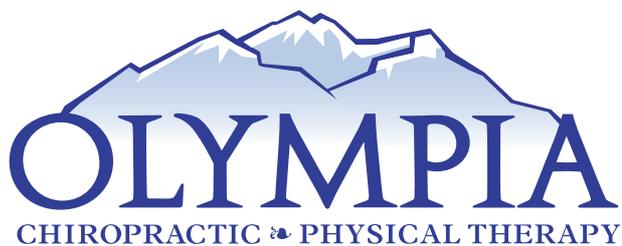




ELMHURST
RUGBY

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO RUGBY UNION

Presented
by



Safety

as a top priority

Rugby is a physical sport, but safer than football and many other contact sports for several reasons --

1) The Laws restrict contact to players with the ball or directly involved with attempts to gain possession of the ball. All other contact is a penalty.

2) What occurs in contact determines who possesses the ball. Thus, training sessions spend significant amounts of time teaching techniques for safe contact.

3) Possession is a key factor to success in rugby and not meters gained every "play." Minimizing or avoiding contact entirely are strategies to secure possession.

4) World Rugby, international governing body for the sport, routinely evaluates research and changes the Laws solely to promote player safety.

So you know...

Research has shown fewer rates of concussion for rugby when compared to football, soccer and other contact sports.

Elmhurst Rugby has adopted a ground-breaking program that, according to research, reduced overall injuries by 72% and concussions by 59%.

Rugby's history & ethos



Images courtesy of World Rugby Museum, Twickenham and Getty Images

Legend has it that in 1823, during a game of school football (soccer) in the town of Rugby, England, a young man named William Webb Ellis picked up the ball and ran towards the opposition's goal line.

Two centuries later, Rugby Football has evolved into one of the world's most popular sports, with millions of people playing, watching and enjoying the game.

At the heart of Rugby is a unique ethos that it has retained over the years. Not only is the game played to the Laws, but the nature in which these Laws were written and followed embody the values and integrity of the game.

Through discipline, control and mutual self-respect, a fellowship and sense of fair play are forged, defining Rugby as the game it is.

From the school playground to the Rugby World Cup, Rugby Union offers a truly unique and thoroughly rewarding experience for all involved in the game.

Rugby's core values

In 2009, member Unions of World Rugby identified the core values that uniquely define characteristics of Rugby both on and off the field of play. These core values define what makes Rugby distinctive as a sport:

Integrity | Passion | Solidarity |
Discipline | Respect



Elmhurst Rugby is committed to these values. Adopting a player-centered approach, Elmhurst Rugby is focused on developing the entire young athlete and helping them become a better version of themselves.

The Game

Rugby is a game in which the object is to carry the ball over the opponents' goal line and touch the ball on the ground to score.

It's simple... but complex



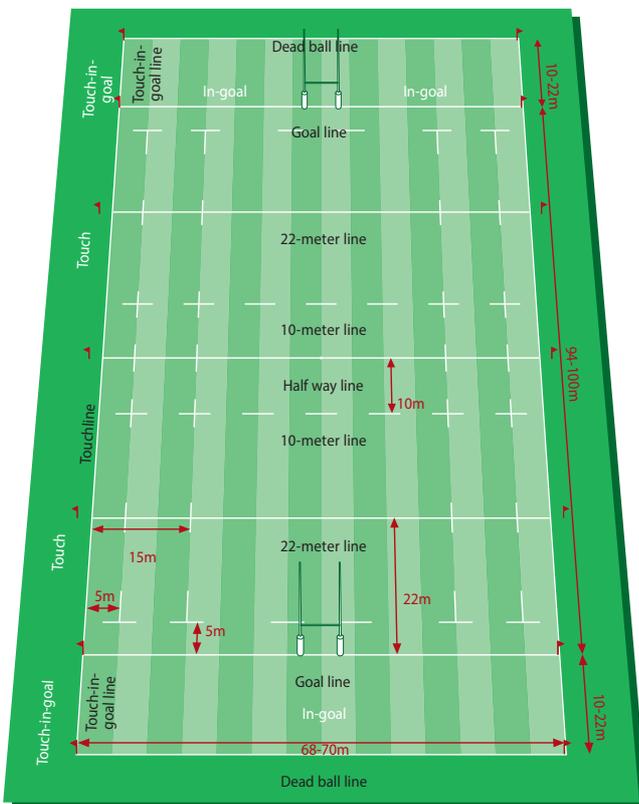
The above description may sound simple - but there is one catch. In order to go forward, the ball must be passed backwards. The ball can be kicked forwards, but the kicker's teammates must be behind the ball the moment the ball is kicked.

The apparent contradiction creates a need for fine teamwork and great discipline, as little can be achieved by any one individual player. Only by working as a team can players

move the ball forward towards their opponents' goal line to score and win the game.

Rugby has its unique aspects, but like many other sports, it is essentially about the creation and use of space. The winners of a game of Rugby will be the team of players who can get themselves and the ball into space and use that space wisely, while denying the opposing team both possession of the ball and access to space in which to use it.

The field of play



In-Goal = End zone

Touch = Sideline

Scoring points

Try - 5 points

A try is scored when the ball is grounded over the opponents' goal line in the in-goal area.

A penalty try can be awarded if a player would have scored a try but prevented by foul play of the opposition.



Try signal



Conversion - 2 points

After scoring a try, that team attempts to add two more points by kicking the ball over the crossbar and between the posts from a place in line with where the try was grounded.

Penalty Kick - 3 points

When awarded a penalty after an infringement by the opposition, a team may choose to kick at goal.

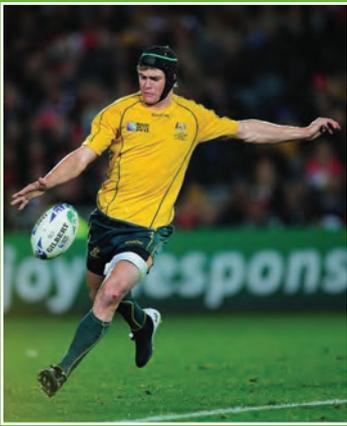
Drop Goal - 3 points

A drop goal is scored when a player kicks for goal in pen play by dropping the ball onto the ground and kicking it as it bounces up.



Kicking

If a player chooses not to pass the ball to a team mate or run with it, that player may kick the ball instead. The kick can travel forwards, but any team mates in front of the ball at the moment the ball is kicked are out of play until either they retire behind the kicker or are played onside by a team mate.



Retaining possession of the ball following a kick is a challenge. Kicking strategies include:

- Kicking into space, so that team mates have time to run onto the ball before an opponent can get to it.
- Kicking to the wide side of the field at an angle, so the wing or outside center can catch the ball.
- Kicking the ball to touch (out of bounds), resulting in a lineout (see page 10) with the throw-in to the opposition. This concedes possession of the ball, but allows the kicking team to contest for the ball in a much more advantageous position on the field.

Open play

The term 'open play' refers to any phase in the match where the ball is being passed or kicked between team mates and both teams are contesting for the ball. In open play, the team in possession tries to get the ball to players in space who can make forward progress towards the opposing goal line.

Kickoff

Each half of the match is started with a drop kick from the center of the half way line. The non-kicking team must be 10 meters back from the ball when it is kicked and the kick must travel 10m towards the opposition goal line before hitting the ground.



Handling



Passing

A player may pass to a team mate who is in a better position to continue the attack. The pass must not travel forward towards the opposing team's goal line. It must travel either directly lateral or back in the direction of the passer's own goal line.

By carrying the ball forward and passing backwards, territory is gained.

If a forward pass is made, the referee will stop the game and award a scrum (see page 8) with the throw-in going to

the team that was not in possession at the time of the pass. Thus, a forward pass is punished by the team losing possession of the ball.

Knock-on

When a player mishandles the ball and it falls forward, it is known as a knock-on.

Knock-ons are punishable by a scrum awarded to the opposition and therefore a turnover of possession.



Tackle, ruck & maul

As well as being a game of evasion, which requires creation and use of space, rugby is also a contact sport. Contact situations can be the very mechanism by which players create the space needed to attack. The three most common contact situations that occur in open play are tackle, ruck and maul.

The tackle

Only the ball carrier can be tackled by an opposing player. A tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and is brought to the ground (i.e., has one or both knees on the ground), is sitting on the ground or is on top of another player who is on the ground. To maintain the continuity of the game, the ball carrier must release the ball immediately after the tackle, the tackler must release the ball carrier and both players must roll away from the ball. This allows other players to come in and contest for the ball, thereby starting a new phase of play.



The ruck



A ruck is formed if the ball is on the ground and one or more players from each team are on their feet and close around the ball. Players must not handle the ball in the ruck and must use their feet to move the ball or drive over it so that the ball emerges at the team's hindmost foot, at which point it can be picked up.

The maul

A maul occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and one or more of the ball carrier's teammates holds on (binds) as well. A maul therefore needs a minimum of three players. The ball must be off the ground.



The team in possession of the ball can gain territory by driving their opponents back towards the opponents' goal line. The ball can then be handed backwards between players in the maul and eventually passed to a player who is not in the maul. A player can also leave the maul carrying the ball and run with it.

Advantage

The advantage Law allows the game to be more continuous and have fewer stoppages.

Sometimes, during a game, an infringement of the Laws may be committed where a stoppage in play would deprive the non-offending team of an opportunity to score.

Even though the Laws state that the non-offending team should be awarded a penalty, free kick or scrum, they are given the opportunity to continue with open play and attempt to score a try.

In this instance, the referee will allow play to continue rather than penalize the offense.

Offside

Rugby's offside Law restricts where on the field players can be, to ensure there is space to attack and defend.

In general, a player is in an offside position if that player is further forward (nearer to the opponents' goal line) than the teammate who is carrying the ball or the teammate who last-played the ball.

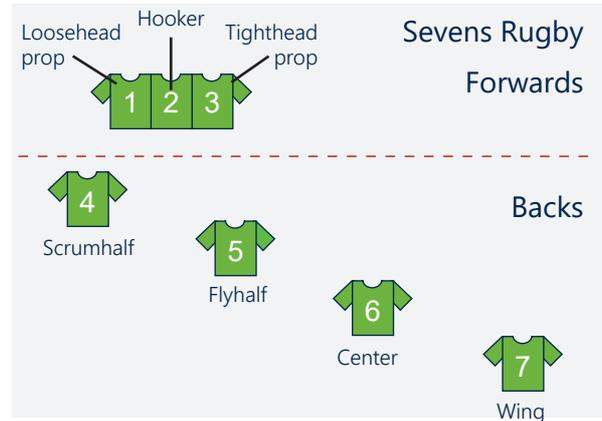
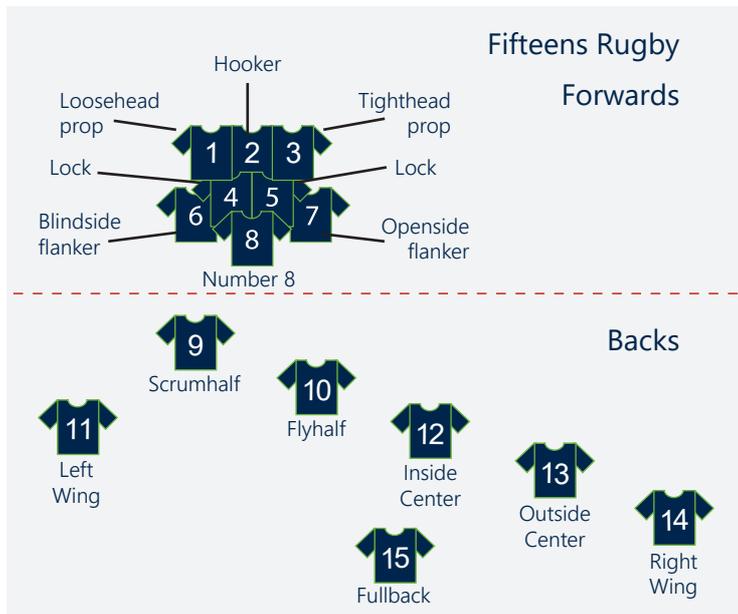
Being in an offside position is not, in itself, an offence, but an offside player may not take part in the game until they are onside again.

If an offside player takes part in the game, that player will be penalized.

The positions

Rugby Union is a game for all shapes and sizes.

Uniquely, each position requires a different set of physical and technical attributes. It is THIS diversity that makes the game so accessible to all.



Props



Hooker



What they do: Their primary role is to anchor the scrummage and provide lifting strength and support for the lineout jumpers. Also pivotal in rucks and mauls.

What they need: Upper body strength to provide stability in the scrum, endurance, mobility and sure hands to maintain continuity of play.

What they do: The hooker has two unique roles on the pitch as the player who wins possession in the scrum and usually throws the ball in to the lineout.

What they need: Great strength to withstand the physicality of the front row coupled with speed to get around the pitch and good throwing technique.



Locks



Flankers



What they do: Locks win ball from the lineouts and restarts. They drive forward momentum in the scrum, rucks and mauls - providing a platform for attack.

What they need: The key characteristic is height. The locks are the giants of the team and combine their physicality with great catching skills and mobility.

What they do: Their key objective is to win possession through turnovers, using physicality in the tackle and speed to the breakdown.

What they need: An insatiable desire for big tackles and a 'no fear' approach to winning the ball. A combination of speed, strength, endurance and handling.



Number 8



What they do: The Number 8 must secure possession at the base of the scrum, carry the ball in open play, provide the link between the forwards and backs in attacking phases and defend aggressively.

What they need: Good handling skills are essential, as is a great awareness of space. Power and pace over short distances is crucial - gaining territory and field position for a quick release to the backs in attack.



Scrumhalf



What they do: Provides the link between forwards and backs at the scrum and lineouts. A true decision-maker, the 9 will judge whether to distribute quick ball to the backs or keep it close to the forwards.

What they need: A multi-faceted position, the scrumhalf must be powerful, have explosive speed, all-around handling and kicking skills. The great 9s are highly confident players with excellent game understanding.



Flyhalf



What they do: As the player who orchestrates the team's performance, the 10 will receive the ball from the 9 and choose to kick, pass or make a break based upon split-second interpretation of the phase of play.

What they need: The ability to kick well out of hand, ideally on either foot, deft handling skills, pace, vision, creativity, communication skills, tactical awareness and the ability to perform under pressure.



Centers



What they do: The centers are key in both defense and attack. In defense, they will attempt to tackle attacking players whilst in attack they will use their speed, power and creative flair to breach defenses.

What they need: The modern-day center is lean, strong and extremely quick. The position demands great attacking prowess, coupled with an intensity in contact to either retain or steal possession.



Wings



What they do: The wings are on the pitch to provide the injection of speed needed to outrun an opponent and score a try. Also important to be solid in defense.

What they need: Speed. Wings will often find themselves in open space, when their number one priority is to press the accelerator and run for the line. Strength and good handling are an advantage too.



Fullback

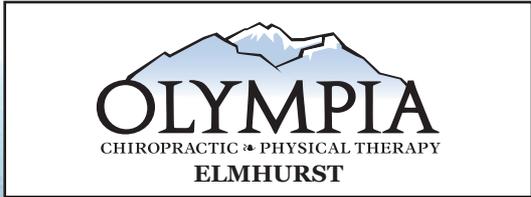


What they do: Generally perceived as the last line of defense, the fullback must be confident under a high ball, have a good boot to clear the lines and enjoy the physicality required to make try-saving tackles.

What they need: Great handling skills, pace in attack and power in defense. An ability to join the line at pace to create an overlap and try-scoring opportunities for the winger. Tactical skill and flair.



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Olympia Chiropractic & Physical Therapy has been serving our community for the past 25 years. Founded by a long time competitive athlete, Dr. Pat Calcagno opened Olympia in 1997 after earning his doctorate in chiropractic from Life University. His brother, Dr. Mike Calcagno opened an Olympia office in his home town of Elmhurst in 2004. Since then, Olympia has expanded to seven different locations throughout the Chicagoland area, including Bartlett, Elmhurst, Park Ridge, St. Charles, and Sycamore. Olympia offers physical therapy and massage therapy in addition to chiropractic care for their patients. Our motto “*Where Champions Go To Get Better,*” speaks to Olympia’s passion to help each patient achieve their highest level of function.

Equipment

Before playing rugby, it is important to understand the equipment you'll need.



It's pretty simple... you'll need a sturdy pair of boots with studs or cleats appropriate for the field on which you'll play. There are different boots for positions, mostly between the forwards and backs.



A mouth guard will protect your teeth, jaw and can help reduce chance of concussion. Some players chose to wear approved head gear (scrum cap) or padded equipment under the jersey.



The scrum



Signals for scrum awarded (left) and forming a scrum (right).

The scrum is a means of restarting play after a stoppage caused by a minor infringement of the laws (for example, a forward pass or knock on) or the ball becoming unplayable in a ruck or maul. The scrum serves to concentrate all the forwards and the scrum halves in one place on the field, providing the opportunity for the backs to mount an attack using the space created elsewhere.



The ball is thrown into the middle of the tunnel between the two front rows, at which point the two hookers can complete for the ball, attempting to hook the ball back in the direction of their teammates. The team who throws the ball into the scrum usually retains possession because the hooker and scrumhalf can synchronize their actions.

Once possession has been secured, a team can keep the ball on the ground and in the scrum while attempting to drive the opposition down the field. Alternatively, they can bring the ball to the hindmost foot of the scrum, where the ball is then passed into the back line and open play resumes.

The scrumhalf



The key player at the scrum is the scrumhalf. This player throws the ball into the scrum, moves to the hindmost foot of the scrum and is usually the player who picks the ball up and passes out to the flyhalf who then distributes the ball to the back line. As soon as the scrumhalf picks the ball up, the opposition may contest for the ball and attempt to tackle whichever player is in possession.

The lineout



The touch judge signals that the ball is in touch and which team has the throw in.



The lineout is a means of restarting play after the ball has gone into touch (out of bounds). The lineout concentrates a selection of forwards in one place near to the touch line, so the backs have the rest of the width of the field in which to mount an attack. The key for the forwards is to win possession and distribute the ball effectively to the back line.

The forwards assemble in two lines, perpendicular to the touch line, one meter apart. The hooker throws the ball down the corridor between these two lines of players. Because the thrower's teammates know where the throw is likely to go, that team has an advantage in retaining possession. However, with speed of thought and movement, the opposition can contest for the ball and the lineout frequently results in a turnover of possession.

The player who successfully catches the ball can keep it and set up a maul, or can pass to the receiver (a player who stands next to the lineout to wait for such a pass) who then passes to the flyhalf and on to the back line.

Lineout support



To allow players to catch high throws in the lineout, it is permissible for the catcher to be supported by teammates while jumping to catch the ball.

Safety is a prime concern here, and any player who is off the ground must be supported until that player returns to the ground. A player may not be tackled while in the air, and holding, shoving or levering on an opponent are all offenses punishable with a penalty kick.

Penalty and free kick

Infringements of the Laws that have a material and significant impact on the opposition are punished with the award of a penalty kick.



Penalty signal

If the place where the penalty is awarded is within range of the posts, the team can choose to kick for a goal by a place kick. Using a tee, the kicker attempts to kick the ball between the posts and over the crossbar. Three points are awarded for a successful kick.

A team may choose not to kick for goal. Other options include a scrum, a "quick take" to bring the ball into open play, or kicking for touch where the kicking team has the throw in to the resulting lineout.

A free kick is awarded for less significant offenses. Teams may not score points directly from a free kick or kick for touch and receive the throw in for the resulting lineout.

A team may opt for a scrum instead of a free kick.



Free kick signal

Match officials

The match is under the control of the referee and two touch judges. Depending on the level at which the game is being played, there may be other officials behind the scenes, such as a time keeper or television match official to adjudicate on replays.



The referee

Before the match, the referee will usually speak to the front row players (props and hookers) from both teams, to run through the scrum engagement procedure. This talk helps focus the front row on this essential phase of the game. The referee then organizes the coin toss with the captains prior to the match to decide who kicks off. During the match itself, the referee is the sole judge of fact and of Law. It is essential that all players respect the referee's decisions at all times.

Touch judges

Two judges, one on either side of the field of play, assist the referee in matters of when and where the ball goes into touch and other issues as required by the referee. The touch judges determine whether the ball crosses through the posts during a kick.



Foul play

Foul play is anything a player does that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Laws of the Game, including obstruction, unfair play, dangerous play and misconduct. The referee must sanction foul play appropriately while mindful of continuous play.

Why did the whistle blow?

For anyone who is not familiar with the finer points of the Laws of Rugby, it can sometimes be hard to tell why the referee has stopped play for an infringement. Here we look at some of the most common reasons why the whistle may have blown, as well as the signal made by the referee when each circumstance occurs during play. The signals for penalty and free kick are shown on page 10.

Advantage being played

Advantage can be applied to either minor infringements (e.g., knock-on), or offenses that could result in a penalty (e.g., offside). The decision has to be made by the referee as to whether there may be more benefit to the non-offending team if play continues. If no advantage occurs, the referee will blow the whistle and bring play back to the place of the original infringement that occurred prior to advantage being played.



Forward pass or knock on

Sometimes, an attack that is advancing forward is stopped by the referee's whistle.

If a pass has gone forward, or a handling error has resulted in a knock-on, a scrum will be awarded to the non-offending team.



Failure to release player or ball

After a tackle, the tackler must immediately release the ball carrier, and the ball carrier must immediately release the ball.

Failure on either of these counts limits a fair contest for possession. If release does not occur within a reasonable time frame, the referee will award a penalty to the non-offending team.



Failure to roll away

Any players on the ground when a ruck or maul is formed must immediately roll away from the ball, so as to allow continuity of play for the team in possession.

Failure to do so will result in the award of a penalty to the non-offending team.



Joining ruck/maul from the side

When joining a ruck or maul, all players must do so from behind the hindmost foot of their hindmost teammate.

If they join from the side, they are in an offside position and taking part in the game, and this will immediately be penalized with the award of a penalty to the opposing team.



Unplayable ball at ruck or maul

If the ball becomes unplayable at a ruck (e.g., under players who are on the ground), a scrum is awarded to the team going forward before the ball became unplayable. For a maul, the scrum goes to the team not in possession when the maul began.





Your Spot In Western Suburbs to Watch Rugby!

Elmhurst's Family-Friendly Neighborhood Sports Bar

Established in 2010, Pints Elmhurst is locally owned and operated. Pints features 17 HDTVs, 20 craft beers on tap, and more than 50 bottles/cans of beer choices. We serve gourmet burgers and sandwiches. In addition, we have healthy salads and a selection of mouthwatering appetizers, including wings, nachos, and cheese curds.

Promise To Our Guests

We strive to offer the best food and service in a warm, neighborhood-like atmosphere. Let our attentive staff members' friendly faces light up your day. We are certain that you'll have a blast hanging out with your friends and family while watching sports at our restaurant and bar.

Advertise With Elmhurst Rugby

Associate your brand with a community organization that's giving back to Elmhurst. A 501c3 Non-Profit, all money generated supports our programs.



Becoming an Elmhurst coach

We welcome participation from parents or enthusiasts interested in becoming more involved with Elmhurst Rugby. Our minimum requirement is the prospective volunteer believes in and can adhere to our four pillars outlined below.

Aside from coaching, we need volunteers to fill multiple positions to help grow Elmhurst Rugby.

You can start by emailing the club at elmhurstrugby@gmail.com

The coach



The role of the coach varies greatly depending on the level at which the team operates. At grass roots levels, it's about developing players technically and personally. At the international level, the coach is responsible for team selection, performance and results.

A coach takes on many interchangeable roles, such as leader, manager, teacher and organizer. The coach needs to have a knowledge of the Game and its Laws, motivation, physical fitness and an understanding of how to coach and improve players.

Replacements & substitutions

As well as the 15 players in the starting line up, a team can also have substitutions. The coach can make a pre-agreed number of substitutions for tactical reasons during the course of the game. Players can also be replaced when injured, either temporarily while a player receives treatment, or permanently if a player is unable to continue playing.

Elmhurst Rugby coaching pillars



TOUGHNESS

We encourage mental toughness, discipline, resilience and for our athletes to become a better version of themselves in rugby and life.



WARMTH

It is critical a coach learn the motivations and goals of their team. Toughness absent warmth is an equation for failure and burnout.



COMPETENCE

Knowledge of the game and how it is played and coached at various age levels is critical and strengths of Elmhurst Rugby.



HUMILITY

The greatest quality of each Elmhurst coach is the recognition that there is still more to learn and an innate desire to collaborate and improve themselves.

Team tactics



The critical elements of rugby training and execution involve (1) technique, (2) tactics, (3) strength and conditioning, (4) nutrition, and (5) mental skills.

Developing the right tactics can make or break a team's performance and require a thorough knowledge of a team's strengths. It is truly enjoyable to watch youth execute a tactical plan during a match. It is also exhilarating to watch two professional or international teams battle each other tactically on the rugby pitch. In fact, watching the gamesmanship during rugby match is much like a battle of wits employed during a chess match.

Power and contact



Rugby is a contact sport and does require power and strength of player. However, rugby is not a collision sport. It is often more advantageous to avoid contact in order to move forward toward the opponent's goal.

Creating space

For all its complexities, Rugby remains a simple game in essence. Points will be scored when a player is put into space and when an attacking team outnumbers those in defense.

As such, Rugby's holy grail lies in creation of space. There are many tactics geared towards this goal, but winning quick ball and moving the ball away from a concentration of players and into space remains the most powerful tool for scoring in rugby.



Rugby Sevens

The Olympic dream



Rugby sevens is played on a full size pitch by teams of seven players rather than fifteen. The game is shorter in duration, with each half lasting seven minutes during the pool stages of a tournament, and increasing to ten minutes for the final.

Aside from duration, the Laws vary very little from the 15-a-side game. Because the amount of space available on the pitch is very different, however, sevens rugby is a very different game to watch. One characteristic of Rugby Sevens is that sometimes teams will choose to retreat towards their own try line initially, drawing the opposition towards them, in an attempt to create space in other areas to then go forward in attack.

Demands of Rugby Sevens

Because Rugby Sevens is played on a full size pitch, players need to be able to cover a lot of ground during a match. This means that participants need to be incredibly fit and have plenty of speed, skill and stamina. As a result, Rugby Sevens players are often backs or loose forwards in Fifteen Rugby.

The basics of Rugby - running, passing, tackling, decision-making - are all key components of Rugby Sevens, as are creating space and keeping possession of the ball.

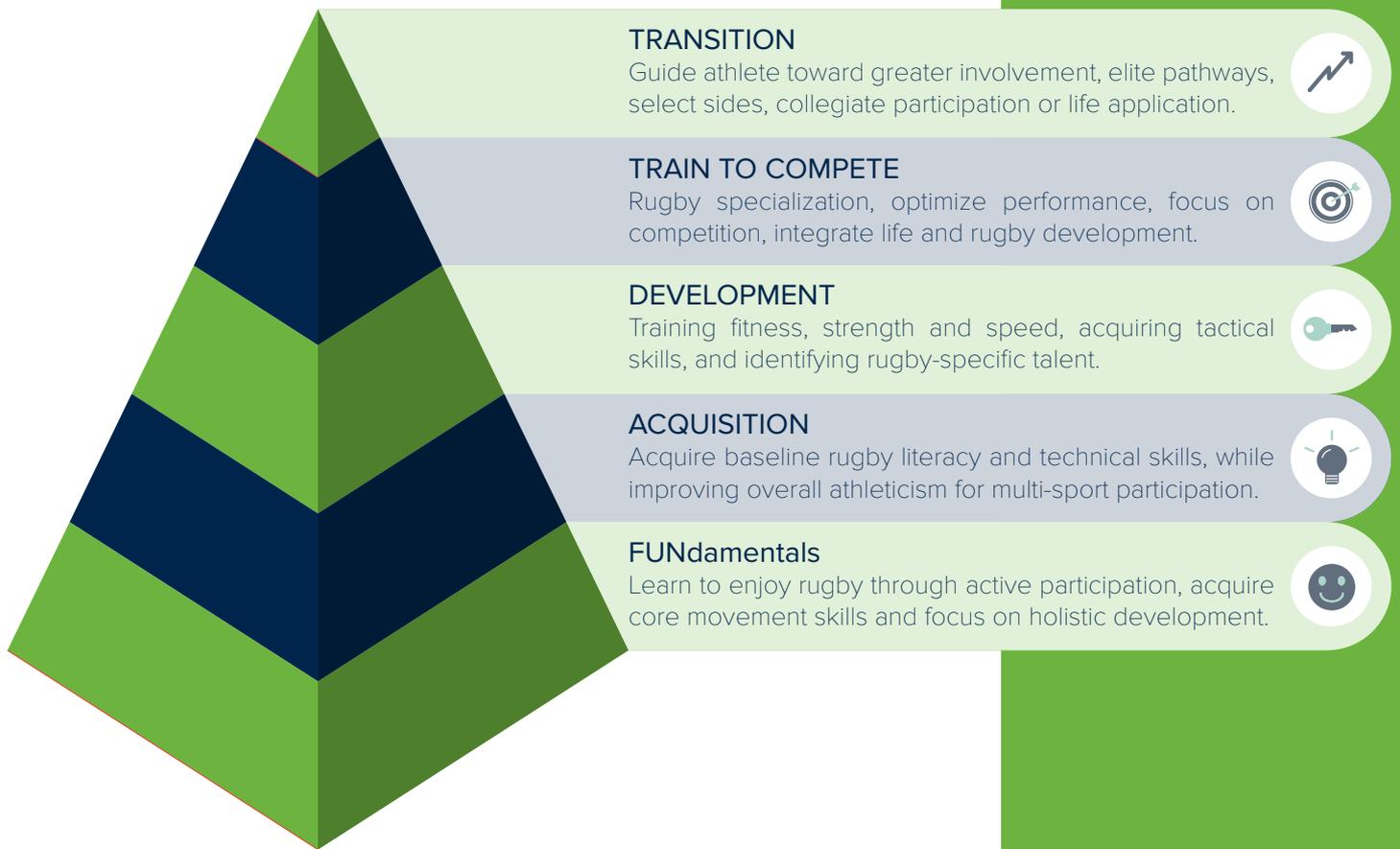
Sevens and the Olympics

Rugby rejoined the Olympic Program at Rio in 2016 when Rugby Sevens made its eagerly awaited debut.

Rugby is a perfect fit for the Olympic Games as it reinforces the Olympic movement's ideals thanks to its longstanding ethos of fair play and friendship. The vibrant and exciting format of Rugby Sevens also appeals to both existing fans and a wider sports-loving audience worldwide.

Now young athletes can have dreams of becoming a Rugby Olympian in Sevens, as well as a professional athlete and National representative in XV's.

Elmhurst Rugby's Development Model



We employ a player-centered approach that uses rugby as a platform to develop the athlete in both competition and life.

Rugby for us begins with learning to love the game. Too many young athletes are either leaving sports as they get older or getting burned out. We work hard to build a foundation that sustains enjoyment *AND* continued involvement.

We also focus on a player's exit from our program. We work with each individual athlete to transition them toward something beyond Elmhurst Rugby, including:

- When warranted and desired by the athlete, pathways toward more elite competition, including regional select sides and representing the USA.
- Collegiate completion where many colleges and universities are now offering scholarships.
- Greater involvement in the sport, whether coaching, refereeing or continued leisurely participation as an adult. Many of our alumni have come back and coached with Elmhurst Rugby or elsewhere.
- For **ALL** of our graduating athletes, we work to ensure they leave our program understanding how to apply the mental skills, leadership, values and lessons learned from rugby to make them more successful in life.