



RUGBY CANADA  
LTRD SUPPLEMENTARY  
SEVENS RUGBY  
IMPLEMENTATION  
GUIDE



IRB Women's  
Sevens Challenge Cup



Winners





## Introduction

The sevens specific Long Term Rugby Development model implementation guide is an extension of the current LTRD model implemented by Rugby Canada. The aim of the sevens specific model is to inform children, parents, and all other stake holders of the requirements needed to potentially perform in the shortened version of the game.

Sevens is now a recognized pathway to national and international competition, with a World Series and Olympic tournament the pinnacle for sevens players. The document has been produced to provide a specific pathway for players wishing to specialize in sevens and give all stakeholders a formal model to follow.

The sevens specific model presents a road-map, a developmental check list, for coaches to remedy these traditional shortcomings by training players according to the LTRD outlined by Rugby Canada. A series of itemized tables or “matrices” show expressly which player skills and attributes should be prioritized at each stage of LTRD.

Like the full Rugby Canada LTRD the sevens specific pathway is a work in progress and probably always will be. It is based on current knowledge and experience along with available research in areas of physiological testing and human development.

## A REMINDER OF THE DEFINITIONS OF THE RUGBY CANADA (LTRD)

### **Technical Capacities**

Knowledge and understanding of rugby specific skills necessary to play the game efficiently.

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### **Tactical Capacities**

Knowledge and understanding of the game and application of its principles to achieve goals.

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### **Physical Capacities**

Knowledge and understanding of the physical components specifically related to maturation and development

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### **Mental Capacities**

Knowledge and understanding of the psychological skills and strategies related to effective performance

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### **Personal & Lifestyle Capacities**

Knowledge and understanding of issues related to self-awareness, self-development and establishing a balanced perspective



## What stages of LTRD are considered when looking at the game of Seven's Rugby in relation to the full Fifteen-Aside game?

As mentioned the Sevens specific Long Term Rugby Development model implementation guide is an extension of the current LTRD model. Rugby Canada believes that the core development capacities for both the Sevens and Fifteens variations of the game are the same for stages 1, 2 and 3. In relation to this the following implementation capacities work from key stage 4 onwards.



# 4 STAGE 4 (SEVENS SPECIFIC) TRAINING TO TRAIN PHASE

Appropriate additional Coaching Accreditation in conjunction with  
NCCP Certification: IRB Level 1 Sevens Coaching



## TECHNICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 EVASION SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

- Develop multi directional skills.

### 2 HANDLING SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Passing across the body in both directions at full pace.
- Passing from the ground for all players.
- Develop long accurate passing.

### 3 CONTACT SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

- Introduce 1 v 1 contact skills.

### 4 MAUL SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Ball carrier
  - Establish a strong base and protect the ball in contact.
- Primary Support Player
  - Secure possession and deliver ball.

**Note: A maul in the 7s game is a last resort and an offload or ruck should be the primary option**

### 5 RUCK SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Key Focus – Tackler to return to feet quickly to secure ball.

### 6 SCRUM SKILLS

- Basic Body Position - Safety & Stability.
- Develop understanding of body and feet positions and binding.
- Put-in and controlled strike of the ball.
- Introduce concept of channel to hooker.
- Pick or Pass to move the ball from the 3 v 3 scrum.

**Note: Scrum technique should be prioritized to most if not all players in the seven's game, as many will have not had previous knowledge in this area even though they may be established rugby players.**

### 7 LINEOUT SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Emphasis on lineout throwing for all individuals.
- Lineout throw linked to half back skills.

### 8 BACKLINE ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Immediate support of ball carrier.
- Introduction of depth of first receiver at breakdowns.

### 9 KICKING AND CATCHING

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Priority for drop kick by all players.

### 10 DEFENCE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Hooker's role is to cover the left side in defense at the scrum.
- Simple inside out concepts explored on defense.

## TACTICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 LAWS/ETHICS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Sevens laws and specific sevens tournament rules and regulations.

### 2 THE GAME

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Basic tactical preparation - awareness of opposition and roles in the sevens game.
- Introduction to structured competition specific for sevens.
- Identify with positional roles specific to sevens.

### 3 PRINCIPLES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- **Pressure** - put stress on the opposition within the parameters of sevens.

## PHYSICAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

## MENTAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

## LIFESTYLE CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

# 5 STAGE 5 (SEVENS SPECIFIC) TRAINING TO COMPETE PHASE

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IRB Level 1 Sevens Coaching



## TECHNICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 EVASION SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide.

- Develop multi directional skills to create space.

### 2 HANDLING SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Passing across the body in both directions at full pace
- Continual threat with the ball in hand.
- Spin passing in both directions at full pace.
- Spin passing from the ground.
- Deep, long accurate passing.

### 3A CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Smother tackle (Ball and Player).
- Tackle and be first to feet to contest for the ball.

### 3B CONTACT SKILLS – ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage

with added focus on:

- Develop clearing the ball from the 1 v 1 pressure.
- Introduce offload techniques in the tackle.

### 4 MAUL SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Ball Carrier
  - Establish a strong base and protect the ball.
  - Powerful Leg Drive to maintain momentum.
- Primary Support Player
  - Secure possession and deliver ball.

**Note: A maul in the 7s game is a last resort and an offload or ruck should be the primary option**

### 5 RUCK SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Key Focus – Tackler quick to feet quickly to secure ball.

### 6 SCRUM SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage



with added focus on:

The specifics of the scrum should be a priority of all players in Sevens and should be taught appropriately

- Basic body position.
- Develop understanding of body and feet positioning and specific binding for sevens.
- Put in and strike of the ball.
- Introduce concept of channel to hooker.
- Pick or pass to move ball away from a 3 on 3 scrum.

**Note: Scrum technique should be prioritized to most if not all players in the seven's game, as many will have not had previous knowledge in this area even though they may be established rugby players.**

## 7 LINEOUT SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Emphasis on lineout throwing for all individuals.
- Lineout throw linked to half back skills.

## 8 ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Immediate support of ball carrier.
- Depth of first receiver at breakdown.
- 3 man attacking unit (ball carrier, support runner, receiver).

## 9 KICKING AND CATCHING

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Priority for drop kick by all players is essential.
- Chip Kick and Catch.

## 10 DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Hooker covering the left side in defense at the scrum.
- Introduce a structured inside out defense.
- Tackle ball carrier to the ground and contest ball.
- Six man defense.
- Seven man defense.
- Defending as a 3 player unit.
- Sweeper principles.
- Strong defense in middle of the field.
- Defending in zones.
- Slide defense.

## 11A RESTARTS - RECEIVING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick offs, short, long and split options.
- Introduction of basic sevens restart formations.

## 11B RESTARTS - KICKING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick offs to regain possession - short, long and split options.
- Introduction of basic sevens restart formations.

## 12 SUPPORT - ATTACK AND DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide.

### TACTICAL CAPACITIES

#### 1 LAWS/ETHICS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Sevens laws and specific sevens tournament rules and regulations.

#### 2 THE GAME

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Go forward in isolation.
- Clearing primary threat (tackler).
- Development of using full field width.
- Team and Player profiling to determine basic styles of play. Fit, fast, physical or skillful.

#### 3 PRINCIPLES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Consistently move ball away from the contact and pressure area.

### PHYSICAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Rugby sevens specific conditioning.
- Shorter physical game preparation.
- Periodized training program.
- Speed Training.
- Pre-habilitation.
- Correct nutrition to support the 7s athlete.

### MENTAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage.

### LIFESTYLE CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

Life-balance-coping with pressures

- Regional and Provincial travel
- Time management responsibilities

# 6 STAGE 6 (SEVENS SPECIFIC) TRAINING TO PERFORM PHASE

Appropriate additional Coaching Accreditation in conjunction with NCCP Certification:  
IRB Level 2 Sevens Coaching



## TECHNICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 EVASION SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Multi directional skills to create space for support players.

### 2 HANDLING SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on

- Passing across the body in both directions at full pace.
- Continual threat with the ball in 2 hands and centered.
- Varying width and depth of spin passing at pace.
- Spin passing from the ground under increased pressure.
- Deep, long accurate passing to support.

### 3A CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Dominate tackle and be first to feet to contest the ball.
- High Priority on low tackles.
- Closing down space to prevent inside pass options.

### 3B CONTACT SKILLS – ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Clearing the ball from the 1 v 1 pressure area.
- Develop offload techniques in the tackle.
- Using footwork and body positioning to create weak tackles.
- Dominate contact and create space between attacker and defender.

### 4 MAUL SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

#### Ball carrier

- Establish a strong base and protect the ball
- Powerful Leg Drive to maintain momentum

#### Link player

- Secure possession and deliver ball

**Note: A maul in the 7s game is a last resort and an offload or ruck should be the primary option.**

### 5 RUCK SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Tackler to feet quickly to secure ball to dominate the contact area.

### 6 SCRUM SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Basic body position.
- Develop understanding of body and feet positioning and binding for sevens.
- Put in and strike.
- Introduce concept of channel to hooker.
- Pick or pass to move ball away from 3 player scrum.
- Props developing skills to break from the scrum quickly.
- Develop skills to provide clean ball for half-back to attack.

### 7 LINEOUT SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Full specialization in lineout throwing / half-back role

- Specialization in Line-out lifting & Jumping techniques.
  - Speed of Jump
  - Advanced lineout variation and lifting techniques.

## 8 ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Introduction of depth of first receiver at breakdowns.
- Introduce correct attacking options for each area of the field.
- 3 man attacking unit, ball carrier, support runner, receiver.
- Previous passing player to support ball carrier.
- Use of evasive footwork.
- Re-alignment strategies.
- Develop maximum width in attack.

## 9 DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Hooker covering the left side in defense at the scrum.
- A structured inside out defense.
- Tackle ball carrier to the ground and contest ball.
- Six man defense.
- Seven man defense.
- Defending as a 3 player unit.
- Develop sweeper principles.
- Strong defense in middle of the field.
- Introduce defensive strategies for set play.

## 10 KICKING AND CATCHING

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Development of Drop Kicking (Goal Kicking & Restarts).
- Chip Kick and Catch.
- Chip or grubber kick to release other attacking players.
- Strategic kicking under pressure.

## 11A RESTARTS - RECEIVING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick off reception - short, long and split options.
- Develop specific restart formations for sevens.
- Introduce one player lifting strategies.

## 11B RESTARTS - KICKING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick offs to regain possession - short, long and split options.
- Develop specific restart formations for sevens.

## 12 SUPPORT - ATTACK AND DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide

## TACTICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 LAWS/ETHICS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide or this stage with added focus on:

- Sevens Laws and specific sevens tournament rules and regulations.

### 2 THE GAME

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide or this stage with added focus on:

- Go forward in isolation.
- Clearing primary threat in the contact area (tackler).
- Team and player profiling to determine style of play. Fit, fast, physical or skillful.
- Compressing the attack for space on the outside.
- Development of a sweeper system.
- Penalty plays.
- Pressure systems and plays in attack to retain ball and scoring opportunities.
- Pressure systems in defense to optimize turnover opportunities.
- Effective and varied use of turn over ball.
- Adaptation to utilize various weather conditions.
- Maximize use of full field.
- Team composition and profile to cover all facets of the game.

### 3 PRINCIPLES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide.

## PHYSICAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Rugby sevens specific conditioning.
- Shorter physical game preparation.
- Periodized training program.
- Speed Training.
- Pre-habilitation.
- Correct nutrition to support the 7s athlete.
- Recovery Strategies

## MENTAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Pre-match / Tournament preparation specific to Sevens. (i.e. multiple games in a day).

## LIFESTYLE CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

Life-balance-coping with pressures.

- International travel.
- Time management responsibilities.
- International travel.
- Continual tournament integration and relaxation.
- Time management responsibilities.

# 7 STAGE 7 (SEVENS SPECIFIC) ULTIMATE PERFORMANCE PHASE

Appropriate additional Coaching Accreditation in conjunction with NCCP Certification:  
IRB Level 2 Sevens Coaching

Kelly Russell NSW 7s



Nathan Hirayama NSMT 7s



## TECHNICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 EVASION SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Multi directional skills to create space for support players.

### 2 HANDLING SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on

- Passing across the body in both directions at full pace.
- Continual threat with the ball in 2 hands and centered.
- Varying width and depth of spin passing at pace.
- Spin passing from the ground under increased pressure.
- Deep, long accurate passing to support.

### 3A CONTACT SKILLS – DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Dominate tackle and be first to feet to contest the ball.
- High priority on low tackle.
- Closing down space to prevent the inside pass.

### 3B CONTACT SKILLS – ATTACK

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Clearing the ball from the pressure 1 v 1 contact area.
- Effective offload of the ball in contact.
- One handed and 2 handed, round the back and outside off load.
- Using footwork and body positioning to create weak tackles.
- Dominate contact and create space between attacker and defender.

### 4 MAUL SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

#### Ball carrier

- Establish a strong base and protect the ball.
- Powerful Leg Drive to maintain momentum.

#### Link player

- Secure possession and deliver ball.

**Note: A maul in the 7s game is a last resort and an offload or ruck should be the primary option**

### 5 RUCK SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Tackler to get to feet quickly to secure ball to dominate the 1 v 1 contact area.

- Link / Supporting players - react to the ball carrier and make a decision about the situation (pick, pass, drive).

### 6 SCRUM SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Basic body position.
- Precision channeling by hooker with strike.
- Pick or pass to move ball away from scrum.
- Props maximize ability to break from the scrum quickly to attack or defend.
- Players adept at skills to provide clean ball for half back to attack.
- Maximized power drive to create turnover ball at the scrum.

### 7 LINEOUT SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Full specialization in lineout throwing / half-back role.
- Specialization in Line-out lifting & Jumping techniques:
  - Speed of Jump
  - Advanced lineout variation and lifting techniques

### 8 ATTACK SKILLS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Introduction of depth of first receiver at breakdowns.
- Develop correct attacking options for each area of the field and from set play.
- Maximize field width in attack.
- 3 man attacking unit, ball carrier, support runner, receiver as a back line.
- Use of evasive footwork.
- Re-alignment strategies.
- Effective use of decoy runners.
- Introduce complex attacking strategies.
- Total awareness of support by all players.

### 9 DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Hooker covering the left side in defense at the scrum.
- Maximize inside out defense to generate pressure and turnover.
- Tackle ball carrier to the ground and contest ball.
- Six man defense.
- Seven man defense.
- Defending as a 3 player unit.
- Sweeper principles.

- Strong defense in middle of the field.
- Defending in zones.
- Defensive Strategies from set play.

## 10 KICKING AND CATCHING

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Specialization in Drop Kicking (Goal Kicking & Restarts).
- Chip Kick and Catch.
- Chip or grubber kick to release other attacking players.
- Strategic kicking under pressure.

## 11A RESTARTS - RECEIVING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick off reception to maintain possession - short, long and split.
- Refine restart formations for sevens.
- 1 player lift strategy.

## 11B RESTARTS - KICKING TEAM

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Kick offs to regain possession - short, long and split.
- Refine restart formations for sevens

## 12 SUPPORT - ATTACK AND DEFENSE

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Understanding running lines and how they will affect space in sevens.

## TACTICAL CAPACITIES

### 1 LAWS/ETHICS

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Sevens laws and specific sevens tournament rules and regulations

### 2 THE GAME

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Go forward in isolation.
- Clearing primary threat in the contact area (tackler).
- Team and player profiling to determine style of play (Fit, fast, physical or skillful).

- Compressing the attack for space on the outside.
- Development of a sweeper system.
- Penalty plays.
- Pressure systems and plays to retain ball and scoring opportunities.
- Pressure systems in defense to optimize turnover opportunities.
- Effective and varied use of turn over ball.
- Adaptation to utilize various weather conditions.
- Maximize use of full field.
- Team composition and profile to cover all facets of the game.

## 3 PRINCIPLES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide:

### PHYSICAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Rugby sevens specific conditioning.
- Shorter physical game preparation.
- Periodized training programing.
- Speed Training.
- Pre-habilitation.
- Correct nutrition to support the 7s athlete.
- Recovery Strategies.

### MENTAL CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

- Pre-match / Tournament preparation specific to Sevens. (i.e. multiple games in a day).
- External pressures (Stadiums, Crowds, National expectations).
- Media responsibilities.
- Recovery Strategies.

### LIFESTYLE CAPACITIES

As per Rugby Canada LTRD implementation guide for this stage with added focus on:

Life-balance-coping with pressures

- International travel.
- Time management responsibilities.
- Continual tournament integration and relaxation.
- Time management responsibilities.
- Cultural expectation of international travel.

## Conclusion

The aim of the Rugby Sevens specific LTRD implementation guide is to provide a platform and a pathway for participants to work towards playing the abbreviated format of the game. The guide is, at it states, a guide and a starting point for the development of individualized player specific programs that will give all stakeholders a clearly defined path to follow.

Both of the implementation guides are very similar in many aspects as the fundamentals of rugby are apparent in both sevens and fifteens variations of the game. The sevens LTRD guide is aimed at providing players who have a desire to concentrate and specialize in the abbreviated form of the game every opportunity to succeed. Although specialization in the sevens game can happen it is important to acknowledge that players, officials and coaches can undertake both effectively and both versions have a close relationship that work with each other not against one another.

## Acknowledgements

**Canadian Sport for Life:** Long-Term Athlete Development Resource Paper. Canadian Sport Centres, 2005.

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