

Pick and go? It's your decision...

Don't let your team waste quick ball at rucks because they have taken the wrong decision. Forwards have to decide whether to "keep on going", to either pick up the ball and drive on or leave it for the scrum half. This session focuses on players having to make their own decisions as they approach the breakdown.

Tell your players the purpose of this session is...

1. Increasing options for attacking from the breakdown.
2. Developing decision-making skills at the breakdown.

Session planner

| WARM-UP | SESSION | DEVELOPMENT | GAME SITUATION | WARM-DOWN |
|-----------|------------|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| 7-10 mins | 10-15 mins | 10-15 mins | 15-20 mins | 7-10 mins |

| ACTIVITY | KIT | OUTCOME |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Warm-up | Pads and balls | Prepared for contact and handling |
| Session: pick and go basics | Two pads and a ball per four players | Introduce options and encourage correct decision making |
| Development: decision making | Three pads and a ball per seven players | Add decision making into the exercise |
| Game: controlled game situation | Cones to mark a 15m square pitch and a ball | Develop the skill in a game situation |

Where this fits as a Core Skills Smart Session

Player skill
Decision making / Tackle situation

Tactical skill
Attack patterns

Other Core Skills Smart Sessions covering this area:

- 6 Swoop and scoop
- 71 Get it back
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Things to think about ...

Why do some players always make the wrong decision?

Players who constantly make poor decisions are not always looking at the defenders as they approach the ball. You can stand behind the defenders in the session and watch where the attackers are looking. Encourage them to get their heads up and scan.

The players are too high going into contact and are not presenting the ball cleanly.

In the initial session, hold a pole at chest height in front of the ruck pad. Players have to duck under the pole before hitting the pad. This forces them to get in a good low body position.

What you tell your players to do...

1. Arrive at the breakdown with heads up scanning the defence.
2. Make informed decisions based on the position of the defenders.

What you get your players to do...

Spread out two players with pads. Player one hits the first pad and goes to ground presenting the ball. Player two gets in a low position to pick up the ball and drives into the next pad close to the breakdown.

In the next drill, position the second pad holder wider and add a third attacking player. Player two picks up the ball takes a step and passes to a runner who hits the pad wider out.

What to call out...

- "Head up as you approach the breakdown"
- "Get low to pick up the ball"
- "Drive low and hard round the side"
- "Listen to your support"

Development...

Vary the position of the pad so player two has to make a decision whether to go himself or pick and pass.

Give player two options both sides of the breakdown. He then has to make a decision about which is the best one.

Game situation...

Set up two teams of six to play contact rugby. The attacking team can only pick and go or pick and pass to a runner. The defenders can't compete for the ball at the breakdown but must realign at the back foot ready to defend the next attack. Then let the defenders compete for the ball. Attackers will now have to ensure they don't get isolated.

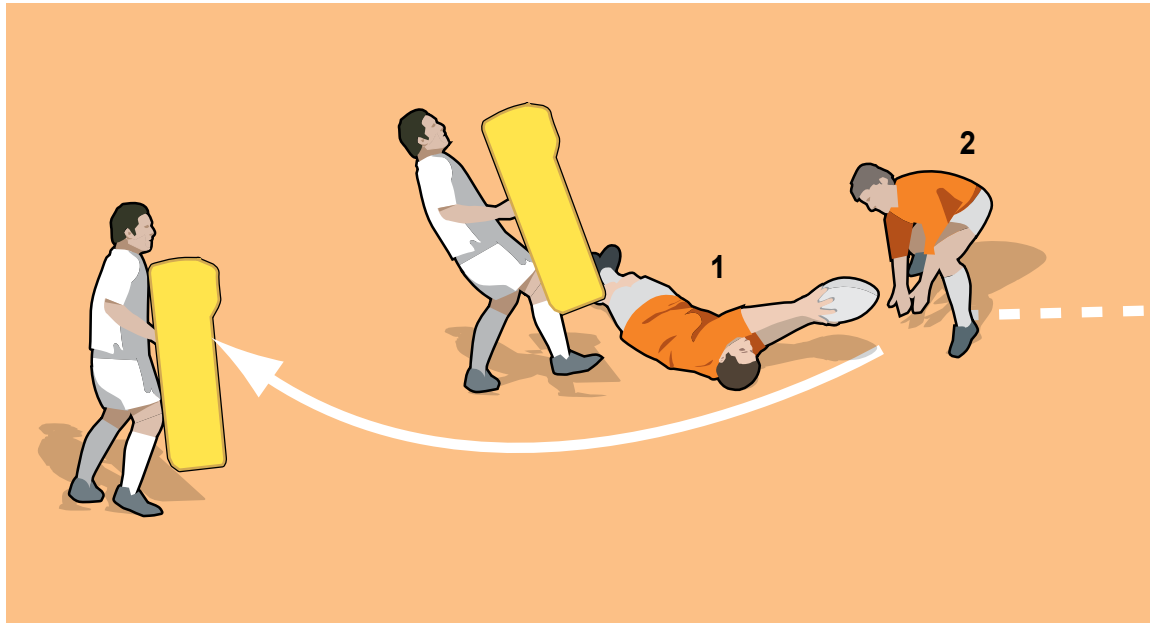
This session devised by Dan Cottrell

1

START WITH...

Pick and go basics

Player 2 picks up the ball and drives round the side of the breakdown.

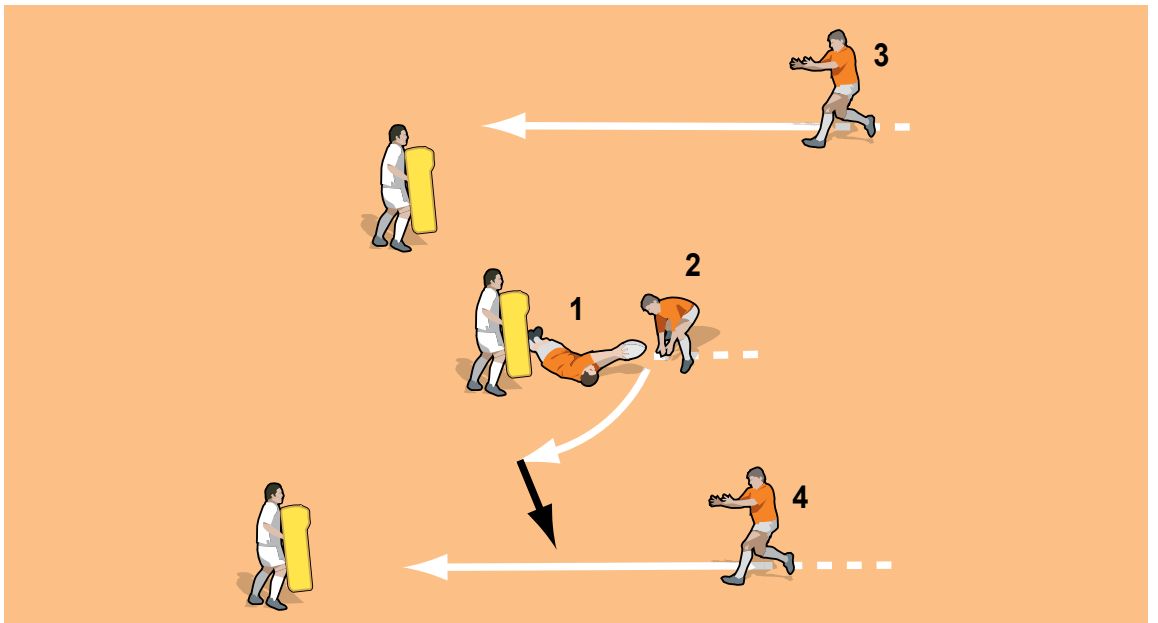


2

NOW THINK...

Decision making

Player 2 has options both sides of the breakdown, so has to make a decision.

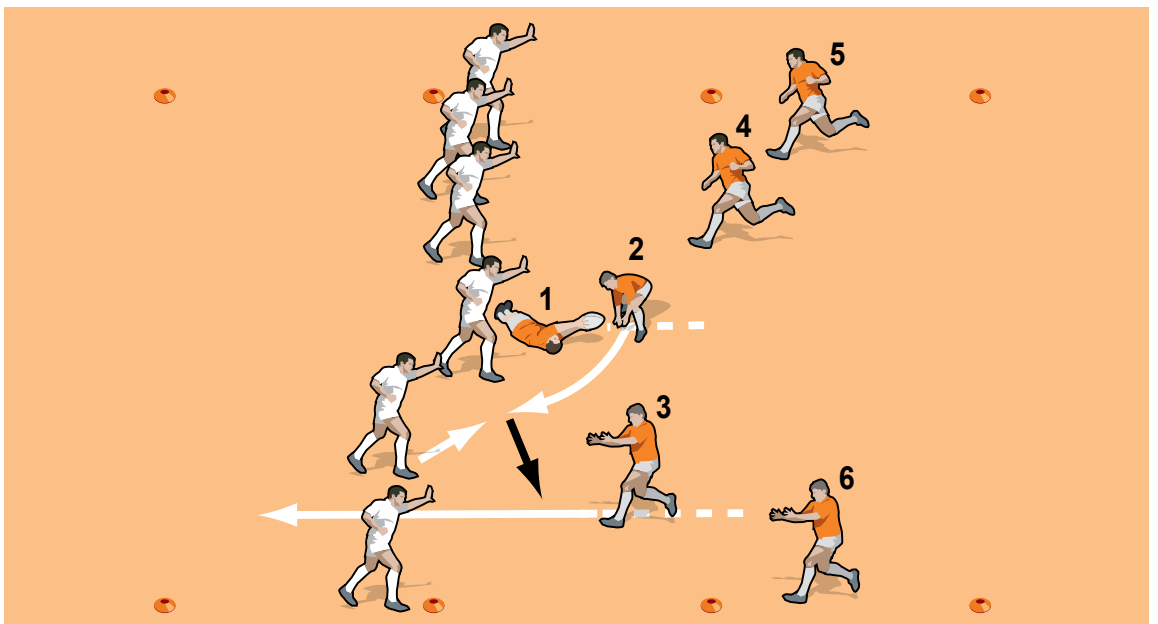


3

GAME TIME...

6 v 6 at full pace

The acting scrum half can either pick and go or pick and pass to a runner.



Direction of run →
Ground covered