

Skills Assessment Baseline in Other Sports

Work Package 1

Objective

Collate a body of evidence from other sports to inform the WFTDA Board planning on the future of the Minimum Skills Requirements. Contribute to a fuller understanding of the impact of decoupling the MSRs skills from game play and the impact on safety.

We specifically focused on sports that feature physical contact and/or an additional movement skill beyond walking/running (e.g. skating, running with a stick, etc.)

Sources:

- Email, WFTDA Community, & social media Call for Contacts
- National Governing Bodies and area leagues and associations
- MSR Task Force previous research

Standardized Initial Questions:

1. Is there a benchmark program/baseline for skills/abilities provided for competitive and/or recreational play in your sport?
2. What skills, if any, are required of players before they may play in a game? In a scrimmage?
3. What skills are expected of players before they may play in a game? In a scrimmage?
4. Is there a variant(s) of the game or other progression that is used to introduce gameplay to new players of your sport?

Responses & Resources

Received Responses
Coaches/Players/Governing
Bodies of:

- American Football
- Basketball
- Ice Hockey
- Men's Lacrosse
- Rugby
- Quidditch
- Water Polo

Countries Represented in
Responses & Work Group:

- Australia
- Canada
- England
- Germany
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Scotland
- United States

Collected Resources from:
*(e.g. coach education, player development,
progression plans, checking/contact
progressions, skill competency checklists,
practice guidelines, etc.)*

- American Football
- Australian Football
- Basketball
- Boys Lacrosse
- Football/Soccer
- Ice Hockey
- Water Polo

By The Numbers

Breakdown of
contact
demographics,
response rates,
and resource
review.

30

Inquiries Made with
Standardized Initial
Questions

15 of the inquiries were
to National Governing
Bodies

14

Responses received

4

From Governing Bodies

0

National Governing
Bodies require skills
baselining before
participation

4 responses shared
tests/assessments given
by **local level** sport
associations

These tests/
assessments are used to
determine which **level of
play** is appropriate for
each player's current skill

11

Sports reviewed

9 provide free resources
for coaches' development

8 offer formal education
or certification for
coaches

6

Provide free resources for
players' individual &
personal development

Determination

Of the responses received:

- The governing bodies of other sports **do not** require baseline skills for participation
 - The decision of requiring baseline skills, benchmarks, and/or determining player participation level is left to area organizations/associations to determine what (if any) they require for their participants
- The governing bodies of other sports **do** provide resources for coaches and clubs on skills to cover, ways to introduce contact, and ways to teach skills.
- The governing bodies of other sports **may** provide variant versions of the sport for younger players/newer players often with decreased/limited contact, adjustments to game speed/intensity, and/or allowances for coach/veteran assistance for new players.

The governing bodies
of other sports **do not**
require baseline skills
for participation.

Heather Mannix

ADM Manager for Female (Ice)
Hockey, USA Hockey

***Bold emphasis added*

“We as a governing body don’t have required guidelines to determine when or if a player is allowed to participate in games... the [local] associations will typically assess the level of play the player is capable of based on their past experience or current skating ability and find a team that matches or is a good fit for the player for them”

Jamie Frech

Coach, University of Michigan
Women's Rugby

***Bold emphasis added*

“All of this is a coach decision, made on an individual basis. There are no absolute standards, it’s the coaches job to sit down with the athlete and explain what the gates are that they need to pass to be ready, and to put their foot down if they think someone is likely to get hurt or isn’t ready to play at a certain level.”

Kevin Greene

Coach & Athlete Development,
US Lacrosse

***Bold emphasis added*

“US Lacrosse does not mandate any procedures and requirements of athletes joining lacrosse at any level.... No skills are required, but coaches need to use their judgement on when and where to insert players to support their development, their love of the game, and to avoid injuries.”

Eric Sherry

Head American Football Coach for
Charlottesville High School
Past Player (College & High School)

***Bold emphasis added*

“Coaches have the responsibility to
assess the games and situations that
they’re putting players into.”

Mary Kimball

Executive Director, US Quidditch

***Bold emphasis added*

“Much of what you asked about isn't really standardized at the league level and is handled by individual teams instead. At the league level, we're more focused on knowledge about safety, the rules, and league policies.”

What About Testing?

Examples of tests and assessments in other sports.

Drew Clute

Coach Education Manager, USA
Water Polo

***Bold emphasis added*

“At a minimum, players must have swimming safety -- drowning is a real risk in terms of player-readiness.

Otherwise, individual clubs and their club managers would make specific decisions about what skills they deem “expected” or “required” for their team’s gameplay....”

Example Swim Safety Assessment for Water Polo

“If any coach has serious concerns regarding the participants ability to just function safely in the water, they would first ask questions like, "do you know how to swim?" [and to gauge their response] ... A traditional swim assessment would be to have the participants swim one or two laps in the lane closest to the wall... After a few laps a coach will have a pretty good sense as to how the participant will be able to function in the water. Next would be some kind of assessment to gauge their ability to tread water. If they're new to sport, they're not going to know how to egg beater.... If they can swim but not egg beater, we can give them a noodle to float on or they can float on a ball.”

Red Hot Toddy

Player, Women's Hockey
Association of Minnesota (WHAM),
Player, North Star Roller Derby

***Bold emphasis added*

“WHAM requires all [players] new to the league to go through on-ice assessments.... [players] are assessed to a certain level of hockey and may play that level or higher - we have everything from new-on-skates (C-3) to former D1 athletes (A-1).... **WHAM doesn't determine if people can play, just at which level.**”

Example On-Ice Assessment for WHAM Play Levels

“On-ice skills include skating forward and backward, striding the length of the ice (speed and stability), crossovers, edgework, stops and starts, fall/get up, and then adding stickhandling to any/all of these. Once the skills part is over, they move to a scrimmage between all participants. During the scrimmage, they're looking at the practical use of those skills, along with gameplay knowledge and general safety.

WHAM looks for two things: can you do these things, and if so, at what competency level? That's what determines your level of play. Once skaters have assessed, that's the lowest level of play they may participate in unless they petition the league. They're welcome to play at a higher level if there is a team willing to roster them... And as long as you play with no more than one skipped season, you don't need to assess again."

Heather Mannix

ADM Manager for Female (Ice)
Hockey, USA Hockey

***Bold emphasis added*

“Some [local] associations will have “draft skates” (typically at the adult level) where they will have new skaters run through a practice where there are evaluators that will watch the level of ability of each player and place them in the appropriate league based on their skill level. **Even in those instances to my knowledge, there is not a set of standards that we as an NGB give to the associations to judge or assess specific skills. So those decisions are made at the association level and is tailored to the type of program that they are looking to run.”**

The governing bodies of other sports **do** provide resources for coaches and clubs on skills to cover, ways to introduce contact, and ways to teach skills.



Governing Bodies that provide resources for development

Stages of World Rugby's Long Term Player Development Model

Stage 1: Fun - General learning of movement and basic skills.

Player plays and the coach guides.

Stage 2: Development – All about learning the game.

Player explores and the coach teaches.

Stage 3: Participation - Playing the game and developing the player. **Player focuses and the coach challenges.**

Stage 4: Preparation - Reaching full potential.

Player specialises and the coach facilitates.

Stage 5: Performance - Consistency of performance.

Player innovates and the coach empowers.

Stage 6: Re-investment - Support and enjoyment of the game.



BASKETBALL ENGLAND

THE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAYBOOK



CONTENTS

01

INTRODUCTION

06

THE PRINCIPLES OF
THE GAME

02

HOW TO USE THE
PDF PLAYBOOK

07

COACHING THE
PRINCIPLES

03

IT'S A GAME &
WE LOVE IT

08

COACHING
GAME AWARENESS

04

CORE PRINCIPLES

09

LINKING GAME
AWARENESS TO
SKILLED TECHNIQUE

05

FUTURE PROOF
PLAYER PROFILE

10

SUMMARY &
CLOSING THOUGHTS



LEVELS OF CONTACT

0 - AIR



Players run a drill unopposed without contact.

1 - BAGS



Drill is run against a bag or another soft-contact surface.

3 - THUD



Drill is run at full speed through the moment of contact. No pre-determined "winner." Contact remains above the waist, players stay on their feet and a quick whistle ends the drill.

4 - LIVE ACTION



Drill is run in game-like conditions and is the only time that players are taken to the ground.

The governing bodies of other sports **may** provide variant versions of the sport for newer players, often with decreased/limited contact, adjustments to game speed/intensity, and/or allowances for coach/veteran assistance for new players.

Adam Dick

Coach, University of Pennsylvania
Women's Rugby

***Bold emphasis added*

“Prior to contact variations of touch rugby are very useful to build other skills and game sense without the contact. **We start players with touch rugby pretty quickly so that they are learning the game straight away and keep their interest while teaching them how to be safe. ”**

Ryan Smythe

Player, The Lost Boys Quidditch
Club

***Bold emphasis added*

“We also typically **start [new players] out with a very slow-paced scrimmage (walking/half-speed)** to get an idea of how the game flows, and also **[we] usually have a captain essentially shadowing them from the sidelines shouting out advice/directions.**”

Tricia “SlamminElla” Norling

Coach & Player, Ice Hockey,
Player, Roller Derby

***Bold emphasis added*

“We place the ready skaters into scrimmages that we orchestrate in the beginning....[the coach] would have total control (to a degree) over **what happened on the ice** so that rookie skaters weren’t left to face things they weren’t prepared for.... our goal was to create a hockey experience that was safe, fun and meaningful without stress or burdens on brand new, just starting players.”

Kevin Greene

Coach & Athlete Development,
US Lacrosse

***Bold emphasis added*

“...at the youngest levels of (boy's) game play, **we advocate for no contact to limited contact**, so that skills can be learned, and a love of the game can be fostered without fear of injury.”

Closing Perspectives

Tricia “SlamminElla” Norling

Coach & Player, Ice Hockey,
Player, Roller Derby

“We were a bit more inclusive in [ice] hockey in this way only because we looked at the skater as a whole: Are they steady? Are they in control of their skates? Can they stop? Are they proving safe on the ice? Are they quick and agile? Do they take direction and coaching well? Have they been consistent in performance or was this one good night a fluke?”

Drew Clute

Coach Education Manager, USA
Water Polo

“We should be facilitating entry [into our sports], not creating more hoops to jump through.”

“I think it’s the fine line that you have to walk as an NGB with a large amount of members.... **by not having a set of strict guidelines from us as the NGB that blanket all associations, it allows for [local] associations to tailor their programs to best fit their members.**

Because, when you think about it, members of an association in Arizona or New Mexico, (a “non-traditional” ice hockey market) may have different backgrounds and playing experiences than members in say, Minnesota, where hockey is much more prevalent in the lives of citizens living there.”

-Heather Mannix,
ADM Manager for Female Hockey, USA Hockey

***Bold emphasis added.*

Work Package 1 Links

[Full Responses](#)

[Contact Records](#)

[Resources from Other Sports](#)