

GCE Physical Education - Exemplar Material

6PE02

Task 2.3 – National Study (Rugby Union)

Commentary

The task submitted is in excess of the word count (1000 words), and the mark given represents this.

This task covers many areas but is very simplistic in the nature of the writing. While it contains some factual information it lacks depth on national provisions and pathways. In addition, reference should be made to national competitions open to elite players of all ages. The national task does mention disabled and gender issues but factual detail is scant. The role of the NGB needs to be expanded along with County associations. The factual detail that is included is helpful. Some of the information contained in the appendixes should have been included in the actual task. The agreed moderated mark has taken in account the 1000 word count limit with the process of moderation ceasing towards the end of the Critical Review and awarded a mark of 9/15.

Mark – 9/15



**RUGBY
FOOTBALL
UNION**

National study

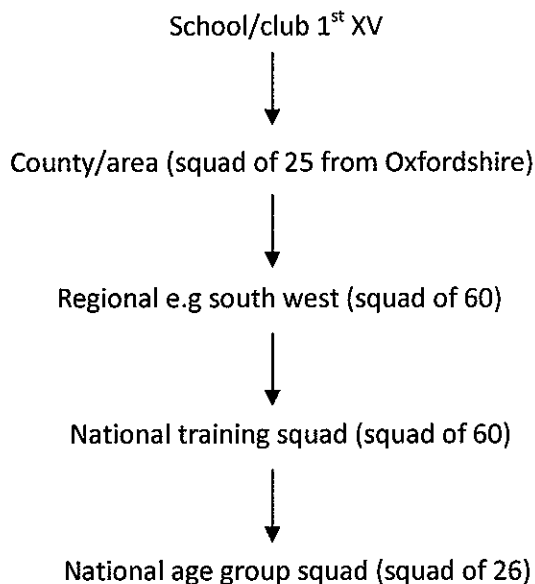
Introduction

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) is the governing body for rugby in England. Therefore it is able to help organize and supply equipment and fund the sport. The game became professional in 1995 and has increased in popularity due to the new commercialisation of the sport. The RFU have been key to the development, especially at the grass roots level with new clubs forming. Due to the increase in popularity of the sport the traditional schools pathways to becoming a professional player is becoming overcrowded as more people wish to play at a higher level. Therefore players are opting for the clubs pathway as it has a distinct advantage for both club and player.

Pathways and provisions

These include the club academy route and the England Rugby Pathway.

Schools pathway



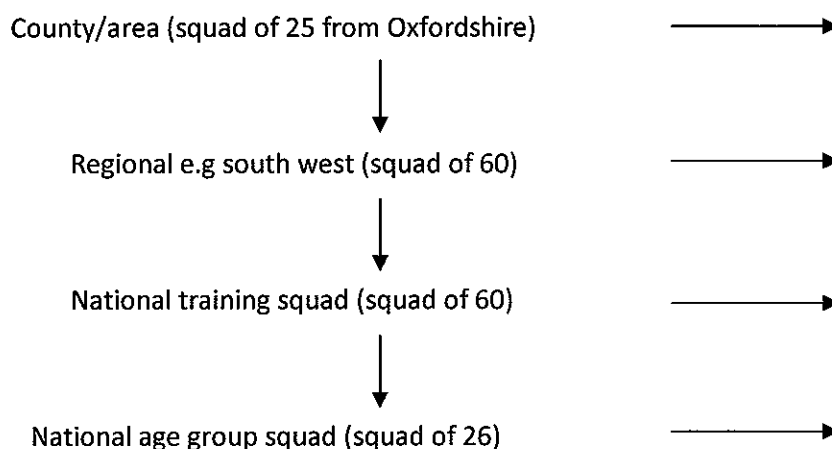
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Academy set up

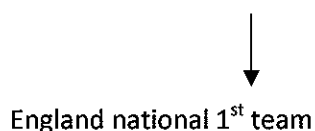
School/club 1st XV

Academy set up





Professional contracts from professional teams (e.g. London wasps)



Progression to county level

First level elite implies the player plays at their schools 1st XV level or for your local clubs colts. Player's names can be nominated by your school or club for a county trial. Assessors and coaches cut the numbers down from anywhere around 100 or more nominees to a squad around 32 depending on injuries and other circumstances. From this 32 a squad of 25 travel to fixtures and are essentially a playing squad. This group of 25 predominantly play other counties. During some of these matches players are assessed by regional selectors, this offers an opportunity to progress to regional and possibly national standard teams.



Progression to regional level

The squad of 25 then play other county squads in their area. Four counties make up an area and there are 8 areas in the South West Region (Oxfordshire being in area 6). During these matches individuals are assessed out of 10 by divisional selectors this is to help them select a training squad of 60. This squad is then cut down further through the training sessions, this is so it can play other regional sides. The training sessions usually include two areas so players do not have to travel so far.

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Progression to national level

After being selected for a regional squad they then go on to play other regional sides. Whilst these matches are being played England selectors are selecting a training squad of 60. This squad are then taken for a fitness weekend (for the previous two years it has been held at Cokethorpe school). The squad reduced to 30 players. The 30 which are cut play for England A whilst the selected squad of 30 is cut in to a playing squad of 26, this is slightly bigger than the county playing squad because of they

need an additional travelling reserve prop. This select 26 then play other national teams in an under16 6 nation's tournament. This continues through the age groups until England 1st XV.



Academies

London Wasps Academy covers Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Middlesex. Their job is to scout talented players in these areas from the ages of 13-21 at this age the player can choose if he wants a professional rugby career or the club lets them go. Players can gain access to the academy by being nominated by the school of rugby or being scouted by a talent scout. The players in the academy are usually scouted in between the ages of 13-16. Once invited to the academy they have to successfully complete a "FAST" test which they must score over 5000 in.

Roles of schools, clubs and county associations.

The school and clubs roles are to look after the player and give the player as much knowledge, skills and conditioning. The county association supplies the first taste of area representation and is therefore very important as it provides a basic level of opportunity.

Provision for elite disabled participation and pathways

There are different varieties of disabled rugby. Wheelchair rugby is a prime example, Great British Wheelchair Rugby is a "non profitable charity." Its job is to develop a fully inclusive sport and allow players to reach their goals and maximum potential. Its funding is predominantly from donations, sponsorships and membership fees. The International Wheelchair Rugby Federation (IWRF) organise the world wheelchair championships which are being held in Vancouver where the UK is currently ranked 9th in the world.



Deaf rugby is a huge growing sport in order to qualify you must have an average hearing loss of 25dB in each ear. There are only three regional sides in deaf rugby including north, south and midlands. Trials are held at Stowe school and Sidcup RFC. The national deaf rugby side have just won against Japan 39-14 in 2005.

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Gender issues

The pathway for females is much the same as it for men. It consists of county, regional and national teams. However it lacks in participants at grass roots level which makes the standard lower in comparison to men's rugby. The woman's regional squad consists of 44 players as opposed to the men's 60. Many state schools are starting to offer female rugby as an extracurricular activity however many girls are channelled away from the sport as it is not a major sport. There is also disabled rugby for women. The governing body for this is the "England Deaf Rugby Union for Women" and are currently creating opportunities for woman's deaf rugby.



Funding O₂

Funding for the RFU comes from sponsors, media and donations. The O2 phone company being the main sponsor signing a £12 million deal in 2004. Nike provide the England rugby kit as well as the sports drinks such as powerade. The money from all the sponsors goes towards paying coaches, nutritionists, facilities and physios.



Critical Overview

If you look at the sheer number of boys involved in the system from county levels upwards it clearly shows it is a success as it gives them motivation and keeps them off the street. However a lot of the progression relies on lucks as it depends if the right talent scout is watching you when you are playing well and whether you perform on the day. It also depends a lot on who you know and whether they are prepared to use their influence to get you through certain stages of the development program. Overall the system must be effective as it has got both genders to two consecutive world cup finals. The men winning one against Australia in Sydney and losing the other to South Africa in France. The woman's side losing both to New Zealand in Canada and Spain.

Page word count 307 Total word count 1036 not including titles or diagrams

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Appendices

Rugby is played in most state and private schools. It is also played in numerous rugby clubs who enter numerous leagues and cups. Cokethorpe School enter the Oxfordshire county cup every year and have won it for the last two consecutive years. The daily mail also runs a national cup for schools as well as a plate. This offers opportunities for young players across the country.