

7. WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND WHERE TO LOOK FROM



australian
RUGBY

**Coaching Course
Record Book**

What to look for and where to look from

Introduction

The vast majority of Rugby coaches have played the game, and as they achieved many values, skills and memories from the game they decide to help the next generation of players by coaching and passing on their invaluable knowledge.

The 'coach' may have been very skilful and successful as a player, but the skills required to coach (and select) are very different to those of playing.

As a player, the coach may have played his whole career in one position, but as a coach he must be knowledgeable in many positions. Recent trends is for teams to have a 'backs' and a 'forwards' coach, with one assuming the 'mantel'.

The role and responsibilities of the coach can be addressed at a different time. The purpose of this paper is to enlighten coaches as to what they may look for in a player and where to view the playing of the game, which will assist them in making objective assessments of the players.

Position specific skills required

Prop forward

- Scrum formation and engagement
- Body shape and height in scrum
- Problem solving in scrum
- Lineout support and sweeping on own throw
- Lineout pressure on opposition throw
- Body height and angle at the ruck and maul
- Drive/Impact at the breakdown
- Mobility in attack and defence
- Kickoff support (for and against)
- Work rate at breakdown
- Effectiveness in tackling

Hooker

- Lineout throw
- Lineout work on own ball
- Lineout work on opposition ball
- Scrum organisation
- Hooking including ball channelling
- Body height and angle at the ruck and maul
- Running with ball
- Drive/Impact at breakdown
- Mobility in attack and defence

- Kickoff sweeping (for and against)
- Involvement and effectiveness at the breakdown
- Effectiveness in tackling

Lock forwards

- Quality and consistency of push in scrum
- Body shape in scrum
- Drive in rucks and mauls
- Body height and angle in rucks and mauls
- Lineout jumping including organisation of their area
- Reactiveness to opposition ball in lineout
- Delivery of ball from lineout
- Kickoffs and restarts – chase and receive roles
- Number of touches in general play
- Number and quality of tackles made
- Mobility in general play
- Impact with carrying the ball

Backrow forwards

- Contribution to scrum
- Contribution to lineout
- Pressure on opposition in close
- Pressure on opposition out wide
- Running lines in attack (support play, linking) and defence
- Effectiveness in tackle
- Effectiveness at breakdown: securing or sealing off ball
- Speed of arrival at breakdown
- Relative contribution in front and behind the gainline
- Relative contribution on open side and blind side
- General involvement in play
- Effectiveness of backrow moves
- Ball skills – running, handling, evasion
- Impact on the game

Scrum half

- Service from scrum
- Service from lineout
- Service from general play
- Kicking
- Handling of pressure

- Blindside work in attack and defence
- Communication with forwards
- Variety in ball usage
- Field vision
- Decision making
- Communication with forwards and backs
- Organisation skills

Fly half

- Starting position
- Running alignment and angle
- Quality and speed of ball transfer
- Support lines and effort
- Ability to control game
- Kicking quality – clearing kicks
- Kicking quality – kicks for territory
- Kicking quality – kicks for pressure
- Organisation and bringing up defence
- Kickoffs
- Drop outs
- Defence – effectiveness of tackles
- Composure under pressure

Centre three quarters

- Running alignment
- Running angle
- Agility and running skills
- Quality and timing of ball transfers
- Support play
- Creativity
- Midfield tackling
- Chasing of kicks
- Kicking
- Counter attack contribution
- Communication in defence

Wing three quarters

- Finishing
- Involvement on own side of field in attack and defence
- Involvement on other side of field in attack and defence

- Support for the fullback
- Communication with fullback and other wing
- Chasing of kicks
- Penetration achieved
- Positional play from scrum and lineout in attack and defence
- Counter attack
- Receiving kicks and returning or other options
- Control of ball at contact
- Defensive qualities – tackles made

Fullback

- Catching and kicking
- Organisation of back three (defence, kicks, counter attack)
- Positional play – defence and attack
- Defensive positioning and tackling
- Contribution to penetration
- Staying in the attack – support, chasing
- Communication skills
- Evasion skills

General player attributes.

Physical

- Speed
- Strength
- Agility
- Acceleration
- Flexibility

Mental

- Mental Toughness
- Determination
- Composure

Other

- Discipline to team plan
- Self discipline
- Knowledge of the Law
- Personal impact on game

Where to look from

Most coaches today still look at a game from near the halfway line and often slightly elevated from the field (eg. in a grandstand). There is nothing

wrong with this as the coach receives a good overview of what is happening from his charges on the field.

Nevertheless it is difficult to judge the angle at which your backs are running comparative to the defence from this position. Analysing what type of defensive pattern is also more difficult to judge from a side on view. It is an advantage to have an assistant coach or manager to view the game from behind the goal posts. This will indicate if your team is running in a straight line (or towards the sideline), what type of defensive pattern(s) the opposition are utilising, the support lines/angles your backs are using, what methods of support are being used in the lineout and whether your team is 'taking the space' on opposition lineout throws.

Conclusion

The important aspects of player analysis is not only are they doing their 'bread and butter' jobs but are they doing any additional tasks on the field and are they impacting the game for the whole game. Many players look good and are effective for half a game and then 'disappear' during the crucial section of a match.

One way to check this is to track a player for a full match, and count the involvements during each quarter (20 minute section) of the game and evaluate the outcomes of the involvements.

Player involvements will either be executed with or without pressure from the opposition. Those who can deliver under pressure for the full game are worthy of selection. Players who only effect an outcome for parts of the game need to be spoken with by the coach to increase their workrate. It may be the case that these players needs a remedial program to improve aerobic capacity or be informed that they require to demonstrate a greater amount of mental toughness.

