

Lineout Play

Developing play from a lineout

The ability to develop play from a lineout and get over the 'gain' line quickly is critical to a team offensive capabilities. There are 4 key benefits for this strategy

1. To carry the ball quickly and simply across the gain line
2. Take the opposition forwards and in particular the open side out of the game
3. Play 'go forward' rugby by creating the opportunity for the bigger ball carrying forwards of the attacking team or faster strike runners to run onto the ball and target opposition backs and/or the space around them
4. Create the opportunity to develop 'continuity play' by offloading in the tackle, create pick and drive play or just big v small or fast v quick mis-matches.

Even though this appears to be a simple team skill, it requires clear communication, execution and practice. For this article, we'll focus on the winning of the ball at the lineout and the execution to the first tackle/contact situation.

Considerations:

- Attacking side: Can you do this! i.e. Individual, player, unit and team skills
- Defensive side: What are the strengths and weakness of the opposition
- Position on the field
- State of the game
- Weather conditions

Objective:

To get the back across the gain line as quickly as possible.



Diagram 1: Full lineout

How are we going to do this:

In it's simplest form this only involves 8 players. (hooker, jumper, 2 lifters, scrum half, ball receiver, openside and nearest supporting back)

For example

- ? Lineout: middle ball (back ball option), ball release off the top to 9,
- ? Long flat pass from 9 to 12 with 7 & 13 securing the ball at tackle / contact

Key skills:

- **Communication** (needs to be communicated before the play starts)
 - What are we going to do.
 - Who's going to do it.
 - Where do we want to go.
 - What are we going to do next.
- **Lineout** (needs to deliver the correct type of ball)
 - Calling structure
 - Execution of the throw
 - Execution of the lift
 - Delivery/release of the ball
- **Scrum half**

- Speed of release of the ball
- Long, flat, hard and accurate pass to the target
- Follow the pass to provide a link to the next phase
- **Ball in contact**
 - Receipt of ball by the ball carrier (usually inside centre)
 - The ability of the ball carrier to retain possession in contact
 - Role of the support players (usually No. 7 and outside centre).
- **Speed to the ball**
 - Clearing the ruck effectively and securing quick ball.

Summary:

We have established a clear and simple offensive strategy from a lineout. We are able to cross the gain line quickly and effectively and clear the first ruck / contact situation.