hard to wake up
- Severe headache
- Confusion

***The doctor is the only person who will determine when a player is allowed to return to training or playing following a concussion.***

### When can a player return to play?

A player should never return to play while they have any signs of a concussion like headache or dizziness. If the concussion was very mild, the player may be allowed to return, but only on the advice of a doctor.

If the player had a loss of consciousness or memory, they may not be able to return to play for a number of weeks. After a severe concussion, a player may not be able to return to play for a month. If this wasn't the player's first concussion, the return to play may be even longer.

### What are the risks in returning to play too early?

A player returning to play too early from a head injury risks suffering from a number of complications such as 'cerebral contusion' (a bruising of the brain tissue) or a 'cerebral haemorrhage' (bleeding of the blood vessels in the brain), both of which MAY BE FATAL.

***A player should never return to a sports activity until they are cleared by a doctor.***

### Are there any lasting effects to a concussion?

Most people recover after a concussion without any permanent damage though people can have signs of concussion for weeks or even months afterwards. Repeated concussions can cause permanent damage. After several concussions a doctor may speak to a player about alternative options to contact sports.

