Experiential learning in professional Rugby Union

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Experiential Learning in Professional Rugby Union

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy awarded by

Loughborough University

By

Sam Lloyd ©

September 2013
Acknowledgements

Over the last five years I have moved cities, developed new friendships, got married, and now completed a thesis. None of this would have been possible without the key people around me. I would like to thank all at Loughborough University for opening an incredible opportunity and believing that I could complete the task. Particularly, Dr Chris Cushion. Regular trips to the office of Dr Cushion kept a sense of reality when the context I was located in was going crazy. It seems a long time ago when I hand in my first bit of work to Chris, and indeed it is. But as I read those 1,500 words, I do not recognise myself. Chris has allowed me explore my own writing, theoretical understanding, and conceptual appreciation.

I would also like to thank all at Rangers RFC. I grew to love the context under investigation. Over the three years I spent with the club, I travelled with them, learnt from them, and grew as an individual. I look back with fond memories, particularly about the social events, early mornings and late nights. The players and coaches I found both remarkable and tolerant of my constant questions, and for that I thank you. It is frustrating I cannot mention any of them by name, but they know who they are.

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis was to understand the role played by experiential learning in professional Rugby Union. Furthermore, to understand how performance information is utilised by coaches and athletes in every day practice. The thesis employed an ethnographic research method, utilising extensive participant observation, interviews, and document analysis. The thesis draws significantly on the theoretical ‘tools’ of Schön, Bourdieu and Foucault. The key results and findings were that coaches used performance related information as a ‘technology of self’, and inculcated a hegemonic ideology. Furthermore, power relations were found and manifested inside the coach / athlete relation that reinforced the coaches spatial and temporal dominance. These dominant power relations were legitimised through the omnipresent ideology, and thus reproduced by the players and coaches. While evidence of experiential learning was documented, particularly with the academy players, the social location of practice marginalised the value of experiential learning in the coaching process. This was because performance information and the use of video based reflection were consistently used as tools of coaching authority, discipline and symbolic violence.
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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Recent ethnographic research utilising the work of Pierre Bourdieu, depicted elite level coaching environments to be highly authoritarian, hierarchically oppressive, legitimised and reproduced (Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012; Purdey, Potrac & Jones, 2008). The (mis) recognition of legitimacy in the coaching process creates, and reaffirms social inequalities (Cushion & Jones, 2012). This characterisation of the landscape of elite sport somewhat undermines the experiential learning theories that are depended on a positive environment and inspiring peers and mentors (Schön, 1983; 1987). Consequently, there remains a gap in our understanding of how professional players and coaches learn experientially. Arguably the learner’s contexts, purposes and practices are the most important factors in the process. Since learning in professional sport is regarded as a social and embodied process (Horn and Wilburn, 2005), an investigation is needed in order to situate it within the omnipresent power relationships elicited by Rugby Union (Light & Kirk, 2001).

In understanding learning in professional Rugby Union, there is clearly a need to understand the social location of practice, including the coach / athlete relationship. Training techniques, such as the use of performance analysis, can be analysed as means of more efficient training, but also means of normalisation, which is the goal and effect of discipline (Heikkala, 1993). Furthermore, discipline aims to eliminate all social and psychological irregularities and produces useful, docile bodies (Denison, 2011). We know that in elite sports environments strict regimes are placed over athletes (Chapman, 1997; Foster, 2003), whereby coaches control the spatial and temporal distribution of discourse (Denison, 2007). However, little is understood as to how these normalising technologies affect, or shape the learning experience. Bourdieusian and Foucauldian theories are both helpful tools in terms of situating models of learning within the complex, socially encrusted workplace of professional sport, and particularly Rugby Union. Yet little is known about how power relations and social structures influence the embodied nature of experiential learning in professional sport. It is clear the process of socialisation, through discipline, bio-power, and surveillance (Foster, 2003; Cushion & Jones, 2006, 2012; Purdey et al., 2008), shapes athletes into docile but productive bodies (Rail & Harvey, 1995), but the use and effects of performance information on experiential learning is relatively unidentified.
A large, growing body of literature has investigated and is continuing to investigate how coaches learn to coach by reflecting on their experiences (e.g., Bell, 1997; De Marco & McCullick, 1997; Gilbert & Trudel, 1999, 2001; Cushion, Armour and Jones, 2003; Knowles, Borrie & Telfer, 2005; Gilbert & Trudel, 2006; Knowles, Tyler, Gilbourne & Eubank, 2006). Hitherto, experiential learning theories have been utilised in order to help understand and develop this idea (e.g., Schön 1983; 1987). Despite the growth in research dictated to understanding coach learning and development (Cushion et al., 2010), little is known about the learning processes of professional athletes. As a consequence of practice coaches and athletes are situated in the same location and social forces (Cushion & Jones, 2006). Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that a similar theoretical model of reflection and experiential learning (Schön 1983; Gilbert & Trudel, 2004) could be applied to athletes and their experience of the performance environment.

Team video review meetings and one-to-one video reflections meetings have long been part of the coaching process (Groom et al., 2012), and could be described as formal learning environments (Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2006). However, there remains a gap in the research relating to these formal systems set up to enable athlete learning. The process of learning experientially from reflection suggests that knowledge must become recognisable and articulated (Loughran, 2002; Cushion, 2006), and involves considerably more than merely highlighting the problem, then providing the solution. However, little is known about these practices. There remains a subtle difference between being told what to do and understanding the practice (Loughran, 2002). This means that experiencing situations in a certain way becomes a genuine learning experience, an episode that carries personal meaning (White, 1988). Such meaning represents a key link to ownership of a reflective process, as practitioners “will pay more attention to information that has immediate and personal meaning for them” (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, p. 32). Therefore, understanding role frames would appear a necessary step in assisting practitioners’ abilities to analyse and draw meaning from the experiences that matter most (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). This is because a coach or athlete role frame will filter the performance experience and subsequently the process of experiential learning.
With this in mind, it is perhaps surprising that, to date, research has focused purely on coaches, and within this, predominantly on youth coaching (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). No consideration has been given to professional athletes role frames, or their coaches. The alignment of coach and athlete role frames, or lack thereof, will fundamentally impact upon both what is ‘seen’, and ownership of performance related issues; and hence, on potential for learning (Cushion, 2006).

The application of these video review technologies in sport allows the athlete and coach to watch matches and analyse strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve improvements (Groom et al., 2011). This development has resulted in many coaches implementing video-based review sessions into weekly training programmes (Guadagnoli et al., 2002). This use of technology has opened up a relatively new area of sports science and been termed ‘performance analysis’. Current understanding of this concept has it that knowledge is effectively provided to the athlete about performance. This could be considered as one of the most important variables affecting the acquisition and subsequent deployment of a skill (Hughes and Franks, 2004).

Moreover, Hughes and Franks (2004) suggest that the use of video has the capability of providing athletes with extrinsic feedback, and the ability to compare what was done to what was intended (Durst, 2010). For these reasons, performance analysis is a powerful learning tool for both athlete and coach, and can become the mirror of reflective practice. This has led to the agreement that performance analysis is situated within coaching (Groom et al., 2012). However, there remains an apparent dearth of understanding related to the impact that performance analysis has on learning processes and practices. Only Groom et al., (2011, 2012) have examined the delivery of performance analysis information, by coaches to players. Furthermore, performance analysis research (see Appendix 18) is statistical in nature, and essentially views the world through a positivist perspective (Brustad, 1997). Therefore researchers and practitioners need to understand the processes and practices of performance analysis information and how athletes are making sense of their experiences in competition. This could be achieved by applying a proven theoretical framework (e.g. Schön, 1983, 1987) so as to strengthen the need to learn from performance analysis, rather than merely consume it.
Theories of adult learning contend that it would be misleading to understand learning only as an individual cognitive phenomenon, or even something which can be fully controlled by the coach transmitting particular curriculum content (Cushion et al., 2010). Instead, it is a dialectical interaction between individual, situational and social factors (Saury & Durand, 1998; Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2006). This means for researchers seeking to understand experiential learning, they must also investigate the interactions between the individual and the social landscape of practice. Gilbert and Trudel (2005) identified specific conditions that effect reflection, being (1) peer access (2) stage of learning, (3) issue characteristics, and (4) environment, and argued that reflection, and therefore learning, varies based on the interaction of these four conditions.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis was to understand the role played by experiential learning in Rugby Union. Furthermore, understand how performance information is utilised by coaches and athletes in every day practice. Whilst theory’s of experiential learning exist on paper, the problems and questions addressed in this research go some way towards considering the realities of using performance information within coaching. This research therefore, attempts to address these issues in the specific context of professional Rugby Union

1.1 - Research Question

1. What can be learnt from understanding Experiential Learning in Professional Rugby Union?
   a. What can be learnt from identifying and examining the role frame components of professional Rugby Union players and coaches?
   b. What can be learned from understanding the formal system set up to facilitate reflection for players and coaches at the rugby club, both from a group and individual perspective?
   c. How does the social and structural landscape of practice effect the learning environment for players and coaches?
Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The following literature review will attempt to outline the existing understanding of the field of Performance Analysis particularly in the sport of Rugby Union. A brief review of the current understanding of coaching will serve to situate Performance Analysis fundamentally within coaching. The review will then argue that if the results of Performance Analysis are to be used in practice, we need to understand the current understanding of adult learning, and apply a theoretically robust notion of learning in practice. Therefore, a review of adult learning literature, with particular reference to reflective and experiential learning will also be examined. The next section will focus on the work of Donald Schön and his conceptual work on Role Frames, belief systems and experiential learning cycles. The final section of the literature review will discuss the work on social theorists Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault. Both of these authors have extensively been used to examine and understand the social and structural nature of practice, from the perspective of both the athlete and the coach.

2.1 - Performance Analysis

At elite levels of sport, the use of digital video and computer technology in training and competition has become more and more prominent in recent years (Carling Reilly, & Williams 2008). Current research in performance analysis adopts the position that its primary function is to provide the coach with information about team and individual performance (Carling et al., 2008; James, 2006; Hughes 2004; Williams et al., 2005; Hughes, 1996). According to Mellalieu, Trewartha, and Stokes (2008), performance analysis has been afforded particular attention within Rugby Union, and is being widely applied within the professional game. As a result, empirical studies have covered various aspects (see Appendix 18), such as patterns of play (Hughes & Williams, 1988); work rates and activity patterns of players (Deutsch et al., 2007; Duthie et al., 2006); performance of officials and examination of the laws of the game (Hughes & Clarke, 1994); comparison between successful and unsuccessful teams (Hunter & O’Donoghue, 2001); and attempts to profile individual and team performance (Bracewell, 2003; James et al., 2005).

Carling et al., (2008) argue these innovations in technology are providing coaches with fast, accurate, relevant and objective information, enabling them to dissect each and every aspect of the game. Thanks to such advances, performance analysis has
become inherently linked to, and situated within, the coaching process (Mackenzie & Cushion, 2013; Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011). For example, in top-level English Rugby Union, each of the 12 clubs, and major national teams employs at least two dedicated performance analyst to collect data relating to performance.

Hughes and Franks (2004) consider that a relationship exists between the effectiveness of performance feedback and that of coaching intervention. They have also suggested that the generation of accurate, precise feedback will only be facilitated through the use of performance analysis. However, the generic use of the term ‘feedback’ in performance analysis literature seems to devalue the complexities inherent in the learning process (Cushion et al., 2010). Hughes (1996) argues that the information derived from different types of computerised systems can be deployed for several purposes: immediate feedback; development of a database; indication of areas requiring improvement; evaluation; and as a mechanism with which to selectively search through a video recording of the match. Hughes (2004) posits that the role of feedback is central to the performance-improvement process; and that, inferentially, so is the accuracy and precision of such feedback. Hughes (2004) goes on to claim that such feedback can only be facilitated if performance and practice are subject to a rigorous process of analysis. Within this perspective, it is assumed that learning and the concept of knowledge have generally been viewed as measurable (Wiemeyer, 2001; Perl, 2002). The assumption of mere provision of feedback, augmented or otherwise, appears to represent a recurring theme throughout. However, the simplification of feedback, and the assumed learning benefits, limits the effectiveness of performance analysis in the coaching process.

What is needed is a more theoretically robust notion of knowledge transfer and learning should be implemented into performance analysis for its use to be justified in practice. For example, Magill (1993) suggested that if detailed, accurate feedback is made available, higher levels of performance could be obtained. Feedback seems essential, therefore, for progression to take place, as practice alone is not enough (Martens, 2003). However, Sharp (1992) has further stated that such feedback may only prove advantageous if the individual understands what has been delivered, and is able to interpret the information correctly. Such usage of this term ‘feedback’ drastically over-simplifies notions of learning, and fails to grasp the complexities associated with human
development. Various models perceive learning as fundamentally tied to the construction of meaning: interaction with complex, interchanging environmental and social inter-dependencies (Cushion et al., 2010). Therefore linear assumptions of learning associated with performance analysis thus render themselves obsolete, by failing to fully incorporate the sophistication of the learners and the world, which they internalise.

This raises serious epistemological issues, and contradicts current thinking on the role of the coach within the coaching process (Cushion, 2007; Jones & Wallace, 2005). Due to the positivist notations current performance analysis literature views the coach as the only learner of any tangible knowledge, disseminating it in accordance with personal interpretation (Groom, Cushion & Nelson, 2011). According to Cushion et al., (2006), due to its nomothetic pursuit, a positivist approach appears to be of limited use in the coaching context, as it is, ‘incongruous with, and insensitive to, the peculiarities of coaching and the unique conditions under which coaches act’ (p. 87). In other words, a key issue which the literature has failed to account for is the human aspect of sport. Data derived from athletic performance cannot constitute a definitive predictor of future performance; sports such as Rugby Union must be considered in terms of a dynamic social system, with ever-changing tacit variables (Passos et al., 2008).

Passos et al., (2008) argue that because team games such as Rugby Union are highly integrated, and composed of multiple components (individual players), this affords the emergence of rich patterns of behaviour in dynamically changing environments. Accordingly, it can be inferred here that performance analysis needs to be researched through an alternative set of assumptions about human learning. This can be achieved by investigating how athletes reflect on their experiences, using video analysis and performance data as a vehicle for experiential learning, rather than performance analysis representing a delivery mechanism for coaches’ future actions (Carling et al., 2008; James, 2006; Hughes 2004; Williams et al., 2005; Hughes, 1996).

Recent research has called for an investigation into the learning processes athlete engage in (Groom & Cushion, 2004, 2005; Groom et al., 2011; Mackenzie and Cushion, 2013), despite this, little research has investigated from a performance
analysis from a learning perspective. In a critical review of 60 performance analysis articles related to football, Mackenzie and Cushion (2013) identified an overemphasis on researching predictive and performance controlling variables with little meaning place on the context of each study (i.e. stage of the season, venue, opposition team). After questioning the rationale and the subsequent impact on professional practice, Mackenzie and Cushion (2013) call for a bridging of gap between descriptive analysis of performance and the dissemination of analysis information to players and its subsequent impact on their learning. This social and cultural investigation has been started by the work of Groom et al., (2011)

Using a grounded theory approach Groom et al., (2011) interviewed 14 English youth soccer coaches with more then 3 years experience in delivering video based performance analysis to athletes, with each coach being interviewed 4 times over the same season. Although the volume of data does not demonstrate a long term and deep involvement in the context, this study demonstrated the complex relationship between player, coach and context. The main findings showed the delivery of performance analysis information can be linked to coaching philosophy. Specifically the contextual factors could be framed by six sub categories: social environment, coaching and delivery, philosophy, recipient qualities, presentation format, session design, and delivery process. Although this study highlights some of complexities inherent in the coaching process, it does not tackle the fundamental learning principles at work or investigate the why the coaching philosophy influences the delivery of performance information.

One of the few studies exploring the delivery and use of performance analysis in situ utilised a conversational analysis approach and the work Raven (1992, 1993) to make sense of the social context. Groom et al., (2012) studied the detailed pedagogical interactions that occurred between coach and players during performance analysis feedback sessions. The purpose of this paper was to explore the coach-athlete ‘talk in action’ during performance analysis feedback sessions. Coach-athlete interaction sessions were recorded within six home match video-based feedback sessions over the course of a 10-month season. The findings suggest that the coach attempted to exercise control over the players by delivering via “asymmetrical turn-taking allocations”, control over the topics under discussion and the use of questions to reinforce his social
power. The coach, to reassert the coach’s authority over the group, used negative images of poor performance.

The findings from Groom et al., (2011, 2012) add to the growing body of research in sports coaching, which highlight the domination authoritarian discourse within coach-athlete relationships (Potrac et al., 2002, Cushion & Jones 2006, Purdey et al., 2008). However, to date, little research has attempted to highlight these issues or apply learning theories to the analysis process. The process of how elite athletic experience is transformed into performance expertise still remains largely unknown (Gilbert & Trudel, 1999). Researchers in other domains have developed theories, which provide insight on how experience is transformed into knowledge (Lave, 1988; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983); but these have yet to be explored in depth in either a sports-coaching or athlete-learning context. Other practice fields, such as architecture, psychotherapy, engineering, scientific research, town planning and business management, have already utilized these theories (Schön, 1983, 1987; Argyris & Schön, 1991; Gilbert and Trudel, 1999; Tochon, 1999): it is surprising that the same has not occurred in professional team sport.

To summarise: current research trends have focused on the measurement of athletes’ activities, through the application of performance analysis (Mackenzie & Cushion, 2013). This relatively recent phenomenon attempts to quantitatively measure athletic experiences and physiques at the site of competition. Besides Groom et al., (2011), little attention has been paid to how the results of these studies have been disseminated to athletes and coaches, or how they influence the learning process. Despite considerable attempts to research the styles and patterns of play within rugby, the transfer or construction of this knowledge is still fundamentally situated within coaching. Unless it is understood how to transmit the gains achieved through performance analysis literature, there appears little material benefit from such endeavours.

Performance analysis does not operate within a vacuum; it is situated in a complex social world of competing agendas. The realities of practice dictate a socially rich landscape, featuring stakeholder interests and ever-changing variables. Together, this landscape and the complexities of the coaching process diminish the assumptions of linear knowledge transfer which performance analysis elicits. The evidence provided in
this section has highlighted coaching as an intrinsic part of performance analysis in Rugby Union. The following section will address current understandings of coaching in sport.

2.2. - Current understandings of coaching

In recent years the understanding of sports coaching has moved significantly. From lacking a sound conceptual base (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2006), to the general agreement that it is a social practice, but still remains largely under explored (Cushion & Jones, 2012). Both coaching and analysis of performance exist in a world that imbues meaning and significance beyond that created by the individual (Lyle, 2002). In this, Lyle is referring to the social and interpersonal relationships which occur within a larger social setting, which can be investigated as a coaching culture or, as in the case of this study, the performance-analysis one. When analysing coaching from a cultural perspective, Jones (2000) contends that coaches must be educated to become aware of the social matrices within which they operate. It is suggested that, through coach-education programmes, they can be made aware of the social and cultural environment that encompasses and impacts upon their work.

Jones and Wallace (2005) highlight empirical work, which indicates that expert coaches acknowledge constraints of practice and act as orchestrators by coaching unobtrusively and flexibly, whilst paying great attention to detailed tasks (Jones et al., 2004; Saury & Durand, 1998). However, social manipulation as a coaching strategy does not represent uniform analysis of coaching practice. Lyle (2002) argues that the coaching process is much more predictable than Cushion (2007), and Jones and Wallace (2005), describe. Lyle reinforces this by suggesting that although coaching is dynamic, and structured within complex social interactions inherent with conflicting values and ambiguity, it remains a normal state of affairs for those dealing with practices involving a similarly fluid human and environmental mix (such as teachers, nurses, or social workers).

Using biographical reports and in depth interviews, Jones et al., (2004), analysed eight professional coaches, regarded as experts in their field, in a range of elite sports. The coaches’ stories were described in order to develop a cultural analysis; such stories are complex, messy and fragmented. Whilst the study provides contextualised narratives, and certainly an interesting insight into the life and career histories of the
coaches, along with a detailed analysis of the core concepts emerging from expert interviews, it negates the key principle which it set out to address: namely, that of analysing the specifics of a coaching context and its ensuing culture.

Perceptions of power within the coach-athlete relationship can have a significant influence on the interpersonal relationship between its two members, and the coaching style that results (Cross & Lyle, 1999). The debate about coaching style is often polarised into a comparison between the extreme, simplified models of autocratic (authoritarian) and democratic (person-centred). The ‘coaching style’ nomenclature is not only applied to direct intervention; but also to the approach taken to support activities which take place as part of the coaching process (such as engaging in performance analysis), both from an athlete’s and a coach’s perspective. It is difficult to believe that such stereotypes are sufficiently refined to capture the subtlety of coaching practice (Lyle, 2002).

Using a phenomenological approach Poczwardowski, Barott and Henschen (2002) depict the coach-athlete relationship as a dynamic, multi-faceted, interpersonal phenomenon. Participant observation, and in-depth interviews were used covering a four-month season at an NCAA Division 1 gymnastics team. Focusing on six athletes and three coaches, their study made significant findings, with the suggestion that the role of the coach involves an on-going process of interaction and negotiation, which highlights the growth of both coach and athlete in the relationship – an issue that similar social assessments have failed to recognise – standing out in particular. This view is in stark contrast to that of the performance-analysis literature, which (see Appendix 18) assumes a linear relationship between analysis information and delivery, and does not allow for the contextual social issues that surround the coaching process. However, Poczwardowski et al., (2002) may be limited by the relatively short four-month period of research and the small number of participants.

Little research has been conducted examining how coaches’ value systems influence their styles (Lyle 1999), meaning the link between styles and methods used and the coaching philosophies clearly calls for further investigation. Lyle (1999) states there to be a common assumption that coaching style and behaviour may reflect the coach’s philosophy or values; but this assumption requires greater evaluation. Coaches
are able to make philosophical statements about their beliefs, but often find these statements hard to stick to in real-life situations. The link between perceived beliefs and coaching practice should be examined further through fieldwork and provide an evaluation of the coaching culture associated with that environment (Cassidy et al., 2008).

Indeed, Abraham and Collins (1998) explain that coaching style is influenced by a wide variety of factors, including gender, team, individual, age, type of sport, and athlete aspiration. Cassidy et al., (2008) state that the role of philosophy is to provide the precursor to action, because every element of coaching is affected by personal beliefs. It is agreed that, as part of training courses, coaches should become aware of their personal beliefs about coaching, and how these deep-seated values affect their actual practice (Cassidy et al., 2008; Lyle, 2002; Lyle, 1999).

Finally, current understanding demonstrates that coaching, and therefore performance analysis, is not something that is merely delivered; but rather, is a dynamic social activity that vigorously engages both coach and athlete (Cushion, 2007). Accordingly, performance analysis will be subject to the same social rules, and embedded within comparable social dynamics. The highly specific nature of performance analysis information means that data relating to individual and team performance is not something that can be gathered and disseminated with ease. On the contrary, as highlighted in the coaching literature (Cushion, 2007; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Saury & Durand, 1998), a social relationship between coach and athlete will fluctuate according to the frequency and type of feedback a coach has the opportunity to give and receive. Thus it is again surprising that, to date, no research has investigated athlete and coach learning; and especially, its impact on the complex world of professional sport. There is, therefore, a need to apply established models of adult learning to the performance analysis domain. The following section will highlight principle models of adult learning and their application to the professional sports environment.

2.3 - Learning

Linear assumptions associated with the dissemination and transmission of knowledge over-simplifies the complex myriad of human interactions involved (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Instead, learning can be presented as a dialectical interaction between
individual, situational and social factors (Cushion et al., 2010). The learner’s contexts, purposes and practices represent the most important factors in the learning process (Light, 2008).

How unique human experiences can be translated into learned knowledge has been very much at the heart of educational debate. Central to this is the concept of experiential learning: a term incorporating a spectrum of meaning, practices and ideologies (Moon, 1999). Yet this is just one of a collection of learning models used in the education of adults. In a review of learning theories, Cushion et al., (2010) encapsulate learning into three fundamental models: Behaviourist; Cognitive; and Constructivism.

Table 1. Theoretical approaches, implications for learning (Cushion et al., 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Approach</th>
<th>Implications for Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural / Conditioning</td>
<td>Complexity reduced into smaller progressive parts, reinforcing desired behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clear measurable objectives, proceed in small steps, and deliver reinforcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitivism / Cognitive Constructivism / Social Cognitivism</td>
<td>Relate new information to known information, understanding the uses of new knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Give strategies that allow the practice of concept leaning, problem solving and self-regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learn by doing, and observing, modelling. Learners set goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>Interact with others, using meditational tools. Structure learning environment to construct understanding, provide support (scaffolding) for learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Engage in social practice</td>
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</table>

Key Summary of Learning from Cushion et al., (2010).

1. Learners build on their existing knowledge and experience.
2. Learning is initiated by the learner, and a role of the educator is to provide an appropriate environment for learning to occur.
3. Learners have the ability to, and should, learn about how they learn.
4. Learning occurs through engaging in practice and this needs to be supported.
5. Learners need to reflect meaningfully and build on their experiences.
6. Much learning is idiosyncratic and incidental; and cannot be planned in advance.
The environment can be shaped to encourage experiential learning.

7. Learning should enable the learner to re-organise experience and see things in new ways, thus having a “transformative” outcome.

Cushion et al., (2010) argues it is important to understand the sorts of social practices that learners want or need to participate in, and provide opportunities enabling them to learn through engaging within them. More importantly, perhaps, situated models imply that learners already engage in sophisticated forms of social practice in their everyday lives, in ways that the practices of, for example, the rugby field may hide. An approach to Rugby Union that acknowledges adults’ competence in engaging in the practice in their everyday lives, and uses this as a starting point for education, would represent a powerful antidote to the current deficits in models of basic adult education.

Lave and Wanger (1991) studied situated learning within a variety of contexts, establishing an understanding of ‘learning by doing’. They developed the concept of learning as ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ in ‘communities of practice’, as a means of conceptualising the process of development of expertise. They point out that it is possible within a given community for experienced ‘old timers’ to engage in the practice which defines the community and, at the same time, for ‘novices’ to have a legitimate peripheral role, gradually moving into a more central position as they continue to participate in community activity. They examine five ethnographic studies of apprenticeship, suggesting that the forms of learning (or failure to learn) in these settings may be accounted for in terms of the underlying relationships of legitimate peripheral participation in these communities: in other words, whether its ‘structuring resources’ offer the novice possibilities for participating directly in community practices.

Situated models of learning (Wenger 1989; Singleton, 1998; Chaiklin and Lave, 1996) argue that whenever people engage in social practice, learning will inevitably take place. This constitutes an understanding, which moves beyond looking at changes in individual thought processes, and instead views learning as the development of the ability to participate in particular social practices. Learning is understood to be embedded in other forms of social participation; provisions which help people to engage within it are therefore likely to be of more use than those which merely equip
individuals with decontextualised skills (Tusting & Barton, 2006). In consequence, it is important to understand the sorts of social practices, which learners want or need to participate in, and provide opportunities enabling them to learn through engaging within them.

The implication of such models is that development in adulthood should not be viewed as a single, linear process with fixed goals (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Instead, many of these theories are socially and culturally contingent. Rather than trying to impose a single model of development, it is necessary to be aware of learners’ current social roles and positions, and the practices they engage in; and come to an understanding of the role played by rugby within these.

In summary, there are two contrasting families of learning models within psychology. The earlier models, Behaviourism, Cognitivism and Cognitive Constructivism, focused on the idea of learning as something which takes place for an individual: whether it is identified in terms of changed behavioural patterns, or altered mental models and processes. More recently, an alternative paradigm has developed in fields such as socio-cultural cognition, in which learning is perceived as a socially situated phenomenon, best understood as a feature of ongoing participation in social contexts. This second understanding is supported by research that has left the experiential setting, and examined the learning processes in the daily lives of people. The following section will discuss these theories of reflection and experiential learning.

2.4 - Reflective and Experiential Learning

At the heart of all experience-based learning theories lies the process of reflective thought (Dewey, 1960; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983; Lave & Wenger 1991; van Manen, 1977). Reflection is considered to be the process mediating between experience and knowledge: in its absence, experience merely consists of isolated, disconnected events (Winter, 1989). Dewey (1960) believes that the learner must make important connections between experience and prior experiences. He referred to this as ‘connections in growth’, and argues there is no intellectual growth unless these links are established through reflecting on experience.

Fundamentally, reflective, experience-based theories argue that all learning is embedded in the re-investment of prior experience (Bound et al., 2000; Larillard, 1993; Michelson, 1996; Chickering, 1977; Dewey, 1960). However, lack of clarity of the
concept of reflection, and the failure of many empirical studies to define it, has rendered
the concept of reflection difficult to operationalise (Akins & Murphy, 1993).

Dewey’s philosophical work underpins much of the literature on reflective and
experience-based learning (Horn & Wilburn, 2005; Atkins & Murphy, 1993). He was
interested in the theory of knowledge: in particular, the application of his theory of
inquiry to education. His pragmatic epistemology depicted reflective thinking as
essentially consisting of real-world problem solving. Encountering a problem, issue or
dilemma in the real world sparks a process of reflective thinking; and, therefore, of
learning. Dewey (1960) identified five stages of thinking involved in the process of
moving from an initial state of confusion to a final, resolved position.

It is crucial to appreciate that Dewey’s theory is not presented as a recipe or
algorithm to be followed slavishly (Winter, 1989). He describes the process of reflective
thinking as dynamic, messy, and full of false starts and wrong turns (Tusting & Barton,
2006). Dewey makes the important point that the eventual logical product can neither be
predicted nor attained without engaging in the messiness of the process. Therefore, the
fostering of reflective thought cannot be found in the teaching of logical form or
structure, but rather in the pondering of real issues and problems. It is through this
process of thinking, making connections, and enabling what is clear to gradually emerge
from what is unclear, that concepts and ideas are formed, and learning happens (Tusting
& Barton, 2006).

After reviewing the work of Lewin (1950), Dewey (1960) and Piaget (1970), as
well as other contributions to the field, Kolb (1984) proposed a model of the underlying
structure of experiential learning as representing a continual process of experience of
and adaptation to the world, rather than a series of outcomes. This process is
conceptualised as a cycle, requiring the resolution of four conflicting modes of
adaptation: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and
active experimentation (Moon, 2004). Kolb suggests that the way in which conflict
between these modes is resolved determines the level of learning. ‘Learning is the
process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience’ (Kolb,
1984: 41).

However, some have argued that Kolb’s own neat four-part distinction is itself
based on an over-simplified model of experience. Miettinen (2000) compares Kolb’s
analysis of experience to Dewey’s, demonstrating how the subtleties of the latter’s
philosophical approach are lost in the four-part model. Therefore, the idea of identifying one’s own or one’s student’s learning style, before teaching to this, should not be adopted uncritically. In both models, the process involves a variety of different types of thinking and modes of adaptation. While the idea of identifying different students’ preferred learning styles has become influential within adult education, for Kolb and Dewey, the integration of multiple learning styles or ways of thinking in an on-going process is most important (Tusting & Barton, 2006).

Others have developed ideas around reflective and experiential learning include Jarvis (1987), whose model of adult learning in social contexts is based on the idea that learning becomes possible whenever there is a disjunction between biography and experience. Based on the Kolb (1984) learning model, Jarvis developed a model of learning incorporating nine potential responses to this disjuncture: three non-learning, three non-reflective, and three reflective learning responses. This suggests that given there are many different types of learning, no single set of principles for adult learning is likely to cover them all.

The real strength of Jarvis’ model is that it allows for the fact that the interaction between individual experience and biography is what makes learning possible (Akins and Murphy, 1993). If the disjuncture between biography and experience is either too small or too great, the experience that occurs is more likely to result in meaningless than meaningful construction. Thus experience can serve as both a spur and barrier to learning. However, Jarvis makes some extravagant claims based on little practical research or peer reviewed articles.


Zoe Knowles has conducted three investigations into the development of reflective skills in undergraduate sports students; and their relationship to current coach education (Knowles et al., 2001, 2005, 2006). The aim of the 2001 study was to explore perceptions on reflective episodes with eight sports coaching students. Knowles believes that the development of reflective skills is not a naturally occurring phenomenon, running parallel to increasing coaching experience. This is an interesting point. Instead, Knowles argues that a reflective capacity is not acquired from experience
alone, but needs to be developed in order to become part of a coach’s practice. This validates the findings of Gilbert and Trudel (2004) that, along with the work of Donald Schön, will be discussed at length in the next section. Knowles et al., study (2001) found that, through a prescribed development programme, levels of critical reflection increased relative to engagement.

Knowles et al., (2001) concluded by suggesting that a shift in critical reflection will facilitate practical benefits. However, this assumption is highly speculative: mere participation in reflective practice does not guarantee any form of practical results; although Knowles et al., (2001) addressed this, and suggested that in the absence of a structured environment, there may be a tendency to ‘mull over rather than systematically reflect’. Fundamentally, Knowles appears to hold an outcome-orientated view of learning and reflective practice. This contrasts starkly with the epistemological assumptions inherent within the constructivism paradigm, which both reflection and experience-based learning theories are inextricably linked to. Indeed, the measurement of reflective learning actually creates a paradox, as the length of both reflective cycles and start or end points of learning cannot be objectively defined.

In their second study, Knowles et al., (2005) investigated the use of reflective practice and learning strategies within six governing body award-coaching programmes. Knowles et al., (2005) agreed with other authors (Saury and Durand, 1998; Salmela, 1995; Gould 1990) that elite coaches apply their own experience of performing and previous coaching situations in order to predict the outcome of coaching practice. However, formal coach education does not equip coaches sufficiently for this process (Knowles et al., 2005). The results of this study indicate that none of the programmes examined contained structures or processes for the direct teaching or overt nurturing of reflective skills. The results also indicate, however, that almost all offered a potential structure for the use of coaching logs or periods of mentoring. According to experiential learning theorists (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983), this denotes the starting point for the reflective process; but it needs to be honed and formally structured if practitioner expertise is to be developed.

As a follow-up to their work of 2001, the aim of Knowles et al., (2006)’s final study was to explore how student graduates deployed the reflective process outside the confines of a supported reflective-based curriculum. Overall, the findings suggest there to be a ‘gap between the academic experience, and the real-world reflective practice of...
sports coaching graduates’ (p. 176). The in-built reflective rigour of formal coach education programs is very different to the post-education reality of sports coach employment. Knowles et al., (2006) argued that this is demonstrated by short-term contracts and lack of professional accountability.

Prior to these observations, Knowles et al., (2001) also noted that critical levels of reflection were not sustained beyond the confines of university. In the 2006 study, they highlight pre-post educational differences in the reflective process, and call for a review in both academic and workplace contexts. In summary, Knowles attempts to quantify reflective engagement, and formalize the process to a set of predefined steps; but more research is required in order to explore the gap between academic experience and the ‘real world’ reflective practice of sports coaches, and which also evaluates how players learn experientially.

Many implications can be drawn from these various studies on reflective and experiential learning. In all these models, reflections arise from a problem or issue people encounter in their lives: which again underscores the essentially contextualised nature of adult learning. In the case of professional athletes, this means that provisions need to be related to real issues which lead them to engage in learning in the first place; while it is also important to note that there are not necessarily any simple procedures or systems which can be followed in order to ensure that successful reflection takes place (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Each athlete’s process of reflective learning will be based on and driven by the complexities of their own experience, and therefore be unique to them. Indeed, it would be impossible to justify a single approach to learning (Cushion et al., 2010), because as each one is based on different assumptions about its nature, so the strategies, which might be employed to enhance learning, will depend on an individual’s philosophical orientation (Merriam & Caffarella 1991).

That said, the reflective practices of athletes and coaches will not be naturally occurring; and will need to be part of an on-going process of literally learning how to learn. With no start or end point discernible in this process, arguably their level of engagement with it determines the successful reflective practice of rugby professionals. If they do not know how to critically reflect on their professional practice, reflection is diluted to mere hindsight. Interestingly, little is known about the education of athletes on such matters, and requires proper investigation within a naturally occurring environment. Reflective practice in coaching forms a fundamental part of the national
governing body’s endorsement programme in many countries (Nelson & Cushion, 2006); but little is known about the education of athletes and coaches away from the training field, and how reflective practice contributes to or degrades learning in the professional context.

Although, because of the essential uniqueness of individuals, there appears no set way of applying reflective theories to sports professionals, a reflective framework could guide the performance analysis process. Experiential learning could utilise performance analysis and video technologies, and become the vehicle in which experience is transformed into knowledge. For example, during a video review session, instead of just describing and consuming the images on screen, the coach and athletes could use an applied theory of reflective engagement to guide and transform experience into knowledge. Experiential theories of learning inform that the construction of meaning between apprentice and master is what denotes learning (Schön, 1983; Dewey, 1960).

The inferences drawn from this section are as follows. Adults have their own motivations for learning, with learners building on their existing knowledge and experience. They fit learning into their own purposes, and become engaged within it. Individuals’ purposes for learning are related to their real lives, and the practice and roles they engage in outside the classroom. The learner initiates the process; while the teacher provides a secure environment in which learning can take place. Moreover, adults have the ability to learn about their own learning processes, and can benefit from discussion and reflection on this. They are able to learn how to learn. Different learning models are synthesised; and teaching can enable learners to develop these. Learning is a characteristic of all real life activities, in which people take on different roles and participate in different ways. Coaching can ‘scaffold’ activities, enabling learners to develop new forms of expertise.

Reflective learning is generated when individuals encounter problems and issues in their lives, and consider ways of resolving them. The process is unique to each person, as it arises out of the complexities of their own experience. A great deal of learning is incidental and idiosyncratically related to the learner: it cannot be planned in advance. While there are things, which can be done to encourage reflective experiential learning, there is no set of definitive steps which, if followed, will guarantee it will happen. Finally, reflective learning enables people to reorganise their experience and
‘see’ situations in new ways. In this way, adult learning is potentially transformative, both personally and socially.

The possibility of enabling athletes to reorganise their experience with little coaching input must, surely, seem an attractive prospect to any professional sporting organisation. The autonomy of the reflective athlete seems completely opposed to the description set out in the performance analysis literature (see Appendix 18): which, by way of reminder, depicts a constantly assessed athlete, with autonomy only in the duplication of behaviours, and no regard to the environmental or situated nature of professional sport. This study re-frames the athlete through a lens of constructionism, while applying a more sophisticated, theoretical basis for human learning. By utilising proven models of learning in an applied context, the way in which athletes become who they are, and how they construct the world around them, can finally begin to be understood.

The following section will explore experiential learning in more detail: focusing in particular on the work of Donald Schön, regarded as among the leading theorists in the field, and someone whose work has already been applied to the domain of sport coaching.

2.5 - Donald Schön

Although other experience-based theories of learning exist, particular emphasis has been placed on the work of Schön (1983, 1987). His ideas have been applied to sports coaching (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004), and focus on how practitioners transform on-the-job experience into knowledge for practice. Six assumptions underlie Schön’s experience-based learning theory perspective: (a) learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes; (b) learning is a continuous process grounded in experience; (c) the process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts; (d) learning is a holistic process of adaptation to the world; (e) learning involves transactions between the person and the environment; and (f) learning is the process of creating knowledge (Gilbert, 1999).

Schön (1983, 1987)’s disillusionment with the traditional, dualistic view of learning and knowledge represented the impetus for his research. This orthodox view, based on information-processing theories of learning, has strongly influenced educational programmes (Argyris & Schön, 1992; Schön, 1983). Context is de-
emphasised, and focus placed on basic mental processes, which are assumed to underpin the learning process (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Norman, 1993; Packer & Winne, 1995; Sfard, 1998).

From an information-processing perspective, “knowledge is understood as consisting of objects detached from the world and located in the mind. Knowledge that is objective in this sense should be available for use in any situation” (St. Julien, 1997, p. 262). Learning is considered purely cerebral, involving a process of self-sustained knowledge transfer, assimilation and acquisition; and learners are effectively viewed as containers to be filled (Sfard, 1998). Educational programmes in which knowledge is transmitted to learners out of context have, it is believed, contributed to a widening gap between theory and practice (Argyris & Schön, 1992; Schön, 1983). Schön (1983) labelled those educational programmes based on this traditional view of learning as the technical rationality model. This model rests on the epistemological assumptions that scientific principles can be applied to everyday practice. In turn, these principles are ‘learned’ out of context in professional education programmes. This model forces a division between research and practice: in which research is viewed as the most valuable, rigorous source of professional knowledge. Researchers are given the responsibility of developing theories and basic scientific principles, derived from everyday dilemmas of practitioners. A hierarchical relationship exists among different types of professional knowledge: arranged in descending order from basic science, applied science, to practical knowledge used in everyday practice.

It has been argued that educational programmes based on the technical rationality model do not prepare professionals for the daily challenges of professional practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Schön, 1983). Schön (1983, 1987) contended that attempts by professionals to apply scientific principles to most dilemmas of practice are ineffective. Based on this realisation, professionals have increasingly questioned the model of technical rationality for its lack of ecological validity (Gilbert, 1999). This 'crisis of confidence' is the result of professionals expressing, "a growing perception that researchers, who are supposed to feed the professional schools with useful knowledge, have less and less to say that practitioners find useful" (Schön, 1987, p. 10).
2.6 - Becoming a Reflective Practitioner

Schön’s main assertion (1983, 1987) is that it is not through technical problem solving that problematic situations are converted into well-formed problems; but rather, technical problem solving only becomes possible via ‘naming and framing’ (Schön, 1983). According to this argument, technical problems themselves do not evoke learning or the development of professional knowledge; but it is in the process of selection and interpretation, through a window frame of experience, that the reflective process begins. Schön believes that, because unique cases fall outside the categories of existing theory and technique, practitioners cannot treat them as an instrumental problem to be solved by applying one of the rules of professional knowledge. These situations must instead be dealt with through improvisation: inventing and testing the strategies of the practitioners’ own devising.

Schön argues that there are two main forms of reflection used by the professional: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The former occurs in association with action, and guides the process of action via knowledge in use: which is derived from theory in use, and makes limited contact with espoused theory. Reflection-in-action only occurs in situations in which the action yields unexpected consequences, and is not part of others which go according to plan. Reflection-on-action, meanwhile, is the form of reflection that occurs after action and relates, via verbalised or non-verbalised thought, to the action that the person has taken. In other words, it is a relatively narrow, retrospective concept, which has a role in learning, informing action and theory building (Moon, 1999).

In real world practice, problems do not present themselves to practitioners as givens. They must be constructed from the materials of problematic situations: which are puzzling, troubling and uncertain. In order to convert a problematic situation to a problem, a practitioner must perform a certain kind of work; in short, he must make sense of an uncertain situation that initially makes no sense. “When professionals consider what road to build, for example, they deal usually with a complex and ill-defined situation in which geographic, topological, financial, economic, and political issues are all mixed up together”. (Schön, 1983, p. 40)

Schön (1983) describes a subsequent pattern of reflective inquiry, consisting of two critically important processes. First, the practitioner is faced with two types of
paths. The high ground (type 1) follows pre-defined science-based theories and principles of action. These consist of in-use strategies and the practitioner’s developed professional repertoire. Alternatively, if the dilemma of practice is unique, and has no pre-defined solution, the practitioner must take the low ground (type 2). In this case, the practitioner draws on some element of a familiar repertoire: which is treated as an example or a generative metaphor for the new phenomenon.

As the practitioner reflects on the similarities he has perceived, he formulates new hypotheses. These are tested by experimental actions, which also function as moves with which to shape the situation, and probes for exploration. A graphical representation of the reflective process is shown in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Adaptation of Schön’s Theory of Reflective Practice (Gilbert, 1999)](image)

A reflective incident will be determined when a problematic situation is uncertain. When practitioners recognise a situation as unique, they cannot handle it solely by applying theories or techniques derived from the store of professional knowledge. Such issues will then become part of what Schön describes as the “swampy undergrowth of professional practice.” Not only must practitioners solve technical problems by selecting appropriate means, but they must also reconcile, integrate or choose between conflicting appreciations of a situation, in order construct a coherent problem worth solving. Reflecting on a single issue may only form part of a wider
problem; accordingly, the practitioner will have to choose between the wider problem and the critical point at hand. The practitioner could also frame the problem in a number of ways: be it biomechanically, physiologically, technically or tactically.

However, Schön is not without his critics. Rømer (2003) investigated Schön’s work on reflective practice: in particular, the relationship between the learning process and learning content or subject matter. Rømer (2003) argues that this was overlooked by Schön, and will impact upon the way in which practitioners will engage in the reflective process. Rømer (2003) also considers that Schön’s alternative to formal education, bound by rules and regulated curricula, must function within a scenario characterised by limited resources, a plurality of paradigms and multiple agents with manifold political and professional interests.

Rømer (2003) contends that the implication of this is that professional practice is no longer to be understood as a mechanical application of scientifically-based rules, but should instead be conceived of as the practitioner’s work within unique situations in tame or wild surroundings. This is a valid point: Schön’s alternative to formal learning is limited by the internal and external agenda influencing professional practice, and situates reflective learning within the messy, socially-embedded workplace.

Moreover, Moon (1999) considers that reflecting-on-practice should take into account ethical, social and political issues so that personal and professional development may occur. Moon (1999) also posits that Schön’s notion of reflection-on-action is already encompassed within Kolb’s experiential learning cycle as the processing of experience. When comparing Schön to other experiential learning theorists, Moon argues that the former regards reflection-in-action as the response to unexpected events; but it is knowing-in-action which controls action more generally.

Clark (1995) employed Schön’s theoretical framework to investigate the reflective practices of four science teachers over a teaching cycle. A constant comparative analysis method was used to analyse the data; while, similar to the use of video analysis in rugby, stimulated video recall sessions were used to re-examine the practitioners’ teaching. During the latter, participants were given the opportunity to comment at any point of the recording: which served to guide the discussions which occurred. Clark (1995) found that the role of the advisor in enhancing reflective practice is not so much in providing a list of issues for the student to reflect upon; but rather, in providing a variety of perspectives from which students might examine their practice.
He also found reflection to be temporal in nature: some reflective incidents spanned two weeks; others, over 13 weeks. Interestingly, components of reflection arose as incidents within cycles, and emerged as themes across cycles. In short, student-teacher reflections were born of incidents but thematic in nature; they were neither incidental nor episodic, but rather, extended and interwoven across multiple classroom and personal interaction contexts.

Similarly, as part of her doctoral thesis, Hallett (1997)’s research into the reflective communities of midwives found that knowledge and understanding grew out of practice. Hallett (1997) conducted 26 interviews of 12 students on a Diploma in higher education for Nurse and with 14 Sisters who supervised them. The interview style was said to be open and informal which the whole study employed a phenomenological approach. The key findings from the study lay in the recognition of midwives’ supervisors that merely providing students with experience – in other words, permitting them to observe and practice – was not sufficient to enable learning. Participants’ views broadly paralleled the theories of Schön; yet intriguingly, Hallett argued that technical rationality did have a place in the experiential process: as it draws links between experience and theories in use. Whether this is unique to the science-based practice of midwifery is not, however, explored. Hallett (1997) studies draws directly from Schön’s model of experiential learning and produced some interesting findings. However, it’s application to the development of athletes and coaches of Professional Rugby Union are limited. The study only conducted 26 interviews over a relatively short period of time, therefore further research is required to explore Schön’s model in professional sport.

A fundamental component of Schön’s theory of experiential learning revolves around the concept of role frames. These are how practitioners (players and coaches) view their roles, and the world in which they operate (Gilbert and Trudel, 2004). Experience offers both coaches and athletes opportunities to live through alternative approaches; but the framing of these experiences impacts upon what is ‘seen’, and therefore, the potential for learning (Cushion, 2006). How coaches and athletes engage with practice and their own actions shapes the possibilities for ‘seeing’ as a result of experience.

In theories of experiential learning through reflection (Schön, 1983; Gilbert & Trudel, 2004), there remains an important interplay between experience and reflection.
Effective reflective practice involves careful consideration of both ‘seeing’ and action, in order to enhance the possibilities of learning through experience. In this sense, role frames are instrumental in the construction of the world in which the practitioner functions (Schön, 1983); and literally constitute the lens through what is seen and how it is seen (Cushion, 2006).

The process of learning from reflection suggests that knowledge must become recognisable and articulated (Loughran, 2002; Cushion, 2006); and involves considerably more than merely highlighting the problem, then providing the solution. There remains a subtle difference between being told what to do and understanding the practice (Loughran, 2002). This means that experiencing situations in a certain way becomes a genuine learning experience; an episode which carries personal meaning (White, 1988). Such meaning represents a key link to ownership of a reflective process, as practitioners “will pay more attention to information that has immediate and personal meaning for them” (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, p. 32). Therefore, understanding role frames would appear a necessary step in assisting practitioners’ abilities to analyse and draw meaning from the experiences that matter most (Cushion, 2006).

With this in mind, it is perhaps surprising that, to date, research has focused purely on coaches; and within this, predominantly on youth coaching. No consideration has been given to elite athlete role frames, or their coaches. The alignment of coach and athlete role frames, or lack thereof, will fundamentally impact upon both what is ‘seen’, and ownership of performance related issues; and hence, on potential for learning.

If athletes and coaches review performance related information through different interpretational frames, convergence of meaning will not be achieved (Schön, 1983). Through role frame analysis, however, coaches and athletes can align the way in which they interpret performance information; and develop conditions for learning. Given the dearth of research examining experiential learning in elite sport, this study seeks to contribute to an understanding of how athletes and coaches frame their roles.

2.7 - Role Frames and Belief Systems

The common feature of role frames is that they are used to interpret situations (Gilbert and Trudel, 2004). Bateson (1972)’s analogy of a picture frame has been used to illustrate the idea of delimiting certain features of a situation, based on an individual’s frame of reference; and employed by Schön (1983, 1987), and Gilbert and
Trudel (2004), to interpret how practitioners frame their role in light of dilemmas of practice. This is paramount: dilemmas of practice are the mechanism by which any reflection or engagements with experiential learning are triggered (Gilbert & Trudel, 2006, Schön, 1983). Indeed, Schön (1983) argues that role frames will filter information, which is most salient to the practitioner, in order for them to engage in unique problem solving; but only the reframing of a situation through virtual experimentation develops personal growth. Therefore, there is no way of perceiving and making sense of reality, except through a role frame.

The very challenge of making sense of complex, information-rich situations requires an operation of selectivity and organization: the essence of framing. Schön (1983) argues that the frames that shape actions are usually tacit; in other words, individuals tend to argue from their tacit frame to their explicit position. Although frames exert a powerful influence on what is seen and how it is interpreted, they belong to the taken-for-granted world of action, and people are usually unaware of their role in guiding their actions, thoughts and perceptions (Schön, 1983).

Indeed, practice is dependent on basic, often unarticulated beliefs and assumptions, which often remain tacit and unquestioned (Light, 2008). In coaching environments, these will include beliefs and assumptions about knowledge, learning, coaching, and the nature of performance (winning and losing). A number of authors argue the importance of practitioners critically analysing their own assumptions and beliefs (Light & Evans, 2010; Light, 2008; Butler, 2005), and fostering a deeper understanding of different approaches to practice. Indeed, if practitioners can identify the components influencing these tacit belief structures, explicit analysis can be introduced to align with others over a period of reflective engagement (Schön, 1983). This process represents a powerful means of imparting practice, as it helps to recognise, develop, and articulate knowledge; and make what is tacit explicit, meaningful and useful (Cushion, 2006; Loughran, 2002).

Understanding role frames means that learning through the coaching process must be regarded as more than the passive perception and internalisation of an external reality (Varela et al., 1991). It involves the projection of the individual’s experiences, and an act of interpretation shaped by experience (Light, 2008). In other words, learning within a coaching environment cannot be reduced to a linear process of internalising pre-existing knowledge (Davis and Sumara, 1997: Light, 2008). Indeed, Tannen (1993)
argues that implicit in understanding role frames and beliefs is the reality that people approach the world not as naïve, blank-slate receptacles, who take in stimuli as if they exist in some independent, objective form; but rather, as experienced and sophisticated veterans of perception, who have stored their prior experience as ‘an organised mass’, and who view events and objects in the world in relation to one another and their prior experience. The world does not exist in some pure form completely separate from people; but instead, as individuals perceive it; decisions, therefore, involve more than mere processing of inert information (Light, 2008).

Identifying role frames, the sets of assumptions and beliefs which inform practice and learning, allows us to view the ways in which they are applied in context. Role frames specifically consist of a boundary and internal component. Boundary components are fixed, situational (Gilbert and Trudel, 2004), and derived from both the local context and wider sporting culture. However, internal components, such as attitudes and beliefs, differ in intensity and power along a scale of significance and meaning: the more central the belief, the more influential (and resistant) it is.

Rokeach (1968) defined centrality in terms of ‘connectedness’: the more a given belief is functionally connected or in communication with other beliefs, the more implications and consequences it has for other beliefs and, therefore, the more central the belief. This has an impact on the engagement of learning: as both learning and inquiry are dependent on prior beliefs that not only make current phenomena intelligible, but also organize and define new information (Pajares, 1992). Therefore, the beliefs of individual practitioners are central to the understanding of internal role frame components. According to Pajares (1992), subject specific beliefs are pivotal to researchers’ attempts to understand the intricacies of how human beings learn: with evidence from teaching suggesting that the beliefs which practitioners held influenced their perceptions and judgments, which impacted upon their behaviour in practice.

To situate this within a coaching-related example, Gilbert and Trudel (2004) identified role frames consisting of three boundary and nine internal components. The former consisted of situational factors (e.g. the gender or age group of athletes), whereas the latter were reflective of the coaches’ personal views and beliefs regarding youth sport. These were dynamic: their organisation dependent upon the status of the boundary components. While Gilbert and Trudel (2004) suggest common components of a role frame for youth team sport coaching, they also argue that because of the
environmental and individual differences each coach experienced with every athlete, youth sport coaching is too complex to suggest one all-encompassing model role frame. Put simply, these findings cannot be stretched to all coaches, or indeed beyond youth coaching, suggesting the need for research in other coaching domains. In addition, given the influence of these findings on practice, Gilbert and Trudel (2004) argued that a periodic frame analysis in order to evaluate coaches’ tacit role frame components would be worthwhile.

In an earlier case study, piloting verbal cueing stimulated recall interviewing, Wilcox and Trudel (1998) case study with youth ice hockey coaches revealed a complex belief system comprising at least 16 principles of coaching. The purpose of their study was to construct the belief system of an ice hockey coach while testing a new methodology for reliably documenting coaching beliefs. The methodology, referred to as verbal cueing stimulated recall interviewing and originally developed by Trudel, Haughian, and Gilbert (1996), is a variation of the stimulated recall method. Wilcox and Trudel interviewed the ice hockey coaches to explain specific behaviours. Verbal cues were provided to help stimulate recall. Only after the coach discussed the behaviour was the video taped segment shown to the coach. The coach then had an opportunity to clarify or expand on the response if needed. In this sense, the video taped segments were used to validate the coach’s initial response rather than stimulate recall of the event. This is different than the traditional use of stimulated recall interviewing. Using this method Wilcox and Trudel (1998) found that winning and player development were two central principles of the coach’s belief system. For example, the coach may have claimed a belief in equal playing time but was influenced by time left in the game and the score in the selection of players.

In a more recent example McCallister et al., (2000) examined the values and philosophies of 22 youth sport baseball and softball coaches. Coaches were randomly sampled from two neighbouring communities and then interviewed once each. The interview included sample questions such as “What types of values do you emphasize for the youngsters on your team?” and “How important is winning in the total realm of your coaching?” Using a content analysis procedure, the interviews were coded and summaries were prepared for each coding category. No mention of validity or reliability of the process or the interpretations was provided. The coaches espoused a wide range
of values for youth sport such as sportsmanship, respect and support for teammates, sport skill development, equal treatment of all participants, and fun. However, many inconsistencies were found when the coaches were asked to explain how they implemented these values into their coaching behaviours. Most inconsistencies were noted between the espoused importance on equal treatment of all participants and the importance of winning. Furthermore, most coaches were unaware of the mismatch between their values and their behaviours.

Although similarities are evident between the Wilcox and Trudel (1998) and the McCallister et al., (2000) findings, the results provide only limited information on the components of a youth sport coach’s role frame. One study was based on a convenience sample of one (Wilcox and Trudel) and the other study was based on random sampling (McCallister et al., 2000), with neither study using any measure of coach effectiveness as a sampling criteria. Furthermore, McCallister and colleagues collected data via single-shot interview with each coach, which does not address the many threats to validity inherent in a reliance on verbal self-report data when examine cognitive systems (Pajares, 1992). Although Wilcox and Trudel combined interviews and observation to address some of these limitations, their results are limited to one novice coach. Therefore, it is evident that very little is actually known about what an effective, or model, coaches’ beliefs look like in action.

Finally, Nash et al., (2008) investigated the complexities of a coach’s role: in particular, the tension, confusion and contradiction engendered within this highly unstructured environment. The study examined the range of perceptions and beliefs surrounding the role of the coach, and the importance of an underlying coaching philosophy. Across a mixed group (in terms of age and experience) of 21 coaches, the most experienced demonstrated the most complex understanding of the impact of their own values and beliefs on their roles as coaches. Nash et al., (2008) suggested that coaches’ pre-established beliefs would identify them with a particular coaching role as a result of their life experiences. In addition, they argued that the process through which coaches embrace aspects of their practice, concentrate on various components, and ultimately develop performers, is dependent upon their knowledge, values and beliefs towards the sport and coaching, which ultimately determine their role frame.
In this section we have discussed the use of reflection as a tool for learning, particularly the way belief systems and role frame affect the way they interpret the world around them. Identifying role frames, the sets of assumptions and beliefs which inform practice and learning, allows us to view the ways in which they are applied in context. However, reflection is fundamentally situated within the location of practice. It is therefore necessary to understand the landscape and discourse and social makeup that impinge on this key component of athlete and coach learning. The following section will outline a socio-analytic framework that can be used to as a set of tools to investigate learning situated in practice.

2.8 - Socio-Analytic Framework and Concepts

The rationalisation of modern elite sport has resulted in the emergence of an empirical analytical paradigm, in which the discourse of performance and scientism has led to the advancement of productivity, efficiency, prediction and accountability (Johns, 1996: 116). An integral part of this discourse is the application of video analysis to athletic performance in the coaching process. Johns and Johns (2000) argue that coaches hold privileged positions in a performance discourse because of their claims to expertise, experience, wisdom and resources. This exalted position grants them the right to expect athletes to sacrifice normal life and engage in a routine so disciplined that most people would refuse to tolerate it (Johns & Johns, 2000). The athlete’s discourse is characterised by proscriptive constraints, which circumscribe a myriad of actions, but enable ‘the prescriptive skills of the endeavour to be attempted with some level of challenge’ (Shogan, 1999: 6).

The theories of Bourdieu and Foucault have been used consistently to understand relations of power and social mechanisms, which affect actions. Although neither author cited the other, or publicly commented on each other’s work, they focus on the same problems: power, government, state and discourse (Callewaert, 2006). The most important difference between Bourdieu and Foucault concerns the principal domains of their intellectual activity (Callewaert, 2006). Bourdieu’s investigations uncover power relations which impact upon practice; whereas Foucault enables analysis through historic mechanisms that generate principles of action. Although Bourdieu’s and Foucault’s ideas are fundamentally different, both can be used to analyse the complexities in adult learning and professional practice.
2.8.1 - Foucault

Four concepts are associated with the application of Foucault’s work to sports sociology (Rail and Harvey, 1995): Discipline; Biopower; Surveillance and Panopticism; and Technologies of Self and Subjectification. These concepts will now be briefly discussed.

Discipline constitutes those concrete and distinct forms of power, which are tools for the domination of bodies. These use normalisation rather than repression to invest in bodies. Physical education can be understood as a discipline in the Foucauldian sense, because it proposes teaching methods, principles, and conditions through which particular types of corporal practice can be inculcated (Rail and Harvey, 1995). Heikkala (1993) argues that sport, and its training practices, are both an instrument (medium) and effect (outcome) of bodily disciplines and regimentation. The rationale behind performance sport is to make the body and soul transcend current performance and excel; but this demands discipline (Heikkala, 1993). Training techniques are not merely means of more efficient training; they are also means of normalisation, the goal and effect of discipline. It eliminates all social and psychological irregularities, and produces useful, docile bodies (Denison 2011).

Bio-power refers to power exerted on the body. This circulates through a network of individuals; it is omnipresent; it is in everyone; and it is immanent in the structuralist sense of the term (Foucault, 1977). Bio-power is functional: it is exercised through motivating human beings rather than menacing them via corporal, repressive punishment (Rail and Harvey, 1995). Foucault argues that power is not acquired, but rather is an interplay of non-equalitarian and mobile relations: it manifests inside relationships (rather than being imposed as an exterior force) and therefore has a productive role (Pringle and Markula, 2005).

Rail and Harvey (1995) suggest that Foucault’s notion of surveillance and panopticism is evident in his contention that not only the prison, but also the asylum, the barracks, the factory, and the school are places where people (i.e. bodies) are distributed administratively in order to be watched and trained for optimal functioning. Panopticism represents a view of society whereby surveillance and self-policing are used to ensure social control and order.
Foster (2003) investigated how black women spoke of their collegiate experiences, and demonstrated the extent to which they had internalised the norms and values expected at the institution they attended. Conducted over the three-year period, Foster (2003) utilised an ethnographic methodology and particularly open ended interviews and participant observation. Of the 211 on the collegiate roster Foster (2003) worked closely, and on a day-to-day basis, with 14 black women on the 28-member track team. During the competitive season, student athletes lived according to guidelines, whereby meals, study halls, tutoring sessions, weight lifting, injury rehabilitation, classes, practice times, and sleep were built into an hour-by-hour daily schedule. Yet even as the athletes complained about the strict controls placed over their lives, most also considered that a great deal of their success was derived from the very same controls which they so often complained about (Foster, 2003). Foster’s (2003) in depth and granular experiences of his participants gave a rich understanding of the surveillance and lack of autonomy placed on the students in the athletic programme. However, little is known if these forces are replicated in professional Rugby Union, how they manifest and the consequences for learning.

Rail and Harvey (1995) lay out Foucault’s notion of subjectification, and how technologies of self are those that ‘permit individuals to effect by their own means or thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality’ (Foucault, 1988).

Chapman (1997) advocated a Foucauldian framework with which to broaden understanding of sporting practices, so that sport can be seen to exist, not only in its institutional forms, but also as a form of discourse, which organises various knowledge and practices to produce docile bodies through normalising technologies. Chapman’s (1997) investigation of weight measurement practices in women’s lightweight rowing using a Foucauldian framework for analysis, particularly Foucault’s notions of the ‘technology of self’. The aim of this work was to understand how relations of power shape human experience and utilise a case study design to do so. Chapman found the discourses of dieting to ‘make weight’, like other technologies of power, emulated from everywhere, but nowhere in particular.
The practice of making weight functions as a microphysics where the effects of the power are primarily exercised by individuals on themselves. However, other individuals such as teammate, coaches, and race officials also were involved in producing the effects of this power, as were the sports institutions. (Chapman, 1997: 212)

The practice of having to ‘make weight’ to be in the team, promoted in the women an on-going self-surveillance, in which they continually evaluated and judged their own bodies from the standpoint of an internalised panoptical viewer.

The possibility of being weighed by the coach at any time, and the chance of being cut by the team if the weight was too high, ensured that the rowers monitored themselves and each other and followed the making weight regimen. (Chapman, 1997: 213)

Chapman also argued that the rowers’ experience of making their target weight should be understood not only in relation to the dominating effect of a disciplinary power, but also as a ‘technology of the self’, through which the athletes related to, understood, and transformed themselves. Interestingly, parallel can be drawn between the use of weight measurement in rowing, and the implementation of performance statistics information in Rugby Union. Clearly, the weight measurement in Chapman’s study shapes not only the training session the athletes undertake but also their daily lives. Little is known about how athletic performance data shapes professional rugby players or the degree of influences it has in the coaching process or the coach athlete relationship. The major draw back of Chapman’s work is the limited date under analysis. Chapman only performed a signal interview with each of the eight participants. No follow up interviews, observations of the rowers regulating their bodies or attendance of the weight measurement practices. Also, it would be interesting to see if the same behaviour is displayed in a professional or Olympic level team, or would these behaviours already be imprinted in the athletes.

Pringle and Markula (2005) argue that Foucault emphasised the need for social researchers to be concerned with how discourses are employed: he feared that discursive resources could instead be used to sustain regimes which act to marginalise other ways of knowing and help sustain or produce problematic relations of power. In a
sports coaching example, regimes of dominant groups of coaches or athletes could use their social position to create truthful or utopian ‘ways of seeing’, and interpreting subjective social interaction in competitive sport as a means of sustaining a hierarchical relationship of knowledge (Swanson, 2009).

Markula and Pringle (2006) explain that, although Foucault did not aim to write the complete history of the different disciplinary institutions, he did analyse some of the essential techniques of discipline, classified into three broad groups: (1) the art of distribution; (2) the control of activity; (3) the organisation of geneses. Markula and Pringle (2006) argue that these techniques are fundamentally concerned with controlling the location of individuals and the production of work – via manipulation of space or architecture, organisation of time and use of graduated, repetitive and systematised ‘exercises’ – to help produce docile but productive bodies. The omnipresent gaze of authority subsequently disciplines the subjects to survey their own behaviours in a manner which renders them docile: they become their own supervisors (Foucault, 1988).

Denison (2007) reminds us that Foucault did not suggest banning or eliminating the measurement and control of time just because it had the potential to render a person docile or apathetic. Rather, he asked us to consider the possible effects which our everyday actions, involving the control and measurement of time, might be having (Denison, 2007). In a self-reflective article Denison (2007) discusses his impact as a coach on the failure of this athlete, Brian, during a 10,000-metre race. Revisiting the even through a Foucauldian lens Denison suggest that the failure of a championship race might not have been down to Brian’s poor performance but the spatial and temporal control the coach (Denison) elicited during the seasons training sessions.

Interestingly, Denison (2007) uses this article not to demonstrate findings from a study, but to explain a coaching strategy using social theory. In the context Denison describes, and like Rugby Union, coaches responsible for the space and time and context in which athletes train. However, Denison (2007) argues that by controlling the spatial and temporal elements athletes are docile and therefore compliant, with no ability to react or change the structure they have become accustom.
Johns and Johns (2000) argue that the sociological investigation of athletes’ involvement in, and preparation for, sport has uncovered paradoxes, but has also revealed a complex interrelationship of power and domination (Birrell & Cole, 1994; Chapman, 1997; Rail & Harvey, 1995). Many of these studies have identified that power is perceived to be omnipresent and dispersed in a web-like fashion throughout society, and acts to normalise practices, such as those found in sport. According to Pringle and Markula (2005), sport, particularly rugby, problematically links violence, tolerance of pain, competition, and physical skill with masculinities (Light & Kirk, 2000). These characteristics shape participants’ experience of rugby: normalising attitudes and beliefs towards the sport, creating docile and self-surveying entities.

Derived from semi structured individual interviews and naturally occurring group conversations with volunteer coaches, Taylor and Garrett (2010) examined the tensions, powers and resistances that are manifested in different areas of sport. Taylor and Garrett (2010) use not only a Foucauldian lens to examine the changing landscape of professional sports coaching, but also draw extensively on Bourdieu in order to provide resources for investigating the problems embedded in social practice. The following section will discuss Bourdieu’s work, specifically, its application with which to situate learning within a complex social environment.

2.8.2 - Bourdieu

A growing body of sport sociology utilises Bourdieu’s theories of durable inequality, to analyse how sport operates as cultural or physical capital (Cushion, 2011; Taylor & Garrett, 2010; Cushion & Jones, 2006; Stempel, 2006). Human action, such as learning in professional Rugby Union, is deeply situated in social and cultural contexts. Along with Bourdieu (1984), Light and Kirk (2000) suggest that such activity is implicated in the reproduction of dominant culture and social relationships (Cushion & Jones, 2006).

Bourdieu’s main assertion is that agents occupying positions in the ‘field’ use species of capital as forms of dominance over one another (Jenkins, 2002). Bourdieu’s notion of species of capital can occur in a variety of forms: economic capital is the command over economic resources such as cash or assets, which can be quickly and
directly converted into money (Shilling, 1991). Cultural capital refers to things of cultural value, such as knowledge, experience or connections (Jenkins, 2002). Social capital includes social position, group memberships, relationships, or networks of support. Symbolic capital refers to honours, recognition or prestige attached to an individual. Embodied or physical capital includes ways in which individuals walk, talk and move, their appearance and taste. Shilling (2004) suggested that the idea of physical capital is easily grasped via consideration of the ways in which sportsmen and women convert physical ability into income or for material gain. However, we are also concerned here with the ways in which cultural capital is embodied in the everyday use of the body; messages communicated by everyday actions; and the way in which uses of the body can provide social advantage, inhibiting or producing engagement in the learning process.

Bourdieu places the body centre stage, proposing that an individual’s very body schema (their awareness of its topographical structure: its parts, movements and limits; Schilder, 1935) is constituted by the class-based conditions of their existence. Thus, Bourdieu (1984) refers to the body as the most indisputable materialisation of class and taste manifest in its most natural feature. The experiences and appearances of the body reveal the deepest disposition of the habitus, and make it possible to map out a universe of class bodies, which in its specific logic tends to reproduce the universe of the social structure. The nature of social position is defined in relation to one’s access to the relevant form of capital, as defined by the particular context.

Cushion and Jones (2006) argue that not only is Bourdieu’s appreciation of both social structures and agency in delineating an individual’s position of importance here, but that such individuals may act without conscious realisation, and hence may reproduce the very structures that limit them (Taylor & Garrett, 2010). Bourdieu’s analytical framework comprises three main pillars: (1) Field; (2) Habitus; (3) Symbolic Violence. These will now be discussed in turn.

**Field**

- A network of historic or current relations, between objective positions anchored in capital.
• The positions of agents in the field are determined by the amount and weight of capital which they possess.
• Fields are spaces of conflict and competition, as agents gain a monopoly of whatever capital is most effective.
• Each field has its own internal logic and regulatory procedures which govern it.

Most important is the field of power: the hierarchy of power in the political field serves to structure all other fields. Society, then, constitutes a collection of relatively autonomous spheres of play, which cannot be grouped together under any overall logic (Jenkins, 2002). The very shape and division becomes a stake for agents. Redistributing the division or relative weight of capital within a field is tantamount to altering its structure. Fields possess some form of historical dynamism: a malleability, which avoids classic structural determinism (Jenkins, 2002).

Habitus
• Habitus are mental or cognitive systems of structures.
• They form an embodiment of external social structures, acquired over the course of a lifetime.
• Habitus denote the structure through which we produce thoughts and actions, which in turn creates our external social structures.
• Habitus structure the social world.
• They can be thought of as the collective, and individuated through the biologic individual.
• As they can be similar among groups of people, they constitute a collective phenomenon.

Bourdieu's habitus constrain but do not determine thought and action. The latter are constrained because habitus only suggest how a person should think or act. People act according to practical sense, reasonably in any given situation. Thus ‘habitus’ avoids a mechanistic, unpredictable reaction to stimulus. When our habitus match the field which has evolved, we can intuit and act instantaneously. This is cohesion without concept. We are a fish in water, yet without any conception of water. Habitus is homologous to the objective structures of the world. If the objective
structures of the social world impose domination on an individual’s habitus, the resulting inequality could be invisible to the individual; thus the dominated always contribute to their domination. The dispositions inclining them to such complicity are also the effect of domination residing deeply inside their socialised bodies (Jenkins, 2002).

Habitus is defined as the ‘product of internalisation of the principles of cultural arbitrary capable of perpetuating itself (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977: 31). It can be viewed as a set of dispositions, inclinations and schemes of perception with which an individual interprets social situations (Taylor & Garratt, 2010; Swanson, 2009; Light & Kirk, 2001; Clément, 1995; Laberge, 1995). An individual’s life history of social experiences makes each habitus unique, constituted through the individual’s engagement in social and cultural life through practice (Light & Kirk, 2000). Purdy et al., (2009) consider that the embodiment of habitus can be identified in an individual’s deportment: in manner, demeanour, and generally in how they see and carry themselves. In this respect, habitus is viewed as the human embodiment of social schemes leading actors to behave in certain ways.

Shilling (2004) argues that the habitus is formed in the context of people’s social locations and inculcates in them a set of tastes, schemes of perception, thought and action; and a world view based on, and reconciled to, these positions (Bourdieu, 1980).

Hodkinson et al., (2007) argue that habitus generates not only meaningful practice, but also ‘meaning-giving perception’ (Bourdieu, 1984:170). Wacquant (1992), in his study of boxers in Chicago, emphasised the central role that the concept of body habitus can play in understanding the social behaviour of those under study. Wacquant performed a 3-year ethnographic study in a boxing gym located in a poverty-stricken, segregated Chicago neighbourhood. Participation in this sport kept the men in this gym, as one respondent described it, ‘out of trouble’ (p. 230).

Wacquant described the boxers’ incorporation of the necessary bodily habitus within the context of their locale and found that only the men entering the boxing gym with an already established habitus conducive to the lifestyle proved successful. Those from the poorest, most unstable backgrounds could not survive in this environment, which demanded commitment to an intense training schedule. As far as learning is concerned, this means that the process of knowledge generation and discovery is fundamentally linked to the athlete’s habitus. If they do not have the internalised
disposition to engage in learning, the value of the task is limited. Thus the very environment, which can help them to become better players, also stops them from engaging in the process.

Symbolic violence

Symbolic violence refers to the imposition of systems of symbolism and meanings upon groups ‘in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate’; in other words, individuals accept the dominant values and behavioural schema currently utilised in the field (Cushion & Jones, 2006), exercised on a social agent with his or her complicity. It is practiced indirectly through the control of social mechanisms, such as language, images or symbolic meanings; and allows the dominated to accept as legitimate their own condition. For example, the use of technical language operates as a medium with which to confer authority. Taylor and Garrett (2010) found that technical language binds coaches into the reproduction of orthodox knowledge, both as users and propagators of its discourse. This legitimacy obscures existing power relations, often making them unrecognisable to, and hence misrecognised by, agents (Kim, 2004). Of particular importance here is the contextual discourse used: with the imposition and enforcement of a ‘correct way’ coming at the expense of limitless other ways (Schubert, 2002). We therefore draw upon this concept of symbolic violence to explore the ways in which the discourse used in professional coaching helps to create and recreate the field, providing current practice with an entrenched sense of legitimacy.

Drawing on Bourdieu’s notions of field, habitus, and symbolic violence, Cushion and Jones (2006) investigated the coach-athlete relationship within professional youth soccer. An ethnographic framework was used over a 10-month season, which included in situ participant observation and interviews, to give a ‘truer’ picture of the coaching process. Participants included five coaches and 24 players covering two age groups, the under-19 and under-17 team. The authors point out that places on this team are highly sort after, and seen as a gateway to a professional contract. However, each of the players are replaceable if their performance dips, or if a better player is found, so competition is fierce. The authors characterised a landscape in which,
Authoritarian behaviour manifested itself through a combination of abusive language, direct personal castigation, and threats of physical exercise by the coaches towards the players. (Cushion & Jones, 2006: 149)

This authoritarian behaviour was an accepted part of life. However, it did not emanate from the coaches, but also the whole organisation, including the peers group. In doing so the actions of the coaches are legitimised.

The control exercised by the coaches and the club resulted in the players being denied all choices about their professional and occupational experiences, and while within the confines of the club, their social experiences. (Cushion & Jones, 2006: 151)

This form of symbolic violence was misrecognised by the players and ‘fed their desire’ of becoming a professional footballer. Intriguingly, Cushion and Jones noted that the players ability to occupy a label as a ‘good player’ was dependant on the player acceptance of a habitus similar to that of the coach. This means the positioning of a player in the hierarchy was not just based on their ability as a footballer on the pitch but in their access to capital.

The players’ positioning within the hierarchical group structure then, based upon their accrued symbolic capital within the field, led them to acquire a certain habitus on the given scale of social differentiation. (Cushion & Jones, 2006: 154)

This means that the players are experiencing the same environment, but their individual access to capital, symbolic, physical or otherwise, shapes the habitus they internalise. This results in uneven experiences for each player, and therefore creates a zero sum game in the quest for capital. Interestingly Cushion and Jones (2006) also illustrate this scenario in which players are stuck between working hard in training and being marginalised by their peers group. This is because working to hard, or being seen to be, will impress the coaches, but also decrease the potential capital gains of the peers group. This could have profound effects on our understanding of experiential learning in professional sport. Reflective theory highlights the importance of external sources when completing reflective cycles (Schön 1983; Knowles, 2001). However, this evidence suggests that seeking feedback from peers or coaches will marginalise players from the socialisation process.
Building on the ethnographic data from a previous research project (Cushion & Jones, 2006), Cushion and Jones (2012) article examines cultural reproduction and socialisation in professional football using a Bourdieusian analysis. The research found that day to day practice was ideologically laden and served the production, reproduction and incorporation of socialised agents into the prevailing ‘legitimate’ culture. The authors illustrate this by examining the routes and rituals in which everyday practice is focused. For example, training sessions would start at the same time every day, and would follow a set path with the same drill at the start of each session. Academy players had a specific kit to distinguish between them and that of the first team. Players could call each other and the academy staff by their first names or a nick name, but the coaches would be call only by specific names, and the head coach, only Gaffer. This unverbalised method of control is seen as a legitimate and unquestioned part of becoming a professional footballer. Cushion and Jones noted that,

The players experienced a continual process of socialisation that served to knit together social legitimacies. These legitimacies included respect for authority, hierarchical awareness, control, obedience, collectivity, work ethic, and winning. (Cushion & Jones, 2012: 9).

This socialisation process was reinforces everyday and became a fundamental part of being a footballer. In the desire to be a professional footballer the players accepted a symbolic press on their lives, which would seek to render them docile, but productive.

In pursuit of their own goals, players engaged in social practices that contributed to the maintenance of the existing culture and helped the reproduce it. In so doing, they sustained on-going relationships of power and inequality in a struggle for capital. Those in power, the coaches, controlled the players, who behaved with submissiveness and docility, thus being complicit in their domination; an essential element of symbolic violence. (Cushion & Jones, 2012: 14)

The real strength of both Cushion and Jones (2006; 2012) study is the methodology employed. If they had just performed interviews the coaches could have said they have an athlete centred approach to coaching and help the players develop as individuals, as is the problems with verbal self-reports (Taggaard, 2009). However, the duration of their investigation, 10-months, and the mix of in situ observations, ranging from two to four days per week, and in depth interview structured around issues relating
to the coaches working behaviour, provides a rich and engaging study into the workings of professional football.

Light and Kirk (2000)’s grounded theory approach generated data through observations, in-depth interviews, semi structured and conversational interviews, field notes and video analysis. Performed over an 18-month period the authors visited a Rugby Union team from an elite independent school. The authors attended all games and training session visited over a 3 month ‘full rugby season’ during this period. Using broader conceptual analysis of Bourdieu, Light and Kirk (2000) research into the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in high school rugby teams found that the form of masculinity embedded in the habitus of the rugby players clearly legitimised hegemonic ways of being male. Light and Kirk (2000) also suggested that the body exists in both nature and culture simultaneously: thereby harmonising with Bourdieu’s argument that not only is culture imprinted on the body, but the body provides the central means through which culture is produced and reproduced. They also noted the important role of habitus in the development of physical and social capital: ‘Through the capital passed onto them by their families, most of the boys in the firsts brought with them a habitus that was in tune with that of the school and the rugby community’. Bourdieu’s work suggests that the body’s engagement in social and cultural practices profoundly shapes the individual’s entire disposition and set of tastes which structure behaviour, social action and access to resources (Light & Kirk, 2000). Light and Kirk (2000) provide a compelling case of Bourdieusian analysis in amateur Rugby Union. However, professional Rugby Union is quite a different landscape, further research is require examining the lives of professional Rugby Union.

Based on the work of Light and Kirk (2001), Swanson (2009) employed a multifaceted ethnographic approach, over 8-months, to studying a group of upper-middle-class mothers whose children played youth soccer. Swanson (2009) says she performed ‘extensive fieldwork’ including, individual and group interviews, surveys, participant observation and informal discussions. However, no numbers are given to illustrate the volume of fieldwork performed other then the 8-month period. Using Pierre Bourdieu’s (1984, 1983) sociological theories regarding the interplay between habitus and capital to analyse how the mothers shaped their sons’ youth sport experience to reproduce class status and social advantage in the next generation. The
key finding from this study is was the inherent reproduction of habitus between the mothers that would be embodied in their sons. Collectively the mothers shared a vision for their sons, and therefore it legitimised their decisions

“According to these mothers, a good, upper-middle-class son is a boy who 'stays out of trouble,' shows commitment, works hard individually and with a team, exudes sportsmanship, displays—even if modestly—his heteromasculine prowess, and is not too physically aggressive”. (Swanson, 2009: 422).

The mothers in this study used soccer as a vehicle to shape and reproduce desirable behaviours in their children. By having ‘good boys’ the mother would acquire gains in different forms of capital, in doing so they are internalising the field in which they compete. Swanson (2009) argues that,

“The parents used youth soccer to ensure not only that they believed to be appropriate use of the body but also to ingrain in the bodies of their sons characteristics of the upper middle class habitus (Swanson, 2009: 417).

Interestingly Swanson (2009) found that parents could have placed their sons in a range of sports other then soccer, but they choose soccer as a defensive move to ensure a symbolic status.

“It was clear that these suburban mothers felt certain pressures to follow the culture norm of placing their sons in soccer. As a result, their sons need to meet certain expectations that were embedded in the dominant cultural norms. (Swanson, 2009: 411).

The real strength of Swanson’s (2009) work is highlighting the defensive nature of the parent’s decisions to choose soccer as a sports pathway. The study found that parents did not choose soccer because the sons enjoyed the sport anymore then lacrosse or American football, but because soccer represented a symbolic representation of capital that could help them ‘keep up’ with the other parents, and ensure a particular habitus is embodied by their sons.

“These upper middle class suburban mothers internalised this external factor to such an extent that placing a child in youth soccer was naturalised; therefore, the social structure of the participants was a contributing to the formation of their habitus. (Swanson, 2009: 411).

Light and Kirk (2000) and Swanson (2009), both used a Bourdieusian analysis
to demonstrate the interplay between habitus and capital. Although the findings from each study are insightful and go some length to analyse the social landscape of sport, both are limited to participation sports and at a youth level.

Based on around a single top level rower and his preparation for an upcoming regatta Purdy et al., (2009) study uses illustrations from the rowers interaction with the people responsible with this training program. The aim of this paper was to examine how power was given, acquired and used by athletes in the elite sporting context. It focuses on a top-level athlete’s reactions to the behaviours of his coaches and how such actions contribute to the creation of a coaching climate, which both influences and ‘houses’ coaching. Over a five-month period, interviews and participant observation were identified as the main sources of data collection. The significance of this study is highlighting the unexplored layers of social interaction within coaching. Purdy et al., (2009) clearly shows that coaches recognise, and afford capital, on the basis of compliance with the training programme.

“The coaches thoughts and actions reflected how they assigned capital on the basis of the athletes acceptance of the perceived contextual norms. Hence, those athletes that consented to the coach’s wishes in terms of participating in the training program were afforded greater respect, time and investment, then those who didn’t. (Purdy et al., 2009: 333).

However, Purdy et al., (2009) found that capital can be exchanged between athlete and coach. For example, if an athlete that does not compile with the training program, but still performs well the coach will make exceptions. This is because, the athletes gain in physical capital, in this case the ability to row faster then the competition, can be exchanged for symbolic capital for the coaches, the coach has developed best athlete.

Purdy et al., (2009) contented that Bourdieu’s theories are inherently ‘good to think with’ in the power ridden context of sports coaching. Hence, they agree with Bourdieu’s own assertion that hat he give us are weapons (i.e. capital, habitus, field), as apposed to lesions, in the quest to explore and understand social practice. The main finding from Purdy et al., (2009) was the coaches’ authoritarian practices became even more pronounced when coaches perceived their power to be under threat. However,
they argue that this is not to criticize authoritarian practices in sports coaching. On the contrary, even athletes sometimes consider them necessary. Purdy et al., (2009) argued that Bourdieu understood society, of which the sporting context is a part, to be structured along differences in the distribution of capital, with individuals striving to maximise their own personal share of this. Of particular relevance in the sporting context is the notion of physical capital: embodied through social practice and any physical attribute, such as athletic skill (Shilling, 2004).

Hodkinson et al., (2008) suggest that participants can influence the nature of the learning culture within which they participate intentionally, through striving to change and/or preserve certain characteristics or practices.

For any learner, the horizons of learning set limits on what is possible (Hodkinson et al., 2008). However, in their study, Cushion and Jones (2006) found that coaches use authoritarian actions to define and categorise players as ‘good’ or ‘bad’. The players subsequently accepted these definitions, while the coaches acted as gatekeepers to their aspirations. The learning horizons of players appeared to be established through the on-going, sometimes changing interrelationship between their dispositions and the learning cultures in which they participate (Hodkinson et al., 2008). This entails a complex interaction between position, habitus and learning culture: the field of force influences the process of learning in complex, changing ways. Thus, after reviewing the work of Foucault and Bourdieu and its application to the sports coaching domain, rugby clubs could be conceptualised as sites of inequality and struggle for various forms of capital, while maintaining a state of doxa, or taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs about a field (Hunter, 2010). Moreover, structurally normalising habitus could be conceived as a form of symbolic violence through which the significance of learning as part of life as a professional Rugby Union athlete is marginalised.

While a large body of research has developed a sophisticated understanding of adult learning, little is known about the real-world application of learning technologies in a complex, hegemonic work place such as that of professional Rugby Union. Yet as we have seen, taken together, both authors provide us with the tools with which to understand the historical structures and social inadequacies, which formulate being, and indeed becoming, a professional Rugby Union athlete.
2.9 - Conclusion

This literature review has contrasted existing research on performance analysis and coaching in sport, with both theories and fieldwork on how learning (especially amongst adults) occurs, in an attempt to synthesise the two, and provide recommendations for the future. It is surprising that so little is actually known about how the lessons provided by performance analysis and video technology can be utilised to benefit learning, and particularly, the results of professional sporting teams; and still more so that thus far, theories on learning have failed to be applied to the analysis process in sport.

Moreover, that the work discussed in this chapter has essentially ignored the human aspects of coaching and learning represent its greatest flaw. Each learner – and each athlete – is a complex individual with their own unique experiences, preferences and view of the world: so, indeed, is each teacher and coach. What is required, therefore, is for coaches to become far more aware about how their own deep-seated beliefs and attitudes impact upon their work, and the success of their charges; and for coaches to encourage and athletes to be provided with far more autonomy in the areas of experiential, and especially reflective learning.

This literature review has also reviewed the work of Schön, and employed his theory of experiential learning as a conceptual framework with which to explain learning in professional rugby. Its key findings are that role frames filter salient information, and are paramount in guiding the reflective process. External knowledge and resources such as coaches are fundamental to the reflective process: as they guide virtual experimentation, and create a convergence of meaning in the reflective conversation. Little is known about the length and cycles of reflective incidents, or whether they appear episodically. This aspect has been greatly under-researched in professional sport, and needs to be fully understood if Schön’s theory of experiential learning is to be successfully employed in order to develop and explain learning in professional practice.

Finally, it has been demonstrated that the experiential learning process is inherently linked to the social fabric of practice. Again, little is understood about how it is influenced or inhibited by the sociological formations of practice and culture within
large groups of professional athletes. Therefore, a social-analytical tool, such as the work of Foucault and Bourdieu, could be used to investigate the fluctuating value, distribution, and regulation of learning in practice.

Sporting teams achieve the best results when its members have the confidence to react ‘on the hoof’: drawing on previous experience, analysis and self-reflection in responding to in-game challenges and adversity. Through greater understanding of learning-based theories – in particular, the ‘role frames’ espoused by Donald Schön – coaches will be able to provide athletes with far more autonomy in decision-making, and finally make the leap from performance analysis for its own sake, to one which has clear, material benefit on the pitch.
Chapter 3 - Research Methodology

Coaching does not occur in a cultural vacuum (Cushion & Jones 2012) without reference to culture we cannot understand how individuals differ according to, for example, gender, age, experience, and learning (Kincheloe, 2005; Brudstand, 1997). A core component of interpretive research is the idea that reality is socially constructed (Sparkes, 1992), and within an interpretive paradigm, the researcher is an inextricable part of the research endeavour (Mantzoukas, 2004). The researcher is not merely another individual but the central figure, the interpreter, the writer, and ultimately, the creator and constructor of the research world (Avramidis & Smith, 1999). Thus, because knowledge generation is a social process and context-specific, qualitative researchers do not seek absolute answers about the nature of reality (Kincheleoe, 2005; Brudstand, 1997); rather, they seek to describe ‘reality’ from the point of view of individuals as they experience it. At the commencement of their study, researchers conducting qualitative inquiry need to identify the assumptions underpinning their work including their epistemological and ontological framework (Mantzoukas, 2004). Matters of research representation are a central feature against which notions such as ‘validity and reliability’ of the endeavour are judged (Avramidis & Smith 1999). This means that the researcher is required to explicate and integrate within the study (Mantzoukas, 2004).

In an interpretative paradigm, Gubrium and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) highlights the differences in the terms, ‘social constructionism’ and ‘social constructivism’. Schwandt (2001) explains that there are two strands of constructivism: radical or psychological constructivism (focus on individual) and social constructionism (focus on interaction). Within the theoretical framework of social constructionism individual identity or self is seen as the by-product of social forces experienced in context (Schwandt, 2001). In social constructionism, knowledge is constructed through meanings that are available to each individual and these meanings are shared between individuals and society (Gubrium and Koro-Ljungberg, 2005). A self is established and understood as a product of historically and culturally situated interchanges among people. Individuals are relational beings who create constantly changing meaning in interaction with others. Social constructionism assumes that any cultural organisation
and institution, as well as society itself, tends to socialise its members (Guba & Lincoln 2005). Therefore, in any social structure, a particular focus is given to conversations as meaningful forms of human interaction (Moses & Knutsen, 2007). Therefore, this study paid particular attention and meaning to the interactions, and conversation between coaches, players and support staff of the rugby club.

As the main researcher in this project, it is important to establish here what my underlying assumptions are. My own viewpoint supports the interpretive paradigm realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) and moreover, development of knowledge in human movement studies is not value-free (Brustad, 2008). Furthermore, I agree with Brustad (1997) that knowledge development is clearly affected by prevailing research paradigms and scientific traditions, and tied to particular interest groups. Therefore, the current research is positioned within an internal idealist subjectivist stance, and a mechanistic belief towards human nature.

3.1 - Research Methods
3.1.1 - Ethnography

In all disciplines, the generation of knowledge is essential to the growth and professional advancement of the field (Brustad, 2008). Ethnography is widely used for research in the field of coaching and to explore cultural phenomenon (Wacquant, 1992; Coates 1999; Foster, 2003; Cushion & Jones, 2006; Swanson 2009; Purdy et al., 2009; Cushion & Jones 2012). Traditionally it requires the researcher to spend a large amount of time observing a particular group of people and sharing their way of life (Tedlock, 2005; Krane & Baird, 2005). The main concern of ethnography is to document events and offer insights into their meaning. Ethnographic research aims to explore both clearly observable and more obscure niches of social life both of which are applicable to the current study (Tedlock, 2005). Experience-based learning is seen as transcending the classroom, and has to consider an individual’s, or group of individuals’, life history as well as their practical interactions (Krane & Baird, 2005). Thus, in this case, the use of ethnography is in line with the research objectives and assumptions.
Ethnography assumes that by entering into close and relatively prolonged interaction with people in their everyday lives, researchers can better understand the beliefs, motivations and behaviours of the participants than through any other approach (Alexander, 2005; Fielding, 2001). This insider’s perspective provides a number of advantages and disadvantages. Firstly, the insider, day-to-day contact provides the depth of knowledge in the context with which to undertake detailed analysis. However, contextual familiarity can mean that the significance of personal interaction can be missed, as the researcher become part of the context under investigation. Previous ethnographic studies and reviews in coaching (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2012; 2006; Krane & Baird, 2005; Coates, 1999; Wacquant, 1992) have shown a deep understanding of the link between the social environment and prevailing culture. Within an ethnographic framework I engaged with participant observation. My participation was as a junior performance analyst within the club environment (see Appendix 18). This was not limited to games and training, but also encompassed non-rugby-related occasions such as social events. This enabled me to gain an understanding of the contexts, which surround the coaching process within the team and involved me in actively watching and following events with all teams, players and coaches at the club. However, this was not without its problems. As I was a part of the coaching team I became indoctrinated within the culture and outlook of the group. This is explored further in the Reflexivity section (p. 79).

3.1.2 - Case Study

To investigate knowledge generation from an ethnographic perspective, a case study format, as advocated by Yin (2008), was pursued. Using case study underlines a deliberate intention to identify contextual conditions (Yin, 2008). It is important to note here that, as a researcher, I did not employ a case study primarily to understand other cases, instead the first obligation was to understand the particular case being investigated. In intrinsic case study, the case is pre-selected; in instrumental case study, some cases would be better than others (Stake, 1995). This is an important difference, as the purpose of this investigation was to understand the context and subtleties of a professional Rugby Union context as a unique case, and not directly apply findings from other cases.
Fetterman (1989) advises that case study research enables researchers to accurately understand whole situations, and can provide an understanding of why people think and act in the way they do. As a result, this methodology was selected in order to provide an insider’s view, and to understand how coaches and athletes engage in the reflective process when situated in professional practice. I became immersed in the practical context and coaching process of a professional rugby club, in order to provide a depth of social knowledge. Although immersion of this kind is not considered an absolute requirement, a researcher’s familiarity with the context in which the phenomenon is being studied constitutes a valuable asset, which can facilitate the data collection and data analysis processes (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Consistent with case study design (Yin, 2008), multiple sources of evidence were used for the purpose of data collection (see Table 3, p. 67). This was critical to the examination of social-cultural structures (Cushion & Jones 2012; Cushion & Jones, 2006; Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003 Poczwardowski, et al., 2002), and helped to address some of the limitations of relying on verbal self-reports (Pajares, 1992).

3.1.3 - Participant Observation

A key data collection method was that of participant observation, critical in both ethnography and case study (Lofland, 1984) (see Table 3, p. 67). Lofland (1984) argues that participant observation is important because it involves the researcher establishing a relatively long-term relationship with a social group in its natural setting, for the purposes of developing a scientific understanding of that group (Tedlock, 2005). By sustaining a long-term relationship, explored further in the reflexivity section (p.72), I enabled myself to develop an understanding of the experiences of those who were part of the process, and thus gain a broad picture of the culture studied. Participant observation allowed me to experience things in and around the club that would not be possible to discuss through an interview-based approach. Indeed, Patton (1990) suggested that there is simply no substitute for direct experience through participant observation.

However, participant observation was not without its problems. Over the three years of data collection, I worked between four and six days per week within the
context being investigated. This led to four specific problems. First, as the researcher, I had to assume positions contrary to those of scientific interest (Tedlock, 2005). For example, there was a constant assumption that, because I worked as a video analyst, mainly computer-based I could fix any computer-related problem in the workplace. This led to a significant proportion of my time being spent performing IT-related tasks.

Second, I followed a commonly known phenomenon, and became a supporter of the group studied (Tedlock, 2005). I had to continually remind myself of the culture in which I worked. Sports teams have a social and cultural following which it is all too easy to become emotionally invested in and indeed, over this three year period, I became part of the cultural make-up and, at times, found it difficult to remove myself from this. For example, I attended every home fixture over a 27-month period, and was at the training ground for 3 out 4 days of each week. This attendance was not as a normal paying fan or customer; it was in order to discuss aspects of rugby and specifics about players with the coaching staff. In the coaches’ office or players’ lounge, I sat, ate and talked and with them during the games. I became part of the preparation for training and matches. Players and coaches revealed personal aspects of their lives, and I shared mine in return. This depth of interaction over a long period of time led to some of those involved at the club becoming friends of mine.

Third, the organisation that I researched split into different social groups. Consequently, I found it difficult to be in the right place at the right time. There were significant social divisions among groups. These included the coaches and the athletes, for example, the coaching staff were categorised into on-field staff, off-field staff and physiotherapy. The on-field staff included the Head Coach and his assistants, along with Video Analysts whereas the Head of Conditioning and his Assistants were off-field staff. Socially, the groups did not mix away from the club, and formed distinguishable social groups during free periods of the working day, such as lunch.

Finally, whilst participant observation allows for a data source that is rich and deep, it could be criticised for being too descriptive and journalistic in style, whilst also being subjective and idiosyncratic (Yin, 2008). To counter this criticism, data were collected by way of detailed description with theme generation conducted after a period of reflection (Stake, 2005). For example, I kept a log of interactions between
by participants, this included conversations, or events that would spark my interest. After a period of time I would review the notes and organise the individual extracts into themes, like example of hierarchy, coach review meetings, and athlete surveillance. These themes, would then for the basis for further investigation.

3.1.4 - Interviews

Gubrium and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) argue that viewing interviews as symbiotic events enables us to focus on sensitivity and flexibility, and the ways in which both interviewer and interviewee ‘feed off’ each other as they co-construct data. The co-construction of the interview was a guiding principle both participants were contextually bound (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Both structured and unstructured interviews were used. For example, each first formal structured interview started with the question: ‘Tell me about your experiences of training and playing Rugby Union?’ I had a fixed set of questions to ask each person, and allowed open-ended responses.

In line with the guidance of Fontana and Frey (2005), I asked each participant the same set of questions. The analysis of the structured interview informed follow-up questions with the players and coaches in informal settings.

Taggaard (2007) suggests that the general value of conducting an interview is that we may explore, through words and discourse, peoples’ socially and historically embedded modes of understanding and acting, as well as possible ‘conflicts’ between these. Five interviews were held in one day, and transcribed during the following seven days. From this point onwards, themed informal interviews were used in context and at opportunist moments. I used themed informal interviews to ask specific questions of players and coaches, but informally. Specifically, when practice was finished, I would walk back to the training base with my analysis equipment and ask the players or coaches’ questions about that day’s practice. Or, on bus journeys to away games, I had the opportunity to discuss relevant topics with the coaches, and explore their beliefs and practices. Again, these were recorded and transcribed. For example, when walking from the training field back to the clubhouse I could talk to Anthony. Anthony is a first team coach and ex-player of the club he has been coaching the first team defence for 3 seasons.

*Researcher: So, Anthony how did you think training went today?*
Anthony: Good, just another day really, they have done those drills a lot so it was quite an easy session.
Researcher: Did you want it to be an easy session?
Anthony: Yeah they have a game tomorrow we just needed to show them what we want.

However, this type of interaction occurred on a more ad hoc basis, and was more opportunistic that a planned method of data collection (Sands 2002). However, the ad hoc nature of the interview gave me small snap shots into the coaches and players daily life, without being intrusive, as I was part of the team. For example, when talking to Patrick is a England player and regular starter in the Rangers first team, after training,

Researcher: I saw Charles pulled you out of that session, what was it for?
Patrick: He didn't want me to be injured we have do that session loads so no point in me doing it.
Researcher: Saving you for the weekend?
Patrick: You know how it is, let the shit munchers do the hard work, and rest the big dogs for game day. Hahaha.....

Gubrium and Koro-Ljungberg (2005) argue the importance of having conversations with participants, to establish how they construct the realities in which they operate. This is because conversation is a very important vehicle for reality-maintenance. Therefore, open discussions reflecting the players’ or coaches’ thoughts and actions enabled a rich source of information, and an accurate description of the social context.

However, Taggaard (2009) reminds us that interviewee descriptions and words are not necessarily one and the same and may in fact be very different. Indeed, Enosh and Buchbinder (2005) argue that interviewer and interviewee negotiate their way between each other’s definitions of facts, then impose their own meaning and frame realities in different ways. This highlights that the researcher is as much a part of the context under investigation as the participants. In this respect and early on in the project I noted in my reflective journal the difficulty I had in communicating with some of the players, because I did not know the technical language of practice:

*In a lineout meeting with Charles today, they have a code relating to the player number and movement in the lineout. I can’t understand what they mean because they talk too fast. It is not particularly cryptic but the speed they reel lineout options off made it difficult to keep up. (Field Notes) – See Study 3 (p. 132)*
Tanggaard (2009) argues that interviewing presents a good case for revealing how language ‘makes’ people, creates social life and opportunities for opening up public discussion: it is this public discussion that we are interested in. Taggaard (2009) also suggests that an interview study should not be seen as particularly well suited to obtaining access to subjective experiences but is objectively attuned to investigating and exploring the discourse and narratives through which people live their everyday lives. In this case the lived experience was the source of data for understanding the way in which athletes and coaches learned, and how the social context influenced this endeavour.

Mallozzi (2009) also believed that if the interviewer held an empathetic position towards the interviewee, this might afford the interview an unnamed beneficial quality. This position is not shared by Taggaard (2007), for whom a focus on empathetic relations was limiting to the research, and would blur ethical problems by softening power issues under the guise of intimacy. Empathy was a particularly hard aspect for me to engage with. The long periods of interaction in the context of the rugby club meant that I got to know, and spent large amounts of time with, the players and coaches. For example, I would go through the players’ performance statistics with them, and watch videos of them performing. During this time, they confided in me and sought assurances regarding their performances. Naturally, I found myself empathising with some more than others, and was continually uncertain of how this was reflected in my data gathering methods.

However, during interviews, whether structured or unstructured I positioned myself as an active listener, eliciting conversation with the participants. I did this by adopting an unassuming role during the conversations, even if I knew the answer to the question I was asking. I found this difficult to adjust to and in many ways quite uncomfortable at first however, as the study went on, I found it easier to remove myself from social situations and take an objective position during interviews.

In a similar mode to Mallozzi (2009), all interviews were recorded using a dictaphone, then transcribed but the text did not take the place of the audio recordings, as these cannot fully reflect all parts of the interview. The data from the transcribed text were stored on my personal computer, together with an access key. This was backed up on a remote online server.
3.2 - Participants

The rugby club had 42 players and coaches. The table below outlines key participants in the research. Other people (players, coaches, referees, and external partners) passed through or had been connected with the club, but the participants outlined below remained constant and became key informants. All participants have been given a pseudonym to protect their identity. Job descriptions and code of conduct for the coaching staff and players can be found in Appendix 10, 11 and 12, along with the organisational structural of the Rugby Club (Appendix 8 and 9).

Table 2. Participant coaches and staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>Bad Tempered, and aggressive during training and games, Level 3 coaching</td>
<td>Defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>award, has over 30 international caps, 4 years coaching experience.</td>
<td>coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>Calculated and analytical, liked by the players and respected in the game.</td>
<td>Head Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level 4 coaching award, coaching since 1990 at the top level, but never</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>played in the professional era.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>Old school coach used to run the academy, respected but mocked by the</td>
<td>Backs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>players. Level 4 coaching award, played top-level rugby in the amateur era,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but no international experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan</td>
<td>Academy backs coach, new to coaching at this level, questionable</td>
<td>Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>management skill. Level 2 coaching award, never played top level rugby, ex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>navy, lots of experience playing and coaching 7's</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrard</td>
<td>New and respected backs coach, forma international player with less than 30</td>
<td>Backs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>caps. Level 3 coaching award, and coached international age group sides.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam</td>
<td>Former international player, and successful coach at different club.</td>
<td>Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International player with over 50 caps, forma head of coaching at NGB,</td>
<td>of Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level 4 coaching award.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>New to coaching, used to player for this club team as a lock for 10 years.</td>
<td>Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never played international rugby, and no coaching awards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Frustrated GPS administrator, information drawn is widely ignored</td>
<td>GPS Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rupert</td>
<td>Works with Academy players, only around the club on Thursdays</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>Head of analysis, been at the club 8 years, works closely with Charles,</td>
<td>Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and has a Level 2 coaching award.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Key Informant: Used to be club captain but now struggles to get in the team.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>Key Informant: First year academy player, seen as a geek, good at goal kicking.</td>
<td>Full Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth</td>
<td>Key Informant: Youth international cap, academy process, not fulfilling his optional.</td>
<td>Number 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>Key Informant: 10+ international caps, senior player and success story of the academy.</td>
<td>Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>Key Informant: 20+ international caps, respected, role model of academy players.</td>
<td>Number 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Key Informant: Academy product, now first team player every week.</td>
<td>Lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Key Informant: Senior player, but not a first team player, was club captain at previous club.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>Academy player, talented, quiet, but well thought of, would go on to play for England First team.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Academy player, very good in the gym, well liked by team.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>Joker of the group, through the academy process, had 1 international cap.</td>
<td>Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>From Fiji, laid back, from the army, prefers to play 7's, international caps.</td>
<td>Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donald</td>
<td>Ladies man, youth international, struggles with long term injuries.</td>
<td>Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Back up scrum half, 1 international cap, could play regular else where</td>
<td>Scrum Half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>Part of the position rotation, only stayed at the club for 2 years.</td>
<td>Lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald</td>
<td>Academy player, bit of a joker, great friends with Raymond.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary</td>
<td>Young, 10+ international caps, looked up to on the pitch, respected in the game.</td>
<td>Scrum Half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>From the academy, but 2nd team player, seen as intelligent.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry</td>
<td>Joker of the group, 2nd team player, only stays for 2 years.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey</td>
<td>Youth international, regular first team place</td>
<td>Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>3 international caps, first team player</td>
<td>Full Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond</td>
<td>Academy player, joker, international 7s caps.</td>
<td>Full Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>Star signing, regular first team player, admired by all.</td>
<td>Fly half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>Moves from 1st team to 2nd regular, utility forward, academy product.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>Moves from 1st team to 2nd regular, utility back, academy product.</td>
<td>Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Product of academy, first team player, no real replacements in the team.</td>
<td>Flanker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregg</td>
<td>Old school brand of player, first team every week.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>New to the team, from the division below, on the 1st team bench most weeks.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>Benches for the 1st team, been at the club for 4 years.</td>
<td>Hooker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>In and out of the 1st team, coming to the end of career.</td>
<td>Lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean</td>
<td>Academy player, not fulfilling his potential.</td>
<td>Wing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Injury plagued, international player from Fiji.</td>
<td>Scrum Half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the Pirates</strong></td>
<td>Loan club that the academy players go to.</td>
<td>Academy Loan Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Academy player, on loan to other club</td>
<td>Hooker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony</td>
<td>Out of favour, but in long term contract, only plays when others are injury, international caps.</td>
<td>Winger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronan</td>
<td>New to the team, from the division below, on the 1st team bench most weeks.</td>
<td>Lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedric</td>
<td>Starlet of the current academy crop, youth international.</td>
<td>Prop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>Youth international, apprentice to Phillip</td>
<td>Fly half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan</td>
<td>Youth international, but now out of favour,</td>
<td>Fly half</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 - Context

The Rangers (a pseudonym) are a professional Rugby Union club in the north of England. The club’s coaching structure and working practices can be found in Appendix 8 and 9. They have a loyal and growing following and but are considered underachievers in the league. They play in the top division but have had a past of relegation and promotion so their place in the league is far from guaranteed. No major honours in recent years have left the club with some big name players but little silverware. The Rangers have ambitions to play in the European cup every year, for this they need to finish at least sixth in the league. The club prefer to develop their own players through the academy system rather then buy them in from other clubs. This is evident in the high number of players that go through the academy system and end up playing for the first team (e.g. Cedric, Tom and Joseph). The coaches have all been involved in the club in some capacity more then four year. Financially the club is backed by a wealthy chairman but loses money every year. The ground is one of the best in the league with good transport links and facilities. The team train in a council owned facility that is run down with poor off field infrastructure such as Internet and offices, but functional for the players. The players generally socialised in groups and live with one another. The year I joined they qualified for the European Cup for the first time in five years and planned to finish in the top four of the league for the following seasons. The club has one ‘super star’ player from overseas, the rest are a collection of ex-academy players and could be described as journeymen. Over the period I was with the team, the number of players in the squad decreased about five per season with only a few new faces.

3.4 - Procedure

Data were collected over the course of three rugby seasons (27 months). Goffman (1989) argues that considerable time is required for a participant observation study otherwise one fails to achieve the level of ‘deep familiarity’ required. From a practical perspective, this duration enabled a rich data set and a large amount of contact time with coaches and players. The sources of data used and collection purpose are highlighted in Table 4. For example, I have all of the player’s official job descriptions (see Appendix 12). I used the job descriptions to formulate interview questions about the player’s roles within the club. I also kept every official document
sent to me, including work schedules, player review forms, internal communications, and I also asked for records from previous years to compare how the club had changed or grown prior to this research project. The major source of data collection from the participant observation was from recording group meetings and individual review sessions. A normal week had six to eight official meetings, five on field training sessions and six meals. This would happen every week from the beginning of July to the end of the following May. During these three years there was only one week that this did not happen and it was due to snow. I recorded meetings with a dictaphone and transcribed the conversations and interviews. In Year Two of the project, I also recorded the individual player reviews, as well as the coaches’ instructions during on field training sessions. In total, I attended over 600 meetings, performance reviews and training sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Documentations</td>
<td>To review the recorded structure with the rugby team as an organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival Records</td>
<td>To review the history of the club and any changes in performance-analysis objectives of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>To gain insight into interactions and learning outcomes over a period of time. Also to gain insight into the historical background of individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>My role as a researcher involved direct participation within the analysis department and therefore I recorded my involvement as an analyst.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Artefacts</td>
<td>The use of computers, cameras and documentation with relevance to performance analysis will also be recorded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the 27 months of data collection, unstructured and semi-structured interviews formed a fundamental part of the investigation. The purpose of the initial interviews was to establish a biographical background of the players and coaches (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). These were analysed against a criteria set out by Tannen (1993) (see page 34). Examples of initial questions were:

- Outline your rugby career to date?
- Describe the context in which you work?
- If you had to write your own job description, what would be on it?
- Describe your normal working week?
• Can you give me an example of a time that you’ve encountered a problem and how you resolved it?
• What is your most enjoyable part of your role?
• What do you dislike about your role?
• How do you know if you’re doing your job well?

The initial interview data were then analysed, against the fundamental research questions. When the data aligned with the research questions a theme was noted which highlighted more follow-on questions. This cyclical process lasted the full three years, and represented an on-going interaction between theoretical concepts, the context, and myself (see Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Interview questions](image)

In the first 3 months of the study, formal interviews were held with all coaching staff and players in order to obtain an understanding of individual backgrounds and motivations behind their choosing a professional rugby career. The interviews lasted between 10 and 40 minutes each. The more experienced players and coaches voiced their opinions in detail, and seemed to have a deeper understanding with which to back up their experiences. The interviews took place at the training facility of the rugby club after a day’s practice on the quietest practice day (Thursdays).

### 3.5 - Key Phases

The 3 years of the project can be broken down in to 3 key phases, based around the 3 separate rugby seasons. Although this formal research scheduling was not initially planned the phases started and ended in the natural cycle of the rugby
calendar and became an iterative process between the context, my academic understanding, and the data I recorded. The three-year research project was split into three defined phases of data collection and focus. The three phases represented three studies, which interleaved, and followed the same data collection and analysis procedure. The differences between phases became the relative use of the data collection methods (outlined in Table 3).

3.5.1 - Phase 1 (Months 1 to 11)

The first phase of data collection (Months 4 to 12) began 3 months into my placement at the rugby club. The initial settling-in period immediately prior to this helped me to adjust to life in professional rugby, and to my new role as a Performance Analyst (for job description see Appendix 17). Although I had experience in this field, to this point it had been limited to working with teams over short periods, and had never involved full immersion within a professional context. The first 3 months also involved learning the analysis systems of the club, and the process of tagging games (adding descriptions to pre-defined game events). I noted how difficult this was:

‘Aaron asked to fully code the game from the weekend; it took ages as I didn’t know who any of the players are or what they looked like. I had to keep checking the players’ pictures on the website to remember who they are. I mixed two of the players up completely.’ (Field Notes)

During this initial period, I was often sent home early because there was nothing to do, or the coaches did not trust me to do anything more than film training sessions. At the time, perhaps through a degree of naiveté, I thought nothing of this:

‘It’s Thursday and after an hour’s commute I am home by 14.30 again, all they (the coaches) want me to do is film training and put it (the footage) on their laptops. I know they don’t even watch it. Seems a bit pointless to me.’ (Field Notes)

Monday and Tuesdays were spent with all the players. The office and meeting room space was an old retrofitted sports pavilion, clearly not designed for hordes of rugby players and video equipment. The coaches each had a desk and were based at one large main office, along with two female administration staff. A small meeting room was next door to this. In the next room again was the video viewing room, where my desk was in the corner, with a blacked-out window on my left-hand side, and four other cramped viewing stations also in the room. It was often filled with myself sat at my desk, and up to nine others standing watching videos at the other
stations. Needless to say, the conditions could only be described as cramped. The main meeting room, a much larger space with 35 chairs, a long desk, projector and screen, was directly opposite.

All the internal walls were half plasterboard and the upper half clear perspex. This meant that, from my small desk, I could see into all the offices and, such were the thin walls, hear the meetings that occurred. The main meeting room was often loud and busy, meaning that I found it difficult to work where I was. The coaches seemed to get on with each other and were friendly in public but in isolation, appeared less so:

‘The coaches constantly refer to each other in a negative way. Aaron and Charles have aligned views on the roles and motivations of the other members of the coaches’ staff. They refer to Ben as the lazy Jamaican and do impressions of him in a Jamaican accent, and would overtly highlight when he is late for meetings and all work related deadlines.’ (Field Notes)

This extended to impression management and even to possibility of political games.

‘Aaron and Charles refer to William as ‘playing a game’, and ‘a politician’. By this, they mean that he is career wise and likes to display positive impressions of himself to others. (Field Notes)

My proximity to the coaches meant that I enjoyed open, unrestricted access to their day-to-day activities and behaviour. However, during Phase 1 of the data collection, I found the players more difficult to observe. Typically, the players only came into the office space and meeting rooms when requested by a coach, or for pre-arranged formal meetings. I could only talk with them during training sessions if they were injured and watching training from the sidelines or at breakfast or lunch. The dining hall served three meals per day, and was the social hub for the players who rested there between on-field sessions and weights, played computer games, or watched television. This informal environment became somewhere I could sit with or observe the players away from the coaches. However, neither players nor coaches included me in any extra-curricular activities until I was invited to the staff Christmas party during Month 3.

Following the New Year, and an enjoyable Christmas party, I was asked to attend some away trips. This enabled me to spend some time with the coaches and travelling on the bus provided the invaluable opportunity of talking to the players in the team hotel, during often-long periods of ‘dead’ time before matches. Both
constituted informal environments, in which the players and coaches would speak freely and not be distracted.

However, as Phase 1 of the data collection continued, I still felt rather on the periphery of things. Essentially, that I was viewed as another intern, to be recycled the following season. In Month 7, though, I was asked to go on an opposition-scouting trip to Ireland, and realised that success on this trip could lead the coaches to respect my role more, and hence accept me into their group.

‘Sat in a hotel in Ireland at the moment writing a report for Aaron, he said if this goes well then I can start doing other opposition stuff, that would make my job more interesting’. (Field Notes)

At this point, I probably viewed the whole project more as a career move than academic study, so naturally wished for more responsibility in the workings of the Performance Analysis department. Regardless, I continued to keep notes on anything of interest that occurred at the rugby club and on interactions between both sets of practitioners. However, between the end of the first season in Month 8, and the start of pre-season in Month 10, I embarked upon a period of reflection and had no contact with anyone at the rugby club. During this period, I looked back on the context and workings of the club, and began to analyse the data that I had been collecting.

In all, I had attended 40 large team review / preview meetings, 15 first team games, 10 second team games, 116 training sessions of various length, and five social events. I also had eaten 48 times with the players and because of my heavy involvement in second team games, developed a significant relationship with the coaches and players of this group.

3.5.2 - Phase 2 (Months 12 to 21)

The new rugby season started with a renewed sense of confidence in my role as a performance analyst. Having spent a year in the role, I now felt like part of the team, and no longer an outsider to the group. My confidence in the role had been rewarded with extra responsibility from the coaching staff. The Head of Analysis was due to be absent for two big European games and I was therefore asked to supply the analysis work for the coaches and perform match day duties.

‘Feeling nervous about next week, it’s the first time I’ll have worked alone with Charles and the other coaches. I am sure it will be fine and looking forward to the challenge.’ Field Notes
Happily, the week passed with no problems and I was now a fully integrated part of the coaching staff. The coaches held relaxed, unstructured meetings three hours prior to kick-off on a Saturday both in order to prepare and to discuss rugby and non-rugby related matters. I was involved at all 15 home games and five away games over the next phase of data collection. This time became a rich source of conversation as the coaches expressed themselves in an uninhibited way about their relationships with the players and other members of the club. I also had the chance to talk to the players while they prepared for games in the medical rooms.

Over this period, I conducted 40 player interviews – one for each player – each lasting between 10 and 30 minutes. The aim of this interview round was to identify a time in each player’s life when they had encountered a specific rugby problem and the methods they had used to overcome these. Once transcribed and analysed, I then followed up themes I had noted with the players in informal ways, such as while watching training or walking to the weights room. For example, a large number of players highlighted more experienced teammates as sources of information and technical expertise. During a training session, I noticed two players discussing a technique for winning the ball on the floor. I listened to the conversation, and followed it up with both players separately.

Richard: “Robert just asked me how to get your body in the right position from a tackle and compete for the ball from the other side. I got a bag and showed him. He’ll get it; you just have to go away and practice”

Robert: “I always see Richard winning loads of balls on the floor, but I can never get it right, I just said can you show me? Then I went and practiced on my own.”

During Phase 2, I attended another 45 large team meetings, 20 first team games, 7 home and 7 away second team games filmed 56 training sessions and 6 social events and worked closely with other sports science support staff, such as medical, strength and conditioning staff, on 3 player profile projects.

3.5.3 - Phase 3 (Months 21 to 30)

The final phase began halfway during pre-season of my third year. By this point, I was familiar with the players and the coaching staff as well as the processes and work flows of the rugby club. During pre-season, the club moved to a new
training ground. This delighted me, as I had not liked my office at all it was small, cold, with no windows and very much out of the way from the rest of the club. The new training ground had superb facilities, but the offices were still located in a rather rundown building. The players held meetings in an old public house complete with bar, dance floor and kitchen. My new office was on the other side of the building to everyone else, tucked away and quiet.

During the next phase of data collection, I investigated the interaction between practitioners. I sat at the edge of the large meeting room, and recorded the conversations, which occurred. During Phase 3, I attended over 40 team meetings, but could only record 16 sessions on a dictaphone. The coaches were still not fully comfortable with me recording what they were saying, but had no issues with my attending the meetings.

When I had recorded and transcribed the team meetings, I began the data analysis process (outlined in the following section). The main sources of data for this phase came from informal interviews and my field notes. I filmed over 60 training sessions during this phase, but no longer ate with the players. My interactions with them extended merely to meeting in the local coffee shop or quick chats before formal meetings and reviews.

I sensed myself becoming too close to the coaches over the first section of the third phase, so actively removed myself from extra activities and social functions. I would be socialising with the coaches at least twice a week either playing squash, or drinking in a local pub. I began to think some of these people were my friends and even confided in one of the players about my personal life regularly. Normally, I would have looked forward to Thursday afternoon social events but detaching from the fray provided a much clearer perspective on the interaction between the coaches.

For example, they often made negative remarks behind each other’s back but I actually came to interpret this as a sign of affection. My feelings towards the rugby club changed over this period. Over the previous 20 months, I had become a fan, meaning that it was difficult to contemplate life after the project had concluded. Perhaps this is a failing of the data collection as I was very close to the people under investigation. This clearly shows the depth of the research I had conducted but my relationships with the players and coaches changed over the three phases, from outsider, to part of the group, to outsider again. (Holt & Sparkes, 2001) The three phases of my involvement with the Rangers spanned three years and consisted of
daily contact. As my understanding of being a researcher grow, so did my relationship with the people under investigation.

3.6 - Data Analysis

As the description of the three phases has illustrated I collected a huge amount of data, from small informal one-to-one interactions, attending hundreds of team meetings, and being apart of the changing culture of an extended period of time. Therefore, data analysis was an on-going process through each phase of the research project, engaged in throughout the data collection stage. As data were collected and the field notes written, themes and categories were highlighted these then guided the observations, and inter-connections between themes and categories were considered (Strauss, 1987). Through a fieldwork journal, opportunities to discuss those themes that appeared relevant to the experiential learning process in the rugby club were reflected upon.

Analysis of unstructured qualitative data is a contentious area in research (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). Gratton and Jones (2004) contend that there is no single correct way of analysing qualitative data, but guide researchers by providing a detailed description of procedures and data manipulation. Data for the current study have been analysed in three stages: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing (Silverman, 2005; Gratton & Jones, 2004). Data reduction allowed a simplification and a focusing of raw data, which uncovered themes and was a significant part of this process. Use of a contact summary enabled codes or tags to be given to individual pieces of text from the field notes (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

Codes and tags in the raw data were identified when data aligned with the research questions For example, after consistently watching one of the players being told off for being too soft and not being aggressive enough during a training session. I started to focus my attention on the cultural aspects of learning rather then the reflective process.

Anthony: Chris, you have to get stuck in, if you see the likes of skins on the wrong side fucking shoe him, its all bet are off! You have to be smashing people, or I will get someone else to do it!
This caused in the reading of the data and subsequent theorising, but helped me develop more sophisticated themes of the way players and coaches learned how to be professionals.

Once the initial tags had been created using the contact summary, those with similar meanings were gathered together; and a label (category), capturing the substance of the topic, created in order to identify the cluster (Gratton and Jones, 2004). These clusters are called categories an important factor limiting the number of existing categories is that of theoretical saturation. This occurred when existing categories were completely sufficient for the categorisation of new data (Gratton and Jones, 2004). Data were then displayed in an organised fashion, based on the categories that became apparent during data reduction (Yin, 2008). For example, I would organise my recordings of team meetings in to sections and categorise the sections of the meetings into units. This gave me a clear over view of a typical team meeting that is used for the vignette in the third study (see p. 151). Once the data were organised, they were then reviewed, and conclusions drawn through theoretical evidence, in order to support the key concepts (Yin, 2008). For example, during the first study, I used the existing role frame concepts (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004) to drive the initial analysis. Tannen (1993)’s model of role frame components was used as a provisional list of codes to guide the analysis process during which, the categories changed. Physical and skill development were originally separate but following examination of how these impacted upon the athletes’ behaviour, a decision was made to group them together as corporeal demands, as both encompassed the same fundamental beliefs in each of the athletes (see Chapter 4, p92)

My notions of adult learning also developed over the course of the project, re-defining my understanding. As I read more about adult learning developing from basic reflective models like Kolb (1984) to more intricate notions of social theory like Bourdieu (1984), I had to re-address what I thought adult learning was, and the motivations behind the different individuals. The most fundamental change being a shift from learning an individual process about growth and the development of sporting expertise, to the idea that adult learning was framed by a field of struggle and about survival and learning the ‘ways of doing’ and ‘being a professional’ (Cushion & Jones, 2012, 2006).

After sifting through the data, it became apparent that Bourdieu’s notion of field and capital were useful concepts in understanding experiential learning as social
reproduction. Delving deeper into the data suggested that such capital could be used in different ways both in exchange for social position, and for financial reward. At this point, I referred back to the notions of capital from both a theoretical (Bourdieu, 1984) and an applied (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Groom, et al., 2011) perspective. This shows a clear pathway in which the analysis of the raw data was analysed against the research questions and the theoretical models, which intern guided further data collection (see Figure 1 p. 68).

As this study draws on multiple theoretical concepts and their application to the professional sports context data analysis was both inductive and deductive, which Denzin (1978) conceptualises as an abductive. An abductive approach was therefore undertaken, in which both data analysis and data collection occurred simultaneously (Nelson & Cushion, 2006). This process consisted of organising large data sets into themes and categories. For example, the theme of reflective conversation in study one was based on analytical memos I kept over a number of years. I had a single document with hundreds of quotes, observation comments. I would group them together with headings like “importance of winning”, “physical punishment” and “interactions with the media”. As I made preliminary and tentative connections from these groups of memos to various theoretical concepts, I could start to explain the events unfolding around me. This process, in turn, informed the progressive focusing of the fieldwork.

At the end of second season, the whole data set was subjected to further analysis. Deductive analysis was used to identify, code and organise the central themes. For example, this allowed the consideration of Foucault and Bourdieu within the analysis. Both inductive and deductive analysis processes were represented as three main phases: preparation, organising and reporting (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). The preparation phase was similar in both approaches. Concepts were derived from the data in inductive content analysis. Deductive content analysis was used when the structure of analysis was operationalised on the basis of previous knowledge. For example, during study 1 the data analysis was based on the previous findings of Gilbert and Trudel (2004), and therefore deductive analysis was used to compare against my findings. Elo and Kyngas (2008) argue that inductive content analysis is used in cases where there are no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon or when it is fragmented; whereas a deductive approach is useful if the general aim is to
test a previous theory in a different situation, or compare categories at different time periods.

For instance, as I interviewed the players and coaches about the role frames they externalised, it became apparent that the historical social structures needed further investigation and subsequently organised the data into themes. This realisation, and continual back and forth between theory, practice and subject, help grow the study organically and over time.

For example, during phase 3 (p. 74), I had already attended hundreds of team meetings and made notes of the way the coaches and athletes interacted, but I had no framework to organise the themes around. It was clear the coaches used various tactics to control and monitor the players, so I started reading around this subject, particularly, Foster (2003), Johns and Johns (2000), Gore (1998), Chapman (1997) Rail and Harvey (1995). This gave me a framework to organise my data into themes, specifically, surveillance, normalisation, exclusion, classification, distribution, totalisation and regulation.

3.6.1 – Vignettes

Vignettes have been used extensively throughout chapters 5 and 6. The vignettes serve the dual purpose of demonstrating the insights of the study and at the same time emphasizing the use and usefulness of interviews in the ethnographic approach of the study (Mile and Huberman, 1994). Erickson (1986) argued that vignettes are vivid accounts of practice, synthesized by the outside observer and the validity of a vignette should be determined by the degree to which it is rich in description of concrete details and allows the reader to be co-analyst of the study. For this reason I make no apologies for the length or detail in the vignettes that appear in chapters 5 and 6. I wanted to demonstrate to the reader the detail, direct of conversation and narrative inherent in the data, as this is a key part of the research. By providing a lengthy and sometimes uncut version, the vignettes seek to illustrate the rich and subtle interactions between agents.

By interviewing participants, recording meetings and tracing patterns of interactions through considerable amounts of material, it became possible to
gain an understanding of the ideas and meanings that guided players and coaches (Mile and Huberman, 1994). Synthesizing the material into vignettes, it became possible to represent and illustrate on-going paradoxes through the negotiation patterns of the participants. The vignettes could not have been written based on observations alone. The vignettes were constructed after the data analysis and interpretation of the patterns in the data material as a whole, with the intention of illustrating central negotiating patterns that constitute the interactions of the case. Erickson (1986) argues that in the fieldwork research report the vignette has functions that are rhetorical, analytic, and evidentiary. The vignette persuades the reader that things were in the setting as the author claims they were, because the sense of immediate presence captures the reader's attention (Erickson, 1986).

3.7 - Quality of Research

3.7.1 - Generalisation of Case Studies

Stake (1995; 2005) argues that case study represents a poor basis for generalisation, because merely a single or few case(s) will be studied at length: the real business of case study is one of particularisation, not generalisation (Stake, 1995). However, Flyvberg (2006) attempted to challenge preconceived notions about case study as a scientific endeavour. He argued that formal generalisation, whether on the basis of large samples or single cases, is considerably overrated as the main source of scientific progress.

‘Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.’ (Flyvberg, 2006: 214)

Furthermore, Ruddin (2006) advocated naturalistic generalisation as a realignment of the responsibility to generalise away from the researcher, towards the reader. As the single researcher I could provide only a thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility (Ruddin, 2006). Stake (1995) also
provides a guide for researchers, assisting in the reader’s ability to use case study as a basis for naturalistic generalisation.

From this, we can see that case studies seek to uncover deep contextual description relevant to the case(s) in question. The generalisation of this is delegated to the reader’s abilities to apply it to other research contexts. This is particularly important to this outcomes and findings of the case study in this case. The goal of this study was clearly not to predict or generalise from the findings of this study, but to use this case study as a base to understand the context and particularities of the Rangers Rugby Club. Finally, naturalistic generalisation demonstrates that the reader can use this case study to indirectly experience the subtleties and culture of Ranger RFC. Which, intern, can inform further interpretation of similar or dimetric contexts.

3.7.2 - Representation

The length and depth of this study raises issues of validity and representation, are much debated in qualitative research. Cho and Trend (2006) postulate a dualistic assertion, suggesting that validity can be either transactional or transformational. Because of the depth of involvement I had with the club over a long and sustained period of time, I have taken a transformational view of validity. Transformational validity (Cho & Trent, 2006) challenges the very notion of validity, even a constructed one. This challenge to – or in extreme cases, rejection of – validity assesses the work as valid only if it achieves an eventual ideal. The question of validity in itself is convergent with the way in which I have reflected, both explicitly and implicitly, upon the multiple dimensions in which the inquiry was conducted (Cho & Trent, 2006). Stake (1995) argues that validation is a fundamental part of the researcher’s responsibility. Researchers have an ethical obligation to minimise misrepresentation and misunderstanding. This follows the positivist notions of triangulation, outlined by Denzin (1984). This triangulation protocol is based on the assertion that data source triangulation is an effort to see if what we are observing and reporting carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances. However, Stake (1995) summarises that the stronger one’s belief in constructed reality, the more difficult it is to believe that any complex observation or interpretation can be triangulated. Given that my own belief centres upon the construction of reality, this leads to an interesting conundrum. Thomas (2010) argues
that the validation of a case study is based on the connections and insights it offers between an individual’s experience and that of another. Yet Koro-Ljungberg (2010) argues that validity cannot be completed or concluded at all:

‘It is precisely the impossible, impracticability, or nonpassage that characterizes validity and validation in qualitative research processes. The measuring and the measure itself changes once the researcher allows interactions with data and participants to guide interpretations processes and when the researchers acknowledges how her or his subjectivity is likely to influence interpretations and conclusions.’ (Koro-Ljungberg, 2010: 609)

Brustad (2008) considers that it is not possible to focus only on validity concerns as a methodological issue, while ignoring epistemological considerations. Notions of what validity means in this case centre around the researcher’s notions of knowledge and being. Epistemological validation involves building assertions warranted by someone’s individual, collective, and spiritual experiences within social worlds, as well as the ways in which they engage in dialogue about their assertions with their environments (Koro-Ljunberg, 2010). For this study is it important to understand that validity cannot be established through reference to some sort of universal criteria or process, but can only be supported by a transparent description of the researcher’s involvement in the process (Brustad, 2008). In this case these transparent descriptions have been outlined throughout the research methodology section particularly during the procedure and data analysis sections (p74).

3.7.3 - Reflexivity

The research journey has shaped my notions of the world, knowledge and existence. Twenty-seven months of data gathering, analysis and interpretation has entailed continual interaction with theoretical concepts, and the localised context of professional Rugby Union. At points I found it difficult to separate my joint role of researcher and performance analyst an ongoing challenge given such a long period of intense contact with both players and coaches. The close season (May to July) provided respite, when I could re-evaluate my understanding and this was when the majority of conceptual developments occurred. Coupled with monthly meetings with an external supervisor, this left me able to maintain a degree of distance in my
research, as well as the deep level of familiarity necessary to comply with ethnographic methodology (Holt & Sparkes, 2001). However, I don’t think I could separate myself from the context. I was with the players and coaches of Rangers RFC almost everyday, and if I was not at work with them, I was living the life of someone who was. The experience of data collection was intensely personal, I was very proud of being part of the organisation as it bestowed significant symbolic capital, particularly in the area I was living.

Over the data collection period my beliefs about the sport and what is involved in professional rugby changed. My prior experience in Rugby Union stretched to my having been an avid player and a coach of both university and youth sides. As a coach I engaged with the sport at a purely amateur level for fun and enjoyment. Like Light & Kirk (2001), I found the landscape of professional rugby to be very different, characterised by extensive uncertainty and a hostile, dominant form of masculinity (Light & Kirk, 2001).

My preconceived notions of professional Rugby Union entailed expert performers dedicating themselves to athletic development and mastery, yet as a result of the experience of the research process, these notions have certainly changed. Over time, particularly from 18 to 24 months onwards, I became comfortable within the role I had been allocated, and could dedicate more time to understanding the players’ involvement within the coaching context. This contrasted greatly with the first 9 months when I was seen as ‘another intern’ working at the club and not invited to social events and was a period characterised by my being asked to perform menial tasks, such as filming training and youth games in remote locations.

The depth of involvement that I subsequently enjoyed led me to form relationships comparable to those of counsellor/client with some of the players. For example, I helped one player develop a business idea which he had, and to explore its legal implications (e.g. setting up a share agreement). Younger players, meanwhile, took advantage of my relationship with them to vent their rugby-related frustrations. That I had no decision-making or hierarchical power over the athletes worked very much to my advantage in this regard, players trusted me, and my credibility increased dramatically between Year 1 and Year 2. During the latter, I was very aware of an increase in acceptance of me by the playing and coaching groups, which was only further consolidated during the final stages of the project. Yet with all that said, the context of practice proved a difficult place to work in:
I have decided the worst part of my working week is the 30 minutes before a team meeting. This is the only time a lot of the players come and watch the videos of the games. They fill up the video room and constantly talk over each other. They give each other ‘banter’ and tell jokes at other players’ expense. It reminds me of lining up before going in to a school classroom with no teachers around. It is a very hostile place; gags and traps are constantly to be avoided. When opening the door, one would have to always make sure there was not an object placed above, so that when you opened it, it would fall on your head. These objects range from bags of ice to mounds of used medical tape. Often, light switches would have blue tack shaped into a penis attached to them - so that when you went to turn off the light you would touch them and be cited as ‘gay’ or a ‘cock lover’. All of this would happen 30 minutes prior to the team and unit meetings. (Field Notes)

My relationship with the coaching staff peaked during Year 2, before starting to decline. During the final year with the team, I realised I had to remove myself from this increasingly personal relationship in order to maintain the role of a researcher. I achieved this by not attending social functions, and no longer engaging in sport after work with the coaching department. I also began to reject requests to do more than my role required. For example, I was asked to drive with the kit man to a game in continental Europe. I declined, and was reprimanded for my lack of commitment to the club by one of the coaching staff resulting in threats to have some of my privileges removed. This also led to a breakdown in my relationship with the other analyst (Aaron).

Regardless of my personal relationships with the coaching staff, I enjoyed my time with the club, but I was pleased when it was over. My journey through the three years of research changed my perspective on Rugby, professional sports, and also my personal aspirations. I found working at the club frustrating, hegemonic, exciting, pressured, dictatorial and fun. I look back with fond memories, about travelling with the team and working with some of the young players, watching get international caps, but I would not go back or want to go through the process again.
Chapter 4 - Role Frames in Professional Rugby Union

From an experiential learning perspective, although players are involved in the same meetings and party to the same information, their interpretation of what is ‘seen’ and experienced is filtered by the boundary role frame components unique to their situation, resulting in very different versions of understanding. The first two sections of this chapter illustrate the role frame components of professional athletes and coaches. There are two types of such components: (1) boundary components: fixed and imposed on the individual by the context and culture of the organisation; and (2) internal components: individually constructed and influenced by historical perspective, beliefs and experience, and ranging in intensity, and meaning (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). Although the findings in this chapter are presented as a simple list of components, this format is purposefully chosen to illustrate the differences between players and coaches, between players and players, and coaches and coaches.

The penultimate section provides an example of two cases, which illustrate the complex involvement between athlete learning and role frame components. Figure 2 and Table 5, below, denotes the role frame components of Rugby Union athletes and coaches (see Appendix 1 for details of these components). Finally, the chapter summarises what is discussed and relates it back to learning-based theory, described in the literature review (see page 18 to 30), in order to provide discussion points which are further expounded upon in subsequent chapters.

Throughout, the chapter draws upon interviews with players and coaches, and highlights the very different approaches taken by experienced professionals and academy players. The former tend towards cynicism at times (p123), and appear considerably more set in their ways when it comes to both performance and self-analysis, to the point whereby such cynicism and self-preservation can have a significant, negative impact on the learning potential of team and squad mates (p142). The latter, especially the less experienced, can find the process of ‘banter’ disheartening, and designed to reinforce social and professional hierarchies within the squad.

Conversely, the evidence demonstrated that younger players seemed considerably more open to self-evaluation, performance analysis technologies and learning from peers. Their senior contemporaries often appeared more concerned with
not doing anything, which could enable a squad mate to take their place in the team, thereby displaying the paradox of individual competition within a team sport. How aware coaches were of this disparity was not entirely clear, but if teams are to maximise potential for success, and coaches throughout the sport are to maximise the results of their own team, it is hoped that the findings discussed in this chapter may provide important and telling lessons.

![Diagram of Role Frame components, both coaches and players]

**Figure 2. Representation of Role Frame components, both coaches and players**

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**Table 5 - Key to Role Frame Components**

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<td>Control and Surveillance</td>
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<td>Reflective Capacity</td>
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<td>Corporeal Demands</td>
<td>CD</td>
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<td>Corporeal Development</td>
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<td>Seeking Feedback</td>
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4.1.1 - Section 1: Boundary Role Frame Components – Athletes

Boundary role frame components are objective conditions of the environment that can influence an individual’s behaviour (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). They are fixed and directly influence the structure of the internal role frame components. The most dominating boundary component for both the coaches and players was the Organisational Ideology. According to Fernández-Balboa and Muros, (2006) an ideology is a set of generalized and common beliefs that make people act as if the circumstances and contexts of their lives were natural and unchangeable (Cushion & Jones, 2012).

Organisational Ideology. The Rangers Rugby Club had a well-documented ‘style of rugby’ which they wished to execute on the pitch (see Appendix 2). This formed a system of ideas that can be referred to as an ideology. The Rangers Ideology helped underpin a curriculum in which a structure was enforced training sessions were planned and performance measured (see Appendix 8 to 16). At intervals during the season, videos clips were produced to provide a guide for practice, showing clips of the players performing the skills correctly in each of the curriculum criteria. Below, Robert provides an example of how this affected the way he played and how the players seemed to ‘buy in’ to the curriculum.

Robert: It is good because, you know, the rugby style is a way the coaches want you to play. Like at free kicks they want you to run the ball every time so we don’t have to, like decide which option to take, you know, if you run it and it goes wrong then it is not your fault, and people will go with you. It also tells you what to do when you get tackled and which lines to run in different situations, so when you review the game with a coach they are going to say things like, “you should have blitzed in this situation because that is what the rugby style says”.

From the outset, this organisational ideology was imposed on the players. Although not all players cited this document during the interviews and discussions, it served as a guide for practice in the various, complex interactions which Rugby Union promoted. This could be conceived as a straitjacket on an athlete’s creative abilities, but the players appeared to treat it as a ‘decision tree’, through which actions in the game were judged. For example, this document gave the younger players a
framework in which they could organise and develop performance aspects. Moreover, when reflecting on their experiences, the decision tree helped to focus attention and created a way of ‘seeing’ athlete performance. For example, the ‘In Defence,’ section provides a timeline of desirable behaviours:

**Rugby Style:**

1. INTO POSITION QUICKLY
2. NOMINATE
3. COMMUNICATION – VOLUME!!
4. LINE SPEED
5. WIN COLLISIONS
6. FLOOD THE TACKLE AREA/RUCK
7. PRESSURE ON 9
8. DISCIPLINE

This was applicable to everyone at the club, and was utilised to produce an ideology, which helped align how players and coaches viewed the way the team wanted to play rugby. The deployment of a style of play document can be seen as similar to Schön’s use of convergence of meaning in experiential learning (Schön, 1983), in which learning occurs when teachers and students perceive a problematic incident in the same light and together experiment on solutions, which, in this case, were based on the document. However, different players attached meanings to the features of the document. Young players were instructed by the style of play; while more experienced players had their own views:

*Michael:* At my last club we had a similar thing, but I just like to play what I see. I do think about the rugby style stuff in the game, but if you stick to it too much you forget what the coaches want you to do in that game. Like, I spoke to Charles (the coach) before the last game and he wanted me to run a different line off the line-outs, so I had to agree with Philip (international player) and the others how we were going to change things and we tried to adjust our play.

This evidence suggested that while Robert was told ‘what to do when you get tackled’ and used this as a guide for practice, Michael constructed his experience on the field to suit the situation around him. This was done through a consultation process with peers, and guidance from the coach at certain points. This clearly highlights the impact of different levels of experience. Michael displayed a performance-related view of rugby, with adjustments according to coaches’ specifications, whereas Robert displayed characteristics of learning, playing rugby by following a structured pattern sequentially. In either case the ideology served as a guide for behaviour within specific expectations. In this way the ideology was a
practical and clear demonstration of production, reproduction and incorporation of social inequalities (Cushion & Jones, 2012).

**Cultural Hierarchy.** The individuals placed in the cultural hierarchy was defined by the fluctuating influence of their symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977), which athletes and coaches perceive, influenced and fixed the boundaries of an individual’s role frame. As with stereotypes, a player’s rugby capability was self-fulfilling and pertinent to the reproduction of social inequalities (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1986). For example, those defined as ‘first team’ players were called upon to give their opinions in team meetings. Usually such titles were given to players who had represented their country, but this was not consistent and was applied with little regard to skill, attitude or leadership qualities, although it did depend on the social role the individual had within the team. There was a collective of players who were expected to engage in team meetings with the coaching staff; while the participation of the remaining fifty or more in this process was much more limited. This was because they were considered ‘loan players’ or ‘squad players’, meaning that their input was not utilised, but their attendance was mandatory. Therefore the way in which different socially defined groups interacted with performance information and the social environment depended on other people’s perception of their ability. A conversation with Daniel highlights this point:

Daniel (first team player): Man, I hate those meetings. We never had to do that in the army. We just went out and played. I don’t think I have ever said anything in those meetings. It’s always Richard, Adam, and Phillip and those guys just saying the same kind of things, you know, be physical and play our style you know, well, then Charles (the coach) just tells us what he thinks. I can’t remember how many times I have nearly fallen asleep; it gets so hot in there. I don’t think anyone would take any notice if I did say anything, this is my first season, so, haha, you know, it’s not up to me (emphasis added).

The ‘field’ of professional rugby is a competitive network of historic relations between the players, who occupy positions related to the capital they embody (Jenkins, 2002). The immediate goal for the players was to get in to the first team and then maintain their place for as long as they could. The senior players discussed being ‘streetwise’; and perhaps not putting everything into training, in order to be fit and
ready for the match at the weekend. During a discussion with Joseph about the skills needed to play in his position, he suggested that these change while passing though the academy system. Joseph displayed a sense of learning not only to develop sport-specific skills, but also when learning to play the training system:

*Joseph: I mean, I’ve obviously come through the Academy and when you come in you’re kind of really eager and almost over keen to, to do stuff. But as you progress and grow, grow into playing professional rugby it’s almost as if you need to, each session you need to know how to approach that session. Doesn’t mean you don’t give it your all but you know you’re playing at the weekend. If you’re playing at the weekend then you literally, just like survival. You want to make sure when you walk out on a Saturday you’re ready to go.*

This highlights a particular aspect of Joseph’s disposition, or in Bourdieu terms ‘habitus’, that has developed to cope with the demands of the field. Joseph’s emphasis on the term ‘survival’ displays an approach to training akin to endurance, rather than maximising his learning experience and maintaining the impression of performance without sustaining injury. Joseph appears to be merely living session-to-session: as long as he takes part and does not get injured, he is ‘ready to go’. Interestingly as an academy player he felt it necessary to try and impress in every training session. This is because the academy players do not posses enough capital to compete in the ‘field’. The academy players had to impress in each session just to stay competitive. Whereas, Joseph (ex academy first team player) and Daniel (first team player) have learnt to play the training system. They know what is expected of them and how to survive as professional rugby players and maintain a position in the cultural hierarchy. In this they displayed a ‘feel for the game’, and are complicit in reproducing the doxa (Hunter, 2010). This is what Bourdieu termed ‘sens pratique’ (Bourdieu, 1984). Everyday practice was framed by the boundary components, and applied meaning to pertinent aspects of participation. Therefore, boundary components defined the meaningful performance aspects, and subsequently define what they reflected upon too. These two boundary components framed the window in which the athletes viewed the world, organising and highlighting salient information and reflective opportunities.
4.1.2 - Boundary Role Frame Components - Coaches

**Organisational Ideology.** The coaches at the rugby club constructed the ideological playing structure from which the direction of the playing department was guided (see Appendix 2). This consisted of a set of ideas on how to play the game and approach competition. This document was frequently cited when reviewing game performance, and formed a backdrop for measuring the players. Alan provides a dialogue about this document:

*Alan (Academy Coach):* Yeah. I think, I, you know, I, one of the reasons I was very happy to come here was the type of rugby that we try and play. And it’s about tempo. And they don’t, you know, they don’t say how to produce the tempo, they just say to the lads, you know, we want a quick game, we want to, you know, we want to get the ball in play. We want to keep them on the back foot etc. And I think that’s great because then that allows the, the players to, to do what they want on the pitch within that framework.

The document framed the information relevant to the coaching staff, yet remained somewhat of an ambiguous list of adjectives and abstract statements:

“TEMPO, HARD EDGE DEFENCE, PLAY WHAT YOU SEE, SUPERIOR FITNESS, TECHNICAL SUPREMACY – GAME AWARENESS, MAKE A STATEMENT, ENJOYMENT – ARROGANT ON THE PITCH – HUMBLE OFF IT, BELIEF, SWAGGER, TEMPO” Ranger Style (Appendix 2)

The abstract nature of the document created ambiguity and left the statements open to interpretation. Its purpose was to establish the ideological stance of the club, in a manner whereby all players and coaches assigned the same value to, and interpreted various aspects of, the sport ‘objectively’. However, as already seen the individual players’ interpretation of ‘play what you see’ or ‘enjoyment’ inevitably differed, depending upon the historical values and cultural significance placed on these aspects. Yet despite this, the document sought to bind the culture of the club through listing desirable culturally driven qualities.

The organisational ideology was encapsulated in the Rangers Style document (see Appendix 2), this document was meant to be objective, and hold the group’s values. However, in practice the coaches used the organisational ideology as a controlling mechanism, for rating the players performance and managing behaviour. In a similar vein to Chapman (1997), in which rowers regulated their behaviour based
on cultural norms and measurement practices, the organisational ideology provided a framework to regulate and manage the players own behaviour. Therefore the organisational ideology set out by the club can be seen as a ‘technology of self’ (Rail and Harvey, 1995), in which power was exerted over the players, emanated from everywhere, but no where in particular.

**Role Schema.** Job descriptions outlined expectations of the coach’s role (see Appendix 10). The operational manual (see Appendix 8), which included the roles and relevant expertise necessary to the application of their role, was explicitly delineated at the start of the season, but disappeared and was not being referred to again after the first couple of weeks of the campaign. Aaron provides a good example of the rhetorical nature of this document:

*Aaron (Performance Analyst): I don’t even look at that thing. It is just Basil (Management Consultant) trying to justify his job. For example, my role and responsibilities are the same as my assistant’s, all he did was copy and paste mine and put them on his. It is a joke, my assistant has to report in to himself and me because that’s what it says in the manual. I can see what they are trying to do but it just doesn’t work. Like, I have been printing and laminating documents for the players most of the week. I am meant to be senior staff. Where does it say in my contract, ‘chief laminator’?*

Through the job description coaches were organised into position-specific areas, which limited the way in which they participated in the coaching process. During the weekly training schedule, small, specific groups of players were formed, for example the injured group. Alan took the injured group most of the time and was thereby limited in the activities he could perform with them. This clearly show the value the coaches place on Alan’s ability, and therefore capital. Other coaches questioned the methods he applied, as they were not ‘traditional’, yet Alan believed that his approach was helping the players:

*Alan: Repetition is certainly, certainly a way ahead. And even, you know, even little games where, you know, I take the sickies and, and we play a lot of ball in hand games just, just, and people might think they’re just silly games. But, but you see people becoming more confident on the ball.*

The boundary components framed and filtered performance-based information relevant to either coach or athlete. This difference was to be expected when
considering the decidedly different biographies and outlooks used to interpret the world in which they functioned. Coaches and athletes shared a boundary component, organisational ideology, but it shapes practice in different ways. For example, coaches used it as a method of assessment and a regulator of workplace practice. However, athletes used the coaching ideology as a framework with which to adjust, and construct, desirable bodily activities. Again clearly, this regulatory framework provides an example of a “technology of self” (Foucault, 1988). Therefore the player became objectified by the ‘objective’ ideology. As the players regulated their own behaviour and conformed to the ideology, the coaches used them as assets to be selected for the first team. Subsequently, the players’ various forms of capital shape the way they saw the performance and learning, environment.

**4.2.1 Section 2: Internal Role Frame Components - Athletes**

*Enjoyment.* All players cited enjoyment as a key reason for their involvement in rugby and the overriding motivation for why they began playing. Paul was a good example of this. He demonstrated a clear socialisation into the sport of rugby and frequently cited ‘enjoyment’ throughout his interview. He appeared to have chosen rugby over other sports simply because others told him he was better at rugby.

*Researcher: So why do you play rugby?*

*Paul: Er, I play rugby because I enjoy, enjoy the thrill of playing. I like the exercise and the sport. I’ve watched it, played it from a young age. Started at the age of 6, down at the local club and so, I’ve sort of played it ever since, I don’t, I don’t really know any different. Played some other sports like football and cricket, and do a bit of athletics and things, but rugby was always the one that, mainly I was better at, and enjoyed the most really, so I guess that’s why I play because I enjoy it.*

As athletes moved though the training programme and developed more experience as professionals, enjoyment seemed to remain a major factor in their rugby career. However, ‘enjoyment’ took on new meaning as athletes gained more experience in the sport. During a conversation with Joseph, he discussed his change in motivation: viewing it a career path instead of something he did purely for fun:
Joseph: I just enjoy it. It’s cos it’s a team sport and you can kind of express yourself. And I was quite a big lad so I was like physical and stuff like that. So yeah, that was my main attraction to it. But obviously how it’s, there’s different motivations, like international aspirations and also it’s a good way of earning a living for a short career. You know, you don’t have long and I want to, I want to earn as much as I can while I am still playing.

Joseph gave specific evidence of the way athletes reframed their views as they move through the rugby club. Joseph’s horizons moved as he became more comfortable with his role in the organisation. A clear shift in his expectations, from expressing himself to, having a career in the sport, demonstrated the way one element of this role frame could reshape the reflective, and therefore learning, experience, i.e. a fundamental means to an end.

**Engagement.** Different levels of engagement with the programme shaped athlete experiences. The training schedule changed from week to week, according to the timing of fixtures and occurrence of ‘A league’ (second team) games. Depending on their current physical condition and the ability group they were part of, the weekly schedule was adjusted for individual athletes. For example, if a player was injured, they did not train and were put in the rehabilitation group. Loan players did not attend all team meetings and training sessions, and Academy players trained with the under-17 group for part of the week. This semi-individualised scheduling modified how the players interacted with the learning environment, giving them unique perspectives on the ambiguous world they collectively constructed. A discussion with Donald highlighted this point:

Donald: I am injured at the moment and get very bored with just doing rehab. I was speaking to Ben (backs coaches) yesterday; he asked me to do some opposition analysis, you know, watch their footage and the feedback to the coaches. I am only doing it because you can’t really say no. I am looking at the starter plays, I will probably just describe what they do in the games and the key players.

These data show the coaches used Donald’s injury as an opportunity to review the next opposition’s footage, something that would not happen unless he was injured. This was a recurring theme, and illustrated how changes in the weekly schedule
opened or closed prospects for reflective engagement. However, the perspective of the athletes seemed to be one of docility (Foucault, 1977; 1988) and delivering what the coaches wanted to hear, rather than situated reflective growth and learning. During a discussion with David, the conversation moved to how the weeks differed and how these affected him. He suggested that the level of intensity around the club changed, impacting directly upon the behaviour of players and coaches:

David (Academy Player): It depends on A League really and whether you’ve got a match on the Saturday. So I mean if it’s not A League then you’re obviously training Monday and the week gets a little bit harder and everything gets a bit more intense. I think it also depends on whether the first team have a match on the Saturday or the Sunday or whether they lost at the weekend. Maybe Charles can get a bit angry, chuck in a few bad sessions for us.... It really depends on what I am asked to do. With Robert (Academy Player) and Paul (Academy Player), Charles (Head Coach) sometimes wants them to be with the first-team, other times they just train with us and the under-17s.

Clearly, the social distribution and organisation of the individual players opened and closed opportunities for learning. However, the distribution of the players was controlled completely by the weekly schedule, this again was an example of regulating technology (Markula and Pringle, 2006) that is meant to be objective, but it was really controlled by the coaches. This manipulation of space, resource, and time is what Markula and Pringle (2006) and Denison (2010) argued generated docile and productive bodies.

**Corporeal Demands.** This component relates to the physical development of the athletes. A large number of hours each week were devoted to this critical area. Athletes spent as much time in the gym as they did on the playing field. Michael’s (squad player) dialogue outlined what is expected of the players:

Michael: In terms of training, you’ve got to do all. Do a lot of weight training. You’ve got to go through a full pre-season of weights, fitness, getting you ready for game times. It is hard work and sometimes you just want to play, but it is a part of the game now. And then you’ve got a full season of weight training, four to six sessions a week, which runs basically from the end of August right through ’til midway through May and just a programme of either
first fifteen games for the club or A league games. I am not a natural lifter but I know why we do it.

In a similar vein to Foster (2003) the athletes were not always happy about the strict controls placed over their lives. However, most also stated that a great deal of their success resulted from the very same controls which they often complained about (Foster, 2003). As well as the gym work, athletes were coached together in team play and in smaller groups of similar field positions. The athletes frequently cited either the development of their current skills to compete for a first team place; or maintaining skill levels in order to keep their place within the team. This involved collaboration with other players:

*Michael (Senior Player):* I mean a skill session is a good example. Sort of extra. After the end of training you’ve got specific time slots where you can bounce ideas off other players who, I’d go to people, the specific people, like thinking, like Joseph is one here I went to, running lines off centres for my position in the back row. Or also Kenneth (Academy Player) and the rest of the back row, we, we sometimes do stuff and look at ways to... clean ways to get back on your feet after tackles and things that are specific to our position.

Michael’s collaboration with other members of the team could be viewed in light of a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), whereby athletes discuss their experience, collectively construct performance and subsequently, create opportunities for reflective engagement. The athlete’s part in the dialogue of construction, and the relationship between practitioners’ participation in practice, shaped each other’s experience of meaning. In so doing, Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that they can recognise something of themselves in each other; and in this experience of mutuality, participation provides a key source of identity.

**Seeking Feedback.** Kenneth, an Academy player, provided a clear example of how he responded to positive feedback from the coaches. During interview, the conversation moved to discussing how he knew if he was doing well in his role. The response indicated that positive reinforcement elicited a change in Kenneth’s behaviour:

*Kenneth: Well, such as like training sessions, like you can often tell. Such as like, we did breakdown yesterday, you know, contesting the tackle from the opposition side, as it were, like making the tackle and contesting from their
side so that you, you know, make a nuisance of yourself, um, you often know in training, just the coaches will like give you feedback, they’ll say like – oh good, yeah, well done, good body position, like they, they’ll sort of, you know, give you positive feedback at the same time.

Researcher: Do you find that useful?

Kenneth: Definitely, I think like if a coach tells you that you’re, you’re doing the right thing then, you know, you’re going to keep doing them, aren’t you to ... develop it in that way. But, if, if the coach says nothing then, you know, you can obviously ask them, but if you get told, to, yeah, not the way to do it, no, get your leg round, or whatever, that’s when you know that, maybe I need to do more practice on it. And when you see someone else do it, you know, right and they give them positive feedback you know how to do it, and you can see how it’s done.

However, not everyone in the club shared this perspective. Brian, who had been playing professional rugby for six years, suggested he did not like to review his games with the coaches. His motivation for giving and receiving feedback seemed to be based on the central principle of looking after his own interests. Due in no small part to the fiscal rewards inherent in professional sport, Brian’s standpoint had a ‘performance maintenance’ perspective, with little application to learning or active reflective engagement:

Brian (rotational first team player): I don’t like to review a game with one of our coaches because I don’t want them to see any faults in my game. At the end of the day, I want to be picked for every game.

Researcher: Would you go through a game with one of the Academy players to help them out, maybe Charlie, for example?

Brian: Why would I help him when he could come back and take my place in the team when he gets better? It has happened to me before at an England trial, I help someone with the calls and patterns then he got picked ahead of me. I would help someone who wasn’t in my position though. I like helping people, don’t get me wrong, but I don’t want to lose my place in the team, I want to keep picking up my appearance bonuses.

These data show, how protective Brain was about his role in the team and how important it was to maintain a place in the first team. Athletes are indelibly shaped by, but also an active reproducer of, their society (Shilling, 2004). As an experienced
athlete, Brian reproduced the competitive nature of professional sport within the rugby club’s implicit corporal development programme. The reproduction of competition from the playing field to the site of knowledge exchange meant that learning and its effectiveness was continually in question.

**Aspirations.** The players described situations in which they wanted to achieve their best and play at the highest level possible. Accounts of this ranged from playing for their country to, in cases of younger, academy players, breaking into the first team. Some players suggested that they were happy just to be a part of professional sport, in this case, ‘being the best’ simply meant retaining their professional contract. For example, Edward’s previous club was a division below his current one; this is his first professional contract:

> Edward: I was so happy to come to this club; I had been playing Div 1 for years and my brother plays for a Premiership team so I always wanted to. When the club asked me to I jumped at the chance... I mainly play when Gary is with England, I think I have done well, but I really took my foot off the gas when I first got here, I thought I had made it already.

The defence captain, Joseph, highlighted the importance of aspiring to be the best and maintaining it. He described a shift in his aspirations. Originally, Joseph focused only on playing professional rugby; but now that he was doing this on a regular basis, his ambitions had shifted to breaking into the international set-up:

> Joseph: I used to just want to play for the first team, and I have done that now. But obviously now it’s, there’s different motivations, like international aspirations, I had a chance to train with them over the summer and now want to, you know, maybe play for England regularly one day.

The individualised nature and changing dynamics of player’s aspirations had ramifications for engagement with the learning process. In the case of any individual, the horizons for learning set limits on what is possible, and enables learning within those limits (Hodkinson *et al.*, 2008). Although the players verbalised what their aspirations were, they could not verbalise how these were going to be achieved, other than through reciting a list of descriptive behaviours.

Ronald was starting his professional career, when asked how he aimed to achieve his aspirations, he replied:

> Ronald: Er, obviously it’s quite a high drive, but it’s also just to improve,
improve my game, be physical, that’s why I come in every morning, to get better at what I do. But that’s quite a high achievement to play to the best of my potential and be in the best team as I can.

**Media.** The professionalisation of Rugby Union over the last ten years has lead to an increase interest from premium television and the sports media. Following this growing interesting the sport, all of the players had direct responsibilities with the media. This could range from live punditry for international games or columns in national newspapers. For others it could just be the odd interview with the community newspaper. The Club had a media guide that gave information to the players about their responsibilities with some parts of the media (see Appendix 16). For the captain, Richard, this involved interviews with the press. For other members of the team, media responsibilities involved representing the team at sponsorship and partner events, while less direct responsibilities referred to, for example, attending social events. Richard’s role was that of mediator between the media and players:

*Richard:* Well we had a tough summer and I was sort of trying to filter all the information to the players as much as I could so there weren’t, so that information wasn’t read in the newspapers. It was told to the players before it came out and so the players were far more settled. And also to keep our minds on rugby rather than what was going on in the news.

The players used the media to reaffirm status within the group and maintain hierarchical relationships. Players with media commitments left the training ground as soon as possible often to develop sideline opportunities, such as sponsorship, television appearances and interviews. For example, on occasion, meeting rooms and video analysis areas were taken over and turned into photo-shoot locations for magazines; chairs and desks would be removed and replaced with photography equipment. Players not involved in the photo-shoots glorify this kind of activity as it became a form of cultural capital:

*Larry:* Those boys have done well to get there, that must be paying really well. I only get asked to go to the local old man’s rugby club, you know, well, one day perhaps when I play for England that will be me in my Y- fronts on the front page.

However, such was the competitive banter and edge within the squad, other players found themselves ridiculed for lesser media work with agencies with smaller
reputations. For example, Raymond (Academy Player) and Joseph (First Team Player), who were both injured at the same time, were sent to Hong Kong for a public relations tour. Both conducted an interview with a local magazine. They returned to discover that other players had stuck multiple copies of the double-page spread on the walls of the training ground, in an attempt to undermine their new-found status:

Field notes: Walked into the office today to find the Hong Kong version of OK magazine on the walls. Raymond had a double page spread on, looked very uncomfortable in the pictures. The rest of the lads seemed to mock by quoting the article to him at every opportunity. He seems to have gone into his shell today, not like him at all. (Field notes).

This suggested that the training ground, a site of learning, was also the centre of struggle between players for prestige and cultural dominance (Jenkins, 2002). This can be conceptualised in a Bourdieuan sense as a field. The different internal values assigned by players to media responsibilities helped to illustrate the relative importance they placed on their jobs as rugby players. Some players viewed training as a necessary by-product and a route of entry to the media:

Anthony: I really want to get into fashion. I am doing some adverts at the moment. One of the Directors here used to work in the media, in TV. I am talking to him a lot and Steve (Anthony’s agent). I was at an awards show a couple of weeks ago, but Steve says I have to keep on playing well to get anything top-level stuff.

For some players, the media was a distraction from training and playing professional rugby. However, their status within the team seemed to determine the reaction of the other players, something clearly dependent upon social standing.

Social Position. Younger players looked up to the established older players for guidance. During a conversation with Paul (first year academy player), discussion moved on to other members of the team, and how they helped out the first team during training. The younger players would learn from this, interacting with more experienced athletes, and seeking to learn from their habits. For example:

Paul: Yeah, I mean like, like maybe showing if the first team back to running, moves or something maybe to defend against their, maybe like, watch the opposition, maybe do their defence against them, or like, attack against them, and help their defence.

Researcher: Can you give me an example of when you’ve done that?
Paul: Like in a back session, they’ll run their starter plays and we’ll, like defend, for example that’s like the Rams.

Researcher: How would you know how the Rams defend?

Paul: Er, we watch the videos, analysis. So we do, do quite a bit of that... watch some videos like of the first team so you can learn, so I can learn off like say Arthur who’s playing full back or Martin...if you’re watching them, not necessarily playing myself, so I can actually learn through watching other people, rather than you know, going out there, making the mistakes myself sort of thing, and just watching what they do well on the pitch. But I would never go and ask them, you know cos they are first teamers, and well, I am just in the Academy.

Paul’s social position (academy player) endowed him with a set of expectations that limited his ability to participate. Hodkinson et al., (2008) argue that people always operate within systems of expectations: both the expectations they bring to a situation, and those which others have about their activities and practices, mitigates and influences the engagement in the learning process. Therefore, because of his social position within the team, Paul trained with the first team, but only in a limited capacity.

**Reflective Capacity.** All players were expected to engage in a period of self- and opposition analysis (see appendix 14). This ranged from an unspoken expectation to watch there own activities in a game, to reviewing the detailed patterns and plays of the up coming opposition. Levels of engagement with this seemed to vary from player to player, some reviewing every video clip in detail, others just watching the tries and big hits. Although information about what would be available and when (see Appendix 14), there was no fixed protocol for this process, but the players relied on their coaches to provide analysis-based information and videos. Raymond’s (first year academy player) short description provides a good example:

Raymond: Er, we go through video footage with, watch how they play, how they attack, how they defend, how they kick, what their kicking game is, and we take that on to the training pitch.

Researcher: And who identifies that?

Raymond: Er, Charles (Head Coach) mainly, obviously, and William (Defence Coach) steps in for defence: what went wrong, what went right. And you just
learn from them and you’re listening and so on.

However, through this process information was transmitted to the players in a linear fashion: the players effectively becoming receptacles, in which analysis-based information is stored. Some players actively inquired and engaged in a self-and-team analysis process. They would do this by reviewing their own video clips, on their own accord. However, this was not a socially accepted thing to do. Higher status players also had a negative effect on others when individually reviewing their game: the derogatory term, ‘nause’, employed by teammates when a player engaged in anything more than the minimum requirement. For example, Raymond (first year academy player) often left the analysis room when Gary (international player) or Anthony (international player) arrived because the ‘banter’ (through which players assert their social position) was too much for him. In such a scenario, if a player could not reply with an adequate response, the remainder of the group would continue focusing ‘banter’ on that player. From Bourdieu’s perspective, this can be viewed as a struggle for objective positions of the ‘field’ (Jenkins, 2002). Both Gary and Anthony had a large stock of cultural capital in the form of banter. This was because they were regular first team player, which played for their county, and in this field of practice both of these elements were held in high regard.

Jeffrey provided an example of the ‘banter’ inherent in the club, whereas Raymond demonstrates how this can impact upon self-analysis and learning:

Jeffrey: The other lads have started calling me ‘Chogy’ because they think I look Japanese. I think Patrick started it. I didn’t like it at first, but now everyone calls me it even on the pitch and nights out. Sam even put it on the club’s forum that I was going to play for Japan. It will pass and they will start on someone else like Gareth or someone else that has no banter.

Raymond: I hate going into the analysis room before meetings. It is the only time when it is full, everyone is hanging around waiting to go into the meeting room and you get people calling you a ‘nause’ if you’re looking at things seriously. All those guys want to do is look at the big hits or tries. They start saying things about my mum and asking what she is doing tonight, you know, things like that. I just walk out and look at things later.

Such experiences seriously and negatively militated against the learning opportunities a player was able to engage with. The meaning and significance which individual players assigned to the analysis and learning process affected the way they
interpreted and interacted with self- and team analysis. In addition, many players considered that statistical information and analysis from coaches did not truly reflect events which happened in the game. Patterns of play were varied, and dependent upon a number of components. When things went wrong, there was a shift of blame from the individual to others involved in the wider pattern of play.

Gary: Its rubbish, in the Vikings game I was put down for 10 unsuccessful passes, but I have played with Fred before, and he couldn’t catch a cold that day. I don’t see why I should be marked down for him being shit.

The players felt that statistical information from the game did not reflect actual lived experiences; but this only became an issue when playing expectations had not been reached. Jason provides an example of this:

Jason: The stats are only made relevant when the coaches want to question your performance. When you have done well they don’t say anything. But if you get a run of bad games they will pull you up and ask why your stats are so low, and the stats are particularly harsh when they want to prove a point.

Winning. The professional nature of the sport provided an emphasis on winning at any cost during the game. This was not shared by all of the team: for example, while senior players had a focus on winning, Academy players were still developing their skills and experience. Larry (squad player) outlined his view on the performance aspect of the team, relative to his ambitions as a professional athlete:

Larry: Of course I want the team to win and keep on winning, you know, but I also want to get on the pitch and play some rugby. Me and Simon travel every week with the team, but only get about five minutes at the end of each game. Sometimes it gets to you. I want to show people what I can do but, you know, I can’t get on the pitch. I play the A-league games but I am blowing half the time because I can’t get regular minutes. And if the boys are winning then I defiantly will not get on the pitch unless someone gets injured. At the end of the day, winning games is what we are here for but I want to play.

Here, winning was a relevant term which guided the learning experience. Larry wanted the team to win, but he wanted to get some more game time, as a decrease in playing time reflected badly when contract reviews occurred. During periods of increased success in terms of results, the focus of the athletes as learners diminished; whereas, halfway through the second season, during a period of defeats
and decline in the league table, the coaches focus increasing amounts of attention on reviewing the athletes’ performance and ensuring that their charges were watching the games and reflecting on their performances:

Field notes: Charles (Head Coach) spent the whole day doing back-to-back reviews with the senior players. I think the run of losses has sparked something because William and Ben also asked me for individual clips of all of the backs. This is the first time I have seen Charles do things like this, normally he addresses everything in the team meetings. – (Field notes).

This cycle would often occur, if the team was winning, then performance reviews would not be so important. However, during a run of poor results, the coaches’ reaction would be to review a game in detail with each player. This highlights the gap between academic notions of reflections and what Knowles et al., (2006) coined ‘real world’ notions of reflection. Knowles et al., (2006) tries to formalise reflection into four predefined steps, however, in this case the opportunities to reflect were not ‘built in to the program’ but occur sporadically and at the judgment of the coach rather then the player. More detail of this reflective conversation between coach and player can be found in Chapter 4, page 128.

Discipline. This was an aspect of the player’s role frame to which the club paid particular attention. A referee consultant was brought in once a week to advise athletes on the different referees they would encounter during games and strategies to maintain their discipline and avoid punishment. The captain, Richard, shared an example of this process:

Richard: I remember when I first started here I, I, well, my first game for, my first start for this club, was I got yellow carded in the following few games that I started. I gave away, sort of, two penalties again which I wanted to get down and I wasn’t as disciplined, and we employ a guy here who used to be a professional referee called Alex and I work closely with him, and how I could work better with the referees, just knowing the finer details of how they’re refereeing, certain rules that are in the law book and adapting my game to that so I’m able to play well and be on the edge, but make sure that I don’t give away, give them the chance to make those decisions against me.

Although a distinction between performance and development of skills was made, the line of separation became blurred as athletes moved from Academy to first
team status. This conflict also hindered the ability for the team to assist in one another’s training needs. The competitive nature of professional sport meant that some people would not be picked for the team, and others would travel with the team just to sit on the bench, for what they perceived as little or no reward. The same individuals then competed during the week in training, under the assumption that selection would be based on how well they trained.

This highlights the paradox of the team environment. Training seemed dependent on players helping each other out and learning from one another; yet in a sense, it is questionable what players of the same position had to gain by helping each other. If one teammate helped another’s development, the end result may involve them losing their place to that player. Hence, “by helping you”, “I have lost out,” or in the most extreme case, lose a contract with the club.

There also appeared to be two fundamentally different philosophies in the approach to training and game performance. The Academy athletes viewed learning from others around the club as a key part of their role: ‘being the best you can be’ and having aspirations to break into the first team appeared to constitute their main motivations:

Paul: I mean I’m enjoying and learning the experience of playing with top class players, like, that’s why I think it’s been a really good here, cos you can meet actually get to know the players, so you come in, like, first year, and there’s no like, oh, the Academy train on their own. It’s just straight in there with the first team and, it means you can watch them train then think, I can do that if I just change the way I approach the ruck or running line.

Conversely, the evidence also suggested that senior players, already with a significant level of experience in the game, were only prepared to make small changes to the way they played, suiting the players around them, and fitting the system of the club. This did not seem to be the case amongst younger players. Paul, for example, simply watched the more experienced players train, before taking what he perceived as the good points, and seeking to transfer these to his practice. The reframing of problems helped to develop alternative perspectives and achieve personal growth (Schön, 1984). So for Paul, when he watched more experienced players, he was framing and reframing this interpretation by changing the relative value and significance of this internal role frame.
4.2.2 - Internal Role Frame Components - Coaches

**Enjoyment.** In the case of coaches, success, and ultimately enjoyment, was dependent upon activities out of their control, namely, the outcome of competitive matches. One of the coaches interviewed regarded himself as a ‘reluctant contributor’, whose gratification was derived from the outcomes achieved through developing others:

*Charles:* I think the satisfaction of seeing the players performing well and winning. I prefer to be a bit of a reluctant contributor, and I see all the jubilation that they have when things go well for them. I much prefer to watch it from fifty yards away rather than be in the middle of that, and nothing I enjoy more than just quietly jumping in the car and going home, and sitting on my own at the pub or at home, and quietly reflecting on a good week and helping to make peoples’ lives happy or enjoyable. That’s the thing that I enjoy about it.

William (Defense Coach) also highlighted the enjoyment of this role, through the outcomes of players’ selection for their country. Again, this is beyond his (the coach’s) control, but seems to be a marker of ‘enjoyment’ and successful evolution in Rugby Union:

*William:* I think the – probably they both have different outcomes, so it’s both seeing James, although it was before my kind of development, but seeing him get an England cap this summer was a real positive. I really enjoyed that because he’s someone who has come through the whole Academy process, and seeing him and Joseph be a part of the England squad this year.

This symbolises an exchange of capital between the coaches and the players (Purdy, 2009). The enjoyment the coaches got from the sports stemmed from the success of the players, either individual players growth, or the overall success of the team. This represented more then just task or even role enjoyment and transcended to the bodies of the players. Arguably, the players could be characterised as specimens who could be normalised by the coaches training regime, to become docile but productive Rugby Union players (Heikkala, 1993; Denison, 2011).

**Winning.** The success of the team was a key factor in the coach’s overall enjoyment of their role, yet perhaps surprisingly, still appeared to be a relative
phenomenon. Ben, a long time coach in the club’s Academy system, discussed the difference between winning and being competitive. He argued that winning was relative to the goals set, and not necessarily reflective of the win/loss record or the points on the scoreboard:

*Ben: To me the most important thing is the desire to improve. You’ve got to – within you and within your squad of players – have a genuine desire to win, to be competitive.*

*Researcher: So winning is very important for you?*

*Ben: Winning – again, I use the word in inverted commas – ‘to win’ doesn’t necessarily mean to win every match on Saturdays, because sometimes you just – that’s out of your hands. But ‘to win’ could be, “Right, last year we only won three games, this year we’re gonna win five”. If you’re dealing with a really poor squad, ‘to win’, for me, means to set your goals and achieve them. Winning is, “I’m gonna get”. I can think of a really good example. I’ve coached teams where realistically, we’re such rubbish. I’ve taught an Academy team where, when they’re rubbish, they never won a game all year. I inherited this team. So for me to say, “Winning means we’re gonna beat all the other teams,” that’s unrealistic. Winning for me was, “We’re gonna get a team that’s better organized and really competitive – able to compete.” Scoreboard, forget that. Did we stay in the game? Did we compete?*

Ben clearly redefines the meaning of winning according to the level of the players he was coaching. Akin to Gilbert and Trudel (2004), Ben adjusted this role frame to suit the playing level of the athletes. However, for William, winning as a coach prolonged the competitive feelings he had as a player. He used coaching as a vehicle;

*William: As a purely competitive animal, having been involved at the high level in terms of playing, you’re in there to try and win things, so winning and winning away, at top teams. That gives you a buzz. Whether you’re a player or a coach and I don’t want to lose that. What you’re doing, you’re pitting yourself against someone else, and whether you do that on a playing side or a coaching side, for the most part, you hope that you come out on top of that tactically, mentally and all the other aspects. It’s something that floats the boat.*
Clearly William had an embodied view of winning resulting from his experience as a professional player. Analogous to Nash et al., (2008) Williams pre-established experience as a player, significantly influenced the value he assigned to this role frame.

**Corporeal Development.** The coaches shared a common assumption that the training of an athlete’s body ran along a linear, mutually exclusive continuum of development or optimisation. This assumption was discussed by Charles, and suggested that the rugby club focused on the development of players as vital to their success and optimisation. Charles did not consider that success in terms of organising teams of players in complex tactical execution:

*Charles: Well, if you don’t develop players and you don’t get them to improve, then you’re not actually optimising. If you take a very simplistic thought process about coaching, surely the coach’s role is to get the best out of every single player that you’ve got in the squad. And if he’s actually getting that player to play to his best, then – that’s a real ideal scenario, but it doesn’t work like that, but that’s actually what it should be – you’ve got forty players or whatever, and you’re getting them to play to their optimum each week. By doing that, then obviously it’s to do with individually breaking down the skill sets that they have and how they integrate them into a team, but also how they individually execute their skill sets as well. So there has to be – performance has to be the key indicator of what goes on in our walk of life, but if you’re naïve enough just to focus on outcomes all the time, you’re not going to get very far. You’ve got to develop the players. We are big on improving skill sets, basic skills – I think it’s a mistake that a lot of people make. They think the reward lies in organizing fancy moves, or looking at outcome, outcome, outcome, when you should be looking at the processes and improving the skill sets.*

All coaching staff shared Charles’ framing of corporeal development through behavioral individualisation. However, the degree to which this was implemented was different for each coach. Ben suggested that he enjoyed helping individuals, but that the culture in which it was deployed was counter-intuitive. Essentially, corporeal development was an internal component that the coaches and athletes shared, but the relationship and value assigned to it fluctuated:
Ben: I think the thing that is most enjoyable about coaching – irrespective of whether you go to the backs, but for me – is helping players to improve as individuals. It sounds an odd thing, given that it’s a team sport, but I think we’re very good in this country at improving teams, and we’re very good at organising patterns and structures, and I probably think that’s true across a number of sports. That’s true from when I was teaching. We’re organised. I’m not sure we spend enough time on actually improving the individual within that organisation.”

Here we find an interesting contrast between Charles and Ben. Both coaches see the importance in improving the individual with the team, however, one thinks they ‘are big on improving skill sets and the others thinks they don’t ‘spend enough time’ improving the individual. This highlights the internal nature of ‘Corporeal Development’, both coaches noted improving the body in some way but the value they assign to the task was different. Therefore, the way they framed experiences was different.

**Structure.** The club imposed a structural framework, utilised by the coaches in order to enable formalised practice and continuity. This included protocols for the management structure (see Appendix 9), medical (see Appendix 13), Performance Analysis (see Appendix 14) and conditioning and recovery (see Appendix 15). Having previously worked in academia and business, Charles conformed to the idea of structure in the workplace, and did not like it when others were not as organised as he was:

**Charles:** I think, without being arrogant, I think a degree of intelligence helps you to do any job extremely well, and the organisational skills, and I think they have a need for good practices wherever you come from. I was brought up at home to understand the reality or the importance of punctuality, organisation, doing things the right way by my parents. I think that emanated into – I was very structured in the way I worked when I was in academia, and I was very structured when I worked in an office. Offices are much more structured than what’s going on here. It actually cheeses me off much of the time when people won’t take a note of something they’ve said they’re going to do, by the date. – So each coach defined structure differently
For other coaches, (Ben, Alan, Garrard and William) structure could be identified in the form of rugby that the players were asked to play. Alan (Academy Coach) believed that giving the players a framework (see Appendix 2, 3, 4, 5) of best practice was fundamental to the success of the team, suggesting that this helped to unify the players’ actions on the pitch, and stopped them operating as individuals:

*Alan:* Well I’m a massive fan of the guys being able to play and I think it’s key, you know, I think it’s key that we, we give them a framework to play in rather than playing by numbers.

For William (Defense Coach), structure would come from self-preparation. Even if this affected other aspects of his life, he ensured that everything had been planned for. Although the coaches cited different types of structure and organisational behaviours, these practices became unmistakable signs of competence in their role, and the way in which they frame rugby-related information:

*William:* I’m probably a bit of a perfectionist. I’m probably not a perfectionist, but I hate to think I’ve left anything to chance too much. If something wasn’t planned, and I knew I should have planned it, that would really annoy me, and therefore I would spend time doing it. So I would – yeah, planning, if something needed doing, I’d spend that time doing it even – like anything, something has to give somewhere around the lines, and if it’s time for – so be it, in terms of that.”

**Time Pressure.** The coaches would have to keep records of athlete performance, deliver scouting reports on opponents, and plan coaching sessions as part of the on-going administration of the rugby department. Although they had assistance from specialist employees, such as the office manager, administration staff and a performance analyst, coaches spent a large proportion of the day engaged in bureaucracy. Wayne, an ex-player, had been coaching for a year and provided a good example of this:

*Wayne:* I am the Academy Rugby Coach, which basically shares the load with the Academy Rugby Manager. There’s less of a definitive line I think I suppose to managing, administration and coaching. I think we both do all roles. So I get involved in the admin as well as the coaching on the field. It is not something that I enjoy but you know, it is part of the job these days. You have
got to keep records of sessions for the DoR (Director of Rugby), do your expenses, answer emails and all those kind of things.

The effect of constant administration on the development and learning of the coaches means that they had less time to coach and reflect on the coaching which they undertook. The reality of professional practice meant that large proportions of the day were filled with planning large, formal review meetings with the players.

**Accountability.** The coaches had specific areas for which they were responsible and ultimately held accountable (see Appendix 10). The club had a number of specialist roles. For example, Ben’s area was coaching ‘the backs’:

*Ben: My principle area of expertise, and the principal that I am required to report on, is the performance of the backs. So generally, anything to do with the backs, I would be expected to stand up and be accountable.*

William, meanwhile, had a mixed role at the club, and held a number of different accountabilities, ranging from bringing in new young players to relying on statistical information of performances during games, which are referred to as KPIs (key performance indicators).

*William: A good indication that things are going the right way is the fact that – this year, for example, we offered contracts to seven of our Academy players and seven Academy players signed. If the system wasn’t right, or people weren’t happy with it, or they weren’t happy to have me involved, then they’d go elsewhere, because there are opportunities elsewhere. So obviously, the standard of those players has to keep coming through. And then on a results basis, whether that is – have I succeeded as a defense coach, or how good your tackle completion is, all those things. Your standard KPIs, they give you a fairly good indication of where you are, and what’s going on, and how your coaching is affecting the players. You don’t take the whole – you don’t take much for granted on how they perform, but if things are going in the right direction, you like to think, well that was me, the coaching has added to it.*

The coaches were given a clear role within the organizational structure of the Rugby club (see Appendix 9), and also a defined job description (see Appendix 10). From a learning perspective this gave the coaches clear boundaries in which they operated, and advised players becoming the mediator between experience and knowledge (Winter, 1989). By placing the coaches in to an explicit structure, they
also become accountable for that area, and allowed the player to seek different perspective to frame dilemmas of their own practice (Clark, 1995). Although in reality this became problematic (see Chapter 5 page 139)

**Reflective Capacity.** All coaches cited the benefits of reflection as a learning tool, but did so in very different ways, from long descriptions of a process of engagement, to not repeating mistakes twice. Charles explained a situation he encountered during a coaching course, when he took the time to delineate where he considered he was as a coach.

*Charles:* I think anything where you stop and reflect a little bit on how things are going – whether it’s actually coaching awards, or whether it’s coaching courses that you go to, I think in any sort of self-reflection is not a bad thing. It’s a good thing. Sometimes you don’t read it that much. In fact, I only took a prelim-coaching course right at the start of my coaching in 1991. Was it ‘91 or ’92? It was a two-day course, and it was on the same weekend of the British Open Golf Championship, and I went the first day, the Saturday, and I thought it was such a waste of time that I didn’t bother going back on the Sunday. So I didn’t actually complete the course that particular time. I went and watched the golf on the Sunday afternoon instead. It was a great opportunity to get away from rugby and chart where I thought I was as a coach. It was a good fork in the road for me, so I do think that self-analysis and self-awareness are important things, and I think coaching courses and coaching awards are helpful in that regard.”

Alan’s description of the reflective process shows signs of fixing identified problems and learning as a quantifiable activity, rather than as an ongoing means of professional growth:

*Alan:* I would hope that I wouldn’t have the same issue more than once, you know because you, you have to do, you know, self-reflection, especially if you think things haven’t gone, you know, right.

However, William highlighted that the weekly cycle of activity meant that the coaches did not prioritise reflective activity, and found it difficult to engage in self-awareness activities:

*William:* The nature of the jobs as they are at the moment, it means I probably spend too much time, and don’t get enough time away to sometimes – not
enough reflection time, so sometimes you’ll do a session, and you want to reflect on what went well, but actually you won’t find time because I’ll have an issue that may be into the Academy, so I’ll put that on hold. And sometimes, things that you put on hold you never actually get around to doing, so that time to give yourself – sort of self-reflection almost, and what you’re doing. Sometimes you feel as though you’ve not really enough planning or preparation time, just because of the nature of the job.

**Humour.** The coaches regularly employed humour as a coaching strategy, which formed part of the social fabric of the club. Charles used humorous remarks at the beginning of team meetings to focus the attention of the players. Wayne described part of a training session in which John utilises this sort of strategy:

*Wayne:* During scrum sessions, Charles would sit on the scrum machine and heckle certain players about stories he found out about them to wind them up, but this would motivate us to work harder, despite being humours it was also encouraging. Once, when Charles was talking to Gregg in a Welsh accent, he said, ‘Is Tracy letting you out at the weekend?’, trying to make it look as though he needed to answer to her. But he would only get into the players that he knew could take it and give some back.

The coaches would also get together and review the matches from the previous weekend (see Chapter 6). During this time, they pulled out any funny or humorous clips and show them to the players in a section of the meeting they called ‘KOTW’ (Knob of the Week) Aaron explains how this is used:

*Aaron:* Sometimes we show funny clips of the players falling over or getting taken out. I remember finding this one of Ian, it had me in hysterics for most of the day and we showed it in the meetings as an example of what not to do. The players do stitch each other up most of the time it makes my job easier.

This kind of activity engendered a rather juvenile climate, and helped foster the social inequalities within the group, fracturing the athletes into distinct, identifiable sub-groups. KOTW is a good example of how the players contributed to their own domination. The coaches singled out one of the players for being a ‘knob’, a video was played as evidence of this, and all of the players and coaches laugh at his expense. However, the players know that next week it could be them at the front of the room with everyone laughing. So the players policed themselves, and ‘stitch up’
each other by telling the coaches when someone has done something to be considered a ‘knob’. In this way they were all inclined to complicity and the effect is a self-domination (Jenkins, 2002).

**Control and Surveillance.** The coaches consistently discussed scenarios, which required different methods of control to be placed on the players, in order to shape the athletes’ experiences of competing against each other. Coaches (in this case, Alan), would devise games with different rules and methods of control to enable or disable experience:

_Alternative:_ After your session, you, you come away and you, you know either someone else has said something or, or you’ve realised that maybe it didn’t work quite as well as you’d hoped or you lost a little bit of control maybe, or you didn’t put enough control in the first place. You know the one about control I think is a real key, key issue in, in rugby and coaching. You know you have to put the guidelines in. And if you have players as we did that night who, who were just trying to overstep the mark all the time, you know coming off side, handling on the floor, that sort of thing, I think you have to discipline them, get them out the game maybe, you know go for a run just to focus their minds so that they don’t continue to upset the game.

At the beginning of each season, the coaches asked the players to devise a list of fineable offenses (see Appendix 6). These included being late for meetings, wearing the wrong attire, or missing corporate functions. The fines incurred a payment of twenty pounds; players would have to stand up in meetings and state what fine they had been given and whether they had paid. Although the players implemented the fineable offences list, it was the brainchild of the coaches, and used as a self-regulating mechanism, and like Humor, the inequality was invisible to the players and thus contributed to their own domination (Jenkins, 2002).

This method of surveillance was also evident during a team meeting. For example, before a defensive training session, William warned the players about the new tracking system which the club had adopted. Although the intention was actually to warn the coaches about over-training, it was consistently referred to as a means of surveillance on the players’ physical activity:
William: We will know if you are working hard enough, the GPS and video doesn’t lie, so for those that have just been coasting through these sessions, Harry will now be able to tell us how hard you are working.

The players and coaches operated in the same learning environment; but the meaning and significance they placed on aspects of their role were very different. In this case, the concept of role frames provided a very useful mechanism for identifying the assumptions both coach and athlete had about the world in which they were situated. Most compelling is the idea that they shared some of these aspects; but the way in which either party consumed experience, indelibly marked the subsequent learning involved. For example, the players shared the internal role frame components, but the divergent value and significance to the individual would alter the press of experience and leave different marks on the body.

In this section we have discussed and found differences between athletes and coaches role frames, both boundary and internal. It has shown that although players and coaches share similar role frame components they consumed experience of the same events through different lens. The findings compound that of Gilbert and Trudel (2004) who argued that practitioners would pay more attention to information that has immediate and personal meaning for them. Therefore theories of experiential learning are fine to think with as an individual, but because the outcome was not always positive, the implementation of them in practice is undermined by the social landscape. This is because the cultural and social landscape will open and close opportunities for reflective growth. This aspect of the experiential learning process has, as yet, not been investigated. This section clearly demonstrated the social fabric and structural positioning of the Rugby Club would need to be examined as it has a significant roll in the opportunities for reflection and learning. This will be explored further in studies 2 and 3.

4.3 - Section 3: Case Study Examples - Kenneth and Michael

This section will look at two of the players in detail, Kenneth and Michael. Both their historical participation and the social location with in the team will be discussed. Finally, a comparison of their approach to training will be outlined. This is to clarify the important differences between individuals at the rugby club, and how
biography and therefore habitus (Jenkins, 2002), had a significant role in the experiential learning process.

Kenneth. By age 20, Kenneth had already been an active part of the Rugby Academy for two seasons, as well as playing for international teams for his age group. Part of Kenneth’s agreement with the club was to be loaned to a (local) national league club in order to gain playing experience. As Kenneth was growing up, and his participation in rugby increased, his confidence was amplified from being bigger than other players for his age. However, his motivation has now changed, and he is intent on going as far as he can in the sport:

Kenneth: Um, well, it started from a young age that I wanted to play the game. Because it was mainly from my mum, because she was a physio at her rugby club and I went down there quite a few times to watch the first team game, and I guess I just liked the sport when I was quite young. I played on Sundays at that same club and obviously the fact that she was there helped out and sort of building up that sort of relationship was good with the club and also having someone there that I knew, a figurehead at least, maybe even better and just through the ages I just got better and better and as I was quite big for my size, early on as well, I think that helped out as well with my development, like knowing that I was bigger than most of the other kids around I could, you know, develop my skills further and better than they probably could with, with the advantages that I had. Erm, yeah, so I think that’s mainly the reason why I started playing and why I wanted to. But like now, like I think I’ve realised you know, that I really want to go further, into like national, international arena, seniors and everything like that, I just, you know, like playing, you know, in front of crowds, and I love the buzz.

The physical size that Kenneth needs to maintain seems to play on his mind. During a conversation about a normal working week, he placed particular emphasis on physical aspects; and also discussed the slow socialisation (Cushion & Jones 2012) and apprenticeship he was undertaking as an Academy player. The descriptions of getting ‘called up’ and ‘getting a chance to train’ resonates with the idea of going through a process and emerging on the other side with more experience. At this stage
of his fledgling career, Kenneth seemed to pay more attention to the processes of how things happen, rather than the outcomes or performances related to winning:

*Kenneth: Well obviously we go through different aspects like weights, I think that’s just trying to build ourselves up physically, you know, size-wise and strength-wise, so you know, we’re not having too much of a shock come, if we come into an A-league game or even if we called up to a Guinness Premiership game, you know, we’re not coming into the game thinking, or knowing that we’re nowhere near as strong and nowhere near as big, so um, you know, that’s going to really disadvantage you, but, yeah, like training wise, on the fields, um, you know, you get a chance to train with the first team sometimes, on Tuesdays, um and Mondays and when they needs, you know players, it’s always nice to come in and you know, train alongside them, get some more involve, er, get more involved with what they’re doing and know what, how they’re training and preparing for the game on Saturday or Sunday. And then we’ve got this Academy day, which, you know, we develop our skills on Thursdays.*

Kenneth’s ‘social position’, an aspect of his role frame, was imposed on him by the coaches. It embodied his experiences and, as a professional athlete, created an identity for him. In a discussion with Kenneth following a review session, he provided an example of why inter-social roles and identities are so important:

*Kenneth: William asked me why Arthur was the first team full back. I said because he is a good player. William was like, Arthur does the basics really well and that’s it. He catches every ball and he can run the ball down the pitch. He doesn’t do anything flash. But what he does, he does well. It is hard to get used to. You don’t have to beat five players and then score in the corner. William says it is about putting other people in to the right spaces and playing as a team.*

Kenneth was typical of an Academy player, and was still learning his trade as a professional. One of the factors influencing this experience-based apprentice is being able to see and interpret the complex nature of rugby. Kenneth, with his limited experience of Rugby Union still depended on the coaches to frame and reframe his practice. Hallett (1997) reminds us that just providing learners with new experiences was not sufficient to enable learning, but it is the reinvestment of experience that
drives growth. This meant that Kenneth depended on others around him to develop alternative ways of seeing and understanding his experience.

Michael. At the age of twenty-nine, Michael is an experienced player in the squad. He has played for the National ‘A Team’, and was captain of his previous club. He has been at the club for two seasons, but since moving, has struggled to hold down a first team place. Michael’s approach to rugby is centred on obtaining feedback from coaches, and learning from his experiences in competition. During a discussion on how Michael engages in this process, he described a specific example:

Michael: Yeah, I mean, after this year we played a Vikings game, I thought it went quite well. But the coach asked me in for a one-to-one session to go through the video and there were about four or five points that I got out of the video that he said look you’ve got to improve your rucking technique, part of your tackling technique and your communication. I suppose that was a specific example.

Researcher: Were you aware of that before you went into that review sessions?

Michael: I was. I was aware of some, I was aware of two or three of the points, but there was one or two that were maybe new that I was, stuff that I hadn’t looked at or hadn’t thought about. So I mean, that was new stuff that was brought to my mind that I guess was something that was an example of, yeah, something that furthered my understanding.

Michael was asked to give an example of a time when he had encountered a problem and how he resolved it. His reply indicated that he did not learn new things in training; but rather, how to adjust his current set of skills to fit the structure of play and other athletes at the club:

Michael: Yeah, just I mean, it comes up, it’s, it’s not so much learning how to play rugby again. It’s more just tweaking little things in your game. The thing with Joseph was, it was just one week we had a problem with; I had a problem with running lines. I was just not getting where I should have been and by talking to somebody else and just adjusting, maybe your running lines, because all, the biggest thing in being a rugby player is identifying what the other players do and learning what they, the ways that they run, the ways,
Michael’s adaption to fit in with others around him highlighted the ongoing, and culturally driven, notions of knowledge within the domain of professional sport. In comparison with Kenneth, Michael had learnt how to play rugby and had a repertoire of performance experience, which he could shape and apply to different situations. Conversely, Kenneth was just beginning his career, and developing an ongoing bank of experience with which to enhance the way he understood the game, and participated within practice. The role frame components, both boundary and internal, which the two men used to view the world around them were the same; but the extent to which both players could see and verbalise practice are remarkably different. In short, performance information delivered to both athletes at the same meeting is interpreted in very different ways.

Given the very different stages of their careers, both Kenneth and Michael also had very different approaches to training. Kenneth disclosed his anticipation about pre-season training:

“I just want to have a good pre-season and go flying into the start to get down a first team place, I am board of going out on loan and want to get a place in the first team, I think if I shine in the pre-season then I will.”

On the other hand, Michael discussed a tactic he uses in order to commit less into pre-season:

“When you come to this time of year you have to do a small injury to get you through pre-season. Just something like getting you knee or shoulder cleaned out, anything with key whole. You don’t want to be doing all that shit with 12 weeks to the first game. Just keep your head down do some rehab and then with 2 weeks to go start pluming up and get into to it. I have been telling the other to do this for years, small injuries in pre-season save a lot of effort.”

Michael displayed a clear socialisation into professional Rugby Union. He has learnt how to play the sport, but he has also developed a professional practice that can be adjusted to suit different circumstances. It is only when dilemmas of practice fell out side of his repertoire of practice that Michael would draw on something he found familiar, and then experiment within the new situation. This clearly parallels Schön (1984) understanding of experiential learning, but also highlights the differences
between Michael and Kenneth. Kenneth was dependant on the players around him to develop his professional practice, whereas, Michael has significant experience to reflect-in-action, manipulating his experience to suit new situations. Michael was also in competition with the very people that could help him the most, (i.e. players of the same position) so he had to develop strategies to cope with the competition within the field of practice.

4.4 - Section 4: Summary and Conclusion

The documentation of the Rugby club assigned specific roles to individual players and served as a guide for practice (see Appendix 2 to 16). An explicit coaching ideology was formed, underpinned the curriculum, and acted as a single reference point for athletes and coaches. This enabled all agents in the field to frame the complex nature of Rugby Union and performance-related information. Evidently, this documentation legitimately controlled bodily activities through an omnipresent gaze of authority (Foucault, 1977). Subsequently, this rendered the athlete self-regulating.

The evidence detailed in this chapter suggests that young Academy players fundamentally framed their role in a different way to that of established first team players. Emphasis was placed on more developmental aspects, as well as learning how to perform and be a professional. This contrasted with senior players, who appeared to collectively construct individual experiences in order to suit situational contexts and survive as professionals. This could be explained through Lave and Wenger’s theory of legitimate peripheral participation (1991). Yet to become experts within their field, the academy team were sampling life as professional rugby players; they therefore looked to the senior players for guidance, and extracted the desirable behaviours they assigned meaning to.

Analogous to this theory, academy athletes participate to the limits of their experience. As long as they had access to learning experiences and the motivation to continued learning, either through training, games, or just inter-athlete interaction, they naturally continued along the same lines, and had the opportunity to grow and become professionals. This is because learning is not merely situated in practice; but an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world (Lave and Wenger, 1991).
In similar vein to Gilbert and Trudel (2004), this study has elicited the conceptual interpretation of a picture frame with which to visualise a psychological notion, employing boundary components in order to frame a situation, and act as a filter unifying all athletes operating within the rugby club. This frame underpins a worldview in which internal components are tuned up or down according to the individual looking through it. The tuning of internal role frame components adjusts along a scale of significance, according to experience and situational meaning. This shift in meaning produced a different learning experience and interpretation of performance-related information, depending on the individual looking through.

Schön (1983) argues that when a practitioner becomes aware of their role frame, they also become attentive to the possibility of alternative ways of framing the reality of their practice. They can begin to take note of the values and norms to which they have given priority, as well as those they have ascribed less importance or left out of account altogether. Frame analysis may also help athletes to become aware of their tacit frames, and thereby lead them to experience the dilemmas inherent in professional pluralism (Schön, 1983). When athletes and coaches identify that they actively construct the reality of their practice and become aware of the variety of frames available, they begin to see the need to reflect-on-action on previous tacit frames. Role frame analysis is therefore an essential part of situated learning, and should be a key component in developing apprentice athletes into full, experienced professionals.

Similarities between the present study and that of Gilbert and Trudel (2004) place a number of internal components amongst both youth sport coaches and elite rugby players. Specifically, these components are discipline, personal growth and development (referred to as corporeal demands by this chapter) and winning. This indicates that beliefs about sport at any level stay the same, but the degree to which they influence the behaviour of coaches and athletes differ according to the external role frame components. For example, Gilbert and Trudel (2004) found a psychological conflict amongst the coaches in their study; the coaches espoused the benefits of sport participation, yet sought to balance this with team success. This was also found in Wilcox and Trudel (1998)’s study. However, in terms of the present research, winning was the sole reason that the athletes under scrutiny were involved in the sport.
Differences in coach and athlete framing, with regard to learning and cognitive development, convergence of meaning and developing new ways of seeing professional practice, seem fundamentally tied to the role frame components which internalised experience of the lived-in world. Therefore, it could be argued that the meaning and significance of performance related information in professional sport is structured according to a pre-defined tacit psychological construct. By making previously tacit belief structures explicit, new ways of seeing and understanding the dilemmas of practice can be utilised, and the subsequent learning experience can be the foundation of growth. Gilbert and Trudel (2004) argue that role frame analysis allows an individual to critically examine the underlying components that guide and influence behaviour. However, this chapter has found that because athletes and coaches go through a deep socialisation within a legitimised and prevailing culture (Cushion & Jones, 2012), existing power relations, are unrecognisable to, and hence misrecognised (Kim, 2004). Furthermore, the contextual discourse used at the Rugby club enforced of a ‘correct way’ coming at the expense of limitless other ways (Cushion & Jones, 2012). Therefore, role frame analysis, positioned as a solely psychological construct, seems somewhat limited, and undermined, by the cultural context in which it operates.

This chapter has shown that experience is the lens through which meaning is assigned to relevant performance expertise. This demonstrates that there are no ‘objective’ viewers of professional Rugby Union, as individuals, be they coach or athlete, and have very different ways of interpreting performance information and the lived experience of rugby. Finally, the overwhelming finding from this chapter is the critical factor social and cultural influences have on the opportunity to reflect and engage in the practice of learning experientially or otherwise. Schön gives us the tools to examine the role frames of individuals, but this only scratches the surface of a deeply integrated social web. What is needed is a further investigation to understand the social power relations that impact upon the learning experience. This will form the main basis for both chapters 5 and 6.
Chapter 5 - Learning: Environments, Culture and Confusion

The previous chapter demonstrated that the learning environment is fundamentally linked to the operationalisation of the experiential learning process. Following on from this the main focus of this study was to understand the learning environments at the Rangers Rugby Club, and therefore the impact upon the learning experience of both athlete and coach. This chapter therefore explores the systems set up to facilitate learning for players and coaches at the rugby club. The first section will discuss the large-scale team meetings led by the coaches to both review and preview competitive rugby matches. Using transcriptions taken from reflection sessions, the second section outlines the process of one-to-one reflections between coach and athlete. Both team meetings and one-to-one review employed video recordings as a reflective tool; this was designed to help facilitate experience-based learning. The third section examines the coach and player relationship: specifically, use of video-based reflection, and different sources of feedback from coaches.

The evidence suggested that large-scale team meetings were monotonous and repetitive. One-to-one reflections were invariably coach-centred and the player barely reflected on their own performance in any meaningful way. Feedback from coaches was not only often negative, but also frequently contradictory, leaving their charges increasingly reluctant to approach the staff for advice, or to confide in them about any concerns they may have had.

Moreover, a hierarchical relationship existed, not only between coach and player, but also between senior players and younger, less experienced ones; which again obstructed learning not just for individuals, but also for the team. While the emphasis of performance analysis and calculated feedback was clearly well intentioned, serious errors in its execution rendered its effect at best neutral, at worst, even counter-productive to the pursuit of experiential learning.

5.1 - Formal Learning Environments

Team review meetings were commonplace in the weekly workings of the Rangers Rugby Club. During the training week, the entire squad of forty-eight players and seven coaches would meet to review the previous weekend’s match, and
preview the forthcoming contest. For the players, Monday began with an administrative overview of the week ahead, followed by the Head Coach delivering the collective thoughts to his staff. Typically, reviews would occur on Monday morning, and be followed by team training (for a detailed review of the training programme see Chapter 6, p146).

For the players, Tuesday commenced with a weights session, followed by a group preview meeting, and ended with a team training session. The coaches’ routine differed in that they would meet at seven o’clock each Monday morning to review the previous game. This allowed them to formulate a 30-minute presentation for the players based on their reflections and analysis. The Head Coach (Charles), accompanied by illustrative video clips, would deliver the review presentation. During a conversation with the Head Coach (Charles), he outlined his approach:

“I am always one for making sure everyone is in the picture, video is a great way to do that. You know better than anyone that with video there are no hiding places. It doesn’t lie. I think if you can show the players where they are going right or wrong then you can move forward as a team. The review meetings are to get everyone together, and as a coaching group we can get some direction to what we are doing and draw a line under the previous game.”

This extract helps identify some key assumptions held by the coaches regarding strategies they employed in practice. For example, the use of video can be viewed as a panoptic medium (Foucault, 1977), which observed players at all times and was used to shape player behaviour. Drawing a line under the previous game represented an indication that if video was used to represent a point, no further interpretation was required: with a convergence of meaning assumed to be automatically arrived at. This contrasted with established theories of reflection (Schön, 1983), and current understanding in the education of adults (see literature review, p18 to 30). The underlying message was that the coaches drove the direction of the club, and had the final say in the interpretation of events and reflection.

As this contrast between theory and practice suggests, both the formal environment and delivery of information to players sometimes led to negative outcomes. Although unintended, the players’ passive role in the analysis process limited its value to them. Therefore, despite the coaches’ intentions, the players did
not always internalise the information delivered by the coaches; and the coaches did not understand why:

“I don’t know why these guys don’t get it, every week we tell them the same, but they still have problems. I mean we do all of the analysis for them, we do all of the research, we look at up to 5 of the opposition games, get a specialist to do analysis on the referees, also tell them what went wrong in the previous game. I mean we give it to them on a spoon and they don’t take any notice of it. It’s the same problems every week.”

A key component of reflective or experience based learning is that of internal discovery or motivation to engage (Moon, 2004). The very act of giving it to them ‘on a spoon’ can be seen as effectively removing the players from the analysis and review process. Consequently, the players had no internalised investment in the legitimacy of this practice (Moon, 2004). This meant that review of games and performance information had little or no player involvement. The players were required merely to turn up for the meetings, listen to the information and then train. The problematic aspects of this process are highlighted by Ronan (first team squad):

“Sometimes it gets so hot in those meeting rooms you can’t keep your eyes open, half the time you don’t really know what Charles is going on about. There are some keen guys who take notes but he talks so fast and the meetings go on so long I don’t bother. He doesn’t ask any questions so most of the time you can get away with it.”

It is evident that this approach had a limited impact on player learning. The formal environment of review and preview of performance had little or no input from the players, and there was an assumption by the coaches of linear transfer of knowledge from them to the playing group. The process started with coaches acting as a review panel for the players’ experiences in competition, and ended when they formally present the findings to the player en masse. However, unlike the players, the coaches have their own review meetings, lasting typically between one-and-a-half and three hours. This allowed each of the coaches the opportunity to speak about and understand the events, which had occurred during the previous match. The coaches watched the whole game again, stopping to discuss relevant points and construct a single interpretation or reality:
“Sometimes those meetings get a bit heated, but that’s only because we are all so passionate about what we do. At the end you kind of see where they are coming from and get a single picture about things.” Garrard

The coaches enjoyed both the time and environment in which to reflect on their interpretation of events, enabling them to arrive at a single, ‘collective’ viewpoint. During the collective review sessions, the coaches discussed performances of individual players, as well as wider tactical aspects of the match:

“Yeah, the coaches’ meetings are good because sometimes you can get a picture about a player or the way you are doing things and they will get questioned. It makes you think deeper you know. Like with Tony I don’t rate him, but he has been injured. Ben keeps saying he is a class act but I don’t know, so it does make you question what you think.” Garrard (Backs coach)

These data illustrate that for the coaches, the performance review environment created opportunities in which to reflect and reframe the way in which information was interpreted. Coaches used their colleagues to help in this process, and Monday morning meetings were where it unfolded. Conversely, the players were recipients of this information, and did not have to actively participate or engage in the reflective process. This led to a jaundiced view of the meetings amongst the players. For example:

“You come out of the team meetings with so many points and generally they are the same every week. Not to diss the video guys, but it is always win the physical battle, or the 9 and 10 are attacking threats, it’s bollocks. It’s almost like the coaches are only telling us so they can say next week ‘well we told you this would happen’. ” Patrick (international player)

Patrick is one of the club’s key, highly influential players, yet he regards the review process with cynicism. Mark, a first team player, also highlighted that:

“I mean, it’s good that they do all the analysis we could never do all that, but the meetings last forever and it is always Patrick or Richard or someone who gets asked their opinion, sometimes I think it wouldn’t make any difference if I wasn’t there.” Mark (first team player)

The different nature of player review and coaches’ meetings suggested to the players that they did not have to reflect on their performance in competition; because the coaches effectively did it for them. Anthony (international player) emphasised this point and identified an outcome of the coach-led approach:
“If I can get away without doing any analysis, I will, you know Charles will always tell you what happened anyway. So I don’t think you need to look at your game. If the coaches have a problem with what you are doing then they will pull you aside and have a go.”

These data highlight the perceived role of coaching feedback within the rugby club, and above all that the players expected only negative aspects of play to be identified. Moreover, the removal of players from the reviewing and previewing of performance threw the value of the whole process into question. By definition, players are at the centre of team sports; with coaching staff supporting them. Yet it was the coaches who selected, lead and implemented the majority of reflection or ‘analysis’. The athletes merely played the role of empty vessel or recipient of information. The coach’s beliefs were underpinned by the assumption that players could and should be able to process, understand and make use of the information provided:

“When I played you had to know what was going on or you got a grilling, but back then we didn’t have all the video and stuff, so you could kind of get away with it. Now we go through things in the meetings in so much detail, so the lads take it in much better, some better than others, but on the whole I think we do a pretty good job.” William (Defence Coach)

This demonstrated William’s belief that by looking at the game in detail, players will automatically develop an enhanced understanding of in-game events. His comments also underscore the changing nature of learning in professional rugby. At the time he was a player, he and his teammates were not monitored by video, and could therefore ‘get away with’ mistakes made on the pitch. This shows the assumption of automatic understanding to be justified; because the coach had never experienced video based reflection from the other side of performance. Subsequently, the way in which coaches presented at large team meetings would necessarily be based on how they experienced these as a player. During such meetings, the coach issued descriptions about performance; but left little opportunity for the players to question or discuss. As the data illustrates:

“During the main review meeting today Charles spoke for 45 minutes about what he thought happened in the game and what we can take into the next game, he kept using phrases like ‘I’ve got a picture of us rucking too high’ or ‘in my mind we have got to start working harder off the ball’. Again during
this meeting no players spoke and as I observed the room few were attentive. The only player interaction occurred when Charles asked if the players agreed with him, they said yes, and the meeting ended. ” Field Notes

“Sometimes you come out thinking more confused then you went in. It’s like they just talk about what is happening, like ‘You could have done this, or could have done that.’” Jeffery

Potrac et al., (2004) identifies that it is not enough for a coach to possess a detailed knowledge of their sport, he or she must convey knowledge in a manner deemed appropriate by his or her athletes, in order for credibility and power to be maintained. Yet the coaches at the club were seemingly unaware of this, and continued to regard large-scale video review as the ideal platform with which to provide their players with the information required to perform. Despite implying that the players did not take on board the information given to players, Charles suggested that if the coaches did not undertake the analysis, the players would go into the games under-prepared:

“Look if we didn’t do all this and said it’s over to you then they wouldn’t do it. If I left it to Gregg or Tom then maybe, but you can’t tell me that the rest of them would, they try and get away with everything. We have such a short turnaround we are currently working on a game two weeks away. They would just go into the game underprepared and then where would we be?” Charles (head coach)

“I only do all the lineout stuff because I know Charles is a nause about that kind of thing. If I can be the one lock who knows the most then I have got a better chance of getting in the team.” Tom (first team Player)

“The coaches like it if you watch a load of game footage, but I think in my position it is the same every week, they say the same things to me; sometimes it is different but on the whole you can get away with not doing it.” Jeffrey (first team player)

The data above highlights the differing perceptions of players regarding the review process and their experiences. This is particularly important because the perception and motivation to engage the players have on the review process will shape their experience. Just being a participant of the review process did not guarantee they would engage, or learning anything from it. Jeffrey, for example, seemed to have no motivation to engage in the reflective process, whereas Tom linked
reflective activity to an increased likelihood of gaining a first team place. The data also suggested varying perceptions on the part of the coach toward his players: namely, that some players enjoy his ‘trust’, whereas others do not. Charles, the head coach, saw great value in the review process, but was not sure the players would do the work he deemed necessary. The Head Coach took it upon himself to perform the analysis or reflective work; something he can control. This control underpinned the relationship between coach, performance information, and player. Yet it could surely be concluded from this that if the players did not take the information in and the coach did not trust the players to perform the analysis themselves, the use of reflective practice in a formal environment is essentially rendered redundant.

The coach also identified environmental constraints, but in turn, this limited the players’ capacity to systematically reflect on their performances. Short turnarounds between matches meant that players had no time in which to review or preview their athletic performance. This helped explain the inherent value assigned to reflection in the coaching process at the club. In other words, the coaches understand the value of ‘reflective practice’, but not enough for it to constitute a core component of the players’ working week. The coaches would rather dedicate resources and time to players understanding in-game performance, and disseminate this according to their preferences. The coaching group also regarded video based activity as coach-led. Athlete interaction was not built in, but supposedly results ‘if there is enough time’. In reality, it did not occur at all, meaning that video-based reflection was effectively left on the periphery of the coaching process, with coaches seeking merely to review performance, but not *learn* from it. The main use of video-based enterprise was, in short, one which the coaches could control and use to send specific messages to players without any reciprocal involvement. Clearly, this video is used as a totalising technology (Gore, 1998), which shaped the players to be docile, but productive (Rail & Harvey, 1995).

The coaches’ intention was to cover the administration of reflection and research in both self and opposition analysis. In doing so, they removed the players from the process. This seems bizarre. The players, after all, were the only people able to influence the outcome of a competitive game, yet while they attended team review and preview meetings, they had been almost completely removed from the process of knowledge generation. This seemed to be the case because the coaches controlled the analysis provided for the players and present information in accordance with the role
frames in which they saw and interpreted professional rugby. So in reality, the coaches generated a dominating ideological representation of a particular game together, then sent specific messages to the players which manifest inside the coach/player relationship (Pringle & Markula, 2006).

The impact of this can be seen in players viewing large team meetings as both confusing, and very similar in content from one week to the next. But this suited the coaches, as the players became the passive receivers of this information. This naturally led the player to invest no value in the information being presented to them, as they were not involved in the process of generation. However, these taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs, or what Bourdieu termed doxa (Hunter, 2010), about a Rugby Union works well for the coaches. They were in control of the information and structural technologies that monitored and judged the players. At some level the coaches were competing against the players in a struggle for symbolic and cultural capital. Therefore if the players knew more, or equal, about the opposition teams, or performance judgment criteria, then there would be no need for large team meetings and therefore the coaches’ role within the organisation would diminish. To impose their dominance on the players, coaches, lead team meetings in such a way as to minimise the player’s opportunity to participate, otherwise they become vulnerable.

From an experiential learning perspective, clearly, the coaches did not use the formal team meetings as site of learning. Instead the type of activity that took place reflected the interests of dominant groups, tending to reproduce the uneven distribution of cultural capital among the team of players which in habit the social space in question, hence reproducing social structure (Jenkins, 2002). Consequently, formal team meetings were used as sites of dominance in which the players were subject to intense surveillance (Rail and Harvey, 2005; Foster, 2003). Charles (Head Coach) used the video clips as an objective medium to demonstrate his thoughts. In this sense the use of video clips were used as a disciplining instrument to normalise the player in game behaviour (Heikkala, 1993). This bio-power (p39) were circulated through the body, and the video served to discipline the players through motivating rather then corporeal punishment. Interestingly, team review meeting were always followed by on field training sessions. So the players were motivated through a ‘technology of self’ (the team meetings), to perform in the on field session.
5.2 - Individual Reflections

The following provides an example of a one-to-one review between a player and a coach. The first is between the Head Coach (Charles) and the captain of the rugby club (Richard). The second is between the Academy Manager (William) and a second year academy player (Jean). These forms of interaction were standard practice at the rugby club. Academy players were allotted a set time each week in order to go over their clips with a coach; whereas non-academy players were required to request such time for a coach to go through a game with them. In practice, players did not volunteer to do this, indeed, it would normally only transpire following a defeat, and at the coaches’ request.

In both cases, individual clips were viewed at least two days after the match. This was typical of the way in which a reflective review between coach and athlete unfolded. Clips were watched in sequence, stopping at periodic intervals in order to discuss relevant points. No record was kept on what was discussed or on actions noted which arose during the conversation.

This model of delivery marked associated assumptions about the learning process. For example, that players were cognitively able to process, understand, reflect and remember multiple points under discussion. Neither coach nor player had seen the clips prior to this meeting, and no agenda had been set for the review. The first transcription occurred after the team lost their third game in a row, ten games into the season. Compared to the previous season, the team had been performing below expectations. Both Charles and Richard sat in a small, empty office, next to one another: watching Richard’s individual clips on a small laptop screen.

Charles: *Let’s just have a quick look through your clips and see – I mean these aren’t fully comprehensive, these fucking things. But I have no time to watch the whole fucking game frankly.*

(Video of clips of the athlete during the game starts.)

Charles: *But your workrate there to get back on your feet was really good and then trying to get back through was good. I think the other thing as well – sorry, we haven’t talked about defence really Richard much but you look such a better player when you get fucking ten and twelve chopping them down.*

Richard: *When I want to – yeah, just go for it.*
Charles: Phillip was doing that in the first half on Friday. And it was creating situations for you to actually get hold of the ball far more. You’ve just got to nag the fucker.

(Richard shows no response but sits and nods in agreement)

(Next Clip)

Charles: So you’ve got to put people on the floor for me. Again, don’t focus on the ball, get beyond – and I’m saying this to all of the players. But get beyond.

(Richard sits and nods in agreement)

(Next Clip)

Charles: This was really good. That’s a great adjustment that you’ve made there. Even if you can really get your mind into thinking about that, that’s really good. That wasn’t the easiest fucking carry in the world either or catch should I say.

(Richard sits and nods in agreement)

(Next Clip)

Charles: I can’t believe we let him out of here. You’ve made the tackle all right and fucking James let him out.

(Richard sits and nods in agreement)

(Next Clip)

Charles: Good. Good. It’s what I mean. Beyond the ball, yeah?

Richard: Yeah.

Charles: There’s too many people focusing to the ball. And even there when you’re coming in there – that’s you, just fucking – is that you here?

Richard: Yeah, yeah.

Charles: You could have smashed Charlie there and you’ve just cuddled him really.

Richard: Yeah.

Charles: Give him a fucking whack. Hurt him.

(Richard shows no response)

(Next Clip)

Charles: Really good. Really good.

(Richard shows no response)

(Next Clip)
Charles: You’ll be disappointed. Probably you think oh I could have stayed up there longer. But your work rate to it was very good. And again, I thought you had a good game on the weekend. Go in, but fine. Again, just if it’s, if it’s secured. Good. And fucking great ball presentation. So that’s almost like a neg line was it? It was, well it’s more an alpha shot.
Richard: It was slowish and ..
Charles: Yeah. Yeah.
Richard: ... whatever.
Charles: You’ve timed your run well.
Richard: F...
Charles: (Interrupting) Yes. Yeah. Little bit high. So what you have the capacity to do as well is you’re getting your body position low before so many of our players are upright like Martin is and Joseph.
Charles: And Mark.
Charles: And you’re actually low and you’re driving beyond the ball. In fact you’re less of a problem than I thought.
Richard: You’ve just got to get low anyway cos ...
Charles: (Interrupting) Yes, it’s a Kiwi thing. I mean your body position is good to do it. You just haven’t quite got him away. The boys have helped you out.
Richard: Yeah.
(Next Clip)
Charles: Good decision there to go round on Seymour.
(Richard shows no response)
(Next Clip)
Charles: Good here. Have you nicked that or was it Martin?
Richard: No. Martin got that one.
Charles: He’s coming back some way now.
(Next Clip)
Richard: This is shit. Oh no it’s ..
Charles: No it’s the one later.
Richard: Yeah.
Charles: That’s good. And I like the way you’ve stayed there to contest. Fuck knows what that’s about. Don’t know what that’s doing.
Richard: No just f... (Not finishing his sentence)

(Next Clip)

Charles: This was really poor.

Richard: Was this the ball presentation where I ..

Charles: (Interrupting) Yeah.

Richard: I, to be honest I didn’t even realise I’d kicked it. So I was looking at it thinking, so I watched the game yesterday and my foot just came over and knocked it out of his hand. It was shit.

Charles: That’s ok. Just try and get a thought ..

Richard: Staying up.

Charles: ...to stay up and belt the guy and stay on your feet and drive beyond. Don’t flop on it.

Richard: Yeah.

Charles: Go through it. Eventually the team are, but it’s not so much you as the group, and it slowed it down.

Richard: Yeah.

(Next Clip)

Charles: This is the one.

Richard: This is shit.

Charles: Why? You thought he was going to make ..

Richard: Well I just wasn’t, cos there were quite a few of the guys loitering round inside ten and I know, it was my man and I just, I think I just rocked back on my heels a bit and didn’t make a decision, just – great tackle by James.

Charles: It was a great tackle. Tackle and back on your feet. Attempting to. Do you feel like you’re getting back to where you were?

Richard: Yeah.

Charles: You can see it. And that in turn puts confidence for you in working the right side of the group as well.

Richard: I can’t believe, I don’t think I went for it. I can ...

Charles: Live, we didn’t think there was hands.

Richard: No.

Charles: Live we thought he ..

Richard: I thought it was a boot or something.
Charles: Live we thought he’d guessed because we were just up here and we thought he’d guessed cos he couldn’t see.
Richard: Cos I remember thinking, I was thinking..
Charles: (Interrupting) Just looked wrong.
Richard: ... that wasn’t me but then I saw it on, I watched it again and I was like I was the only one in there. It must have been.
Charles: It looked wrong Richard. I don’t think there was hands there.
Richard: Yeah it did. Yeah.
(End of Clips)
Charles: Everybody was talking about you being an England seven last year. It was born of your workrate yes? And your work on the floor. So it’s about for me keeping that workrate back to where we’ve got it. It’s about materially hitting rucks and hurting other people so that you then bounce and get back on your feet better, clearing beyond the ball. Think about more the off sideline is the back foot, not the ball. And your plug work continues to be very impressive. Other than that I think you played, thought you, well I thought you played well. Thought you played very well. I know you’re quite hard on yourself but your stats, your stats read well. Phillip is a starting point for linking yeah? And nag him about tackling so that you get the, get the plug.
Anything else?
Richard: No that’s good.
Charles: You sure?
Richard: Yeah that’s good thanks.

The second vignette is between a second year academy player (Jean), and the Academy Manager (William). This one-to-one review takes place the day after a second team game. The second team, consisting chiefly of academy players and peripheral members of the first team squad, won the game convincingly, away to a highly ranked opponent. This was William’s fourth one-to-one review of the day. Again, no agenda had been set, no notes were taken, and both participants watched individual clips on a small laptop in an empty office. There was lots of commotion in the next room, as the remaining squads waited to go into another meeting.

William: It’s not that our Premiership wingers don’t make mistakes, of course they do, but (not finishing his sentence)...
Jean: ... make an unforced, I can make a... or someone gives me a shit pass and drop it, then...

William: Things happen and as long as you fix it, and there’s part of that, I’ll mention it here.

Jean: Yeah, that’s just the frustrating thing is because I’m playing, generally I’m playing well, like the pre-season games and the A League match stuff and like that, anyway, it’s just, this underlying thing. Because I guess that kind of hindered me where there were opportunities with the first team, it’s cos of the errors I made, and going forward to get into the top level, you’ve got to, you can only make errors when you’re under serious amounts of pressure.

William: Especially, I think it’s like anything, the position you’re in, yours are magnified. Cos, let’s be honest, you don’t get as many touches as, you know if Frank drops a ball, well yeah, but he probably passes it 50 times a game. Whereas you get...

Jean: I get like 15...

William:.. a dozen touches, 15 involvements, something like that, if three of them are like catastrophic, it just, even if some of the other stuff, you know, it may. Well there’s two things, it means that the other side has to be very, very good, to overshadow, so, you know, they struggled making some mistakes, but at the moment it does seem, sensational things as well, and we’re trying to cut those out, while doing the sensational. If you’re not doing the sensational, but you’re making mistakes, then it’s that balance.

Jean: I think in the Panthers game I did do some pretty good stuff, so but this game I didn’t get as much opportunity to overshadow it, so...

William: Yeah, possibly you did, I mean, for whatever reason, I mean..

Jean: I did look for the ball when I came on.

William: Yeah, well, look, as you say, you were in position to come round on, there were two or three times where you were in a good position and you really just showed a couple of them in there where we decided to truck it up in the B channels or small C channels where, if we can get that into the wider channels, and hopefully they’ll be something that we’ll have a look at for this week as we go forward.

(Video of clips of the athlete during the game starts.)
William: This first one I did mention it to Robert when I was there, but I reckon you’re as quick as Robert, so you’ve got to... your two jobs.
Jean: Yeah, I think I, I think I misjudged it and thought that I wouldn’t get there, when actually I probably would have, so I stopped running.
William: Which then means that you weren’t in position, whereas instead of, instead of you being...
Jean: If I’d been there then I would have hit him. Whereas now I am on the back foot.
William: Yeah, yeah, as he, as he spins round here off of Robert, and like, you know, Robert hasn’t quite made the tackle, but you know, if you’re going that flat out, if you imagine he spins into you, here and you’re flat out, then this blokes going to end up here. As he did.
Jean: Yeah, it’s just that I think I misjudged that, I don’t want to get step side, and I think I fell for the...
William: I think at that, I think that far out...
Jean: It doesn’t matter.
William: I think, you know, you, you’ve just gotta, you’ve got to go balls out, so you two go, people are going to cover in behind you and you know, it’s right. And the picture is, fucking hell, they are, their bloke, you want their bloke shitting it, if you two are coming in and that, that’s the picture, and the thought process.
Jean: Yeah.
(Next Clip)
William: Possibly you could have helped Paul a little bit here, wonder whether, you almost go back as if, you’re going to get the pass. I think by the time you then reacted it’s probably too late, but I don’t, I’d say Paul has got to be more stronger in contact and start driving. You’re probably too late.
(Next Clip)
William: Possibly go a little bit harder there?
Jean: Yeah, I think, I misheard Paul, I thought he was going to chase his own kick and then I...
William: Well I think that’s what happened.
Jean: I need to chase it regardless.
William: Yeah, you’ve got to go on that, I think. One of the things that we’ve been working on with the first team, and we actually sent a message on to Paul, cos the first kick Paul put up in the game, he then chased which, especially with a long kick, it’s just, it’s a contestable high ball, fine you can go and win your own high ball. But if you’re sticking it long, you might as well stay back and let someone else bring, so get someone, so Paul has got you.

Jean: Yeah, tell em to stay back.

William: Yeah, yeah, so he can then kick and stay, and so if you’re then with him, so he’s dropping, you then go, so at least we’ve then got that, that solidity.

Jean: It would have been nice of him to have told me that.

William: Yeah.

(Next Clip)

William: Firstly it was lovely, lovely footwork, just want you to bang, did well with that, good, and you’re going, and now where’s that space, where can I go, where can I go and you know, it was hell of a pass, but I’m not sure it was ever on to pass it. I mean, you know, I was like, you know, one of those passes where I thought, fucking hell how’s he going to get that there, I mean, you know, it was as perfect a pass as you can get.

Jean: But it probably wasn’t the right option.

William: Yeah, I think he was like, right...

Jean: I should have just, I could have, cos he was really chasing ...

William: If you took him to this gap in here, then, whether you score or not I don’t know, but I think.

Jean: ...yardage.

William: Yeah, it just made, it was almost, as soon as you’d got here, you’d already decided that Paul was the, the option, and maybe without scanning as much as you...

Jean: Yeah, he had such a big call though, I probably should have made it, I mean I kind of went with it at that, we didn’t really assess the situation.

William: But as I say, you know what I mean, the execution of the pass was great because you know obviously I didn’t think it was poss., I didn’t think it was a pass possible. And then this one here is you, you know, that’s your...
Jean: That’s just when I, I’ve, cos I know that I’ve been, what I’ve been doing from this, similar situation is just thinking of the next thing I’m going to do before I’ve got it in my hands. There, as soon as I felt it touch my hands, I was like alright I’ll go now and I didn’t actually have a proper hold of it.

(End of Clips)

William: Positive, positive for me, out of this. I mean, yeah, this isn’t a positive obviously, you know, we’ve got to fix this, you know, and these are the silly errors, as I said to you, I think I said on Monday night, I said, you know Garrard’s assessment of you is, World Cup Final, versus New Zealand, England against the fucking junior All Blacks, it’s 7 points and you know, and that could be the cost of the game, and that’s, that’s the level that he will judge you on, and, as we will, in terms of, you know. We will, we don’t want you to be at the Pirates, when we look at you, right, are you a good enough to be the Premiership winger and, you know, do that underarm post because it puts yourself under all sorts of pressure.

In the first example, the coach (Charles) begins the review with a comment regarding the value of the task they are about to engage in. Charles suggests that watching individual clips does not reflect the reality of the lived experience, which, from the start, devalues the exercise. He states that lack of time is the reason for this. The coach clearly values his time more than the value of the one-to-one review process, and in doing so seeks to establish his dominant social position (Jenkins, 2002). The protocol for reviewing was to watch the clips in sequence: pausing for discussion at relevant intervals; but this leaves little opportunity to reflect in any depth on the events being watched. This leads the coach to assume the role of both judge and jury. While the athlete on the other hand, charged with justifying the actions he has taken, assumes a passive role. There is little meaningful interaction between the coach and athlete. Both parties merely describe the events they are watching: although this is a necessary part of the reflective process, it is superficial, and could even constitute a barrier to learning, as it effectively removes the ‘meaning’, essential for experiential learning (Moon, 2004; Lave and Wenger 1991). Like the team meetings the actual value in the exercise is not to experiential learning, but operationalising a technology of self.
This results because the player has no control over their own learning direction. By assuming an evaluative role, the coach monitors and judges the activities of the player through their rugby specific role frame. In consequence, players become reliant on this external source of critical incident identification. This can be related back to Schön (1983), and the theory of reflection-in and on-action. As the players reflect in action, their ability to ‘see’ meaningful practice is dependent upon external frames of reference. With no access to external frames during competitive matches, the players are no longer able to ‘see’ meaning in practice.

The second vignette highlights the interaction between coach and player. Video plays a role in both participants’ understanding of the player’s athletic experience. The coach guides the player through his episodes of activity and offers an alternative point of view. These range in significance and meaning: some clips offering only surface level descriptions and closed answers. The coach can clearly be seen assuming the dominant role; and determines the success or failure of the player’s performance. The coach questions the work rate of the player, asking if he could have worked harder in a particular situation. The player responds, citing a communication error between his teammates. The coach’s first response is to question the work rate of the player, which could be interpreted as a display of dominate behaviour. The discussion then extends with the coach offering a solution and describing a virtual experimentation (Schön, 1983).

The player adopts a submissive role consistently agreeing with his coach’s findings, yet with no deeper questioning or rationale behind the actions cited. The level of interaction is both one way and limited in reflective judgment. The coach gives his point of view, and in so doing, becomes the holder of performance knowledge the player is then expected to understand this information without question. In this case, the player has only had two years’ experience in professional rugby; with so little depth to this experience, he has not built up a repertoire of workplace knowledge. This means that what he learns during the period of repertoire building will become part of the frame of reference he uses to evaluate future experiences. This can be linked to Lave and Wenger’s (1991) theory of limited peripheral participation. The player can only participate in the reflective conversation according to the limits of what he ‘sees’ and can communicate. One-to-one reflection sessions become the site in which these skills should have been developed.
The final clip features the most interaction between player and coach. The discussion centres upon the possibility of a passed, the coach heaps praise on the player, but argues that it had nonetheless been the wrong thing to attempt it. Both individuals agree and explore an alternative. This clip ends with the player explaining that he had already made up his mind regarding his actions by the time he received the ball: thereby displaying behaviour associated with reflection-in-action (Schön, 1983). By this, he connects the current situation to one he has already experienced, and uses this as a model for action. The review session seems to run smoothly, all points are taken on board, and the closing statement finishes with the coach benchmarking performance expectations. This closing point reinforces the hierarchical relationship between coach and player. The coach attempts to make a positive from the situation, but ends by suggesting that the player is not quite good enough: thus questioning his ability to play at the highest level. The coach employs his knowledge and experience in rugby as a tool with which to judge the player.

Interestingly, however, one of the coaches (Wayne), in his first year of coaching, admits he is not sure what to look for when going over individual clips with players.

“I don’t really know what to say when I go through David’s clips, he seems to do doing everything right, but just not sure really what to say. I just say he is a bit lazy towards the end of the game and that’s about it.” Wayne

Wayne, then, feels like he has to at least say something during the reflection sessions. This is because, if he does not, he will not be seen as an expert, and thus loses this position in the social hierarchy. This further underscores the limitations of experience for both coach and player. As a ten year playing veteran, Wayne has been used to watching and evaluating himself. In the same way that young players can only participate to the limits of their experience, the same can be said for coaches starting out. This also highlights a continued power and knowledge struggle: emphasising the limited role of learning within the formal discourse of reflection and self-analysis. Instead, in the many forms which reflective practice takes, it is used as a tool for the coach to position himself above another. This constitutes either a mechanism of controlling the way a player reviews his own performance; or of controlling the team as a whole. Even if the coaches do not have anything to add, they still feel as though they must say something; otherwise the players will be left thinking that they cannot interpret the game as well as they themselves can. Each one-to-one reflection session
can be characterised as a field on which the coach and player compete for capital. However, the cultural hierarchy inflicts the underlying social inequalities on the dominated (the players) (Jenkins, 2002). By participating in the video review process coaches and players reproduce the existing inequalities and reaffirm the social order.

This completely reshapes the role of reflective learning in formal settings. Given such limited levels of player involvement, not to mention the authoritarian protocol used, it is arguably as destructive as it is useful (Moon, 2004). The coach legitimately holds hierarchical power over the players and little interaction is encouraged during this process. Moreover, this one-to-one video review reaffirms the panoptical gaze of authority the players are constantly subject to. In performing regular one-to-one reviews the players learn what the expectations are of the coach and they can start to self-policing, with the reflective video process becoming what Foucault (1988) termed the “Technology of Self”.

This section has discussed the individual video review process, particularly the coach leading a player through the clips of their performance. On one level the coach and player sit together and watch the same clips and discuss what the coach thinks are relevant clips. However, the reality is very different, the coach decides the pace of the conversation, the timing of feedback and the depth of interaction. Clearly, this one-sided approach demonstrates the importance of social and cultural dominance in the struggle between these two agents. The following section explores the relationship between the coach and athlete further: investigating the roles and relationships assumed by both parties.

5.3 - Relationship between coach and player

The relationship between coach and athlete is both complex, and directly impacts upon the learning climate (Cushion & Jones, 2006). Previously, this study has discussed the role of formal learning environments in both large team meetings and one-to-one reviews. Little evidence of experiential learning has been found, but a compelling relationship has been uncovered that situates both the athlete and coach. Further evidence is required to analyse the relationship between coach and athlete, and assess how this impacts upon learning in professional rugby.

The following section explores a particular case involving Paul, a second year academy player, and Alan, an experienced coach. The case of Alan and Paul
demonstrates the press of experience on both player and coach. This case is also indicative of the experiences of the academy players and their socialisation in to the wider team. When asked about his relationship with one of the coaches (Alan), Paul suggested:

“Up and down relationship, in general he is a nice guy and a good heart, but he does not convey his points at the right time. He just says ‘this is shit’ and doesn't say why. For example, once straight after a game he said, "You didn't have a very good game today" and didn’t give any good feedback, he just criticizes me most of the time”. Paul

The relationship between the coach and players highlights the dichotomy between the player seeking feedback or assurance, and the coach’s criticism. The timing of feedback to Paul is a particular issue, as he explained:

“Straight after the Rams game, he said “how’s your hamstring? Well you need to come off next because you looked like you’re not interested and the people in the stands don't know that and they think you’re not interested.” I think it is worse because we lost that game, why do they need to bring it up straight after the game, just wait until the review! The week before he hammered me when we won and he hammered me for carrying so much so the next game I passed a lot more and he hammered me for doing that.” Paul

Paul clearly regards this feedback as overly harsh, unnecessary but also commonplace. When asked how he highlights things to players, Alan replied:

“You have got to get your message across, say I think he can’t pass off his left hand side, I will get some video together and show him then make him understand what I want. It’s the only way they learn, so you have to get them to understand what you mean.” Alan

The idea of making them understand provides further evidence of the coaches and the players’ involvement in the developmental process. Such are the very different modes of understanding on display, the two sides fail to arrive at a convergence of meaning (Schön, 1983). However well intended, such an example illustrates the dichotomy between player and coach in seeing practice.

Hauw (2009) argues that learning from experience raises notions of introspection, first-person analysis and reflective practice in the process of athlete transformation. In this case, the coach is the architect of truth and competence, with
the players made to understand this representation through authoritarian means. In one particular situation, the player questions this:

“I said to him, ‘mate you are hammering me at the moment, I have just come back from injury’ and he kind of laid off me a bit. It was refreshing and he picked me up really well, but he always tries to brush over the good stuff and focus on the negative. He doesn't understand you sometimes have a bad game“. Paul

This example is of particular significance because it underlines that the assumed role of reviews was to give negative feedback, and reaffirms the coaches’ position as dominant figures. This also shows that critical incident identification was based around performance correction, not positive reinforcement.

However, it should be acknowledged that this was not always the default position for the coaches. Paul makes a comparison between Alan (Academy Coach) and Sam (Director of Rugby),

“In the Giants game, my first 1st team start and I had been knocked out on the Monday night, during the next week he went past me on the stairs and said, "I have seen that Paul before, you didn't look interested". Whereas Sam, he said after a game I played well and "I played really well and great to see you back playing really well, you had a really good game last night, glad you’re over the Packers game". Paul

Schön (1987) argues that what the master (coach) sees and values will be very different to that of the apprentice (players). Moreover, the coaches also often contradicted one another, which lead to ambiguities in the players’ framing of performance information. Paul gives a clear description of this:

"When we played the Colts A team, I called a miss, I had John outside and I switched and he got taken into touch, the following week Garrard (coach) called me over and said to me, “Paul, I want to show you something, look if you get a forward don't just call a miss, do a tailor or something, don't just call a miss, organise something you have the people there", then with Alan he said ‘Great option, just dump John in’, Garrard came and got me to tell me this! I just don't trust Alan, because he contradicts the other coaches sometimes, it seems to me Garrard analyzes the game whereas Alan observed the game." Paul
Schön (1987) argues that even if practitioners (coaches) could produce good, clear and compelling descriptions of performance, (in this case) players, with their very different systems of understanding, would be likely to find them confusing and mysterious. In this case, it is not just the athlete and coach who struggle with convergence of meaning, but the coaching department itself clearly did not possess a unified frame of reference with which to interpret competent performance. This leads to a fundamental breakdown in the relationship between Alan and Paul. The player clearly puts this down to a difference in the way the two coaches interpret the game. Furthermore, this example demonstrates the inconsistencies inherent within the culture and transient nature of performance expertise. However, Paul does take some points from Alan on board, and regards working with a coach as a valuable learning tool. He contrasts this with his relationship with other members of the playing staff:

“To be fair, he does help me with things like my right hand fend and high ball stuff, but he still nitpicks about things and it is just too much… I mean I am not dropping the ball. You feel a lot more at ease with S & C and physios, who won’t judge you, and say you are weak, and I am not as truthful with the coaches because they will say I am soft.” Paul

Paul believed that to confide in the coaches is to display a kind of vulnerability. This links to the work of van Woerkom (2010) who argues that reflection takes place within a frame of reference of an individual (see Chapter 4), who then embodies an internalisation of wider cultural norms and values. This renders reflection, and subsequently, coaching and analysis, as a socially and historically embedded process, which is also political, and thus shaped by ideology. In this case, Paul does not want to approach a coach with a problem, and chooses instead to confide in the other practitioners around him.

However, a more experienced player (Greg) has learnt to deal with this kind of feedback from the coaches and argues that players have to accept it and move on:

“Sometimes the coaches do get on your back for no reason, they question your workrate or something. But you know you just have to be like, ‘you are a prick’, nod and agree with them and get on with it.” Gregg

The evidence here relates to the findings of Dimova and Loughran (2009) namely, that rationalisation may masquerade as reflection, and that justifying actions or behaviours should not be equated with reflection. The relationship between coach and athlete mitigates the level of reflection, and subsequent learning, the athlete is
able to engage in. In this case, because of the professionalised nature of the sport, the rationalisation of in-game events becomes a barrier to learning, as neither party were willing to collectively critically evaluate gaps in performance. Furthermore, Le Cornu (2009) argues that critical reflection depends upon the separation between individuals and the object of their attention. Yet, at Rangers RFC the separation between individual and object was never achieved. To some observers, the relationship between Paul and Alan was viewed a strong one, the two men spent large proportions of time going through video footage, and interacted in a student-mentor capacity. Indeed, the club’s consultant sport-psychologist suggested that:

"You can tell the relationship between Paul and Alan is a strong one, they have obviously spent a lot of time going through the footage together and built up a lot of trust between each other, it must be very inspiring for Paul to work with someone like that". Rupert

Yet previous comments from the player highlighted a clear gap between perception, and the reality in which the player operated. The evidence suggested that players masked their feelings and concerns towards coaches, preferring to confide in others. Although Paul viewed his relationship with Alan as a key learning tool, he had little trust in his judgment or accuracy in terms of analysing his performance.

The evidence here suggests the relationship between the coach and athlete to be one of fluctuating power, dominance and control (Cushion & Jones, 2006). As the athlete is increasingly pressured by political demands of accountability, practice itself suffers (Dimova and Loughran, 2009). Mirroring the findings of Groom et al. (2011), a key issue pertaining from this involves the range of coaching expertise, approaches and value systems which players have to factor in when interacting with one another. In just one game, Paul’s external feedback arrived from many different sources. Alan spoke to him immediately afterwards, Garrard waited until after the next game and in two different individual reviews, he was told to do different things in the same situation.

None of this is to argue that the use of video in order to drive reflective practice does not constitute a worthwhile exercise, but from the evidence detailed in this chapter, it is abundantly clear that practitioners need to present a clear frame of reference with which to review performance experience, and enable a convergence of meaning between both coach and athlete and, indeed, coach and coach.
5.4 - Conclusion

The coaching environment explored in this chapter both opens and closes experience-based learning pathways. Its formal elements can be characterised through a coach-led approach, which holds the implicit position that players are the receivers of knowledge. Performance knowledge - both empirical and subjective - is filtered through to the players via a coach, but this process stands in contrast to current understanding regarding the education of adults (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Both coaches and players are tied to a historic cultural model of information delivery (Groom et al., 2011) and cannot innovate from this without fear of a negative impact on the players’ performance. In consequence, coaches use formal learning settings as, in effect, sites of governance inevitably shaping the learning horizons of players, with both parties always left expecting the coach to disseminate and reproduce performance related information. On a deeper level, the coaches did not use the team meetings as site of learning, but instead opted for a programme of surveillance in order to establish legitimate power inside the coach / player relationship.

The data also found that during one-to-one reflection sessions, the players assumed a submissive role, thereby enabling the coach to dominate and judge the players’ actions during a match. This authoritarian relationship appears to stem from the players’ inactive participation within other formal learning environments.

Adult learning theories maintain that the individual’s ability to motivate and engage themselves in learning activities is key to success (Tusting & Barton, 2006), but in the case of the rugby team, their motivation comes not from task enjoyment, but from playing time and financial reward. This lead to a state of affairs whereby players aimed to ‘survive’ reflection and team review sessions, without being pulled up for negative performance. This necessarily impacts upon the coach-athlete relationship when in formal learning environments.

Moreover, although in non-formal environments, athletes learned from each other, this presented itself in vicarious and reproductive forms. The assumed social status of a player determined the level and quality of feedback received from teammates. At any stage, if a player was considered a threat, the community of practice closed and a form of hegemony took root.

In established communities of practice, practitioners take on different roles and participate in different ways, forming identities within the group (Wenger, 1998).
In the sub-culture of professional rugby, this is also the case, but the identity of the players was role dependent. Indeed, when players in the same position assumed the same role within the coaching culture, they often remarkably neither helped nor collaborated with colleagues of the same playing identity. Experientially, the forms of learning that took place were steeped in cultural and political hierarchy. The social relationship between teammates would limited opportunities the individual’s ability to become critically reflective. Furthermore, the ultimate judgment of players’ abilities and their professional pathways always rested with the coach.

Within such a relationship, as was identified particularly in the case of Paul, can be found a myriad of mixed messages, inconsistencies and contradictions. The coaches had a unified view of general patterns and principles of game play, yet contradict one another on the many micro-factors open to interpretation. For while the evidence suggests that coaches agreed on the macro, overriding principles governing a particular game or structural ideology, they harboured many different methods of execution on a granular day-to-day level. This is due to both the levels of experience they possess, and the routines and habits which individuals are used to (Schön, 1984). As a result, one-to-one reflection was essentially one way, and served to reaffirm social inequalities (Jenkins, 2002) and motivate the players through non-corporal means (Rail and Harvey, 1995)
Chapter 6 - The field of practice: A site of dominance

The following chapter uses a mixture of vignettes, field notes and transcriptions to illustrate the complex and multi-directional working environment within professional Rugby Union. They have been used because they offer means of enhancing the representational richness and reflexivity of qualitative research (Humphreys, 2005). Bourdieusian and Foucauldian frameworks are used throughout the analysis to give an interpretation and explanation of the interactions between players and coaches. The first section of this chapter demonstrates the structure of a normal day at the Rangers Rugby Club and highlights the mechanisms that shape practice and therefore learning. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the field of practice opened and closed opportunities for learning. However, the very act of establishing a functional learning environment created a constant struggle for various forms of capital and therefore social inequality within the club (Cushion & Jones, 2006). The second section examines the paradox social inequality created between players, and finally the third section discusses the structural hierarchy and its impact of learning. Like Foster (2003) the data illustrate that the very structure that was designed to help the athletes learn, i.e., physical training, reflective and video review, became the very tools the coaches used to totalise and regulate behaviour.

6.1 – Vignette: A day in the life

I arrive at work for 7:30am, after driving from my home to the training base, which is about 30 miles away. The roads are normally clear and I get to work without any problems. Some of the players are already in the gym for a weights session. When I arrive at work, the players are divided into groups so the conditioning coaches can monitor and manage the training sessions. The first group of the day is always the academy, followed the first team squad who are split into smaller groups of about eight. The groups work at 20- to 30-minute intervals. Meanwhile, I attend a review meeting with the coaches and analysts. These meetings are lead by the head coach and everyone in the group watches the weekend game. The coaches all watch the last game from start to finish, stopping to discuss points in the game and highlight salient aspects for the team and individuals.
The team won at the weekend against a mid-table team. In the room reviewing the game are the head coach (Charles), the director of rugby (Sam), the backs coach, (Garrard) the defence coach (William), the first team analyst (Aaron) and myself. All of the coaches attend and watch the game live and have seen the game again at least once before this meeting. Some of the coaches prepare reports for this meeting, for example, the defence coach counts every tackle made in the game, rates each tackle as effective or ineffective for each person in the team, and finally totals up the scores for each player and the team as a whole (see Appendix 7). The backs coach counts the number of completed tackles they achieved and how much ground they covered during the game. Again, this is totalled up for the players and the team as a whole. This data was compiled via a single database and reviewed periodically to identify trends. Before the coaches start watching the video of the game, statistical information from both the defence and backs coaches is printed on separate sheets of paper and handed to each coach, a copy is also pinned on a notice board outside the coaches’ office for the players to view when they come in. The players have to walk past these boards on the way to the meeting rooms.

The coaches also have the option of viewing the game from different angles because they get a film of the game from the broadcasting cameras. However, this is not frequently done, they just watch the broadcast feed that goes out on television. Finally, for each game the coaches choose a different player to follow with a dedicated camera, this ‘player camera’ is synchronised with the main broadcast view so they can see where a particular player is in relation to the rest of the game. Also, some of the players wear GPS units on their backs and heart rate monitors. These units record the player’s speed, global position every millisecond and also measure g-forces with an accelerometer. This information is collated and displayed live during games and reported on prior to the review meetings. The players are all aware of the video recorders, statistics, measuring devices and the coaches’ review processes. The only point they do not know is which player will be followed with a player camera. They only find out which player will wear the GPS units 2 hours before kick off. In summery during competitive games players are monitored by GPS, watched by individual player cameras, distributed into manageable groups, and their behaviours are recorded statistically. Arguably, this player performance data were used as a means of domination of the players by the coaches (Cushion & Jones, 2006) and
contributed to the normalisation and, consequently, the self-regulating nature of each rugby player. This concept is explored further below.

The meeting starts with the head coach going over the tackle stats and suggesting what he thought went wrong (see Appendix 7). The meeting concludes after three hours, with the coaches in general agreement, after a 30-minute video presentation setting out different aspects of the game. This is followed by another 30-minute video presentation about the next team they are going to play.

At this point it is about 10:30am: all the players have finished their individualised weights sessions, have eaten food provided by the club, and are generally relaxing in the common room before the first team meeting. Some of the players will go to the video review room to watch the game from the weekend. The video room is about three meters square, dark and the windows have been covered with black tape so no light can get in. A desk runs against the longest wall with three laptops, each with a copy of the game on it. When using one of the laptops in the video room, the players can either watch the full game, the full game with the deadtime taken out (a condensed version of around 40 minutes for the full game), the set plays, such as lineouts or scrums, or individual clips. The individual clips are 10-second video clips concentrating on each time the player comes into direct contact with the ball or part of general play. These clips can be watched seamlessly back-to-back with no gaps. While this is a tool players use to review their own clips, some also use it to review other people’s clips. For example, the locks that did not play can come into the video room and watch the clips of the locks that did play in order to see what they have been doing. This therefore provides the means for the players to monitor their performance and also the performance of their teammates.

The players have a 30 window to review their video clips before the meetings start. The team meeting is at 11:00am: this is a meeting in which the head coach presents the coaches’ findings from the morning meeting to every player in the team, whether they played in the match or not. The room is small for the number of people, dark and overcrowded; the players sit on blue plastic chairs. The player’s fill the room and some have to sit on the floor at the front while the senior players have their own seats right at the back or in the front row. The head coach Charles stands at the front of the room next to a projector screen, facing the players. The first team analyst Aaron sits behind a desk with a computer to the left of the head coach, controlling the
presentation and videos. The three remaining coaches and four medical staff stand on the right-hand edge of the room and watch the presentation in silence.

Two of the players, Gary and Anthony, are wearing a different type of training tops to the rest of the team; they are questioned about why they do not have the correct kit and fined £20 (see Appendix 6).

Charles: Right be for we get under way, some issues have been brought to my attention, it seems the usual suspects have turned up without the correct kit. So Gary and Anthony, how to you plead to this charge?

Gary: Charles, it’s the same kit, just because it doesn’t have my name on it?

Charles: You right it is the right kit but the wrong name, and that’s a fine. My daughters wear each others clothes, I don’t expected it from you...

(Crowd start laughing and mocking Anthony and Gary)

Anthony: What? All the lads do it....

The players are required to bring a folder with them to every meeting. The coaches look out for the presence of the folder and individual players are fined if they do not have them. Some of the players try to hide each other’s folders to get them fined, but no one would ever try to hide Philip’s, Patrick’s or James’, as the senior internationals they hold too much social power in the group and are the ‘untouchables’. Particular players are targeted such as Ian (new to the team, seen as a joker) or someone on similar social level, that is a squad players. Interestingly, one older player has a different way of managing this problem and has developed a strategy to cope with institutional rules. Patrick’s folder never leaves the meeting room he hides his in the analysis room on the top shelf, behind a set of books. Each day he just comes to the analysis room, picks up his folder before the meeting and returns it straight away.

Patrick: I keep it (the folder) in your room because I don’t want to carry it around, I don’t keep anything in it either anyway. I know Charles (head coach) likes to make an example out of me. So if I keep it in here, I can just get it.

The meeting starts with the head of medical addressing the group about the week’s training schedule and any changes in the programme and is followed by the head coach (Charles) taking the team through the key points from the game; these
points had been agreed by the coaches at their earlier meeting. This takes about 40 minutes and has no input from the players or other coaches:

*Charles:* A couple of things I wanted to address with you in relation to the Spartans game. First of all, which is an organisational thing, kick for goal. When the opposition are kicking for goal, numbers on shirts, people who are marking the posts please, who would that be? Seven and fourteen. Seven and fourteen are actually marking the posts. So we'll just slo-mo this: turn the lights down please. It's sod's law because of course it's hit the post and it's alerted us. We've got Anthony standing in an incorrect position, so that could be a fine, Anthony. *(laughter from the player)* Not that I'm bitching. We've got Richard – you're probably too wide there. And because we've left off a post there, somebody else has got to really pick it up, so just got a bit closer in there, and there's no sign there of you, James, and that's probably because you didn't realise, because you've not played seven before. It's the law of sod. But seven and fourteen. Something actually as well just to be aware of – go back a fraction *(talking to the analyst controlling the video)* – is you'd have to argue, and again it's three small things, we're just picking it up. If we're going to look to go quick, we don't actually need Simon standing ten yards up... just get back inside the... too, so we're actually all in a position to win, and go from wherever it happens to be. So just very small technical things, but if they're worth pointing them out at the start of the season, they're worth pointing out, people that are unlucky with the... there, etc. But people are in the wrong position, so just to make sure we have that sorted.

*Charles:* The second thing I want to deal with, which is what fundamental is. Twenty-five minutes to go, we go 32/16 up. We've been a little bit soft in some ways in the first half, but we should have been well ahead and put some good rugby together. Game's finished, three scores, and yet we manage to turn into Fred Karno's army again, doing the old... making mistakes and getting ourselves into a mess. Thought process when we got back there, Phillip?

*(No response from Philip)*

*Charles:* Phillip kicks the conversion. Chat on the field at this point? Same again, keep going...

*(No response from the players, and moves on to the next topic)*

*Charles:* All right. So let's just have a quick look at it, because I think we've got to just decide in our mind how this is happening. And it's The Seahawks of course in different circumstances again.

*(Coaches' video of the highlights starts playing)*

*Charles:* We're way off in terms of the re-start. Then we're into something that we've seen a bit of in the last few weeks as well. There's a ball on the floor and we don't really want to go down on it. We're sort of hanging around, can't be bothered, they want it more than we do. React. And, suddenly, they've got the ball. Do we want to defend now? Mark's been okay. Tom... sloppy in the side, it was in the side, so they're on an advantage on a penalty. Gary doesn't want to make a tackle, or Gary doesn't make a tackle, Philip doesn't really want to do it so somebody else comes and cuddles him. And suddenly we're under pressure here near our own line. It's a series of errors, nobody wants to make them, but it's so easy under any circumstances. This bit here's very good, we're
off the line, we've solved the problem. We've fixed the issue, but the penalty is against Tom. The ref. doesn't get within thirty metres of where the offence took place, which is probably one of his best decisions of the day. They kick the penalty and re-start. Communication: James, Martin. Actually the chase is really good. They come up with the ball with that same strategy two, three minutes later, mind, but we don't communicate on that.

And again we just get sloppy. This is a reasonable kick from the 10, it's Phillip I think who fields it and does a decent ball up, and again the chase, you're just not quite at it physically. Gary, Patrick, spin out... round him, and off they go and we're in trouble. Is it a yellow card? Don't think so, but the point is they've bust us and they've put us under pressure where referees are looking for incidents in that area. So we're now on a yellow card.

(next series of video clips)

Charles: Into the corner, we don't bring them all down. What are we standing off to do? A smash? No. Far too slow. We've allowed the bell end to bank it, and frankly, with what Gregg does here – and he actually had to do it because there were no red shirts on the floor – he could have been done for the long walk of shame like he did in the previous game for the same incident.

Anthony has held there; probably had to hold, actually, because they've executed it quite well. Give them a pat, they executed the play quite well, and you had to hold, I think, otherwise you were in trouble with the... short. We've... and we suddenly find ourselves ten points down. Why am I raising it? Because we can't afford to switch off like that, and that series of errors there, every single one of them was avoidable, but we made errors there. We don't target for this...re-start, we don't... to go down on a ball, we give away a sloppy penalty, we... a tackle, miss a tackle, penalty, we don't catch a ball we probably could have caught with communication... a re-start. We don't kick chase and nail the kick well enough, two people switch off, one guy then comes back, it looks wrong, we don't pull them all down, and we're ten points. That is how quick things change. That's what we've got to understand. We have played some really, really good rugby – you're doing to see that in a second – some really good rugby, but you can't afford to give away ten points in two or three minutes, no matter what's going on. And that put us into that sort of pressure that we didn't need to be in. Again things that we've been negative about ourselves before this season. How did we respond to that? We responded by catching the bloody kick-off with Tom/Martin duet thing that they've obviously been working on. Caught it, win the fucking thing back, and off we go, and we start to put immediate pressure on. So this is not a situation whereby we don't respond well to being put under pressure. This is just us switching off, thinking the game's over. And the situation can change very quickly. I said to Ben when he went 32/16, there's no coming back to re-start, I said The Spartans had better watch out here or this is going to be fifty... the way things are going here. And, suddenly, in a split second we lose focus. So just those things that we do mentally well most of the time, next job focus, focus, focus. We cannot afford to disrespect and just switch off and allow people a toehold in the game, because, God, it can change so quickly.

In terms of our performance on the day, in attack there were some great pictures. That didn't surprise anybody in this group as to how well we performed on the day. Everything in training was right, and we took it into the field. One thing that pleased me very much was the way we kept getting extra
putters in when we went round the corner. Something we've talked about, we've tried to manufacture one, two, three calls, whatever. It was that allowed it to happen. That sort of thing was happening, whether we were missing out or playing inside balls. Our ruck clearly on the day was consistently good. I don't think we can rely on the fact that we were clear rucks for definite on Friday. I don't think it's all...I don't think it's absolutely set in our game but our consistency of ruck clear was terrific. Our support play on the day was also outstanding. When people throw, people were on the shoulder to support and actually nail things down.

The defence coach (William) then takes over to discuss the opposition team’s patterns; again a video is played on the projector and the coach talks while the team watch.

*William:* The... team, they run a Denmark pattern. Normally they're not... Then Alfie... great. That was like an apex pattern where they go wide. And they go... in and they go wide again and try to outflank you with a ten and two... .defence... they... they drive them all, and they... it. The re-start play... an A1 set-up, and they go through a B3, A3 kick. Just on the speck, bigger story, number seven and he's good on the floor. In defence they hit all these targets, so I presume they'll rock it, rock in an out, passes will help. Just watch out for the... Rambini to...? ... and hooker... and Massey. And just opportunities to attack... nine, ten channel, about four defenders. To Pat... twenty-four, and defending's a hot... They've got four wall defence, and have the opportunity to chaos, and play a hard... have the opportunity to... in the rugby factory. And lastly Larry’s asking to have opportunity to do our B5s, A5s... don't mark up... so really target that as well.

The head coach, Charles, then summaries the video sessions and asked the group whether they have any questions. No players ever asked anything at this point.

*Charles:* Anything else you want to look through? Anybody else? Quite a few of you, I'm sure, the group, the video group, have had a look at some things. They're passing information through as well. Anything you're not clear about? Have you got a picture of what you... is? And we'll build into the week and work through exactly how it is that we need... what we need to chuck at them to, to get things absolutely right.

*(silence from the people in the room, as they look at each other)*

*Charles:* Okay, as I said to you earlier, the one thing that we have not approached today, which we'll have a look at in the... tomorrow on footage terms and then work on tomorrow afternoon, are the things that defensively we've been a little bit off over the course of the last two weeks. Six tries in two matches, we can't be getting that soft, so we need to have a look at some areas of that. Because of that, because we've got a short week, and because it's soft out there, we're training this afternoon. You make sure that your heads are right, however, for when you come in tomorrow, and we've got a unit session...
in the morning, followed by a defence session in the afternoon. You'll then be off on Wednesday – we make sure we travel up to Ravens clear in our minds how we've got to deal with this lot, and sort them out on Friday night. Done? Thank you guys.

The meeting finishes with the backs coach giving instructions about the following training session and what they are going to work on. The players then leave, going down to the dressing room to get their boots and training equipment. The coaches remain in the room and have a quick chat about how the meet went, with some general small talk, while slowly making their way down to the training field.

Charles: I think they got the message.
William: I think so… well, if they didn’t they are going to struggle in this session – a lot of them will be running to Tesco and back.

The coaches frequently used physical punishment during training sessions. Sending a player to run to ‘Tesco’ was a punishment the coaches used if the players could not follow a specific pattern of play during training. Tesco is a shopping centre about 500 metres away from the main training field. As players are getting changing in the dressing room, they had to wait at the entrance until the entire team is ready. Only when every player was wearing the correct kit for the weather, their boots and body strapping, they would run over to the coaches who were in the middle of the field with the balls to get further instruction. Charles said he implemented this routine because the players kept arrive late to sessions. So, if they all come over together, they had to wait for the last person to be ready before they came over. This way they all got punished if they were late, instead of one person. This approach can be seen as a mechanism that sought to reinforce the coaches’ spatial and temporal control (Denison, 2007)

All of the coaches make a point of ensuring this process is followed and the players do not come out one at a time, but as a group. They are also informally inspected for the correct kit. Anyone wearing the wrong kit is sent back to the changing room or fined on the spot (see Appendix 4).

Kit Man: William (Defence Coach) told me if they come to me before a training session asking for kit, I shouldn’t give it to them, because they should be organised. They are all allocated kit at the beginning of the season and they should have it with them.
This again shows that the coaches had explicit strategies they employed to regulate the player’s behaviour (Gore, 1998). They make them run to Tesco, when appropriate, they make them wait for each other before coming to the training session and they ask the kit man not to give them kit at specific times of the day.

By this time, it is about 11:20am, training has begun, the players have been split into three groups and each group is with an individual coach for about 15 minutes before the groups rotate to a different coach. The training session is being filmed using a single camera from an elevated position; the players do not know which of the three groups are being filmed. Eight of the players are also wearing the GPS units with live data displayed on a laptop near to the head coach. On the way to the training session, the coaches discuss what is going to happen:

_William:_ Oh who is this? Some England doctor. He can fuck off.
_Charles:_ Who is this coming?
_William:_ It’s Anthony, isn’t it? Is it right to say that the England doctors can’t say if our players can play or not?
_Charles:_ That’s a good question… hum… I think it’s up to us. Who is it, do you know?
_William:_ Yeah, it’s the fucking England doctor.
_Charles:_ I wish we were in Durham, Newcastle or Manchester.
_William:_ Why? Coz it’s hard to get to?
_Charles:_ Yeah.

(change of subject)
_William:_ A solid twelve minutes for Ben.
_Charles:_ How much should he have?
_William:_ Five.
_Charles:_ How much have I got here? Ten?
_William:_ Yeah, we have five minutes, then 1 minute, then two, two minutes, but I will send them to the water bucket between the 2 sets. To get together as a group and have a chat.
_Charles:_ Do you want me to do a pattern of it to start or not?
_William:_ Naaa, they don’t need to, do they?

The session starts with each group being directed to specific areas by the coaches and working with a single coach. The groups rotate around the areas of each of the three coaches after a 10-minute drill. When each group has rotated around all the coaches, the team comes together in a huddle to get feedback from the coaches and senior players.

_William:_ You have to be more aggressive–if we think it’s a kill opportunity, Gary has eyes in terms of numbers. So, you can see, that’s what the ruckers are for!
Gregg: If the ruck is dead, then we shout DEAD! DEAD! DEAD! And if it’s a kill, it’s fucking KILL! KILL! KILL!
Patrick: You guys don’t wait for the pads, that’s bollocks. If the pads are too far behind, we go beyond.
William: Can you up your intensity, coz you’re fucking this up at the moment. You’re walking, Ian!
Patrick: The 9 responds to the 10, we’re not doing it. Get it together!
Charles: Good chance reactions in that set.
William: I like what I see in principle. In terms of what we’re doing, its just that reaction we have got to have, and I think Charles said it: at times we’re almost looking at what we want to do first. Actually our first reaction is just to go through there anyway, and actually they send four, but the first five managed to bounce and get back off them, we might have disrobed more then the opportunity gives us. It is reactions to stuff we’ve got to improve.
Charles: William, on that if we are in attack and yet we react differently for some reason – we have a ball carrier and he is dominant in the tackle – what we do is clear, we go beyond the ball. We are not interested in the ball are we? We go beyond, that’s what we have been working on. We, if we make a dominant situation, just get beyond the ball. Stop looking at the ball, I guarantee if you look at the ball to pick it up, some cunt will knock you over as you’re doing it. GET BEYOND THE BALL! The ball will look after itself, if we have cleared the fucking thing, yeah?

This takes about three minutes. The final part of the training session lasts 15 minutes. The team is split into the starting team and the second team. They play a series of full pitch, full contact games lasting three minutes with a one-minute rest. If the ball goes out of play, a new ball gets thrown in, so the action is nonstop. Only 15 people are on each side, so some players have to stand on the sidelines and they are interchanged when a three-minute section is complete. The pace is intense, the players are clearly working very hard and, at each break, when resting, they put their hands on their knees and generally look tired.

Adam: I am fucked, that last set (finding it hard to speak) completely did me.
Ian: I am going to feel that in the morning.

However, looking tired, by putting hands on your knees or putting your hands on your head is frowned upon by the coaches and the medical staff. If a player is caught doing this, they are shouted at with a particular phrase, “Next Job”. This is shouted over and over at the players. It is meant as a reminder to keep going and not to show any sign of weakness or fatigue to the opposition. Other key words are shouted during the whole session, such as “fix it”, “rocket”, “hot”, and “kill” (see Appendix 3).
These three-minute games are refereed by the academy coach William and if he sees an infringement, he does not award a penalty, but sends the offender to run around a set of goal posts 200 metres away as a punishment. In this session, four people make that run. When the training games finally are finished, the players and coaches go into another huddle the coach speaks words of encouragement and then ends the session.

*Charles:* Perfect, YES! YES! YES! Arthur, you could even practise here, sitting behind the line and coming into the line on the counter attack at times, I am not saying all the time. It’s so easy to see, Daniel won that battle, we get out, and we win that battle we get in. William, we could do a lot worse then having our back three work behind this and if we see ‘KILL’ we can just come from the back. So, next time, if you’re a spare man, come from the back. Gary, watch for Arthur coming from the back, if we turn them over, and it’s watching, no, we haven’t got that, no we haven’t got that, right we fucking got it. I am off.

*William:* Come in scrum half. Has everyone got a picture of what we are looking at? It is slightly artificial when you got, a bag but we are trying to keep away from killing your body in terms of what we’re doing. For our last set over there, grab a drink if you want to come in, and repeat the work we are doing. If you are honest in your rucking, lets say yellows carry it in and blues try to get there. If someone gets hold of you, you think in a game situation you would have been rucked out of it. Be honest enough not to dive round the back of him and go for the ball. It’s an honesty call between the group of you, but if there is no fucker there, you don’t do a job and you just go stand there like this, you have your full right to turn over the ball.

*Charles:* That drill, we should do more of it. I know you get bored of the same drills, that drill has got a lot, and I tell you why. Suddenly we turned over and our chance went JUN! JUN! JUN! And that’s what we haven’t been getting in our game. Next time, if we run someone in behind the back, the back three – Daniel, Martin, take turns to stick behind the line of nine. Has he dominated that? No. Has he dominated that? Yeah, we fucking got it. Have you got that picture guys?

*William:* Phillip, Richard we good?

(No response from any of the players)

*Charles:* Thanks, guys – good session.

Some players stay on to do some individual work, such as kicking at goal or lineout jumping and throwing, but the atmosphere is much more relaxed and set at the players’ pace rather than as directed by the coaches. The coaches walk in a group from the middle of the field towards the complex, straight in to the canteen. They are always the first to sit down to eat on a table on their own. Some of the players go for a shower, some stay on the field and talk, while some go in to eat with the coaches. The
canteen would not be awarded a Michelin star, but the food is plentiful. Today it is lasagne with a range of salads, smoked fish and nuts. Lunch is always a noisy affair with lots of chat and bravado.

By this point, the players have eaten three times and it is only 1pm. When the coaches have finished eating, they go upstairs to the office. The players stay in the canteen or go either to the common room or the video room.

The next meeting is at 1.30pm, this is when the forwards and backs split up. The forwards always have their meeting first, lead by the first head coach Charles. They discuss lineouts and scrums. The forwards have lots of technical calls and names for different parts of the lineout. The head coach invents these and the players are expected to keep track of new developments, as instigated by the coach (see Appendix 4 and 5 for a description of names and calls). When the players and coach have come up with a set of parameters for the coming game as based on this document, they will discuss the scrums. Again, a similar document is collated by the head coach at the start of the season with a great deal of technical information and the players are expected to learn every aspect of it and keep pace with changes (see Appendices 4 and 5).

The forwards meetings are always fast-paced, led by the head coach Charles with little input from the players. The head coach takes the players through a video of the next opposition’s lineouts. The analyst, under the strict direction of the head coach, has prepared the video. As the video plays, the head coach speaks to the players in a coded language, based on variations of the lineout document.

Charles: Right, listen because I am not going to hang around here, so make sure you are listening, because if you haven’t got your heads switched on here, I will go loppo out side. If you don’t understand, then you say I don’t understand at the end. We ready?

(No response from the players)

Charles: Drop lineout, Cowboys an important one of the lineout. They have two full lineouts which are the most used, this one is one as well, depending on who they select. The number will vary as to who jumps, where their 6 is used, quote a lot who often has 7 on his back, who is a lineout jumper. They can often use their jumpers or second rows as lifters, but I wouldn’t get too bogged down in that. As far as the dropped lineout is concerned, key thing is, which we didn’t do well is, and we talked about it last week, if we are going to run this set up which we are in again this week, we have got to understand when three and four and five are working together, depending on where we are in the pitch. So, I have said to Wayne, if we are in the last 30 metres of the line
in attack – i.e., they are in defence – I want 3,4,5 to almost certainly work together. It could be that you decide to jam up 1,6,8, or it could be that 6,7,2 could be tight, that’s your decision to make, but 3,4,5 must not allow them to win an easy ball at the front, if we are in the last 30 metres. If we are not in the last 30 metres, my expectation is that 4 is talking about cutting out the front, but the reality is, the main job of 4,5,1 is to cut out the drops on 8 and 5, that’s the main job of 4,5,1, is to cut out the drops on A, 8 and 5, if they Swindon, which is ball C, it’s about seeing if we can react from 4,5,1 into 3,4,– not easy, but that’s what we will try to do. There is no excuse for us not to get 4,5,1: 5 in the air, on drop on 8 and 5. I repeat, there is no excuse, I won’t expect that, zero tolerance to that. Plenty of tolerance for not getting back for a Swindon, but zero tolerance on the right area of the pitch to stop a drop 8 and a drop 5. We are then going to work on a 6,8,2 and 6,8,2 will stop the drop on 7 and we will look for 6 and a reaction on 8 as they are working well on this at the moment. So we look for 1,6,8 to get the lift on 6 if he can. So 1 has a tougher job and he has to react to 6’s call when he can, and when 5 goes to him, their 5 goes to 6. The other one that’s hard to react to, in the Swindon ball, the F ball – do you see it? – when 5 comes to 6 and 6 comes forward. The key thing there is that 4 and 5 stay awake – we get a call from 1 when he leaves 5, and then he works back to it. There is a reasonable chance he can get back there, as long as 4 and 5 stay awake and don’t give up, so we need a Swindon call, when 1 leaves his post to go to 6 then 4 and 5 stay awake and indeed take a step back. Has anybody got any problems with the rules I have just gone through there before I show them on the footage?

(no response from the players)

Charles: Everybody absolutely understand?

(no response from the players)

Charles: Yeah, right play, if they go to a 3,2,2 and indeed if they go to a 2,3,2, which is the next, then 5 and 1 must swoop, OK? So 5 and 1 swoop, if they come in quickly in these walk in balls, both A and B you have to, you wouldn’t even know if it is a drop or what ever. So the rules of 3,4,5 talking them out of that apply and 4,5,1 would be working together, if you get my drift, because that’s our default position. Does everybody understand what I said there? Yeah? As far as this is concerned, its just about 3,4,1 clearly covering the front – 3 and 4 have to stay alive to any Swindon movement, where 4 goes to 6 and comes back, i.e., C. Some of your sheets have mistakes, because I was in here late last night, and I did the bloody number and I came in and looked before I left and I wasn’t happy, but rather than sending out 30 more sheets, if you look at number A which makes me worry a bit on the drop that you haven’t seen it. F we have agreed its 4,5,1 on the drop not 1,6,8, because that’s the Swindon movements. OK? Now on this sheet here, that C is incorrect, its 3,4,1, so I am saying that 3,4,1 will cover A, and I am saying on the C ball is a Swindon looking for 3 and 4 to stay alive and 1 works back, so 1 is working between 4 and 5, alright? If they go 6 on the walk or 6 forward that is going to be 1,5,6, so 1,6,5 are going to cover B, they are going to cover E. D is harder for them, much harder, because they will get clamed out of it, and 6,8,2, and my expectation is you will cover F. G is harder, but its not that far forward. So, in this incident here, we don’t have a 1 we have 5 and 1 swooped and we are not looking at getting 6 up in the air in any circumstances. So 6,8,2 you will defiantly stop F. G is a little bit harder, you
will see that in a second and you will be able to get a flat run from behind them. Footage. Play, you wouldn’t even know that was a 3,2,2, but it could be a 3,4,5 cutting that out, depending on where it is on the pitch. That is the 8 forwards ball, which again is a 3,4,1. This is a walk-in on 6. Stop it there, please, Aaron. Just go back. So, you have just got that picture. There is that 3,2,2. So, now, if this guy goes into this area there, my expectation is 5 and 6 will come forward and I will turn and lift them – that’s easy to cite yeah? That’s the one, the Swindon ball, where 3 and 5 have got to stay awake, so I would go back, then he has to turn and be ready to get up there. I don’t think that is unreasonable. If someone misses out on that, our worst scenario, there should be a one-man lift on 4. All right?

The meeting lasts about 10 minutes and the coach talks for the entire time. Finally, he finishes by saying “All right? Good, let’s go out then”. The forwards then make their way down to the training field and work in small groups on lineouts, then scrummaging. Before the next meeting, I discuss the pace of the complex language used by the coach with the head analyst.

Aaron: If you were just an academy player and you didn’t know that much about lineouts, and it takes a fucking age to, to learn what he’s talking about. You listen back to his commentary, you wouldn’t have a fucking clue what he’s talking about, because he, it’s all referred to as ‘Ball A’, ‘Ball B’, ‘Ball C’, and he said, and, and so, it just comes across as Ball A is covered by 1,5,6 and if 6 moves, now he’s talking about the opposition, 5 shoots forward, onto 1, um, a little bit like Ball B, but if Ball B happens, we close up tight at the front. And all this sort of stuff, and all it is, is letters and numbers. So when you’re listening you’re not actually taking it in.

SL: Well it’s a code isn’t it? It’s a form of code and they’re…
Aaron: And he’s not, actually, no-one’s actually taking any of the information in. I think what… the problem is, he expects people, because he’s got an analytical mind, he expects people to watch the clips in there, and then have an idea, which you do, you form an idea of what they’re doing, but they don’t come away knowing what they really need to look at.

It is now the turn of the backs to have a meeting. This is lead by the long-serving backs coach. Although a lot of the players have known the backs coach for many years, they seem to lack respect for him, as he struggles for their attention during meetings. The backs meeting is relaxed compared to the forwards meeting, with player’s feet on chairs, as they lay on the floor and try to play jokes on each other. A large piece of blue tack has been modelled into the shape of a penis and stuck on the light switch by one of the players. Unsuspectingly, when one of them goes to turn the light off for presentation they touch it and the whole room, including the coach, burst out laughing. It takes a long time for them to calm down, as the bravado
gets stronger and stronger. After about 10 minutes, everyone settles and the meeting starts. The backs do not have a documented list of actions, calls or set ways of doing things like the forwards, but they still communicate in the same way.

Ben: Daniel and I had a chat about the Cowboys and he is going to tell us about those. Daniel can you come and join us?
Daniel: Short and sharp lads, that’s how I like it.
Ben: Sorry, before you start, the reason we are doing this is because I wasn’t here yesterday and I believe Charles did an extensive review this morning. That’s why I have not put it on the agenda. I… apologies for that.
Daniel: Basically, typical flair team in my eyes. They love playing out wide, they love passing the ball around and love off loading and stepping. I mean from a team point of view and the back off first phase, they go wide. I think it is vital we don’t just drift – we have to push a lot, unlike them. They drift and turn their hips and drift heavy. If you look at The Steelers, you look at The Jaguars, the boys that played against them, they gained 25 to 30 metres from going wide off the first phase. Now, although their 10 is a very weak defender, I personally don’t think we should target him too much because that will take us away from our strengths. We are playing against a team that will let us play to our strengths, you know. We can spread the ball wide and we can play that kind of rugby and get on the front foot. They will let us do that. If we are going to do that, we have to look after the ball in wide channels.
Ben: Can I just butt in there? I think the thing about the 10 being a weak defender, is about who is in at 10. One of them is not a weak defender, he is not afraid to stand his ground. Sorry, carry on.
Daniel: They love their offloads, so it’s vital in defence that the guy next to you makes the tackle, you have to block the off load, block the off loading channels, that will give us the chance. When they are in the wide channels, it’s the perfect opportunity for us to kill it. They are very similar to us as a team; if we put them on the front foot, then they will beat us. Where they are not similar to us, is they are a bunch of individuals, kick chase isn’t great, and if we do well as a team, we can win this. It’s the perfect opportunity for us to play to our strengths.
Ben: OK thanks Daniel.
Anthony: I have been watching them over the weekend. I think we can get inspired by them and really take it to them. Get back to play the way we want to play, off load it, playing with width.
Daniel: One last thing, they will try anything. As a back line, our wingers might not be covering our back line, and they will sit on the touchline and look for cross-field kicks all day.
Ben: Respect: that’s one of the things I was going to put on the board. Respect their kicking game, but I try and avoid talking too much about them. It would be stupid to go out there and not think about what they are doing. I presume you have looked at a number of their games; they have been available for about 10 days. Anyone tell me a move they have run off set phase that you recognise?
Anthony: I haven’t seen much apart from them getting the ball wide. They are very good passers they just miss, and hands…
Ben: I will show you a couple of things that I watched, which we should all recognise. They run Alphas, they run Pinches. When Daniel said they are
similar to us, it is remarkable how similar they are. They might not call them
the same move, but they are the same plays. Just very quickly, we don’t even
need to stop and go through it. Just run through this…

(video starts playing)

Ben: First one, stop. I just want to make you aware because we need to run this
in the team thing, as a clearing pattern. Centre field scrum 8 will go, 10 and
15, 12 and 14 over here 13 and 11, 8 will pick into here, 12 clears out and
meanwhile 10 and 15 now slid round this way. They will fire a pass or play
down here or put the kick in, into that space here. I am going to let the rest of
them run and you will see some things that you probably will recognise.

(Clip play with no sound or comment from the coach or players)

Ben: Some things there we should all recognise, as we said, they are very
similar to us. OK, boys, really concentrating, short and sharp session, I will
see you down there.

The coaches constantly refer to the words in the ‘On Field Speak’ document
(see Appendix 3), and again work through a list of clips with the coach giving a
commentary as they watch the video. This only takes 5-7 minutes and then the players
make their way down to the training field. For this training session, I am on the roof
of the training facility filming the players. To get to the roof, I have to go out of the
fire exit, jump from the stairwell over to a lower roof and then place a ladder from the
lower roof to the roof of the main building. The ladder is about three feet too short to
reach the main roof, so I have to pull myself up the rest of the way. Once on the roof,
I cannot get down without help. However, the view over the training field is excellent.
I can see everything that is happening across two rugby pitches, taking directions on
what to film via text messages from Charles.

This training session lasts 60 minutes. The coaches finish by congratulating
the players on a good session, but also warn about not dropping their standards during
the week. Everyone leaves the field and the kit man is left to pick up the equipment
and pack everything away. The coaches go to the office and start to review the
training session straightaway using the video I filmed. They ask me to pull out a few
clips for tomorrow morning’s meeting and some one-to-one sessions. They want to
pull out some of the players’ lack of work during the games, particularly the two
props that Charles describes as:

“Lazy at getting back, they could have worked much harder in games 2 and 3.
I want them to know we watch this training footage and don’t just do it for the
sake of it.”
I produce the clips and then help the head analyst Aaron go through the previous match footage of the next opposition. It is about 2:45 and the players are leaving for the day, and the coaches are the only people left in the building. I start watching and making notes on a game while the coaches discuss current injuries in a briefing with the head physio. The coaches have a few nicknames for the head physio (Dr Death or Mr Shipman – a reference to the serial killer, Harold Shipman). They discuss the current status of the injured players and the time-scales for getting them back playing. This is led by the director of rugby Sam and seems more like an interrogation then a briefing. The meeting is cut short because one of the coaches needs to leave early. By 15:30 everyone has left the training facility and offices, apart from the other analyst and myself. We discuss the games we have to watch and organise an example video to show the coaches tomorrow. The relationship between the coaches fluctuates and behind each other’s backs, they complain and question motivations. Fundamentally, the coaches set the cultural of the whole club. They do this by implementing an ideology (Chapter 4 p84, and Appendix 2 to 9) that is both normalising and totalises to the players (Gore, 1998).

On the face of it, the coaches get on with each other. However, as the coaches sought to dominate the players using symbolic violence and authoritarian discourses (Cushion & Jones, 2006), they also attempt to use the same tactics on the other coaching staff through the use of bravado and 'banter’. For example, the coaches would constantly refer to each other in a negative way often reinforcing negative gender and racial stereotypes. Aaron and Charles have aligned their views on the roles and motivations of the other members of the coaching staff. They refer to Ben being “black with a big one”, as “the lazy Jamaican” and do impressions of him in a Jamaican accent, overtly highlighting when he is late for meetings and all work-related deadlines.

Aaron and Charles refer to Phillip as “playing a game” and “a politician”. By this they mean that he is career-wise and likes to give what he thinks is the right impression to others. Charles would counter William’s political moves by undermining his relationships with other staff. Charles and Aaron would describe and discuss how he (William) is infatuated with the young administrator, commenting on how he explicitly takes an interest in her activities. They compare the situation to that of a dog marking its territory and any conversation with a woman at any stage would
result in being asked if you “banged her”. This masculine and sexist hegemonic behaviour manifested inside the coaching cultural, emanating through all of the coaching staffs relationships. For example, the camera man would be asked to film girls in the crowd at half-time, this would then be reviewed before meetings, with resulting discussions objectifying and demeaning. This culture of hegemonic behaviour was a prevailing part of all of the coaches’ habitus (Jenkins, 2002) and reproduced in further discourse both inside and away from the Rangers training ground (Cushion & Jones, 2012). This highlights the location of the learning culture. Jenkins (2002) tells us the agents operating within the same location will inculcate similar habitus. As the coaches establish a hegemonic culture, the resulting behaviour is legitimised throughout the learning environment.

This vignette has described the environment and structural patterns that the players and coaches operated within on a daily basis. Players and coaches did not just interact with each other, but, importantly, they were located in a historical way of being. The gaze of authority was ever-present during the players’ day. They were directed and watched in every activity they performed, from when to arrive, what to eat and groups of people they should work with. Gore (1998) found that regulation and surveillance were, although present and increasingly invisible, not explicit. The rugby club had a clear and verbalised means of regulation and surveillance through video, GPS, schedule management, and the distribution of groups. These relations of power in the rugby club can usefully be seen through Foucault’s power concepts. Drawn from the data above examples of surveillance (video monitoring of players), normalisation (team video reviews), exclusion (none selection for first team), classification (player in specific positions), distribution (timetables and routines), totalisation (establishment of ideology) and regulation (assessment against performance indicators) (Gore, 1998) are part of the club context. The coaches used power regulations, both spatial and temporal (Denison, 2007), to mould the players into docile, but efficient, rugby professionals; however, the players learned how to be professional athletes from each other. The findings in this section clearly show the way players were normalised into professional rugby through different mechanisms of power.

The data in this section sought to highlights the daily routine at Rangers RFC and has demonstrated the nature of the prevailing culture embedded therein. It is clear
the coaches’ authoritarian behaviour is inculcated through a hegemonic ideology. The fundamental use of technical language bound coaches into the reproduction of orthodox knowledge, both as users and propagators of its discourse (Taylor & Garrett, 2010). Kim (2004) argues that this legitimacy obscures existing power relations, often making them unrecognisable, and hence misrecognised as legitimate. This perspective reshaped the notion and role of performance information in experiential learning. Arguably, performance information and technical language define athletic performance but also reproduce a particular culture and its durable inequalities. So by engaging in, and therefore legitimising, this practice the players and coaches contribute to their own domination.

6.2 – Learning From Others

Thus far the evidence has shown coach and athlete interaction to be dominated by an authoritarian regime that shape the lived experience. Thus the players were left to learn from each other and would frequently cite each other as valuable sources of learning (see study 2). This highlights the paradox between the coaches and the players. The coaches operated to structure and shape the players experiences, but, in so doing, they created a clear boundary. Players could not go to the coach for help for fear of been seen as weak, so, to fill the void, they took advice and guidance from the very people they are competing with for a place in the team (see study 2). Seemingly, the players learned how to become professional rugby players from each other. This was culturally driven, forming part of their socialisation.

Fred (Academy Player): I think you get much more out of speaking to older players and learning how they do things. You just have to look at Phillip. When I got here, I was a bit, like, I knew it all, but from seeing how Phillip acts around the place and the things he does in training, its, like, well, you learn a lot.

The impact of an individual on a learning culture depends on a combination of their position within that culture, their disposition towards that culture and the various types of capital they posses (Hodkinson et al., 2008). Therefore, players were obligated to develop each other but were also in competition for a place in the team. This can be characterised using Bourdieu’s notion of a field as a site for the constant struggle for capital. The players competed against each other in the same position for
a place in the team but also have to ensure an effective, collective, group. However, over the longer term, the players were ultimately in competition for a professional contract and considered their own survival as a professional player (Cushion & Jones 2006; 2012). Cedric is considered to be a promising young player; over the last two seasons, Gregg who is a senior player in the same position as Cedric has been mentoring him with significant consequences:

_Gregg:_ If I knew that Cedric was going to end up taking my place, and I suppose my contract, then maybe I wouldn’t have helped him so much. Sam (Director of Rugby) wanted me to help develop Cedric and I thought it would be a good idea as I only had a couple more seasons in me and he would only get 10 minutes at the end of games. But he has started all season and I have had to sit on the bench. Now they haven’t renewed my contact and I am off to another club next year.

Gregg highlighted a conundrum for the players, as they help each other, they increase the level of competition for places. In the case of Cedric and Gregg, after years of inter-player mentoring Cedric’s rapid development lead to the exit of the mentor from the team. Some of the players recognised this eventual outcome and had firm beliefs on when to help other players.

_Brian:_ I would never help Tom out, as I see it, he is in direct competition with me. If anything, I would make it harder. He may be on the same team, but I want to keep my place. Sam (Director of Rugby) wants me to mentor one of the academy kids. I said “yes”, but only because you have to. It has happened to me before, so I will just ignore him. I would gladly help one of the props if I could, but they can’t get me out.

Brian also emphasised how he keeps a record of how the other players in his position are doing to make sure he keep his place in the first team:

_Brian:_ I watch all of their clips and make notes on what they are doing. Nothing major, I just like to know where they are. If I think they are getting better, or competing for a place, I will step it up in training, I think everyone does it.

By reviewing clips of competing players, Brian regulated his own behaviour and used the practice in a symbolic way to ‘watch’ people he was competing with. Based on what Brian watches, he would ‘step it up’ in training. This particular example shows the regulatory and symbolic way analysis was used as a mechanism to
shape practice (Groom et al., 2011). The data also highlighted the struggle between players, the coaching environment and their own development. The players faced a life of constant development and the people they can learn the most from (i.e., players in the same position), posed the biggest threat to their professional status at the rugby club. The entire playing group cited other players as being the most valuable source of knowledge but in-turn, they were the most threatening to each others existence as professionals.

6.3 – Hierarchy

Second team games acted as a platform for the squad players to apply training to practice and these games played a significant role in the coaching culture. Second team games were played on a Monday evening and occurred sporadically throughout the season. The number of second team games in a season was normally 12, but with long gaps between matches. The team was made up from non-starting first team and academy players. The rugby ideology was the same the first and second teams used the same patterns and tactics. The captain of the second team, Mike, gave a clear account of the second team games:

Mike: They are a lot more relaxed then the first team, while this is not always good and the standard is far below. You just don’t get the same intensity and skill level. It can be quite frustrating, I am 29 and I am playing with a load of kids sometimes. The games can be quite hard to get into because you are trying to impress and make a mark on the first team, but they are played on poor pitches and some of the players don’t know the calls.

The second team games offered a place for the younger academy players to start life as a professional. The academy route gave players the opportunity to sample the on-field practices and weight training with the freedom to play in second team games and at loan clubs. However, above this level, there were the academy graduates, this group of players were good enough to become squad players in the team (not all make this step up), but not good enough for a full first team place. These players were left with small amounts of game time, and, because they posed a threat to the senior players, they got no feedback or guidance from them and little attention from the coaches. Duncan, an academy graduate, highlights this during a coach trip to an away second team game:
**Duncan:** It is hard, because I will only get 40 minutes tonight and I haven’t played for 2 months. And it’s going to rain, so all I will be doing is tackling and carrying. It’s like you train for weeks, then when the game comes the coaches say, “Well, we need this guy to be ready for Saturday, so you’re only going to get a half”.

William, the second team head coach, outlines why they work like this:

**William:** It is tough sometimes, but that’s all part of it. Some players like Duncan will not get much game time, so when he does he has to shine. He has some things to work on and, if we need to get one of the first team players back for the weekend, then, yeah, that’s the priority, so, in terms of that, we need to get people ready for Saturday and that’s how it works.

These data suggest that the coaches invested time and resources (in this case, playing time) in the first team players. However, to be considered as a first team player, you had to ‘shine’, although given limited opportunities. This ‘acts as a site’ of struggle and was described by William as part of being a professional rugby player. William also implies that this was a learned, but not explicit, attribute, almost an unwritten rule of becoming a professional player. Shortly after this, John, a second year academy player, confronted William about a lack of game time in the second team. William and John discussed it in these conversations:

**William:** You know, John, he needs to be on suicide watch most of the time. I have never met such a depressed rugby player. He needs to man up and stop whining. This is how it works, it’s like you are third choice and, until you improve your throwing then you will remain third.

**John:** Well, I asked him about the game time situation and he just said I need to improve my throwing, but I never get on the field to do any and training just is not the same. He just wants to win the second team league and would put his best players out instead of us.

These data highlight the two sides to second team games. The reason why the club invests time and resources into second team games was to develop the wider squad and enhance the playing base at the club. However, come game day, all the focus was on winning the match.

**William:** I want to win every game, if that means some players don’t play then so be it, the player will learn to be part of a winning team.

This shows the opposed meanings that second team games had for the three conflicting stakeholders: the players, the coaches and the club. For the players, a
second team game was a chance to gain different forms of capital, and earn a shot at becoming a first team player. Whereas, for coaches, second team games were to be won and get established first team players ready. Finally, the club had set up the principle of using second team games in a developmental context, regardless of victory or defeat. William gives an overview of his thoughts about the difference between winning second team games and developing players:

*William:* It is a difficult balance because you always want to win but developing players is the most important thing about it and the proof is in the players we have developed to international standard: you just have to look at Anthony, James and Arthur, to name some. They all came through this way of playing and I think it helps toughen them up and be, like, shit that was hard but I got though it and now I am a better player because of it.

This attitude was reflected in the coaching behaviour displayed during second team games. The coaches became very emotionally involved in the games, to the point of shouting and punching parts of the stadium. After one of the Monday night games, I noted:

Today William was shouting at the referee and punching the sides of the gantry box where we watch the game. I could not make out why he was so angry, but Duncan kept making mistakes in our own half, so I am guessing it was that. (Field Notes)

During games, the coaches had a private radio network so they could talk to each other in different parts of the stadium. The physiotherapists, who were allowed to go onto the pitch to treat players, were also part of the radio network. They were used as messengers by the coaches to send information to players. Below are a few examples of messages being sent to the players during a second team game. These occurred during a cold and dark November Monday night, it had been raining all day, so the ground was covered in mud and made for difficult playing conditions. The second team had won their previous game, but had not been doing well in the overall league. I was on the TV gantry, filming the game with two of the coaches to my right. They were watching the game, but also used two computers, one with a delayed feed of the game and the other capable of rewinding the live video feed to review the players and monitor things they might have missed. Both coaches watched the game live and, at breaks in play, rewound the footage and looked at almost everything in
slow motion. This match setup was the same for every game: the players knew they were being watched like this and were used to the messages being set on by William.

(Shouting) Tell Duncan, if he does that again then he is off, play the fucking pattern properly or he is fucking off!
(Shouting and in disbelief) Tell John, he is not working hard enough, get around the corner and stop taking breathers!
(Angry and Shouting) Why are we doing a dog pattern off a full lineout? Tell Michael to get his head out of his ass!
(Angry) Guys, we have got to sort this out. We are all over the place; we have to work hard in defence.

The messages being sent onto the field during games seemed to be for the coaches’ benefit rather than the players’. Seemingly, the coaches were responsible for, and yet had the smallest amount of control over the outcome of games. Their ongoing emotional involvement mitigated the player’s ability to react and change to the game as it unfolded. This is because coaches were sending messages onto the field at every break in play. Kenneth, a graduate of the academy system and regular second team player, described how the players viewed this behaviour:

Kenneth: Well, it is embarrassing most of the time – you look up and William is having a fit at something. Then you get a message on saying I am not working hard enough. Or, like, if you do something wrong, say, like, out of position or making the wrong tackle, you know you have done it, then you get a message saying you have done it wrong, it is a bit undermining. I know I have done it wrong, I know the patterns, you don’t have to tell me during the game.

Arguably, the coaches’ constant involvement with the game diminished the freedom athletes had to reflect-in-action. Schön (1984) described a reflective scenario in which the practitioner alone navigates a reflective path and seeks alternative actions within subsequent practices. However, in this case, the coach was performing the reflective work for the players and expecting them to use this information to guide future actions. The lack of ownership in this process has previously been identified as a reason for diminished motivation (Tusting & Barton, 2006). Arguably, Schön’s theories of reflective practice did not take into account the complex and shifting power relationships inherent at a rugby club. However, when asked why he needs to send messages on to the field during games, William replied:
William: If I see something, someone not working hard enough or something wrong with the play, then I have to do something about it or we might lose the game. That’s part of the job to win games and do as well as we can in the process.

The data illustrate an on going contradiction regarding the second team games, and the separation from what is espoused and the actual coaching practice. This contradiction undermined the learning climate. The coaches previously claimed that developing players was their main function and the second team games were the ideal place to do this.

William: The point of the A league is to develop the younger players, that’s why I mix in some seniors with the academy, and if we have any places left we bring in some schoolboys.

However, the culture surrounding the mid-level players is one of authoritarianism and culpability.

William: Duncan just cannot play at this level, he does not listen to a word, or follow the game plans we give him. I would prefer to play the younger guys and see what we can get out of them.

Such data illustrates similarities with the work of Cushion and Jones (2006). The coaches’ actions and behaviours towards players were shaped by a tacit status the players held within the playing group. This was reflected in the type and frequency of learning activities the players engaged in during the training week. During the week following a second team game all of the academy players got a ‘one-to-one reflection session’ as outlined in Chapter 5 (p128). However, the remaining players (no first team, no academy) then had no structured review and had to review their game on their own, as colleagues will not help. This diminishes the players’ abilities to frame and reframe experiences (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004). As seen above, all of the players then had a group debrief prepared by the coach with no player input. When asked why the academy players were the only ones to get one-to-one feedback post-game, the coaches replied:

Alan: Well, we only have so much time in the day and the academy players don’t do training on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, because they go and train with the loan clubs, so they have the time to go over things.
William: You know how it is: I am going to spend the most time with the players I think can make it, it is as simple as that. I have 45 guys here and not all of them will make it.

6.4 - Conclusion

These data suggests that both structural influences and an increase in physical capital shaped the opportunities the players had to review games with a coach and get individual feedback. Following this, reflective engagement was subsequently dependent on the social groups the players were in. Social and cultural influences and player-coach interactions have been heavily linked to the viability of the coaching process (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2004). In addition, team meetings can be viewed as ‘sites of intellectual dominance’ (Weininger, 2002: 8), in which coaches sought to impose knowledge on players, knowing that it might not have any effect on their future behaviour. The data in this section also highlight a myriad of coach/athlete interactions that both open and close situations for experience-based learning. The role of second team games and the social grouping of players silhouette the lived experience of professional rugby. The degree to which experience-based learning can then influence the individual within the rugby programme is dependent on the coaches’ interactions and finding new ways of seeing one’s own practice. However, inter-player relationships mirror the struggle for the many forms of capital available and, therefore, the players that depend on each other are also the ones that are in direct competition with each other.

In conclusion, data from this chapter shows that, while totalising is clearly a technique used in pedagogy for governing or regulating groups, players and coaches also totalise themselves by naming themselves as part of the various collectives. Foucault (1998) writes of the kind of rationality in which institutions are grounded, rationality characterised by the integration of individuals in a community or totality that results from a constant correlation between increasing individualities and the reinforcement of the totality, a situation that was evident at Rangers RFC.
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

The preceding three chapters have attempted to highlight the forms and practices that experiential learning elicits in professional Rugby Union. The data has demonstrated that the sub culture of Rugby Union to be a complex and socially rich landscape with competing agendas and confined within a hierarchical structure. It is no surprise that within this system of action, players and coaches compete for forms of capital within the field that serves to maintain a doxic order. While these findings are not new to professional sport in general, the evidence in this thesis clearly shows the extent to which rugby players produce and reproduce social inequalities. This conclusion will now review the key findings from each study and demonstrate what has been learnt from investigating experiential learning in professional Rugby Union.

Chapter 4 (page 82) illustrated some of the elements that affected the ability to frame and therefore reflect on experience. The findings, like Gilbert & Trudel (2004), are insightful and showed the use of role frames in sports. However, the findings are also limited in the sense that they fail to convey the overwhelming impact on the social context on the players and coaches. The coaches constructed and reproduced a coaching ideology, as an omnipresent set of rules to regulate the player’s behaviour, both on and off the pitch. Here we find the paradox that underlines the whole organisation, the pervasive coaching ideology shaped the field of practice and formed a single point of reference, but its interpretation was unique to the individual player and coach. This means that coaches judged players performance through an external ideology, but the narrative that supported the ideology is shaped buy the organisational hierarchy. The comparison between Kenneth and Michael (Chapter 4) showed that while both players were in the same context, party to the same information and receiving the same coaching, the way they interacted with the social landscape was very different and hence their experiences and learning differed. Schön’s theory of role frame analysis goes some way to conceptualising experiential learning in professional Rugby Union. However, it seems depended on access to co-operative peers and mentors, and a helpful environment, as shown in chapter 4, this was certainly not the case at Rangers RFC.
The aim of chapter 5 was to understand the systems set up to facilitate video based reflection. The data demonstrated player’s participation in formal learning settings, such as team meetings or one-to-one video reviews, was limited and defined by a passive or even submissive role. The interactions between players and coaches, either formal or informal, were often characterised by mixed messages, inconsistencies and contradictions. This was a fundamental feature of Ranger RFC during the entire research period. Both coaches and players at Rangers RFC were culturally rationalized, and conformed to historical norms and methods. Within this context coaches agreed on the macro, overriding principles governing a particular game or structural ideology, but they harboured many different methods of execution. For the players this created a complex and confusing field of practice. As they tried to develop their skills as Rugby players, they encountered different messages and instructions from each of the coaches. Evidently, video reviews, either team or individual, were used as a ‘technology of self’ and sought to imprint the prevailing ideology, rather than a tool for reflective learning. Formal learning environments were inherently hegemonic and also reproduced cultural hierarchy and subsequently the social inequalities. This clearly demonstrates that learning is the pretext to team meetings or individual video reviews, but unmistakably they were sites in which the organisational ideology was inculcated.

Chapter 6 sought to understand how the social and structural landscape effected the learning environment. The evidence clearly revealed contextual factors that influenced coach / player interactions and showed that coach / player interactions both opened and closed situations of experience-based learning. The data also demonstrated that the coaches used authoritarian technologies to reaffirm their social position including constant spatial and temporal control. The coaches’ behaviour was legitimised, by the orthodox knowledge they generated through performance information. This subsequently reaffirmed the state of doxa. Also, inter-player relationships mirrored the struggle for the capital available and, therefore, the players that depended on each other as a source of knowledge were also the ones that were in direct competition. When applied to learning and development in professional rugby, if the form of capital an individual competes with or is contrary to the learning climate or culture, it will limit their ability to participate. This is evident in the way player’s access knowledge from the peer group (page 164).
This thesis demonstrates a backdrop of complex social hierarchies and tacit ways of doing that inflict and shape the body, in which players are oppressed and objectified. Nonetheless the key point is the players (mis) recognise this as part of being a professional Rugby Union player (Jenkins, 2002). They competed for positions on the hierarchical structure, for symbolic and financial reward and used the (mis) recognition as motivation (Cushion & Jones, 2006). From an experiential learning perspective it seems that the definition of learning changes as the players progress through the club hierarchy. At the academy level players learned from the older, more experienced players, and got more opportunities to review their experiences with coaches. However, if they made it to the first team squad they had to learn a whole new set of unverbalised rules of social and symbolic engagement (Cushion & Jones, 2006). The learning opportunities, i.e. team meetings, one-to-one review sessions and reviewing performance data, can be contextualised as a site of dominance on the players by the coaches. It is up to the players to relearn the rules of engagement in this field, and they looked to their colleagues for help.

During these formal learning sessions the coaches were also competing with the players to maintain their status as the distributors of knowledge and insights. In this scenario it is in the interests of both parties for the coaches to deliver unquestioned ‘truths’ about the teams performance, and the players to listen passively, agreeing with what they have to say. This situation worked well for both groups and helped to establish a role, and therefore a need, for the team meetings and review sessions. If, for example, the players could review there own performance, or each other’s, then why would the coach be needed? As the guardian and distributor of knowledge, it is in the coach’s interest to keep the players docile otherwise they could undermine the role they occupy. Team meetings and the use of analysis appeared as a perfect medium to justify the coach’s position.

The assumption at the Rangers RFC was that video does not lie (William, p112; Charles, p122). The recording of a whole game is an objective record of proceedings, but the selection of what parts of the video are important, the order in which they are played back, and the meaning accompanying the narrative is completely defined by the coach. In using video to highlight performance issues the coach is implying impartiality and assisting the player develop their performance experience, but this is a façade, and here lies the paradox. The coach is viewing a
player’s performance, not just through a role frame (chapter 4), but also as a historical way of doing, being, and with reference to a competing field of practice organised by an individual’s access to capital. Therefore, learning seems to stop, or at best needs to be completely redefined. This is because the criteria behind which both the players and coaches are ultimately judged, i.e. the outcome of games, is objective (win or lose), but also centred in a wider social and historical milieu of Rugby Union. For example, Rangers RFC could lose a game, an objective-rating system based on points, but play well, a symbolic rationalisation of an individual or groups display of corporeal and cultural capital. This means that the very nature of performance, and therefore the discourse of learning, is tied to the subjective eye of the observer. While evidence of experiential learning was documented, particularly with the academy players, the social location of practice marginalised the value of experiential learning in the coaching process. This was because performance information and the use of video based reflection were consistently used as tools of coaching authority, discipline and symbolic violence.

The research method employed in this thesis was somewhat unusual. Like other studies, it employed an ethnographic case study design. However, unlike the majority of studies in sports coaching it had access to a professional environment for a three-year period, and daily emersion within the context. The result of this lengthy involvement could be seen as a virtue or a limitation. I feel as though my relationship with the players and coaches significantly changed over the 3 years. It went from being just another intern to socialising with and befriending some of the participants. I see this lengthy involvement as a key benefit of this research, without it I feel the result would be very different.

When I first started the research I found a barrier around the team. It would have been very hard to cut through the bravado and examine the landscape beneath the surface. For example, I only had permission to record the team meetings in the second year, and still this was something I had to negotiate for. Subsequently, although I attended the team meetings in the first year, I could not use the data from them in the analysis, but this period was key for the study as I was being socialised into the team and the wider organisation. Some authors only rely on single shot interviews (Chapman, 1997), or limiting the research period to four or five months (Poczwardowski et al., 2002; Purdey et al., 2009), interestingly I found the richest data started to be uncovered after about 18 months. This might have been because I
was also fulfilling a job as a performance analyst, and therefore missed things while I was getting used to working and justifying my role as an employee. The job was demanding in periods, the beginning of the week especially. Either way, the depth this study has gone to is unique.

7.1 - Limitations of the work

One of the limitations of this thesis is perhaps the volume of work I had to do as a Performance Analyst within the context. Although this role opened the door to the project, it is possible this could have affected my role as a researcher. As I discuss in the methodology, for a period I did see the research project as a career move. Furthermore, by the end of the 3 years I was doing so much data collection and reading, it was getting in the way of the day-to-day job. This subsequently led to the breakdown of my relationship with the analyst I was working with. The context of Rangers RFC was something I have never experienced before, and it did take time to adjust and find my feet.

Also, my conceptual understanding of the theory has changed and developed significantly over the 5 years of writing. This is a clear example of the limitation of this research. I have had to constantly re-analyse the data every few months, as I learnt and understood more about Foucault, Bourdieu and Schön. I feel this process has reinforced a deeper level of understanding rather than a limitation, but I can see how others would interpret this. However, and more importantly, the standard of my writing at the beginning of this research project was not at the required level. It has been a constant battle, to drag my understanding and implementation of the English language to the high doctoral requirements. The constant investment in writing led to long periods of practice, training and investment, something that most researchers would not have to undertake.

7.2 - Recommendations

Recommendations from this research project are three fold. Firstly, this thesis has shown the organisational ideology shaped all social interactions and hierarchies. Other practitioners could use this implementation as a tool to master the spatial and temporal distribution of professional athletes. Also, through education coaches can begin to use these social ‘tools’ to improve the delivery of performance information
and help in the struggle of professional practice. Secondly, although theories of reflection and experiential learning have a conceptual base, they appear undermined by the social landscape in which they operate. Therefore, practitioners need to understand how they use performance information in practice. This is because there exists a subtle difference between using video for reflective learning, and the enforcement of a coaching ideology. Thirdly, we have seen that formal learning environments are time consuming, abstract for the players, and serve to enforce a hegemonic regime. Therefore it is recommended that coaches undertake a process of role frame analysis to examine their professional practice and understand the lens through which they see Rugby Union. Finally, this thesis has shown forms of racism and highlighted the elitist culture in which the professional game is situated. Also, the hegemonic displays of sexism and masculinity reinforce the pretext of being a rugby player, however more research is required to investigate this from a learning viewpoint. This research has drawn significantly on work already carried out in this domain (e.g. Cushion & Jones, 2006; 2012, Purdy et al., 2009), but reflecting on my time with Ranger RFC and writing this thesis, it is clear that the cultural hegemony and forms of masculinity elicited were centrally tied to the fabric of “being in” professional rugby. Looking back on the whole experience I am surprised at how much it shaped my behaviour, so a warning must be given to any researcher undertaking similar depths of research.

7.3 - Future Research

Although this research has gone some way to develop the understanding of learning in a professional Rugby Union environment, further research is needed to see if the result would be similar in another context. The results of this study have focused attention on the coaching ideology of this specific rugby club. In turn, it could be argued that a modification in the coaching culture could fundamentally change, and reshape the practices of the Rugby club. Although, the results in this thesis reflect some of the findings in Cushion and Jones (2006; 2012) regarding use of power and social reproduction in football, more research is required to identify an alternative coaching strategy. It would be interesting to investigate how a professional sports team could operate without the spatial and temporal control that Dension (2007) describes and was evidenced in this research. Spatial and temporal control of
players and staff was such a dominant feature of Rangers RFC that it is hard to imagine how they would operate without it. However, this is nothing new, Foucault argued that it is not just the prison in which these forces are elicited but also the factory, the hospital, and the classroom. With this in mind it is unsurprising that it features so heavily in the professionalised workings of Rugby Union.

Following this research more evidence is required to understand the long-term formation of bodies as they compete in fields for capital, and how this results in a similar internal language (lineout chats, backs moves, adjectives about performance), dress (wearing each other's clothing) and cultural processes (strapping, music, roommates). Finally, future research could develop the relationship between players of the same position of the same squad. This situation I find compelling, as the very people that can help each other the most are the same people they are competing against. Moreover, they have to work with each other everyday in close and demanding situations. It would be interesting to investigate when agents realise that an increase in non-traditional capital resource can result in extended playing time or a greater role in the team (and therefore financial gain), if new fields of competition open up, with the aim to understand the logic and regulatory procedures.
8 – References


Trudel, P., Haughian, L., & Gilbert, W. (1996). L'utilisation de la technique du rappel stimulé pour mieux comprendre le processus d'intervention de l'entraîneur en sport [Use of the stimulated recall technique to better...


9 - Appendix
### Appendix 1 - Role Frame Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Athlete / Coach</th>
<th>Internal / External</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The coaches have specific areas, which they are responsible for and ultimately held accountable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Pressure</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The coaches keep records of athlete performance, deliver scouting reports on the opposition and plan coaching sessions as part of the on-going administration of the rugby department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirations</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>All players described situations, in which they wanted to be the best they can be, but accounts and actions varied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control and Surveillance</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The coaches consistently discussed situations that required different methods of control placed on the players to shape athlete’s experiences of competing against each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporeal Demands</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>This relates to the physical development of the athletes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporeal Development</td>
<td>OD</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Assumptions of training techniques seemed to run along a linear, mutually exclusive continuum of development or optimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>A referee consultant is used to advise the athletes on the different referees that they will encounter during games, and strategies to maintain their discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>All the athletes engage with a slightly different programme and have different experiences of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Athlete / Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Enjoyment seemed be a key-motivating factor during athletes’ early careers. However, enjoyment takes on a new meaning as the athletes gain more experience in the sport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humour</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The coaches used humour as a regular coaching strategy and it formed part of the social fabric of the club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Some of the players had direct media responsibilities, engaging their attentions in and away from the club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational Ideology</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Athlete / Coach</td>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>This is applicable to everyone at the club, and utilised to produce a philosophy underpinning aligning how each person views how to play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic Capital</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>In similar vein to stereotypes, the level of a player’s ability is a self-fulfilling social status and pivotal to the reproduction of social inequalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Capacity</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Athlete / Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The levels of engagement seem to vary from player to player: with some going through every aspect and others just brushing the surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Schema</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Boundary</td>
<td>The type of athlete the coaches interact with limits the way they participate in the coaching process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Feedback</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Motivation for giving and receiving feedback seems to be based on a central principle of looking after their own individual interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Position</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Social position endows athletes with a set of expectations that limits and enables professional participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The club elicits a structural framework, utilised by the coaches to enable formalised practice and continuity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winning</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Athlete / Coach</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>The professional nature of the sport provides a clear emphasis on winning at any cost during the game.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2 – Rangers Style

Rangers 2009/ 2010 – The Rangers STYLE

1. IN ATTACK
WIN THE GAINLINE BATTLE

• STAY UP
• ATTACK SPACE
• KEEP BALL ALIVE
• CHANGE POINT OF ATTACK
• QUICK BALL MINDSET

  o GO FORWARD
  o BODY POSITION
  o BALL PRESENTATION – ‘GADGET’
  o ACCURATE/ AGGRESSIVE CLEAR

SUSTAINED MOMENTUM

2. IN DEFENCE
WIN THE GAINLINE BATTLE

• INTO POSITION QUICKLY
• NOMINATE
• COMMUNICATE – VOLUME!!
• LINE SPEED
• WIN COLLISIONS
• FLOOD THE TACKLE AREA/ RUCK
• PRESSURE ON 9
• DISCIPLINE

GET THE BALL BACK

3. HAVE GAME CONTROL (3 T’S)

A) TEMPO
  o ’60’
  o QUICK THROWS
  o TAP AND GOS
  o ‘DEADWOODS’

B) TERRITORY
C) TACTICAL APPRECIATION

- WHEN TO KICK
- WHEN TO RUN

WE DO WHAT WE WANT, WHEN WE WANT

4. WIN THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL BATTLE
A) REACT
- ‘ICE’ – ATTACK INTO DEFENCE
- ‘CHANCE’ – DEFENCE INTO ATTACK
- ‘BOUNCE’ – SPEED OFF THE FLOOR
- ‘FIX IT’ – ERRORS HAPPEN
- ‘NEXT JOB’ – FOCUS ON THE PRESENT
- ‘HEADS’ – BE ALERT TO OTHERS

B) CONFRONTATIONAL
- DOMINATE AT SCRUM TIME
- DOMINATE AT MAUL TIME
- DOMINATE AT TACKLE TIME
- DOMINATE AT RUCK TIME

EVERYONE – 1 TO 15

C) BELIEF
BELIEF IS A SHARED MENTAL MINDSET (S.M.M)
S.M.M. IS:
- UNITY
- ENJOYMENT
- SUCCESS

BELIEVE IN THE STYLE!
Appendix 3 – Rangers On Field Speak

(Rangers On field Speak Document)

**DINK** = CHIP OVER THE TOP
**NUDGE** = GRUBBER KICK
**B.A.** = CROSS FIELD KICK
**BURJ** = BOX KICK
**PANAM** = KICK DOWN TOWN
**BOMB** = UP and UNDER
**STANDS** = GET THE BALL OFF THE PITCH!
**HOT** = I WANT THE BALL
**CANE** = SWITCH
**TAILER** = BALL BEHIND THE RUNNER
**ALPHA** = BALL TIGHT BEHIND RUNNER
**CUFF** = RUNNER COMING FROM BLIND TO OPEN TAKING A SHORT PASS
**PINCH** = GIVE and GO (RETURN BALL)
**LATHO** = BALL BACK INSIDE
**ROCKET** = RUNNER OFF 9 WALE\_S = 9 TO 3 MAN PINCER CREATING MINI RUCK
**WALES RETURN** = 9 TO 3 MAN PINCER and BACK TO 9

**MUPPET** = 9 RUNS WIDE and DROPS RUNNER BACK INSIDE
**SNAP** = PICK and GO ROUND THE EDGES
**ALDERSHOT** = RUNNER COMING FROM OUT TO IN OFF 9 OR 10
**BILL and BOB** = RUNNERS INSIDE 10
**CHALK and CHEESE** = RUNNERS OUTSIDE 10
**CHAOS** = CHANGE OF DIRECTION
**OUT** = GET OFF THE LINE
**RESET** = MOVE BIGGER FORWARDS TOWARDS THE RUCK
**BLITZ** = GET OFF THE LINE HARD FROM WIDE RUCKS
**HOVER** = BUY TIME
**FIX IT** = CORRECT MISTAKES
**CHANCE** = ATTACK FROM TURNOVER BALL
**ICE** = DEFENCE FOCUS WHEN WE LOSE THE BALL
**WALL** = STRONG KICK CHASE
**KILL** = WHEN OPPOSITION IS ISOLATED – TURNOVER!
**ESCORT** = RUNNING LINE
TO PROTECT OUR KICK CATCHER

**HIT** = BACK 3 CALL ON
WHEN TO CLOSE GATE

**SIXTY** = UP THE INTENSITY

**BOUNCE** = GET UP OFF THE
FLOOR FASTER THAN
OPPOSITION

**NEXT JOB** = FOCUS ON THE
PRESENT

**WHITE** = PERIOD OF

STRICT DISCIPLINE – NO
PENALTIES!
## Appendix 4 – Rangers Lineout Document

### (Rangers Lineout Document)

**Calling Mechanisms:**

- As last year, we will have a mainly silent line out.
- 2 calls will be made before we go to line out.
- Hooker will get to mark early to prepare to throw.
- Prop at front of line out will take calls to hooker.
- If hooker wants to go from option 1 to option 2, he will turn the ball, so all forwards can see.
- If hooker doesn’t want to use option 2, then bailouts are used.

### BAIL OUTS:

1. **SLUG** - throw to prop at the front
2. **GO** - Front jumper takes it forward at 5m
3. **CHIEF** - Throw to back jumper at 17m (9 ball)

1. **Full – Old School** (at 7 metres)
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14356</th>
<th>87</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

   a. **Drop on 4** – lifters 1/3
   b. **Fast 4** – Trigger off lifters 1/3
   c. **lob 4** – Dummy b. 4 on 2 step lob, lifters 1/3
   d. **Drop on 5** – lifters 3/6
   e. **Fast 5** – Trigger off lifters 3/6
   f. **9** – 8 lifted at 17 m by 6/7
   g. **99** – 8 lifted at 20 m by 6/7
   h. **6** – 6 lifted in hole by 5/8
   i. **Swindon 8** – 6 to 8. 8 forward, lifters 5/7
   j. **Swindon 86** – As Swindon 8 but throw to 6 over top
   k. **Ospreys 17** – 6 to 8 and to 5. 8 lifted by 1/7 at 17m
   l. **Ospreys 20** – As Ospreys 17 but 8 lifted at 20m

**PROPS** – 3 to 8. 1 to 5. Creates / 4 156 387

m. **9** – 8 lifted at 17m by 3/7
n. Swindon 5 – 5 forward, lifters 4/6
o. Leeds 5 – Swindon 5 but 6 on lob, lifters 4/1

PEDAL – 356 back. 8,7 round. Creates / 4  187  356
p. 9 - 356 back to 17m
q. 99 - 356 back to 20m
r. Sale 12 - 356 to 15m. Then 5 forward lifters 7/3
s. Sale 8 - As Sale 12, then 8 forward, lifters 1/8

Consider best bail outs for each.
If going over 15m, the ball must go there.

2. Full - 70 Series (at 7m) (5 and 8 interchangeable)
   / 143 5 687
   a. Drop on 4 - 4 lifted by 1/3
   b. Fast 4 - Trigger off lifters 1/3
   c. lob 4 - Dummy b. 4 on 2 step lob, lifters 1/3
   c. Drop on 8 - 8 lifted by 6/7
   d. Drop on 5 - 5 lifted by 3/6
   e. Swindon 5 - 3 and 6 to 5. 5 forwards lifted by 1/6
   f. 6 - 6 forwards, lifters 5/8
   g. 5 Shift - 3 and 6 to 5. 5 forwards, lifters 1/3
   h. 9 - 8 lifted by 6/7 at 17m
   i. 99 - 8 lifted by 6/7 at 20m

3. Full – Space (at 7m)
   / 1 4 6 5 7 8 3
   a. Drops on 4,6,5,7,8
   b. 9
   c. 99
   d. Swindon 6,5,8
   e. Leeds 4,6,7.
   f. Leeds 70. Dummy Leeds 7, throw over top to 9
N.B. Drops go off the hooker, Swindon off the lifters, the jumper goes up where the original front lifter was, Leeds off the lifters, the original back lifter goes straight up in area of the original dummy jump. It may be that on longer Leeds ball i.e Leeds7 that the jumper goes back a pace – consider what works e.g. Leeds

4. Dummy lift on 4 by 1/6.
   6 lifted by 1 and 5,

4. 6 Man Drop (at 7m)
   / 1 4 6 5 8 3
   a. Drops 4,6,5,8.
   b. 9 ball
   c. 99
   d. Swindon 6,5 and 8
   e. Leeds 4,6,5

5. 6 MAN TIGHT
   / 1 456 83
   Go to line out with above set up looking for 5 to find space for quick ball won with his pod. If this is not on, then 5 asks to split it to a 2/2/2 set up. Then go through with second option.

OPTIONS;
   / 14 65 83
   a. 4 on lob, lifted by 1/6 - 4 lob
   b. dummy a. 6 lifted by 1/5 - Leeds 4
   c. dummy b. 5 lifted by 1/8 - Double Leeds 4
   d. 6 forward lifted by 4/5 - 6 in hole
   e. 8 forward lifted by 5/3 - 8 in hole
   f. 5 to 8, 8 forward, lifters 6/3 – Swindon 8
   g. 6 forward, 8 in hole, lifters 5/3 - Fulham 8
   h. 8 lifted at 17m by 5/3 - 9
   i. 8 lifted at 20m by 5/3 - 99
   j. 5 in the hole on lob. – 5 lob

6. Line Out On Own Line Procedure :
Option A – Old School
   a. 812 – Dummy 8/7 forward to 6 – throw to 12 way over back if hooker doesn’t want to use this, he uses:
      b. Go - 4 forward at 5m lifted by 1/3
      c. Cheeky Slug – Dummy “go” and then prop turns to get ball.
Option B – Space
   a. Leeds 712 – Dummy Leeds 7 – throw to 12 way over back if hooker doesn’t want to use this, he uses:
      b. Go - 4 forward at 5m lifted by 1/3
      c. Slug – Throw to prop at front
Appendix 5 – Rangers Scrum Document

(Rangers Scrum Document)

Our default position is to complete OUR scrum as quickly as possible with quality possession

“3 SECOND SCRUMS” will be the norm!!!

There will be occasions we will want to scrum longer (see later).

MINDSET

a. Dominant and aggressive at every scrum
b. Mental focus and enthusiasm at every scrum
c. Constant analysis of selves
d. Know the scrum calls and strategy

KEY TECHNICAL FOCUS POINTS

a. Strong, solid set up
b. Listen to referee. Speed across mark (hooker triggers)
c. Constant pressure
d. Flat back with strong core locked

PRE ENGAGEMENT

1. Set up at mark as required – hooker control. Back 5 be very vocal with flankers talking to their props encouraging.
2. Excitement about each new scrum.
3. Call of 2 numbers to dictate which side of scrum to go up.

2nd Number counts – 1 = left up. 2= straight. 3= right up.

4. Hooker dictates timing of when we crouch. Generally look to set late ie wait for opposition to go down first. The hooker can then call PLUS (step to right) or MINUS (step to the left). Sometimes we will want to crowd opposition. Small chat.

5. When scrum has formed, hooker calls SET. Should be answered by whole pack calling YES as we crouch. The call of YES is showing a commitment to scrum from ALL 8.
BINDING
1. Tight head has first bind with hooker on our ball. Loose head has first bind with hooker on opposition ball
2. Shorter lock to bind over taller lock.
3. The heavier lock goes behind the tight head and behind the loose head on their ball / on request of the front row
4. Flankers to bind between props legs, if props want. Be aware that it is illegal so referees could prevent it.
5. Tight binding throughout. Use of ARMS call to stress importance of tightening. With that call, the whole scrum works towards the hooker, thus pulling the pack closer.

FEET POSITION

1. On our “3” ball (see above), our 2nd row and number 8 set up with their LEFT foot forward i.e. the first step is with the RIGHT foot.
2. On our “1” ball (see above), our 2nd row and number 8 set up with their RIGHT foot forward i.e. the first step is with the LEFT foot.

ENGAGEMENT

1. Whole unit moves off the HOOKER, who will anticipate call/ go off the “E” of engagement.
2. Mindset to scrum beyond the contact point.
3. Speed across mark vital.
4. Hit to be made and constant pressure. On engagement, a call of “HIT 2,3,4, 1-2, 1-2” etc.

OUR BALL - WE MUST CONTROL THE DELIVERY OF OUR OWN BALL.

1. DEFAULT 1  (D1)

   Use of channel 1. Left flanker and left lock to leave space for ball to be struck to 8, for QUICK ball.
   8 to engage between locks and then move between lock and flanker.
   Pack to work towards tight head as mentioned above.
   Ball put in on hooker tap

2. DEFAULT 2  (D2)

   Use of channel 2. Left flanker/ left lock to leave no gap.
   ie feet together, unlike D1.
   Ball to be struck to right foot of 8, for STEADY ball.
   8 to stay between locks. Pack work towards tight head.
   Ball put in on hooker tap

3. LONGER SCRUMS

   a. D 10
      Ball put in immediately on engagement.
      Pack will drive over ball with hooker in driving position.
      On engagement, call of “HIT 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10 to be made

   b. T L (try line)
      Call for PUSHOVER with early weight as for D10.
c  D S ( double shove)

Procedure on engagement as for D10/TL.
The number 8 will then call “8”.
This warns pack to reset – so they tighten ARMS and then
call “AND” “NOW” “ 1-2 1-2 1-2”

SURF AND SURF CUT ( off LONGER SCRUMS only when oppo
Intent on cheating walk round)

SURF  Tight head lead in. All work towards him.
Tight head turns head towards loose head and whole
pack follows him through.
Tight head CRABS forward.

SURF CUT. Work as a Surf (see above) but when their
hooker goes round, our tight head calls “CUT” and
works towards opposition tight head.
Our hooker and loose head follow through, same angle.

OPPOSITION BALL - AIM TO TURN THE BALL OVER AND/OR
TOTALLY DISRUPT.

CALLING

After initial “HIT 234 1-2 1-2”, the flanker responsible for calling
After engagement, pack keep on constant pressure with ARMS
When ball is presented, the flanker calls “AND”.
When ball is put in, the flanker calls “NOW”.
After ball put in, call of “1-2 1-2 1-2” again called by all.

OPTIONS

1. BOUZA - straight shove.
2. TYSON – A step to the left and drive.
    3. WHITE – Loose head and hooker attack oppo tight head
       Our tight head attack their hooker.
       Back 5 to put power through left side of scrum

4. WINDO- Hooker and tight head to attack oppo hooker
       Loose head to put his power through tight head.
       Back 5 to put power through middle of scrum, so
       opposition hooker feels full force of weight.

5. PICK UPS (to prevent oppo tight head turning in)
       Three quarter crouch. Hit down on opposition.
       Drop chests.
       As ball comes in, pack explode up.
       Can use on a “31” or a “32” equally well.
Appendix 6 – Rangers Finable Offences

Rangers Finable Offences 2010 – 2011

1. Late for any session, meeting, physio, massage or for any event where you are representing the Club.

2. Incorrect footwear for any session (weight shoes, training shoes, rugby boots and studs for scrums)

3. Wrong Kit as specified below

**Gym:** Any Rangers 2010/11 training kit

**Rugby:** Rangers Rugby Shorts and Rugby shirt, Rugby socks or Kooga white short socks

**Rugby Wet Weather:** Rangers Vortex tops and Hurricane Track bottoms and beanie

**PSS/Skills Session:** Vests or Tec T’s can be worn until rugby session begins but then reverts to the above

**Off Field:** As detailed on schedule or email

4. Leaving water bottles/empty bottles strapping etc on the training pitch.

5. Leaving plates bowls and cutlery on the table in the Team Room.

6. Not having your folder at all meetings
Note 1: Fines for the above offences have been agreed by the
Senior Playing Group as:
  • Staff and Senior players: £20
  • First year Academy: £10

Fines not paid within 1 week will be doubled

Note 2: Serious offences, e.g. Missing Sessions, box / corporate
duty, or anyone guilty of serial offences of the fines outlined above
will be dealt with separately by the DOR.
Appendix 7 – Tackle Statistics
<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>1st Half</th>
<th>2nd Half</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1st Half Tackle</th>
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**Summary**

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**Tackle Stats - Home Game European Cup**

**1st Half**

- Made: 52
- Missed: 0
- Effective %: 90.29%
- Ineffective %: 0.00%

**2nd Half**

- Made: 41
- Missed: 0
- Effective %: 90.29%
- Ineffective %: 0.00%

**Total**

- Made: 93
- Missed: 0
- Effective %: 90.29%
- Ineffective %: 0.00%
Appendix 8 – Rangers Rugby Operational Manual

Operations Manual

MANAGEMENT

SEASON 2008 - 2009
2009...

Play-off finish every season.
European Cup Qtr Final every season
Squad base of 75% English Qualified
Players (excluding 1st year Academy
Players).
To play a brand of rugby that is
an attraction to home grown
talent and also to foreign and
home grown 'Stars'
Full house every week
One site training facility
Testimonial announced for 2011/12
3 World Class

7 International

25 Exceptionally good (with potential) club or ageing international players

10 Good club players

10 Academy players with potential to be in the top three tiers

Academy + EPDCs
Operating Principles
Our Operating Principles

Believe in yourself, each other and what we are doing.

We stick together, through thick and thin.

Don’t expect others to do things that you are not prepared to do yourself.

Everything we do, we do together and for each other.

We Train Hard and Play hard and enjoy the rewards

Success is what we are all about.
OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Everything has been documented with respect to setting standards when together and away from each other. Other talented sports teams have failed by not recognising the importance of these agreed standards for both players and management alike. The majority are simply common sense but you must fully understand your responsibilities as a [redacted] player. These are with your 24hrs a day, 365 days a year.

Selection/ Coaching/ Team Ethics

- You should not discuss, write or disclose at any time, any information about any aspect of playing for [redacted] that would cause offence to any member of the team or Management. "What happens within the [redacted] camp stays within the [redacted] camp."

- If you are not selected you should always immediately congratulate the player selected in your position either by handshake or telephone.

- As a selected player you should publicly recognise the role of the non-players/ replacements at all times.

- Selection issues must be discussed privately with the Director of Rugby and nobody else.

- Every squad member must retain focus at all times -- if you are not in the starting 22, you must be prepared to play at short notice and train accordingly.

- Every player must make the team rooms -- not the physio room or the bedrooms the focus of the team.

- You are encouraged to discuss openly and honestly all aspects of training/organisation. If you think there is a problem with any area of the coaching/training programme then you should discuss this in confidence.

- Injuries: We will do everything possible to treat any injuries so that you are fit to play. However only you know the truth and you are not expected to play unless you can give 100% performance.

- The starting team will be selected and announced at least 48 hours prior to the game -- sometimes earlier. However you must understand that changes can be made to the team at any time up to kick-off. This may be due to weather, the opponent's selection etc.
• If you have been changed from the team you must wish your replacement good luck and if necessary discuss the change with the DOR at an appropriate time after the match.

• You should consult the [REDACTED] Director of Rugby for permission and advice if you are asked to play in any match other than those for your club – this is a common courtesy and will ensure that you are available for activities associated with your selection for [REDACTED].

Day to Day Organisation

• Ensure you are prepared for all meetings, training, etc – by that we mean knowing exactly what the routine for the day entails. This includes preparation re: kit, strapping, transport, timings etc.

• When attending team meetings, training, organisation etc you must arrive prepared, and presentable. You must have your [REDACTED] Squad Folder with you at all team meetings and ensure that it is kept safe at all times. The folder contains important, confidential information about the Harlequins Squad and the way that we operate – look after it!

• As a [REDACTED] player you have a responsibility to call the Head Coach immediately if there are any problems at any time. This is common courtesy and vital to planning.

• Absolute punctuality – no excuses for lateness unless it has been communicated beforehand. Elite time is 10 minutes early.

• Return phone calls within 24 hours to all fellow players/management. Ensure that the call answering service of your mobile provider is used where available.

• Mobile phones – no mobile phones are to be taken to ANY of the following:-
  o Team meetings
  o Training or organisation sessions

• Dress in Hotels – we use quality team accommodation and is it essential that you are suitable attired at all times, i.e. no dirty training kit to be worn in the hotel, no shorts at meal times, and only “Sponsors” kit to be worn.

• Language on tour – no bad language at any times other than private meetings (and training and practice sessions).

• You are representing [REDACTED] at ALL times when travelling – not just when arriving at the hotel – a constant high standard in attitude and behaviour are required and expected.
• You are requested not to write or ghost columns for daily/weekly newspapers. However, should you choose to do so it is your responsibility to ensure comments are never critical or negative towards the [redacted] team/club or Coaching staff.

• You will always be allowed to prepare for a game in your own way. If you are not playing you should not distract those who are preparing.

• Replacement/Squad Members – In addition to taking full part in training sessions and observing the same formalities as the team, replacements are expected to undertake minor administrative tasks in the interest and well being of the team.

• The Director of Rugby will deal internally with any disciplinary issues relating to players or management.
  
  [redacted] is our home – look after it – this incorporates:
  o Players lounge/dining area
  o Dressing rooms/ treatment room
  o Meeting/analysis room
  o Training pitches

• Keep these areas smart and tidy – they are seen by others.

• After every game we must fulfill our RECOVERY and MEDIA/SPONSORS responsibilities before fulfilling any personal arrangements.

• ALL PLAYERS are on duty at the [redacted] on home match days.

• Ensure you prepare yourself to be a WINNER.

• Know all the calls which affect you.

• Understand your role.

• Think and be aware and put yourself in the strongest team position you possible can.

• RIGHT PLAYER, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME.

• Always speak with the coaches to work on improvements.

• Remember, no player or coach knows it all -- there is always something to learn.

• BIG players are BIG because they TAKE/SEEK ADVICE AND ACCEPT CRITICISM and USE IT TO IMPROVE.
Appendix 9 – Rangers Rugby Management Structure

Rugby Management Structure
Rugby Management

Meetings Schedule
Management Process

- Management Meeting
- Department Head 1:1’s
- Players Meeting
- Management Meeting
- Department Head 1>1’s
- Players Meeting
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
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Note: The table represents the weekly structure for a coach, with specific activities scheduled for each day and time slot.
Appendix 10 – Rangers Rugby Management Job Descriptions

Job Descriptions

Roles and Responsibilities
Main Areas of Responsibility

Director of Rugby

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>[Redacted]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Director of Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer [Redacted]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main Function

To develop a strategy and structure working within set budgets that will ensure that [Redacted] Rugby Club becomes the Premier Rugby Club in Europe and maintains this position? To continually evaluate progress towards those Strategies.

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To develop, manage and recruit a quality of squad within budgetary means which will enable the Club to play to its potential.
- To co-ordinate and direct the core coaching team in providing a comprehensive and effective development programme for all players, but in particular the senior squad.
- To develop an education system for coaches, particularly at Harlequins, but extending to "outside coaches" from clubs, schools and county teams.
- To develop training, playing and support facilities compatible with the Club's overall goals and budgetary constraints.
- To work with the Head of Academy in ensuring that the Club has in place a comprehensive Development Programme which identifies quality young players and ensures that they are effectively developed to the high standards set.
- To continually identify and monitor individual player performance and where necessary take the appropriate corrective action.
- To establish and maintain the highest standards of media exposure and help promote the sport in general, and the Club in particular.
- To ensure that the squad observes consistently high professional standards, both on and off the pitch, and fulfills their high profile role towards spectators, members and sponsors.
- To ensure that a competitive and equitable remuneration structure is adopted within the budgetary constraints.
- To develop a process to manage the budget and exercise proper financial controls.
- Define the style of rugby the team will adopt for the season.
- Agree with team coaches each players individual development
- To represent the Playing side at Board Meetings.
- Manage coach’s and provide feedback from each game to coaches.
- Ultimate and overall responsibility for Training, Selection, and Playing Strategies
- Attend all games in order to assess team and player development.
### Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

#### Skills
- High standard of rugby knowledge
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Problem solving skills
- Coaching
- Intelligence and shrewdness in assessing players
- Pro-active approach
- Knowledge of Sports Science
- Good communication and listening skills
- Excellent motivational skills
- Perception and open-mindedness
- Vision
- Strong playing background
- Good man-management skills
- Delegation skills

#### Performance Measures
- Provide 1:1 feedback to all squad members based on their performance.
- The Head Coach and Assistant Coaches understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what's expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to coaches.
- Published goals as agreed between DOR and CEO prior to season.

### Notes

*Discipline* – all disciplinary issues must be dealt with according to the procedures laid down in Players' contracts and/or the procedure for dealing with Administrative Personnel.

*Selection of Coaches and Support Staff* – The Director of Rugby is responsible for the appointment of the senior coaches and support staff; he will consult with the Head of Academy in appointing coaches and support staff for the junior sides.

Subject to the agreed contractual terms the DOR has the authority to select alternative specialist services if he believes they represent better value.
Main Areas of Responsibility

Head Coach

Employee

Job Title
Head Coach

Line Manager
Director of Rugby - 

Main Function

To ensure that the senior squad’s level of skills and techniques enable the Club to achieve its rugby objectives.

Main Tasks

• To liaise with the fitness team so that individual and collective levels of fitness, speed, strength, co-ordination and athleticism are maximised and on a par with world standards.
• To continually assess the strengths and weaknesses of the squad and recommend either short-term playing styles and techniques which will maximise the team's strengths and minimise the weaknesses or in the long-term identify deficiencies in the squad which need to be corrected.
• To ensure that individuals are developed to the limits of their potential and that a regular appraisal is held of their progress against measurable criteria.
• To create a climate whereby individuals feel they can express their views constructively and for the benefit of the team and so achieve a genuine level of job satisfaction and self-confidence.
• To ensure that collective skills are well-drilled and competently executed at the right time.
• To work with the Forwards coach in ensuring that there is an overall cohesion within the squad and that the players roles are well-known within a given style of play.
• To ensure that training programmes are effective in terms of both content and intensity bearing in mind the length and competitive nature of the fixtures throughout the season.
• To work closely with the Director of Rugby and specialist services and so promote a good level of cohesion which will in turn generate good team spirit.

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

• Managing the professionalism within the squad
• Manage the team's on-field organisation for each game.
• Provide player feedback
• Agree with each players individual development
• Agree the weekly rugby content with the Director of Rugby at the beginning of each week.
• Manage Assistant Coaches
• Provide feedback from each game to players as per the agreed process.
• Overall responsibility for implementing Training and Playing Strategies
• To manage half time in line with agreed protocols
• Priorities Reckless Coaching and analysis work
• To implement set piece backline attack moves in accordance with the overall approach and game plan agreed with the Director of Rugby.
• To implement Set Piece backline defense as above in conjunction with the Defense Coach.
• Improve individual player core skill development.
- To develop and implement a game education program with the players.
- To develop and implement a player Monitoring System
- To conduct analysis work previewing opposition and reviewing performance.
- To review game performance from set piece and broken play and restarts
- To Provide monthly reports on individual players and units to The Director of Rugby
- To provide quarterly reports to players to include a development program for improvement.
- Debriefing Individuals/ Sub Units?
- To coordinate all meetings of key player groups.

**Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)**

**Skills**
- High standard of rugby knowledge
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Problem solving skills
- Coaching
- Good IT skills
- Well qualified and experienced coach
- Good knowledge of sports science
- Perceptive and open-minded
- Visionary
- Strong playing background
- Good man-management skills
- Good judgement of playing skills and players
- Good knowledge of modern coaching practices

**Performance Measures**

- Provide 1:1 feedback to all squad members based on their performance.
- All Key Players and Assistant Coaches understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what's expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby
Main Areas of Responsibility
Assistant Coach

Employee
Job Title: Assistant Coach
Line Manager: Head Coach - Director of Rugby

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To be responsible for implementing all aspects of forwards play.
- Develop an Adaptable Effective & Efficient lineout, scrum and maul in both attack and defense with options that are understood and managed by the players in line with the agreed game plan.
- To be a responsible member of the coaching and management team.
- Managing the professionalism with in the squad
- Attend all games and A Team games
- To Ensure That all Practice Sessions are agreed with the Head Coach.
- Provide player feedback
- Agree with each players individual development
- Agree the weekly rugby content with the Director of Rugby/ Head Coach at the beginning of each week.
- Provide feedback from each game to players as per the agreed process.
- Overall responsibility for implementing forwards training in line with strategies.
- To manage the forwards at half time in line with agreed protocols
- Priorities Forwards Coaching and analysis work
- Improve individual player skill development.
- To Provide monthly reports on individual players and units to The Head Coach.
- To provide quarterly reports to players to include a development program for improvement.
- To encourage players self analysis of performance.
- To promote yourself in a professional manner.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

- Communicator and listener
- High standard of rugby knowledge
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Coaching
- Good knowledge of sports science
- Perceptive and open-minded
- Strong playing background
- Good judgement of playing skills and players
- Good knowledge of modern coaching practices
Performance Measures

- Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
- All Key Players to understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what’s expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby
Main Areas of Responsibility

Defence Coach

| Employee |  
|---|---|
| Job Title | Defence Coach |
| Line Manager | Director of Rugby |

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

- Analysis Preview and Review Of Opposition attacking strategy and moves from set and broken play. Channels used areas of pitch adopted, attack patterns.
- Record the tackle completion data by individual and review data with coaches and players.
- Develop Unit Leaders on the field.
- To be a responsible member of the coaching and management team.
- Managing the professionalism within the squad.
- Attend all games and A Team games.
- To Ensure That all Practice Sessions are agreed With Head Coach and Director of Rugby.
- To Arrive At Rugby Sessions 90 Min Prior to start
- Agree with each players individual development and encourage self analysis of performance.
- Agree the weekly rugby content with the Director of Rugby/Head Coach at the beginning of each week.
- Provide feedback from each game to players as per the agreed process.
- Overall responsibility for implementing defensive training in line with strategies.
- To input into the half time process in line with agreed protocols.
- Improve individual player skill development in the following areas, tackling, decision making and support play.
- To review defense game performance from set piece and broken play and restarts.
- To Provide monthly reports on individual players and units to The Director of Rugby
- To provide quarterly reports to players to include a development program for improvement.

**Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)**

**Skills**

- High standard of rugby knowledge
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Coaching
### Performance Measures

- Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
- All Key Players to understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what's expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby.
Main Areas of Responsibility
Kicking Coach

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<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Kicking Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
<td>Head Coach - Director of Rugby</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To help and support the Backs Coach to implement the kicking strategy.
- To coach the kicks in the basic essentials of kicking that is kicking at goal, drop goals, kicking from hand and restarts.
- To take a weekly kicking session with the non-kickers to improve their kicking game to include punts, sprays & grubbers.
- To make himself available for a general kicking session with a non-kickers group selected by the Head Coach.
- To keep a diary record of all kicking sessions.
- To devise a methods of measuring individuals progress.
- To record kicking scores on a weekly basis.
- To report back to the Head Coach and the Director of Rugby on the players kicking progress.
- To analyse kicking performance from the last game and feedback to the players concerned after discussing with the Head coach.
- To encourage the players to carry out self-analysis of their performance.
- To provide monthly reports on individual players and units to the Director of Rugby.
- To provide quarterly reports to players to include a development program for improvement.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills

- High standard of rugby knowledge
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Coaching

Performance Measures

Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
Provide feedback from each game to players and the Head Coach and Director of Rugby.
Main Areas of Responsibility
Head of Physical Development

Employee

Job Title  Head of Physical Performance
Line Manager  Director of Rugby - 

Main Function
To have overall responsibility for formulating and implementing (coaching) yearly individualised programmes in all areas of Athletics Performance including strength, conditioning, flexibility, diet and recovery designed to produce rugby players of world class fitness standards in line with Strategies.

To provide effective and comprehensive programmes covering the following areas,

1. Injury prevention,
2. Prehab and rehab
3. The player's education of self care and injury prevention.

This will include full liaison with the appropriate Medical Support and Athletic Performance staff.

Key Accountabilities

1. To utilise internal and external specialists in formulating yearly individualised programs in all areas of Athletic Performance including strength, conditioning, flexibility, diet and recovery.
2. To provide, implement and monitor the effectiveness of comprehensive programmes as set out in the Main Function.
3. To co-ordinate and implement the on field athletics performance and warm ups in consultation with Rugby and Conditioning Coaches.
4. In consultation with the Academy Rugby Manager and Conditioning Coaches, coordinate a suitable development plan which mirrors the overall programme in line with RFU guidelines.
5. To develop a team approach with good communication between members of staff from both conditioning and medical departments.
6. To consult with outside resources (e.g. Nutritionists) to ensure the input of up to date technology to maximise the effectiveness of the programme.
7. To maintain accurate and up to date records of all individual and team training sessions and player progress.
8. To develop and implement an appropriate professional development plan for athletic performance and medical services staff.
9. To keep abreast of current best practice in order to remain at the cutting edge of technology.
10. Agree with each player their individual development.
11. Agree the conditioning content with the Director of Rugby/ Head Coach at the beginning of each week.
12. Develop a process to give a detailed analysis of both performance and the development of the strength and condition of all players providing monthly reports on individual players and units to The Director of Rugby.
Key Responsibilities

- Managing the professionalism with in the squad
- Monitor and assist in the development of the Academy Conditioning Coach.
- To provide Nutritional Advice and recommend supplements to players.
- Liaise with Rugby Manager to ensure Nutrition standards are met on menus for the club home and away.
- To encourage players self analysis of performance.
- Provide player feedback.
- To be responsible for the Development of Initiatives to improve the training culture and environment and keep it fresh.
- To consult with the Head Physiotherapist and then to be responsible for the implementation of all rehab programs.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- High standard of Strength and Conditioning knowledge for Rugby
- High Standard of Nutritional Knowledge,
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Coaching

Performance Measures

➢ Provide 1:1 feedback to players and reports on their performance.
➢ All Key Players to understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
➢ Every player understands their role and what’s expected from them
➢ Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby

Notes

It is critical for the overall functioning and effectiveness of the department to work as a team. This requires good communication skills and a professional approach to all aspects of the job.

Working hours will be varied and the Coach will need to be very flexible to fulfil the responsibilities expected of him.
Main Areas of Responsibility
Conditioning Coach

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<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Conditioning Coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
<td>Head of Physical Performance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Main Function
To have responsibility for implementing yearly individualised programmes in areas of strength, conditioning, flexibility, diet and recovery designed to produce rugby players of world class fitness standards.

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

Main Tasks
- To implement these programmes and continually monitor their effectiveness.
- To implement the on field athletics performance and warm ups and recovery sessions.
- To develop a team approach with good communication between members of staff from all departments.
- To ensure the input of data to record the effectiveness of the programmes.
- To maintain up to date records of test results and player development progress.
- Attend all games and A Team games.
- To Arrive at sessions 90 Min Prior to start
- Provide player feedback
- To measure each players individual development.
- To implement the agreed conditioning plan for the week.
- To support and supervise the players conditioning programs.
- To monitor and assist with the rehab of injured players.
- To ensure that all players are tested at regular Intervals throughout the year.
- Conduct sessions for injured players within/away from squad environment.
- To ensure Nutrition standards are met on and to provide Nutritional Advice and recommend supplements to players.
- To provide quarterly reports to players to include a development program for improvement.
- To encourage players self analysis of performance.
- Meet regularly with Academy coaches to ensure that their requirements are being met.
- To make recommendations and assist in the development of Initiatives to improve the training culture and environment and keep it fresh.
- Implement and maintain a training register and process to capture all players sessions and record progress and to give a detailed analysis of both performance and the development of the strength and condition of all players.
Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- High standard of Conditioning knowledge for Rugby
- High Standard of Nutritional Knowledge.
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Presentation skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
- Coaching

Performance Measures
- Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
- All Key Players to understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what’s expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby.

Notes
It is critical for the overall functioning and effectiveness of the department to work as a team. This requires good communication skills and a professional approach to all aspects of the job.

Working hours will be varied and the Coach will need to be very flexible to fulfil the responsibilities expected of him.
Main Areas of Responsibility
Assistant Conditioning Coach

Employee

Job Title: Assistant Conditioning Coach
Line Manager: Head of Physical Performance

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To arrive at sessions 90 min prior to start
- To assist the Conditioning Coach as instructed
- Assist in delivery of strength sessions
- Assist in creating a good work ethic and environment in the gym
- Inspect players undertaking their assigned sessions
- Assist in keeping a record of strength testing and power testing
- Record players adherence to the code of conduct in sessions and monitor recovery and nutrition following conditioning sessions.
- Assist in delivery of long-term injury sessions
- Help with conditioning sessions for long-term injured players with Ind. Rehab schedules.
- Conduct and monitor sessions with rehab players when conditioning coach is with the squad.
- Assist in delivery of sessions to non-22 or before game day.
- Assist in delivery of individual sessions
- Design, plan and implement individual programs to suit player needs.
- Design plans to enable varied multi sessions to take place simultaneously.
(Monday AM assigned conditioning block) with a view to maintaining intensity and increasing recovery time.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- High standard of Conditioning knowledge for Rugby
- High Standard of Nutritional Knowledge.
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills

Performance Measures

- Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
- All key players understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what’s expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby.
Main Areas of Responsibility

Rehab Coach

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<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

Main Function

To provide effective and comprehensive programmes covering the following areas, (1) injury prevention, (2) prehab and rehab and (3) the player’s education of self care and injury prevention. This will include full liaison with the appropriate Medical Support and Athletic Performance staff.

Main Tasks

1. To provide effective and comprehensive programmes as set out in the Main Function.

2. In consultation with the Head Physiotherapist, coordinate and implement massage treatments for players. This will include occasion where additional therapists will be required as directed by the Head Physiotherapist or Director of Athletic Performance.

3. To keep abreast of current best practice in order to remain at the cutting edge of technology.

4. To maintain accurate and up to date records of all individual and team training sessions and player progress.

5. To ensure that all rehabilitation and massage equipment is properly maintained and inform the Director of Athletic Performance when repairs are required.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills

- High standard of Conditioning knowledge for Rugby
- High Standard of Nutritional Knowledge.
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills
Performance Measures

- Provide 1:1 feedback to forwards based on their performance.
- All Key Players to understand exactly their roles and responsibilities.
- Every player understands their role and what's expected from them.
- Provide feedback from each game to players and the Director of Rugby.

Notes

It is critical for the overall functioning and effectiveness of the department to work as a team. This requires good communication skills and a professional approach to all aspects of the job.

Working hours will be varied and the Coach will need to be very flexible to fulfil the responsibilities expected.

A work experience person may be attached to the Rehabilitation coach. If so a programme of development, appraisal and progression will be required. Furthermore the individuals on work experience will be required to give a short presentation on an area relevant to their development at some time during their placement. This should be agreed in advance, with the Director of Athletic Performance.
Main Areas of Responsibility

Head Physiotherapist

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Director of Rugby</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Physiotherapist</td>
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**Main Function**
To direct the Physiotherapy team in providing an effective service to the senior players and Academy players in conjunction with the Club’s medical protocols.

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

- To provide the necessary physiotherapy services at all organised training sessions and matches (both home and away as well as overseas) for the Club’s senior sides as agreed with the Director of Athletic Performance.
- To be responsible for the provision of effective and prompt medical treatment for the players in collaboration with the Club’s medical officers, whilst ensuring that the appropriate paperwork is completed and submitted. This covers the current private medical insurance policy and any other policies which the Club may have in place.
- To provide a morning after game clinic throughout the season, or as agreed with the Director of Rugby.
- To be responsible for the co-ordination and the scheduling of players for physiotherapy and massage in consultation with the Director of Athletic Performance.
- To co-ordinate the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Physiotherapist and Academy Physiotherapist in consultation with the Director of Athletic Performance.
- To co-ordinate rehabilitation requirements, programmes and progression in consultation with the Director of Athletic Performance.
- To carry out a detailed assessment of incoming players to ascertain their interim profile and limitations. A report should be documented and signed by the player in question.
- To carry out an assessment of current players whose contract may be extended and report to the Director of Rugby accordingly.
- To demonstrate an effective liaison and coordination at all times with the rugby management team, coaches, and Athletic Performance and Medical Support Services.
- To keep abreast of current best practices in order to remain at the cutting edge of technology.
- To coordinate the responsibilities of Team Doctors, Physiotherapist(s) and Massage Therapist(s) to ensure appropriate management of players.
- Managing the professionalism within the squad
- The management and assessment of injury of all contracted players.
- Demonstrate good Clinical and organizational skills with particular reference to treatment and rehabilitation
- Implement The Concept Of Prehab And Its Application

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• To implement and maintain a medical database for all squad players.
• To initiate a muscular-skeletal screening of all players and to establish player profiles.
• To perform a Coordinating role, liaising closely with the Conditioning Coach in conjunction with other Medical Colleagues.
• To provide regular updates on the injury status of players to the Head Coach and the Director of Rugby
• Accountable and responsible for the provision of information to the EPMS, Coaches and
  o Management team
• The polarising of information centrally by way of regular feedback and updating via IT system.
• To maintain the confidentiality of Medical records in accordance with legal requirements.
• In respect of confidentiality, and in order to comply with the Professional Code Of Conduct as
  o appropriate to medical and Scientific Support Staff, it is imperative to obtain a consent/
  o confidentiality Statement Forms from those players under your remit.
  Responsibility for the upkeep and security of the data is the sole responsibility of the Head Physiotherapist

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
• High standard of Physio knowledge for Rugby
• Recording of statistical data
• Communicator and listener
• Interpersonal skills
• Organiser and time management
• Assessment skills

Performance Measures

➢ Provide injury status post match.

Notes
It is critical for the overall functioning and effectiveness of the department to work as a team. This requires good communication skills and a professional approach to all aspects of the job.

Working hours will be varied and the Head Physiotherapist will need to be very flexible to fulfil the responsibilities expected of him.

A work experience person may be attached to the Head Physiotherapist. If so a programme of development, appraisal and progression will be required. Furthermore the individuals on work experience will be required to give a short presentation on an area relevant to their development at some time during their placement. This should be agreed, in advance, with the Director of Athletic Performance.
Main Areas of Responsibility

Assistant Physiotherapist

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<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
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</table>

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To be a responsible member of the coaching and management team.
- Encourage professionalism within the squad.
- To assist in the Physiotherapy services in the form of assessment, treatment and rehabilitation.
- To inform the players and management of the medical requirements of the team.
- The management and assessment of injury of all contracted players.
- Demonstrate good Clinical and organizational skills with particular reference to treatment and rehabilitation.
- Implement The concept of prehabilitation And Its Application.
- To implement and maintain a medical database for all squad players.
- Accountable and responsible for the provision of information to the EPMS, Coaches and Management team.
- The polarising of information centrally by way of regular feedback and updating via IT system.
- Maintenance and confidentiality of Medical records in accordance with legal requirements.
- Responsibility for the upkeep and security of the data is the sole responsibility of the Physiotherapist (Academy).
- In respect of confidentiality, and in order to comply with the Professional Code Of Conduct as appropriate to medical and Scientific Support Staff, it is imperative to obtain a consent/confidentiality Statement Forms from those players under your remit.
- to maintain player profiles
- Establish medical functional screening as the concept of prehabilitation.
  *This is a core requirement of your role and should be undertaken in consultation with and upon the advice of the Head Physiotherapist.*
- Following a sound medical function screen, (documented and recorded) the whole concept of prehabilitation can and must be educational with emphasis placed upon the individuals acceptance and adoption of the process from the outset.
- The responsibility for treatment and rehabilitation of Academy Players is the remit of the Academy Physiotherapist. Innovation, and a dynamic approach is desirable.
- A satisfactory means of Recording Injury
- Maintenance and confidentiality of Medical records in accordance with legal requirements.
- Responsibility for the upkeep and security of the data is the responsibility of the Physiotherapist.
### Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

#### Skills
- High standard of Physio knowledge for Rugby
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Interpersonal skills
- Organiser and time management
- Assessment skills

#### Performance Measures
Main Areas of Responsibility
Analyst

Employee
Job Title: Analyst
Line Manager: Director of Rugby - [redacted]
Head Coach

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To be a responsible member of the coaching and management team.
- Encourage professionalism within the squad
- To provide data to both preview the opposition and review performance.
- After each Match to provide to the Coaching staff by the following lunchtime information from the game.
- The information should be visually accessible on computer providing instance break down on Performance Goals by individual and unit debrief.
- On Day 1 edit the Coaches debrief points (Make Sure All Equipment Is Available To Coaches) and ensure that all information is on laptops and available to players in the viewing room.
- To provide Coaches with last two games of opposition to be edited as instructed for debrief purposes 10 days prior to next game.
- Produce written stat sheets, make these available to the players.
- Provide players with DvD copies if required.
- Produce monthly stats performance sheets.
- To film training sessions, half times when required.
- To be responsible for all analysis equipment, laptops, projectors, DVD’s, control Player DVD’s.
- To provide Away games entertainment as requested

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- High standard of knowledge of Rugby
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Organiser and time management

Performance Measures
Main Areas of Responsibility
Academy Manager

Employee

Job Title: Academy Manager
Line Manager: Director of Rugby

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- To provide a complete management and support service to members of the Harlequins Academy, ensuring that the players are given every opportunity to develop to their potential and become Elite Rugby Players.
- Identify and register appropriate individuals for the Academy.
- Ensure that all Academy members adhere to an Academy Agreement.
- Deal with agreements and contractual issues of Academy members.
- Manage the Development of Elite Academy Players from 16+
- Organise, implement and evaluate the work of Academy Staff - Coaching Skills/Technical/Tactical & Conditioning.
- Manage all playing commitments of Individual Academy Members.
- Assist in the development of strategies to improve the process.
- Assess, monitor and evaluate the progress of all Academy Players.
- Create a network of service providers, creating partnerships.
- Liaise closely with all Regional Staff to ensure that they are fully updated on the Academy Process.
- Implement career, education & personal development plans.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- Discretion
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Organiser and time management
- Good admin and computer skills

Performance Measures

TBA
Main Areas of Responsibility

Academy Conditioning Coach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Title</strong></td>
<td>Academy Conditioning Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Line Manager</strong></td>
<td>Head of Physical Performance - Academy Manager -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

To provide a conditioning service to the Harlequins Academy players, ensuring that they are given the opportunity to develop to their potential in becoming Elite Performers.

- Carry out fitness testing to EPMS Protocols at Pre-agreed intervals for individuals identified by the National system.
- In conjunction with the National Academy Conditioning Adviser, produce individual fitness programs for identified individuals that are based upon test results.
- Individual fitness programs should conform with the National Academy Curriculum.
- To continuously review and update fitness programs.
- To provide relevant information on nutritional needs, both practical and educational, for Academy Players.
- To provide the Academy Manager with relevant information as required.
- To teach and reinforce all techniques that are required to carry out training plans in a safe and effective manner.
- Assist in the development of strategies to improve the process of dealing with elite rugby players.
- Assess, monitor and evaluate the progress of all Academy Players.
- Produce monthly reports for the Academy Manager and Director of Rugby.
- Liasse with medical and physiotherapy Dept. to ensure that Rehabilitation and Rehydration needs of each player is catered for in the training plan.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

**Skills**

- Discretion
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Organiser and time management
- Good admin and computer skills

Performance Measures

TBA
Main Areas of Responsibility
Admin Manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
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</table>

**Main Function:**
In conjunction with the Rugby Manager to ensure that effective administrative services are provided for all rugby activities.

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

- To be the point of contact for players for all administrative purposes and IT queries.
- Open and sort the post.
- Complete correspondence and admin work for the Director of Rugby.
- Keep the Director of Rugby coaching diary and arrange meetings.
- Produce and distribute weekly schedule received from DOR/Head Coach.
- Keep stock of stationery. And other Office Manager duties.
- Answer telephone and take messages.
- Keep filing system current.
- Meet and greet visitors as necessary.
- Administration of player files.
- Any other business as instructed by the DOR.
- To liaise with the RFU, PRL and so on in ensuring that the various fixtures are confirmed and times communicated.
- To liaise with the Stoop for the provision of Season Tickets for players, staff and their families.
- To make the necessary post-match arrangements for players in terms of food, passes, parking etc.
- And to ensure that they are aware of any promotional requirements.
- To deal with all correspondence and ensure that it is properly directed and followed up.
- In conjunction with the DOR and Rugby Manager liaise with the Commercial, Media and Community departments, developing, promotional, charity and other similar roles and organise the individual players to meet the press as requested.
- To prepare training schedules and liaise with the Rugby Manager so that medical support services, groundstaff and catering personnel can be properly informed.
- To develop a working relationship with senior contracted players and their partners so that any problems can be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- To co-ordinate and produce reports and letters for the management and coaching team as and when required.
- To undertake project work which may be required from time to time and which is consistent with the jobholder’s experience and capability.
- To ensure the database is accurately maintained.
- To organise food for training sessions.
- To oversee and monitor budget expenditure and wage cap and keep the DOR informed of the current position.
To deal with all mortgage requests relating to players.

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- Discretion
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Organiser and time management
- Good admin and computer skills

Performance Measures
- To assist the Academy Manager with organisation of training sessions and associated events
- To ensure that the appropriate travel and hotel arrangements are made for all matches.
Main Areas of Responsibility

Rugby Manager

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Rugby Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
<td>Director of Rugby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main Function:
To ensure that effective administrative services are provided for all rugby activities.

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

Main Tasks:
- To liaise with the other clubs and ensure tickets/passes are available in line with normal practice.
- To liaise with the RFU, ERP, and so on in ensuring that the various fixtures are confirmed and times communicated.
- To make the necessary post-match arrangements for players in terms of food, passes, parking etc and to ensure that they are aware of any promotional requirements.
- To assist the DOR and Head Coach by making the appropriate administrative arrangements for pre-season training covering travel, accommodation, food, equipment and kit.
- To ensure that the quality of all food provided is in line with good nutrition practices.
- In conjunction with the DOR liaise with the Commercial, Media and
- To deal with all senior player registrations and where necessary, letters of intention, visas, work permits, etc.
- To ensure that the appropriate travel and hotel arrangements are made for all matches.
- To publish and communicate training schedules and liaise with the DOR so that medical support services, groundstaff and catering personnel can be properly informed.
- To develop a working relationship with senior contracted players and their partners so that any problems can be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- To assist in the preparation and monitoring of the non-salary budget items and ensure these costs are properly controlled.
- To ensure that all new players receive an effective induction so that they quickly become accepted and integrated and subsequently deal with any "welfare issues" which may arise.
- To undertake project work which may be required from time to time and which is consistent with the jobholder’s experience and capability.
- Ordering and stocktaking of training centre supplies and equipment.
- Issue Season Tickets/Staff Passes to – Staff, Players, Coaches, Medical Staff
- To be present at all management meetings to record and circulate minutes.
- For Home Games – Arrange Passes and Tickets for Opposition Officials, Match
Officials. Players post match sponsors rota, Official team sheet, Match Day Tickets, Non Playing Players Match Day commercial rota
- Arrange Players involvement in Commercial Events (liaise with Commercial Dept)
- Doctors Rota from Head Physiotherapist
- Blogdons – liaise with operating company
- To ensure that effective administrative services are provided for all rugby activities.
- To be responsible for the Rugby Kit Men

**Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discretion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Communicator verbal and written</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Organiser and time management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good admin and computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and works well under pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good admin and organisational ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organisational ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to develop a good relationship with a wide range of people in a relatively short period.</td>
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</table>

**Performance Measures**

TBA
Main Areas of Responsibility

Kit Man

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>Kit Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Manager</td>
<td>Rugby Manager</td>
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</table>

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

**Training** - Liaise with Coaching Staff 1 Hour before Training to ensure relevant training equipment is available.
- Liaise with Head Coach to confirm times and dates for training.
- Keep all training equipment clean and tidy and in good working order.
- Keep an inventory of all equipment.
- Ensure everything is locked away after training.
- Deliver kit to laundry each week.
- Keep an inventory of Playing / Training / Leisure Wear (No kit to be given out without the permission of the Director of Rugby).
- General maintenance of training base facilities.
- Provision of studs accessories and kicking tees.

**Match Day’s (Home)** - All Playing kit to be set out in the dressing room, drinks and all other materials that are required for match day, (3 Hours before Kick Off before the players arrive)
- Ensure all of the 2 way radios are operational and ready for the coaches.
- After Warm Up – collect tops and ensure they are washed for next game.
- Ensure that all drinks bottles are full for the 80 mins.
- Organise the half time drinks.
- Ensure that a kit change is available for half time if required.
- All Playing Kit is put in to soak prior to washing.
- All Equipment used is moved out of the Stool after the game.
- Organise and brief ball boys.
- Organise method of operating for Staff on Match Day’s, Home and Away.

**Match Day’s (Away)** - Check Kit and Equipment taken to Away games is loaded onto the Van.
- Suitable nourishment provided for journey in liaison with the Head of physical performance.
Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

- When staying in Hotels ensure the "Team Room" has drinks,
- Help to liaise with players re timings and locations of rooms.
- Ensure that the dressing room is set up prior to the players arrival.
- Check Kick off time, At the end of the game ensure that everything is loaded into the Van.
- Ensure the van is left tidy and clean.

General - Keep a record of all expenditure during the season.
- Keep records of all kit coming in and going out.
- Liaise with Rugby manager. to order anything from Kooge
- To assist Rugby Manager. In any way, i.e. Airport Duties, Transport
- Be responsible for the washing of all kit.
- Keep records of all training kit coming in and going out.
- Carry out stock checks throughout the season.
- Ensure regular sterilisation of drinks containers and bottles.

Drive to each ground and have a good knowledge of the ground

Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

Skills
- Discretion
- Recording of statistical data
- Communicator and listener
- Organiser and time management
- Good admin and computer skills
Full UK driving License

Performance Measures

TBA
**Employee**

**Job Title**  Kit Man

**Line Manager**  Rugby Manager

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

**Training** - Liaise with Coaching Staff 1 Hour before Training to ensure relevant training equipment is available.
- Liaise with Head Coach to confirm times and dates for training
- Keep all training equipment clean and tidy and in good working order.
- Keep an inventory of all equipment.
- Ensure everything is locked away after training
- Deliver kit to laundry each week
- Keep an inventory of Playing / Training / Leisure Wear (No kit to be given out without the permission of the Director of Rugby).
- General maintenance of training base facilities.
- Provision of studs accessories and kicking tees

**General** - Keep a record of all expenditure during the season.
- Keep records of all kit coming in and going out.
- Liaise with Rugby manager to order anything from Kooga
- To assist Rugby Manager in any way, i.e. Airport Duties, Transport
- Be responsible for the washing of all kit.
- Keep records of all training kit coming in and going out.
- Carry out stock checks throughout the season.
- Ensure regular sterilisation of drinks containers and bottles.
- Drive to each ground and have a good knowledge of the ground
- Ensure the van is left tidy and clean.
- Ensure that the dressing room is set up prior to the players arrival.
### Competencies required (Knowledge, Skills and behaviours)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discretion</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Full UK driving License</td>
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<th>Performance Measures</th>
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<td>TBA</td>
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Appendix 11 – Rangers Rugby Players Code of Conduct

Players

Code of Conduct
PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Rugby Training

Players are to wear the prescribed dress codes for training sessions. If you do not have the correct gear, you leave the field and are given 5 minutes to return with the correct attire.

Players will turn up on time for training, if you are going to be late for training for any reason you should contact the relevant coach with a justifiable reason.

You must not wear tracksuit tops or bottoms in training without the prior consent of the relevant coach.

Should a player receive a "yellow card" in training by a coach or the referee, the recipient of the "yellow" will be required to attend a meeting in the meeting room an hour and a half after training to analyse the offence along with the relevant coach/referee... A "yellow card" table will be kept upstairs.

Players are required to bring their maxi muscle water bottles to all rugby sessions. No other substitute container will be acceptable.

A "red bib" system will continue to run – the precise basis of these being handed out and used for training will be addressed separately by the Medical Team.

Rugby Meetings

Players are asked to attend all meetings as required and if they are before training sessions, the player must attend in prescribed training gear so he is ready to go straight onto the pitch afterwards.

Failure to do so will result in the player leaving the meeting and returning within 5 minutes in the appropriate gear.

It is expected that all players will turn up in good time for meetings. It is unacceptable for any individual to keep the rest of the group waiting. If you are going to be late or cannot attend a rugby meeting for any reason you should inform the Head Coach with plenty of notice.

Players should bring their folders and a pen to every meeting.
Injured Players

All players not training in pre season MUST watch all of the on - field sessions unless there is a prior agreement with the coaches

During the season any player not training but in consideration for the next game MUST watch the on - field sessions unless there is a prior agreement with the coaches.

Players who are injured and not in consideration for selection for the following game may be asked to watch the on - field session and will be specifically requested to do so by the coaches.

All injured players are expected to attend all meetings unless specifically advised by the coaches that they are not required.

'A' XV PLAYERS

All players involved in "A" Team Matches on a Monday evening are required to attend all meetings the following day, unless advised that they are not required.

All players involved in the "A" Team Matches must bring their training gear the following day in case they are requested to be involved in some form of training.

Where possible, the coaches will seek to advise players directly after the 'A' XV game, if they will be required to participate in training in some form on Tuesday.

Forwards will have a specific rehab time on the Tuesday at 10.30am (i.e. after the forward meeting). If any forwards are then required to train after the meeting, they will regen at a different time.

- All "A" XV Team backs will have a specific rehab time on the Tuesday at 11.30am (i.e. after the backs meeting). If any backs are then required to train after the meeting, they will regen at a different time.

Match Day and Travel

You will be advised by way of an agenda, provided by the Rugby Manager of all commitments for both players and non players on a week by week basis, for both home and away games. This will include appropriate attire.

Conditioning and Medical Codes of Conduct

You will be advised separately of these by the relevant departments.

Admin Code of conduct

You will be expected to complete your admin as directed.
Appendix 12 – Rangers Rugby Player Positional Job Description

Players

Positional Job Descriptions
Prop Forwards Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Set a solid platform
- Deliver requirements of your selected position
- Deliver required binding
- Set in dynamic driving position
- Chase the hit and keep it on
- Communicate with your team mates
- Know the calls

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Deliver required movement
- Support and protect jumpers
- Protect our possession re ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Deliver development of play
- Deliver defensive pattern
- In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively

Kick offs
- Move quickly and support the jumpers in your chosen area
- Protect the jumpers and lift if required
- Set platform solid platform for us to play from

Second phase

Attack
- Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
- Act as a support runner for offload
- If ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
- Get back in the game quickly
- Communicate at all times
- A high work rate is required
- Read the play

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Position yourself accordingly and quickly
- Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
- Deliver an effective press
- Deliver effective first up tackles

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- On our ball understand call or move
- On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure your and the teams performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Hooker Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Lead and organise the set scrum
- Set a solid platform
- Deliver requirements of your selected position
- Deliver required binding
- Set in dynamic driving position
- Chase the hit and keep it on
- Communicate with your team mates
- Know the calls

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Throw accurately
- Hit my jumper every time
- Protect our possession re ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Deliver development of play
- Deliver defensive pattern
- In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively
- Control the 5m line
- Cover blindside

Kick offs
- Move quickly and support the jumpers in your chosen area
- Protect the jumpers and lift if required
- Set platform solid platform for us to play off

Second phase

Attack
- Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
- Act as a support runner for offload
- If ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
- Get back in the game quickly
- Communicate at all times
- A high work rate is required
- Read the play

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Position yourself accordingly and quickly
- Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
- Deliver an effective press
- Deliver effective first up tackles

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- On our ball understand call or move
- On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Second Row Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Set a solid platform
- Deliver requirements of your selected position
- Deliver required binding
- Set in dynamic driving position
- Chase the hit and keep it on
- Communicate with your team mates
- Know the calls

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Communicate and work with the hooker lifters
- Work dynamically in the jump
- Catch and deliver the development of play re C&D or OT
- Protect our possession re ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Deliver defensive pattern
- In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively
- Dominate your opposite number throughout the game

Kick offs
- Communicate
- Control your area of work
- Come onto the ball
- Judge flight of ball with good timing
- Catch and set dynamically
- Set platform solid platform for us to play from
- On their ball chase hard and try to disrupt or steal

Second phase

Attack
- Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
- Act as a support runner for offload
- If ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
- Get back in the game quickly
- Communicate at all times
- A high work rate is required
- Read the play

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Position yourself accordingly and quickly
- Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
- Deliver an effective press
- Deliver effective first up tackles

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- On our ball understand call or move
- On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Blindside Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Set a solid platform
- Deliver requirements of your selected position
- Deliver required binding
- Set in dynamic driving position
- Chase the hit and keep it on
- Communicate with your team mates
- Know the calls
- In defence monitor blindside moves and if play goes open hold position on blind

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Deliver required movement
- Support and protect jumpers
- Protect our possession re ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Deliver development of play
- Deliver defensive pattern
- In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively
- Support openside from full lineouts

Kick offs
- Communicate
- Control your area of work
- Come onto the ball
- Judge flight of ball with good timing
- Catch and set dynamically
- Set platform solid platform for us to play from
- Position yourself as a ball carrier off first phase
- On their ball chase hard and try to disrupt or steal

Second phase

Attack
- Be aware of the second phase call
- Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
- Act as a support runner for offload
- If ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
- Get back in the game quickly
- Communicate at all times
- A high work rate is required
- Read the play

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Position yourself accordingly and quickly
- Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
- Deliver an effective pass
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- Support openside from lineouts
- Monitor the blind in scrums

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- On our ball understand call or move
- On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure your team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Openside Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
• Set a solid platform
• Deliver requirements of your selected position
• Deliver required binding
• Set in dynamic driving position
• Chase the hit and keep it on
• Communicate with your team mates
• Know the calls
• In defence put pressure on the first receiver

Lineouts
• Know and understand the calls
• Communicate and work with the hooker lifters
• Catch and deliver the development of play re C&D or OT
• Work dynamically in the jump
• Deliver required movement
• Support and protect jumpers
• Protect our possession re ball
• Tidy up any loose ball
• Deliver development of play
• Deliver defensive pattern
• In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively
• Target first receiver

Kick offs
• Communicate
• Control your area of work
• Come onto the ball
• Judge flight of ball with good timing
• Catch and set dynamically
• Set platform solid platform for us to play from
• Position yourself as a ball carrier off first phase
• On their ball chase hard and try to disrupt or steel

Attack
• Be aware of the second phase call
• Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
• Act as a support runner for offload
• If ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
• Get back in the game quickly
• Communicate at all times
• A high work rate is required
• Read the play and know the backs calls

Defence
• Understand and deliver your role from platform
• Position yourself accordingly and quickly
• Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
• Deliver an effective press
• Deliver effective first up tackles
• Target the first receiver from platform
• Compete and look to steal ball or slow

Penalties/free kicks
• Get into position quickly
• On our ball understand call or move
• On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video feedback and de-brief with the coaching team.
Number Eight Job Description

Scrum
- Set a solid platform
- Deliver requirements of your selected position
- Deliver required movement
- Set in dynamic driving position
- Chase the hit and keep it on
- Communicate with your team mates
- Know the calls
- Protect and deliver controlled ball from the base
- Work with scrum half
- Set target from the base if required
- In defence work quickly from the base to support and identify threats

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Deliver required movement
- Support and protect jumpers
- Protect our possession re ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Deliver development of play
- Deliver defensive pattern
- In defence look to disrupt and spoil effectively
- Support openside from full lineouts

Kick offs
- Communicate
- Control your area of work
- Come onto the ball
- Judge flight of ball with good timing
- Catch and set dynamically
- Set platform solid platform for us to play from
- Position yourself as a ball carrier off first phase
- On their ball hold back for kick in place of winger

Second phase

Attack
- Be aware of the second phase call
- Position yourself so you can be used as a ball carrier
- Act as a support runner for offload
- If a ruck is formed enter in the correct body position and take out the threats
- Get back in the game quickly
- Communicate at all times
- A high work rate is required
- Read the play

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Position yourself accordingly and quickly
- Swap in and out to avoid mismatches
- Deliver an effective press
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- Support openside from lineouts
- In defence work quickly from the base to support BR and identify threats

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- On our ball understand call or move
- On their ball press up and hit the runner

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team performance through regular appraisal, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Scrum Half Job Description

Scrum
- Work with hooker when putting ball in
- Know and communicate the call to the forwards
- Deliver controlled and quality ball from the base
- Work with number eight and fly half
- Box kick from base if required
- Use vision and know your options
- In defence put pressure on the opposition scrum half and number eight
- Decision making in defence at other scrums

Lineouts
- Know and understand the calls
- Deliver controlled and quality ball
- Tidy up any loose ball
- Communicate calls between backs and forwards
- Control CB and C
- Use vision and know your options
- Kick if required
- Know teams defensive requirements

Kick-offs
- Communicate
- Control your area of work
- Come onto the ball
- Look for option runners off first phase
- Control drives if required
- Box if required
- Deliver controlled and quality ball
- Use vision and know your options
- Pose a running/sniping threat

Second phase

Attack
- Be aware of the second phase call
- Read the play
- Deliver controlled and quality ball
- Communicate to support runners
- High work rate
- Be at every breakdown where practical
- Recognise opportunities
- Recognise slow and quick ball
- Give the fly half what he wants
- Use kicking options as and when required

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Understand and deliver your role from phase play
- Sit in pocket and communicate
- Once passed follow ball and act as sweeper or linebreak defender
- Cover any kicks over
- Deliver effective first up tackles as and when required
- Use effectively turnover ball
- Communicate with full back

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- Get hands on ball
- Look to see if quick tap is on
- Hit wide runners or fly half
- On our ball understand call or move

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure your team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Fly Half Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Make appropriate calls and communicate to the scrum half and forwards
- Communicate move selection to other backs
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on the opposition first receiver

Lineouts
- Make appropriate calls and communicate to the scrum half and forwards
- Communicate move selection to other backs
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on the opposition first receiver

Kick-offs
- Communicate
- Look for option runners off first phase
- Use vision and know your options
- Kick if required
- Communicate move selection to other players
- On their ball put the ball in the desired area
- Put height and hang time on the ball
- After kick press up and hold zone

Second phase

Attack
- Make appropriate calls and communicate to the scrum half and forwards
- Communicate move selection to other backs
- Kick if required to relieve pressure or turn opposition
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- Play heads up rugby and read the play
- Deliver effective development of play
- Quality handling
- High work rate
- Recognise opportunities
- Recognise slow and quick ball

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Understand and deliver your role from phase play
- Communicate with openside from platform
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- On turnover recognise opportunities

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- Get hands on ball
- Look to see if quick tap is on
- Get option runners outside and inside
- Kick for corner if required
- Kick for goal if required
- Work with captain to make appropriate call

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure your and the team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Centre Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Communicate with fly half
- Know the calls
- Expect ball at all times
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on your opposite number and hold your zone
- Deliver defensive pattern

Lineouts
- Communicate with fly half
- Know the calls
- Expect ball at all times
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on your opposite number and hold your zone
- Deliver defensive pattern

Kick offs
- Communicate
- Use vision and know your options
- Kick if required
- Communicate move selection to other players
- On their ball chase hard and get into required position

Second phase

Attack
- Make appropriate calls and communicate to the scrum half and forwards
- Communicate move selection to other backs
- Kick if required to relieve pressure or turn opposition
- Run required lines at pace and effectively
- Expect ball at all times
- Use footwork and attack space
- Clear ruck and take out threats if required
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- Play heads up rugby and read the play
- Deliver effective development of play
- Quality handling
- High work rate
- Recognise opportunities
- Recognise slow and quick ball
- Offer physicality in attack and defence

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Understand and deliver your role from phase play
- Communicate with player inside and outside from platform
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- On turnover recognise opportunities

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly
- Look to see if quick tap is on
- Get option runners outside and inside

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team's performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Wing Job Description

From set plays

**Scrum**
- Communicate with other backs
- Communicate with scrum half if blind is on
- Know the calls
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on the opposition number and hold your zone
- Deliver defensive pattern
- Drop back for kick if required
- Communicate with full back

**Lineouts**
- Communicate with other backs
- Know the calls
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence put pressure on the opposition number and hold your zone
- Deliver defensive pattern
- Drop back for kick if required
- Communicate with full back

**Kick offs**
- Communicate
- Use vision and know your options
- Kick if required
- Communicate move selection
- On their ball chase hard and make first up tackle
- Get into position and drop to cover kick if required

**Second phase**

**Attack**
- Communicate move selection with other backs
- Kick if required to relieve pressure or turn opposition
- Run required lines at pace and effectively
- Expect ball at all times
- Use footwork and attack space
- Clean ruck and take out threats if required
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- Play heads up rugby and read the play
- Deliver effective development of play
- Quality handling
- High work rate
- Recognise opportunities
- Look for counter-attack opportunities from poor kicks

**Defence**
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Understand and deliver your role from phase play
- Communicate with player inside from platform
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- On turnover recognise opportunities
- Counter attack effectively
- Work with full back to cover kicks
- If on blindside look to cover full back as he comes into line

**Penalties/free kicks**
- Get into position quickly
- Chase kick

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure your and the team performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Full Back Job Description

From set plays

Scrum
- Communicate with other backs
- Know the calls
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence follow ball and take last man
- Deliver defensive pattern
- Cover kick
- Communicate with wingers

Lineouts
- Communicate with other backs
- Know the calls
- Look at the opposition defence
- In defence follow ball and take last man
- Deliver defensive pattern
- Cover kick
- Communicate with wingers

Kick offs
- Communicate
- Kick if required
- Communicate move selection
- On their ball hold back and communicate with number eight and winger

Second phase

Attack
- Communicate move selection with other backs
- Kick if required to relieve pressure or turn opposition
- Run required lines at pace and effectively
- Expect ball at all times
- Use footwork and attack space
- Clean ruck and take out threats if required
- Use vision and know your options
- Look at the opposition defence
- Play heads up rugby and read the play
- Deliver effective development of play
- Quality handling
- High work rate
- Recognise opportunities

Defence
- Understand and deliver your role from platform
- Understand and deliver your role from phase play
- Communicate with wingers and scrum half
- Deliver effective first up tackles
- On turnover recognise opportunities
- Counter attack effectively
- Work with wingers and scrum half to cover kicks
- Communicate with blindside wing to ensure cover if out of position

Penalties/free kicks
- Get into position quickly

You will attend all training sessions and meetings when called upon. We will measure yours and the team's performance through regular appraisals, stats from games, video footage and de-brief with the coaching team.
Appendix 13 – Rangers Rugby Medical Protocol

Medical Protocol
MEDICAL GUIDELINES

1. If you wake up unwell you must contact [redacted] before 0600hrs. If it is decided you are to miss training you need to send a text to the Head Coach for selection/training numbers etc.

2. The above applies for days off and after training.

3. If training depends on a medical consultation, then you must attend that consultation before 1000hrs. If the consultation results in you not training, you must again contact the Head Coach.

4. Ice baths are obligatory.

5. Injured players must organise medical appointment times on the previous day – this also applies to days off.

6. The Physio’s room is not a social club.

7. A staff meeting between Coaching Staff, Fitness and Medical Staff takes place before lunch every day.

Training

1. Non training players shall not occupy the physio room 1 hour either side of training.

2. If a player is unable to make training at the allotted time they should ring one of the coaches.

Protocol for return to play

Mission Statement
To return the player to full health and playing, without the recurrence of injury once returned

Protocol: Injury—Return to play

- Accurate diagnosis – on bed, scanning/consultant review if required.

- Rehab planer: set with physio/fitness team – short and long term time frames documented and distributed to management team.
- **On field return** - When returning to rugby training, coaches consulted regarding limitations and bibs used appropriately.

- **Training volume completed** - Player able to return to play once a FULL week of training including positional skills completed without reaction from injury.

- **Return to play** - A final agreement of duration of return to play game should be made between coaches and fitness/physio team.
Appendix 14 – Rangers Rugby Performance Analysis Guide

Performance Analysis
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Analysis Protocols

- Game and Individual Analysis will be available from 0800hrs 2 days after a game unless we have a short turnaround week.

- Opposition Preview Games available 0800hrs 3 days after the game.

  The preview games will be coded and preview moves added, which will include:
  
  - Scrums
  - Lineouts
  - Kick offs
  - 1st phase attack
  - Kicking strategies

- If you need a preview movie of any other specific aspect, inform Rhys 2 days before you need it. You will also be able to use the matrix to find things for yourself.

Timetables

- This year a timetable will be used to give priority to players depending on what day it is. As there are only 3 stations please do not come in if it is not your session time (unless stations are free).

Sportscode Guides

- The guides to Sportscode are on the walls behind all analysis stations and in your game books. These are there to help you navigate through Sportscode. If you are unsure please ask or a tutorial.

DVD's

- DVD's of games, training and game book footage contain highly sensitive information. They also take around 8 hours for each game. Therefore, unless essential, DVD's will not be produced. Instead, laptops or password protected hard drives will be issued for you to take home and watch the footage.
Appendix 15 – Rangers Rugby Conditioning and Recovery

Conditioning

Recovery
Strength & Conditioning Guidelines

GOAL

Overall goal is to become the leanest and best conditioned side in the premiership.
Strength and Conditioning Guidelines

- Kit and weight training shoes to be worn in gym at all times
- Arrive 10 minutes before the start of your session.
- Do not come enter the Gym area until instructed to do so.
- Health & Safety is paramount in the gym
- You are to attend all weights & conditioning sessions with your training diary
- You are required to bring your training diary to every Gym session.
- Tidy weights away after each training session — leave the gym as you would like to find it
- We are in the gym to train. Do not interfere with another players training session. Switch on!

RECOVERY

- Recovery is compulsory after heavy rugby sessions and all matches. Check with coaches for training and Match day protocols
- When travelling the wearing of recovery skins is recommended and this practise will be enforced.
- Recovery shakes/drinks must be consumed after heavy training and games, unless agreed by the Head of Physical Performance

Body composition Goal

- Backs all backs and back rowers under 10% Bodyfat
- Tight 5 forwards to be under 16% Body fat
Strength and Conditioning - Season Structure

Pre season: 16th June – September 8th

3 groups
Group 1 – Body comp Group
Group 2 – Speed /Power group
Group 3 – Strength Hypertrophy Group

Hard Day /Light Day

- Hard day is double sessions with content dependent on what group you are in
- Light Day is prehab/Recovery Focused
- Re integration of touring players- need to ensure they have a good strength phase.
- Mind full of the amount of rugby content needed

3 Phase Season

Phase 1: September 6th – Autumn internationals

- Continue to top up players conditioning levels
- Change strength training weekly structure
- Retest at the end of phase 1

*Important to ensure that we maintain our conditioning levels and keep players fresh.*
- End of phase Review with coaching staff

Phase 2: Autumn internationals - 6 nations

- Hardest months
- Keep players focused
- Change training structure to keep fresh mentally
- Testing at end of phase

Phase 3: Home Stretch

- Keep players as fresh as possible
- Constant liaising with coaching staff
- Decrease volume
- Increase intensity
Testing

- At the end of pre season to give us data to compare during the season
- At the end of every phase
- Reports to coaching staff
- Testing protocols yet to be decided pending further discussion Re: ELV’s
- Will need to be non invasive to the typical rugby week.
Player Responsibilities in relation to [Redacted] and Central Official Sponsors and Suppliers

CLOTHING:

Home and Away Fixtures:

Home - [Redacted] shirt, belt, club tie, suit and your own shoes to be worn post match

Away – [Redacted] chino’s, [Redacted] polo shirt and [Redacted] jumper (optional)

Player Appearances:

As directed but it will either be:

[Redacted] training gear as specified
[Redacted] chino’s and polo shirt
[Redacted] suit

Each player will receive branded t-shirts from [Redacted] and [Redacted] as well as [Redacted] branded vests to wear as directed by the playing staff

No kit displaying [Redacted] or [Redacted] should be worn at all

PLAYER APPEARANCES:

[Redacted] players will be requested to take part in a number of player appearances for the club throughout the season. These can range from junior rugby coaching, racing days, trade shows, photo shoots to hosting table’s at [Redacted] dinners.

Players are representing [Redacted] on these appearances and expected to act in a professional manner. Please be as accommodating as possible with regards to player appearances.

Sponsors:

25 individual and 5 squad appearances
6 1st XV plus partners players visit to [Redacted]

3 individual and 1 squad appearance
3 individual and 1 squad appearance

3 individual and 1 squad appearance

3 individual and 1 squad player appearance

5 individual player appearances

3 individual player appearances

2 individual player appearances

1 squad and 3 individual player appearances

4 individual player appearances

5 individual player appearances

3 individual player appearances

Requirements of Central sponsors:

Pre season media day:

Captain and DoR
Venue and date tbc but will be either last week Aug or 1st week

GP Awards Dinner (Sept) - DoR and award nominees:

Venue and date TBC but probably the Wednesday prior to the 2009 GP Final
3 first team players to be made available on 3 occasions per season
Director of Rugby - One occasion per season for coaching of local junior club

1 appearance for 3 players per season
1 Off road day per club per contract period
1 appearance for 3 players per season

1 appearance for 3 players per season

**DRINKS:**

- Official Water Supplier – mechanic of how players are to use new system TBC
- Official Isotonic Sports Drink Supplier

Drinks from these branded drinks holders are the only one’s that should be used and displayed on a matchday

**STRENGTH & CONDITIONING:**

- Official Sports Nutrition Supplier

**SIGNED MERCHANDISE:**

To be signed in time for the start of the season

- sponsors:
  - 32 signed shirts
  - 85 signed balls

- Central sponsors:
  - 25 signed shirts
Appendix 17 – Job Description

Job Title: Academy Performance Analyst

Reporting to:
- Academy Manager
- Assistant Academy Manager
- Technical Analyst

Department: Academy

Job Function: To assist the Academy Manager in player development by monitoring and analysing ‘in-game’ performance. To aid members of the wider coaching group within the academy to access performance analysis tools with their relevant player groups.

Main Responsibilities:

1. TO PROVIDE TEAM AND GROUP ANALYSIS:
   - To film matches and training sessions as required.
   - Where applicable, to code matches live.
   - To provide the coach with a copy of the match, either on their laptop or DVD, to take away immediately after each match (2nd XV matches only).
   - To code team instances, as pre-determined by the Academy Manager and Technical Analyst for the purposes of statistical analysis.
   - To present a match review for coach and player analysis after every 2nd XV match as required by the Academy Manager.
   - To update the Harlequins performance analysis network server after each game so that players can access and analyse performance.
   - To teach each player and coach how to use the performance analysis network so that they can access and analyse team performances.

2. TO PROVIDE INDIVIDUAL PLAYER ANALYSIS:
   - To provide each of the players with a DVD of the match after each game.
   - To code individual player instances, as pre-determined by the Academy Manager and Technical Analyst for the purposes of player/coach review meetings and statistical analysis.
   - To update the Harlequins performance analysis network with individual player instances so that they can access and analyse individual performance.
   - Provide players with analysis opportunities away from Rochamptown, i.e. take home iPods, DVDs, etc.

3. TO ASSIST THE ACADEMY COACHING STAFF WITH ANALYSIS PROJECTS:
   - To aid the academy department and its staff members, on a priority basis prescribed by the academy manager, to integrate analysis tools to aid player development, e.g. work with academy coaches to provide comparative analysis of players in same position at all ages throughout the club, work with physiotherapists and S & C staff to develop players through footage review.
5. TOURNAMENT ANALYSIS

- To travel and perform team analysis duties as described above when youth team, 2nd XV team or any combination of the two are involved in a tournament.
- To undertake confirmed and potential opposition team analysis, review the findings and create a team presentation for the coaches and players.

Measures of Performance:

1. To ensure the Academy coaches have full assistance in developing effective team reflection sessions. To ensure all assistance is carried out to a high, professional standard and completed efficiently and effectively.

2. Development of group-level review sessions to target specific coaching principles as required by the coaching staff.

3. Implement an effective individual player analysis program as determined by the Technical Analyst. Players must be able to independently access relevant performance material, analyse the information, and draw meaningful conclusions.

4. Develop the levels of ‘in-game’ analysis, according to the coaches needs, so that players can be given timely and appropriate feedback that can be used to immediately affect performance.

5. Fully utilise performance analysis network that can be independently accessed by coaches and players in order to review tactical and technical information as deemed necessary by either party.

6. Ensure that on all tournaments there are full performance analysis operations to support the coaching group in achieving their goals and aiding tournament progression.

7. Make sure that all departments of the academy are aware of the potential uses of performance analysis within their own department and are given opportunities to explore those opportunities.
**Person Spec**

- Knowledge and relevant experience of the ‘Sportscode’ performance analysis system.
- Knowledge and experience in video capturing, broadcasting and production.
- Knowledge and experience of Apple systems, including server operations and development.
- Experience of working in rugby elite player development environment.
- Understanding of rugby coaching principles and terminology.
- Ability to communicate complex principles effectively within individual-to-group and individual-to-individual environments.
- Excellent knowledge of MS Office including:
  - MS Word: ability to produce documents, tables, mail merge
  - MS Excel: to produce bar charts, graphs and statistical data
  - MS PowerPoint: to produce PowerPoint presentations
  - MS Internet – to research and find information.
- Proven ability to improvise, innovate and develop new analysis processes in line with technological and methodological developments.

**Agreed by Post Holder:**

Signed: ____________________________
Print Name: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________

**Prepared & Authorised By Line Manager:**

Signed: ____________________________
Print Name: Director Of Rugby
Date: ____________________________
Signed: ____________________________
## Appendix 18 – Finding from Performance Analysis Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Purpose of the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eaves, S., Hughes, M., and Lamb, K.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>concluded that the introduction of the 10-m offside rule (1993) appears to have resulted in a significant change at the ruck; increasing the speed of the ‘play the ball and the rule changes associated with the introduction of the summer playing season (1996) resulted in a further increase in ruck speed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Rooyen, M. K., Lambert, M. I., and Noakes, T. D.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>There was a significant increase in the amount of time required for point scoring movements (20.8 ± 2.3s) compared to turnover movements (12.8 ± 2.3s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Rooyen, M., Rock, K., Prim, S., and Lambert, M.</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>This study clearly shows that there is a difference between the number of contact situations that the forwards and backline players are involved in during each competitive match.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eaves, S., J. and Evers, A.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>It was concluded that both the speed of the play the ball and the position of the attack relative to the initial ruck position are factors associated with creating perturbation in play in professional rugby league football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eaves, S., and Borad, G</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>It was concluded that teams in the NRL are more adept than teams in SL at confining their opponents to the defence zone. In addition they play a more expansive game in the transition zone, which enables them to move more quickly into the attacking zone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mellick, M., Fleming, S., and Davies, G.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>his process generated an empirically derived theoretical model of referee communication which was then evaluated from within the practice community of Rugby Union referees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarrie, K., and Hopkins, W. G.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>With the advent of professionalism, players have become heavier and backs have become taller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasski, et al.,</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>This defence performance which is connected to quick attacking phase would be common strategic and tactic facet for world second tier union like Japan which has been forced the physical disadvantage constantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prim, S., van Rooyen, M., and Lambert, M.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>There were no statistically significant differences between the teams for the total amount of ball possession per match or time of each movement involving ball possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Rooyen, M. K., Lambert, M. I., and Noakes, T. D.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>These data suggest that superior performance in World Cup rugby is linked to possession retained, the number of points scored in the second half and the propensity to lose possession in areas of the field from which the opposition is likely to score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Rooyen, M. K., and Noakes, T. D.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>This study has shown clear differences between teams reaching the semi finals of the 2003 Rugby World Cup and those knocked out at the quarterfinal stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van Rooyen, M. K., and Noakes, T. D.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>This study therefore suggests that the ability of teams to construct movements that lasted longer than 80 seconds was a key influence on where teams finished in the Rugby Union World Cup 2003 tournament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams, J., Hughes, M., O’Donoghue, P., and Davies, G.</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>The system was found to be reliable with both systems, but there were some performance indicators that had a percentage error of more than 5%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duthie, G., Pyne, D., and Hooper, S.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>After nearly a decade since becoming professional, elite Rugby Union is still characterized by highly intense, intermittent movement patterns and marked differences in the competition demands of forwards and backs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eaves, S., Hughes, M., and Lamb, K.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>It was concluded that the introduction of professional playing status in Rugby Union had had a marked effect on game action variables and, as a consequence the playing pattern of the game is significantly different in the professional Era and Periods compared to the pre-professional Era and Periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James, N., Mellalieu, S. D., and Jones, N. M.P.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The findings suggest that while general positional performance profiles appear to exist, intra-positional differences may occur due to variations in an individual’s style of play, the decision-making demands of the position and the effects of potential confounding variables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reed, D., and O’Donoghue, P.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Contrary to previous literature, soccer (57.9%) was on average predicted more successfully than Rugby Union (46.1%). Nevertheless results suggested that the ability of Artificial Intelligence and Computerised methods to predict the outcome of matches has, for the first time, surpassed that of humans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syers, M. G. L, and Washington-King, J.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>It was concluded that the maintenance of forward momentum, while avoiding contact through effective Running and Evasion Patterns was crucial in determining the effectiveness of ball carries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Williams, J., Hughes, M., and O'Donoghue, P.</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>The study found that both match and ball in play time increased significantly. It is suggested that this was largely due to the changes in the rules that were introduced over the period of the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, N. M.P., Mellalieu, S. D., and James, N.</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>The findings highlight a number of team factors which contribute to winning matches. Subsequent combination of these variables may be used to develop a model to predict future performance within Rugby Union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laird, P., and Lorimer, R.</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>This paper highlights the IRB findings and illustrates the possible benefits of comparison and cross referencing with previous research in other sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boddington, M., and Lambert, M.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Most scoring opportunities started on the right between the halfway line and the opposition's 22 metre line. Movement was from right to left in direction and more time in possession to secure points in the 1st half.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eaves, S., and Hughes, M.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>The results of this study suggest that the physical demands placed on international players has significantly increased, with the pattern of play moving towards a ruck dominated, more active game.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson, R.</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>There were no differences between the best and worst kickers in the tourimets on routine time, consistency or rhymicity. The view that increasing the temporal consistency of a routine will result in improved performance is challenged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin, J., and Smith, N. C. M., Tolfery, K. and Jones, A. M.</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>The results of this study suggest that refereeing top English rugby football union matches is physically demanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olds, T.</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>There is a close association between body size and success. Final ranking in the 1999 World Cup showed significant correlations with the average mass of the squads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainey, D. W., and Hardy, L.</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>The results indicate that interpersonal contact and time pressure are common sources of stress for sport officials and are frequently related to their burnout experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>