

PREP TO PLAY AERIAL CONTESTS



Reduce lower limb, head & finger injuries



➔ Improve athleticism and football performance in contests



Coaches have a duty of care to dedicate training time to educate players on how to approach aerial contests.

COACHING POINTS: Preparing feet & body, and launching

Coaching Tip ➔

Coaching players how to prepare and position their body prior to, during and after an aerial contest is essential, to increase contested marks or spoils and player safety.



SPACIAL AWARENESS
Turn head & read cues of kicker



FOOTWORK – ACTIVE FEET
Run an arc to come forward at the ball



DUTY OF CARE
Educate players that they should not back pedal into a contest



LAUNCH OFF ONE LEG
Take at highest point



INSIDE LEG PROTECTION

EARLY TO THE CONTEST?
Engage body and protect the drop zone



SITTING DUCK
Waiting under ball = vulnerable position and will get out-marked/spoiled

COACHING POINTS: Marking & landing

Coaching Tip ➔

Taking eyes off ball & moving head to the side = dropped marks & finger injuries.



EYES ON THE BALL
"W" hands



HEAD TO SIDE
Not looking at ball



LAND – ATHLETIC STANCE
Next play ready



STIFF LANDING
Unbalanced = High risk position for serious knee injury

PREP TO PLAY

AERIAL CONTEST DRILLS

Coaching Tip >

Reinforce a maximum of 2-3 technique points prior to commencing any drill. Keep cues simple. Use analogies such as 'W' or 'Butterfly hands'.

TECHNIQUE

ACTIVITY 1 STATIONARY MARKING

2-3 group size
10 mins
10m area



> Watch ball into hands

- > Stationary throwing firm ball into hands 2-3m away
- > Stationary kicking into hands with player on knees, then on feet
- > Walking through ball – increase speed as able

ACTIVITY 2 UNCONTESTED FOOTWORK AND LAUNCHING

- > Vary starting positions & flight of ball – players should adjust footwork if fumble, last one standing = winner



Noodle whack drill

- > Players in lines run through for marks and one player whacks them with a foam noodle. Drop out if fumble, last one standing = winner

Coaching Tip >

Cue players to adjust footwork, and body work as needed depending on each contest.

PROGRESSIVE DRILLS

ACTIVITY 3 TOKEN CONTACT

6-8 group size
10 mins
10-20m area

Drill Variations
Vary starting locations and side of contact

- > Use a token opponent with a bump bag to simulate contact
- > Encourage players to protect their body with their inside/lead leg, and launch at the ball



> Protect with inside knee



> Practice both sides & new starting points

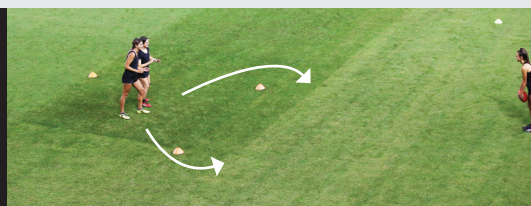
Coaching Tip >

Get players to take turns kicking the balls. **Coaches - coach!**

ACTIVITY 4 1v1 CONTESTED MARKING

6-8 group size
10 mins
10-20m area

Drill Variations
Larger square. Or designate starting points to force practice of particular situations



- > 4 cones with 2 players starting in the middle
Instruct to run to the back (or front, or opposite to partner)



> Launch at the ball



> Engage body if early to contest

SMALL-SIDED GAMES

ACTIVITY 5 MARKING GRIDS 4 v 3

8-10 group size
10 mins
15-10m area

Drill Variations
Adjust number of players, size of grid, or ratio of defenders: attackers

Progressions

- > Initially you may have players stationary on the corner
- > Attackers can move around
- > Kicker at each end - defenders to communicate and come forward to find players at the front

