



England
Rugby

RETURN TO SCRUMMAGING SESSION PLANS

CROUCH



#SCRUMTOGETHER


PHASE 1: CROUCH

RETURN TO SCRUMMAGING

TWO WEEK PERIOD - INDIVIDUAL CONDITIONING

PREPARATORY - [Prepare to Scrum YouTube Playlist](#)

ADVANCED - [Principles of Scrummaging YouTube Playlist](#)

DURATION	Up to 20 minute segments to build into existing sessions.
EQUIPMENT	Cones, Balls (rugby and football), Bibs.
PITCH	<p>Appropriate size for the number of players, create two game zones (using co-coaches) if you have large numbers so players get more touches of the ball.</p>  <p>20m x 35m – suggested pitch size.</p>

F.I.T.T PRINCIPLES

Follow the guidance around Frequency, Intensity, Time & Type of activities for each phase with graduating return to scrummaging in mind.

FREQUENCY

Up to 3 times per week (allow one clear day between the same exercises for recovery or adaptation).

INTENSITY

Low- Individual and partner work
Moderate- Controlled ground based Game Zones

TYPE

Individual conditioning focusing on preparing to scrum, scrum shape & core/neck strength.

TIME

10-20 minutes per session.

PURPOSE

To reintroduce players to basic scrum based body movements.

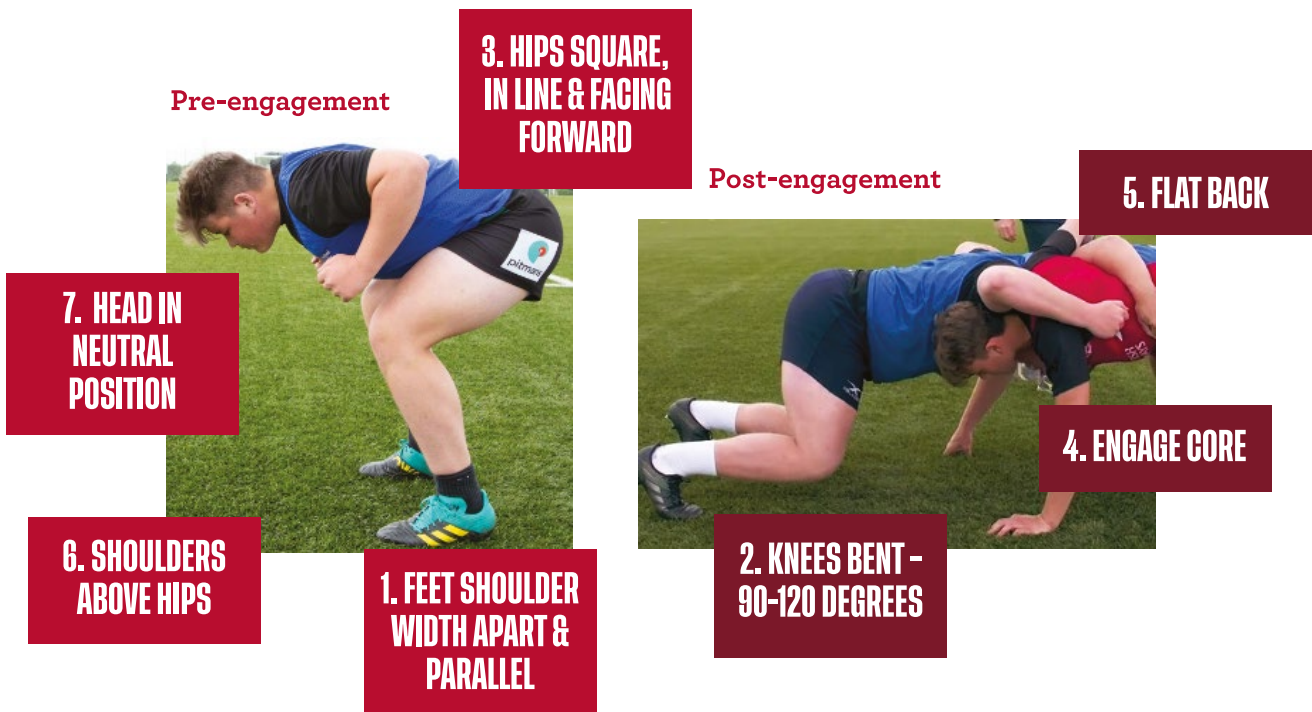
COACHES NOTES

Coach to have 2 balls to keep any games active so players' heart rates don't drop. Use 1 rugby ball and 1 football if possible. Adapt pitch size to suit number of players/stretch/challenge.

KEY COACHING POINTS

Scrummaging – Tower of Power (ToP)

1. Feet shoulder width apart, lead with strongest foot.
2. Knees bent slightly (Post engagement 90 degree angle).
3. Hips square, in line and facing forwards.
4. Core engaged.
5. Flat back.
6. Shoulders above hips.
7. Head in a neutral position.



***These cover both the PRE-ENGAGEMENT and POST-ENGAGEMENT Tower of Power.**

PRACTICAL DELIVERY NOTES

Before any practical activities, the coach should be confident that the participants have the fitness/ability to participate in the planned exercises and are suitably prepared to take part in physical activity. Activity should be relevant to the Age Grade you are working with. The pitch and skill zone should be set up beforehand.

WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND COMPLETING THE ACTIVATE WARM-UP BEFORE STARTING THE SESSIONS – [CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

CROUCH TWO WEEK PERIOD

Incorporate these **ACTIVATE** exercises into your session and encourage your players to engage with the **Activate exercise program**, 3 - 5 times per week.

BEAR CRAWL: RESISTED STATIC NECK CONTRACTIONS: [Watch it here](#)

SINGLE LEG ARABESQUE: [Watch it here](#)

BRONCO'S: [Watch it here](#)

ZOMBIE SQUATS: [Watch it here](#)

Option 1: Some players can be in the Game Zone whilst others are in the Skill Zone area

GAME ZONE - Tower of Power Stuck in the Mud [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To warm players up whilst developing safe effective Tower of Power body positions which players will use when in the scrum.

Description

- Coach to demonstrate the Pre-Engagement ToP using a player.
- All players have a ball other than the defender (e.g. 1/2/3 defenders against 7 attackers).
- Attackers need to avoid the defender.
- Defender must make 2 handed touches below the waist in a ToP body position.
- If touched by defender, the attacker puts the ball down and adopts the Pre-Engagement Tower of Power body position = 1 point to the defender.
- Must hold this ToP position until shoved by a team mate, which will free the attacker to pick up their ball and join the game.
- A player that frees a stuck teammate gains 1 point.

Progressions

- Players adopt the Post-Engagement ToP with hands on the floor.
- Players can only get caught if they have a ball, limit the number of balls so attackers start passing to each other.
- Have more than one defender.
- Support players can also free the stuck player by Bear Crawling between their legs = 10 points.
- Attackers can work in pairs with one ball between them. Every 3 passes made = 1 point.
- Adopt a plank position instead of ToP.

SKILL ZONE (movement based) - Bear Crawls [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To focus on developing a players movement skills to allow them to successfully complete the Tower of Power body shape when moving.

Description

- Small sided, 3-4 players in a small grid.
- Players must move around in the bear crawl position.
- Ensure that any movements are randomised.
- Objective is to nudge team mates off balance whilst holding good form throughout.

Key focus is for players to keep their back flat, hips low and in line with their shoulders.

Option 2: Some players can be in the Game Zone whilst others are in the Skill Zone area

GAME ZONE – Bear Crawl Tig [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To develop players fundamental movement skills which transfer in to improving movements specific to the scrum, tackle and maul.

Description

- Small sided: 3-4 players in a small area (multiple games can be run concurrently).
- Players must move around in the bear crawl position.
- One of the players is the 'tigger' and attempts to make a touch on one of the other players evading.
- If touched that player becomes the tigger.

Key focus is for players to keep their hips low and in line with their shoulders.

Progressions

- Increase the number of attackers and defenders.
- Award points for good body positions/form.
- Last player standing- once tiggered, that player joins the tiggering team until only one player remains, who wins the game.

SKILL ZONE (movement based) The Hinge: [Watch here](#) The Squat: [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To reintroduce players to the fundamental skills of the hip hinge and the squat pattern.

Description - The Hinge

- Pair players up so that one can execute the movement and the other observe.
- Push hips back first into an imaginary wall.
- Lower chest towards the floor, whilst maintaining a flat and straight back.
- Load the lower body muscles around the hips and upper leg (hamstrings and glutes).
- Hold this position for 5-10 seconds, then stand up.
- Swap roles.

Progressions - The Squat

- Pair players up so that one can support the other.
- One player stands upright to act as an anchor, holding their partners hand for squatting stability.
- Feet at a comfortable width apart.
- Squat down to parallel.
- Maintain a flat back.
- Load the lower body muscles around the hips and upper leg (hamstrings and glutes).
- Hold this position for 5-10 seconds, then stand up.
- Swap roles.

Option 3: Some players can be in the Game Zone whilst others are in the Skill Zone area

GAME ZONE – Gorilla Keep Ball [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To develop players fundamental movement skills which transfer in to improving movements specific to the scrum, tackle and maul.

Description

- Small sided, 4 players in a small area (multiple games can be run concurrently).
- Players must move around in the Gorilla walk position (squat with chest up and hands on the floor between the legs).
- Three players are attackers passing a hand sized ball around.
- One of the players is the defender and attempts to intercept the ball.
- If the ball is intercepted, the defender joins the attack and the passer becomes the defender.

Key focus is for players to maintain a squat based body position throughout with a flat back.

Progressions

- Increase the number of attackers and defenders.
- Award points for good body positions/form.
- Provide a target for the number of passes made by the attackers. If reached use this as the new target.

SKILL ZONE (movement based) Ball ladder challenge [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To challenge a player to maintain the Tower of Power body shape under pressure.

Description

- Set up a series of ball ladder areas.
- The player needs to make their way down the ladder before starting again.
- 10 points for completing the ladder without a knee or hand touching the floor.
- Points can be awarded for good body position/form.

Progressions

- The distance between balls can be varied based on a player's ability.
- The player can decide which route to take.
- Having progressed forwards through the ladder, players can then move backwards and back towards the start for double points. If they touch the floor all points are lost.
- Different coloured balls can be worth more points if used by the player.

Option 4: Some players can be in the Game Zone whilst others are in the Skill Zone area

GAME ZONE – Hungry Hippos [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To act as a pulse raiser suitable for ground based body positions, which lend themselves to scrummaging and the body parts used for this.

Description

- Four scoring zones set up in the corners of the playing area with a central zone containing a range of balls.
- Players to team up in pairs.
- One person from each team bear crawls to the central zone to take as many balls back to their scoring nest and partner as they can manage.
- Their partner then goes whilst they rest.
- The pair with the most balls wins.
- Must maintain their bear crawl position throughout.
- Extra points can be awarded for good form.

Key focus is for players to keep their back flat, hips low and in line with their shoulders.

Progressions

- Use crab walks to change the challenge.
- Combine bear and crab walks in either direction.
- Add a defender or two into the game. If a player is touched in possession of any balls, they must drop what they have and carry on playing.

SKILL ZONE (movement based) Regather Challenge [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To focus on the regather around the Tower of Power body shape when moving forward.

Description

- Set up multiple stations.
- Player to adopt a pushing position around the ToP against a piece of equipment such as a tackle bag, tackle tube or car tyre.
- Players must push the equipment forward in a controlled way, whilst maintaining a strong scrummaging position.
- A teammate can be used to add resistance if needed.

Key focus is to take short steps to aid any regather and keep feet in contact with the floor.

Progressions

- Further instability or challenge can be added by using a tackle cylinder side on or gym/swiss ball.
- Team mates can cause instability through nudging.
- Two players can work together using a tackle cylinder side on.

Key focus is to try and remain square on throughout.

Re-gather Coaching Points

- Position feet shoulder width apart with 90 degree angles at the knees.
- Sink hips towards the floor.
- Expand chest out and up as the player drives forwards.
- Follow with short foot steps to re-position feet.

Additional activity

SKILL ZONE (movement based) The Forklift [Watch here](#)

Purpose

To challenge a player to maintain the Post-Engagement Tower of Power body shape under pressure.

Description

- Set up multiple stations within an area.
- One player adopts a static bear crawl position.
- A partner sets up at a perpendicular orientation in the same position and binds under the body or torso of their partner = the forklift.
- Both are challenged to maintain stability in this position.
- The forklift player moves forward under control and their partner moves sideways with them, again under control.
- Both focus on controlling their shape and regathering positions after any movement.

Key Player Focus - Take short steps to aid any regather and keep feet in contact with the floor.

Progressions

- The player being moved by the forklift now focuses on moving forwards. The forklift now has to move sideways with them.
- Swap roles.

Key Player Focus - Not to let their knees get too far underneath their body when moving.

PLAYER SIGNPOSTS AFTER EACH SESSION:

For best performance gains encourage your players to engage with the **Activate** exercise program, 3 - 5 times per week. Also to practice the two fundamental movement skills of the Hinge and Squat.

The Hinge: [Watch here](#)

The Squat: [Watch here](#)