



Case Studies And Testimonials

The Rugby Doctor working in a club environment...



Working in a club environment...

Students of the Game..!

The University of West London approached The Rugby Doctor to coach their Men's rugby team - The Rangers - over the course of the 2014-15 season.

With a three year turnover of players *Student Rugby* poses unique challenges in terms of squad management and positional succession in addition to those of squeezing rugby into the hectic lives of participants. The Rugby Doctor initially focused upon 'core skill' development for rugby debutants and for those returning to the game whilst introducing the concept of a simple playing framework that would enable players to achieve the most possible in the limited time available. A particular challenge was the combination of some very raw recruits with other high performing players

After a slow start the squad responded well and began to gel, producing excellent performances and demonstrating significant development over the course of the season.

Following one particular game the Rangers' Captain commented "we scored 4 tries in the first 20 minutes, this period was the best I've ever seen us play" and reflecting on the season as a whole he wrote "Thank you so much for all you have done this year, you have changed our team from a rabble to the best team this Uni has seen for a while. For me personally you are one of the best coaches I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I hope you would consider coaching next year's team, when they appoint their new captain."



Working in a club environment...

Anything but Amateur..!

Ealing Amateurs appointed The Rugby Doctor as their new Head Coach in advance of the 2013/14 season. TRD assumed full responsibility for pre-season planning and delivery in preparation for the competitive campaign in the Zoo Shield.

In the lead up to the season The Rugby Doctor ran bi-weekly pre-season training sessions and introduced a bespoke playing framework, (simplifying an overly complex existing 'playbook'), that allowed the whole Club to understand the targeted game structure.

As the season began to unfold TRD targeted evolution rather than revolution and gradually contributed more to team selection and matchday matters. In addition to regular squad training TRD also undertook player mentoring, performance assessment and error correction to boost individual and team performance.

Following a successful season for the Club Ealing Amateur's Chairman wrote "The Rugby Doctor seamlessly integrated himself into the management team and successfully revised the coaching regime for the 1st and 2nd team. As a result the playing performance of both teams was significantly improved and the discipline and morale across all of the Mens' teams is well established to ensure that the improvements continue into the coming season."

Addendum

The Rugby Doctor was invited to return to the renamed Ealing Mens' Section for the 2014-15 season and was pleased to accept the invitation delivering a programme that reinforced the foundations that had been established whilst extending the playing framework and enhancing individual player development.



Working in a club environment...

Accelerating Reintegration to the Game..!

Returning to the game following a protracted absence a West London club winger found that techniques and tactics had moved on since he had last played and that new 'jargon' was inhibiting his contribution to, and enjoyment of, the game.

Able to offer one-to-one mentoring The Rugby Doctor designed a series of three sessions covering major core skills areas, (see below), tailoring each to the unique positional requirements of the player and supplementing these with tactical guidance wherever appropriate.

- 1) Catch / Pass and Running Lines
- 2) Kicking and Defence (including tackle technique)
- 3) Approach to 1-on-1s (including agility) and Breakdown skills

The returning player commented... 'The Rugby Doctor has been invaluable in helping me focus and improve upon my technical and position specific skill set. His coaching sessions are informative and well structured and I would highly recommend him to anyone who wants to improve their game...'



Working in a club environment...

Supplementing 'in-house' Coaching..!

Seeking a positive start to the 2012/13 season, Wasps Juniors asked The Rugby Doctor to lead a midweek coaching session for their U15 squad.

The Rugby Doctor was initially engaged to deliver 10 early season 'skill development' sessions but positive feedback from players and coaches led to the arrangement being extended, first until half-term, and then again until the end of November. After a 'winter break' a further extension was agreed with 8 more weekly sessions delivered towards the end of the season.

The Wasps Juniors' U15 Head Coach wrote... Wasps U15s are a group of enthusiastic youth rugby players, coming from many corners of West London and a wide variety of schools & colleges. With Sunday-only sessions, split between training and games, the players were struggling to develop a cohesive approach to their play. An athletic and talented group, but in some key areas of the game they lacked the basic skills and techniques to perform well as a team.

We decided to bring in TRD to address these shortcomings. Starting a midweek session at our ground in West Acton was logistically challenging with school commitments and limited availability of floodlighting but having got the numbers out the players responded to TRD's style, turning up week after week and showing good concentration and commitment throughout the sessions. TRD's clear communication style along with his in-depth coaching knowledge was enjoyed by players the coaches alike.

Midweek attendance grew through the season, despite the conditions becoming darker and colder. The sessions translated themselves into improved team performances on the pitch with considerably more consistent and better defence, enhanced ball retention, more successful offloading and support in attack.

Great Stuff..., hopefully we will be able to persuade TRD to return next season; I know the players will be up for it...



Working in a club environment...

Honing Skills and Developing a Style of Play..!

In advance of the 2011/12 season, The Rugby Doctor delivered 'pre-season' preparation sessions to the Wasps Juniors U16 squad...

Working over the summer on core skills development in preparation for an important season for the Wasps U16s, The Rugby Doctor soon identified that the talented squad might benefit significantly through the establishment of a 'playing framework'. TRD structured weekly 60 to 90 minute sessions to upskill members of both the A and B squads and to ensure that both teams began to play a similar style of rugby. The implementation of this loose 'structure' still empowered players to make their own decisions but within a framework that allowed all to participate in commonly understood patterns of play.

The initial 'summer programme' was extended by the Wasps Juniors management and the weekly session continued throughout the season.

The Wasps Juniors' U16s Head Coach wrote... "Many thanks for the coaching programme that you brought to the Under 16's at Wasps; all the coaches were very impressed with the variety of the sessions, your enthusiasm and knowledge of the game. All the boys' skill levels improved and I know that they looked forward to your training session each week..."



Working in a club environment...

The Personal Touch..!

During the 2010/11 season, The Rugby Doctor delivered 'personal training' sessions to two members of the School of Rugby, which is jointly run by London Wasps and Middlesex CB...

Having been invited to join the London Wasps School of Rugby two ambitious U15 players sought to maximise their opportunity and to push for Middlesex County honours. The Rugby Doctor was asked to deliver a 'rugby specific' conditioning and 'position specific' coaching programme. In consultation with the player's parents dates were selected within an already hectic season to ensure that there would be no risk of over-training. TRD structured each of the hour-long sessions with roughly equal proportions of core conditioning, position specific conditioning and position specific coaching. TRD was able to customise the sessions in order to prepare the players physically and to work on an individual needs basis using a very tailored one-to-one approach.

One of the players commented "the sessions I have had with The Rugby Doctor are the best one to one sessions I have ever had and are immensely helpful both physically and mentally" and both players were delighted when selected to represent their County in the end of season Middlesex fixtures.



Working in a club environment...

Senior Rugby..!

During the 2009/10 season, The Rugby Doctor delivered a trial coaching session at a West London Rugby Club...

Following a popular initial training evening focusing on producing quicker ball at the breakdown The Rugby Doctor was engaged to work with Old Isleworthians RFC, initially for the remainder of that season. The Rugby Doctor assumed responsibility for leading midweek training sessions and implemented a bespoke playing framework, publishing a comprehensive 'playbook' that allowed the whole Club to understand the targeted game structure. TRD's aim was evolution rather than revolution and gradually contributed more to team selection and matchday matters.

Old Isleworthians' Chairman wrote "The Rugby Doctor joined OIRFC half way through the 2009/10 season, always a difficult task to try to make an impression when the season is in full flow. However TRD quickly analysed what could be changed in a very short period of time and went to task in a seamless, pragmatic way that made an immediate impact not only on both senior teams as a whole but also installing confidence in individuals, some of whom have been playing the game for longer than they care to mention.

After such a successful second half of the season, it was an easy decision to ask TRD to continue his efforts for the 2010/11 season. As a result of this OIRFC have seen unprecedented numbers at pre-season training and an enthusiasm for training and playing that has not been seen for some time. TRD has had a big impact on player recruitment and retention which will lead to OIRFC running 3 senior teams on a regular basis"

Addendum

The Rugby Doctor was asked to return to OIRFC for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 seasons and was pleased to accept the invitation delivering a programme that reinforced the foundations that had been established whilst beginning to extend the team's playing framework and enhance individual player development.



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RFU Recognition..!

At the end of the 2008/9 season the 'Coach the Coaches' programme outlined below won the 'More Coaches' category of the RFU President's XV competition open to rugby clubs across the country. In the third year of competition, the President's XV awards attracted 224 entries, up from 158 in 2008. As a winner the Club received a £500 cash prize and a prestigious award that was presented by rugby legend Jason Leonard. A case study of the scheme will appear in a 'Models of Good Practice' booklet which will be distributed by the RFU.

Coaching the Coaches..!

During the 2007/8 season, The Rugby Doctor was asked to develop and administer a 'Coach the Coaches' programme for the Minis Section of a West London Rugby Club...

The Rugby Doctor created a development 'Pathway' for Ealing Rugby Club's Minis Section with internal coaching modules interwoven with sessions provided by the RFU and by the Middlesex Constituent Body. The *Pathway* was designed to ensure that coaches remained motivated and increased their competence and confidence in preparation for formal RFU 'Award Courses' at appropriate junctures. The modules were structured to 'fill the skill gaps' in terms of each coach's individual development needs.

A simple, tiered internal 'award scheme' was established which, aside from simply being motivational, encouraged 'buy-in' from the Club's coaching community. Importantly the Pathway allowed the measurement of the progress of individuals and helped to identify gaps and development needs within particular age groups.

The scheme operates with a series of levels, (akin to Judo belts), and progression is symbolised by the award of coloured 'coaching badges' upon completion of certain Pathway milestones, providing a visible indication of coaching status and advancement within the Club.

A Club spokesman remarked "The Rugby Doctor has created an innovative coach development solution which has already achieved many of the targets set at the outset, and which is set to grow from strength to strength as it enters its 2nd season. The development needs of the coaching community are now being met and the Pathway is delivering coaching development at all levels, from newest volunteer to Age Group 'Head Coach'..."



Working in a club environment...

The Netball Doctor..!

For the 2008/9 season, The Rugby Doctor was asked to design and deliver a coaching programme for a leading Buckinghamshire-based Netball Club...

Targeting promotion to the Premier National League, Clan Netball Club asked The Rugby Doctor to deliver a series of training sessions that would prepare their A-squad for the more physical demands associated with this higher grade of competition. The Rugby Doctor designed a programme that introduced 'contact skills' and worked upon elements of 'rugby fitness', all built around areas of overlap between the two sports and aiming to challenge the Clan players to venture outside of their normal comfort zone. Clan's open-minded approach provided them with access to different coaching methodologies and allowed them to integrate ideas from the 'world of rugby' into their regular training regime.

Clan's Club Captain commented “with this new training regime, we have improved beyond what we thought possible; we are at present unbeaten and have taken the training on to the court. Not only are we physically tougher but surprisingly our mental approach to the game has changed; the thought process when delivering a ball down court and our support of fellow team players has certainly been impacted and we are now working much more as one unit. Over the years we have been trained by various Netball coaches from County to International standard but without a doubt this coaching has made the biggest impact in the shortest of times. With continued coaching like this we will be ready for the Premier League...”