



PENGUIN INTERNATIONAL RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Rugby Football Union
Kent County RFU

COBRA Support Coaching & Player Development Malaysia 30 Oct to 4 Nov 2024

Report by Craig Brown, Will Helu & Nick McCamley

Always keen to support rugby in Malaysia and especially to support our partner club COBRA, the Penguin Coaching Academy team headed to Kuala Lumpur for 7 days of coaching minis and youth across a wide spectrum of the local rugby community.

Penguin Coaches Will Helu from New Zealand, Nick McCamley from Australia, and Gareth Rae from Hong Kong arrived in Kuala Lumpur from 27 October and had their first sessions at 9am Monday morning.

There was a great mix of schools and the COBRA players and a wide range of age groups from 8 to 16.

The Penguin coaches ran a number of activities covering skills, fun games, ball work, lots of movement, and built the sessions up to unit and team play. The focus on skills development varied based on the age group and the level each group had, ensuring that each session was tailored to meet the developmental needs of the players.

However, the key fundamental skills were consistently coached across all sessions, including catch, pass, decision-making with the ball in hand, introduction into modified games-based play, tackle, carry and clean, and ball placement. The importance of these basic skills was emphasized to ensure players understood their role in teamwork and collective success on the field.



Session Recaps:

1. Sri KDU International School

We had an amazing time at Sri KDU International School for our very first Penguins Rugby coaching clinic in Kuala Lumpur! Six enthusiastic boys, aged 8-10, joined us for an introduction to rugby—most of them experiencing the sport for the first time. The clinic focused on making rugby as fun and engaging as possible, while covering the basics: catch-pass, evasion skills, and a few friendly competitive drills. We emphasized the importance of teamwork and collective understanding, highlighting how crucial the basic skills of catch, pass, and decision-making are. We wrapped up with some exciting mini-sided games, ensuring that rugby is about having fun while

learning a few new skills. We thoroughly enjoyed the session and are looking forward to our second coaching clinic tomorrow!



What is also special is that COBRA will support the schoolteachers going forward to develop the sport inside the school and also to help some of the teachers to develop as coaches. The Penguins will be back at some stage to further support this initiative.

Nick & Gareth

2. Cobrats U12 Team

Thank you to the Cobrats U12 team for having the Penguins Coaching Group come in this morning and run a session with the team. Full credit to the team who were respectful and engaging despite the early morning heat. The session was focused on developing catch-pass and decision-making skills, with an introduction to modified games-based play to test those skills under pressure. This included a couple of blocks of modified ruck touch, emphasizing game-based learning and seeing how the boys could transfer some of those catch-pass and decision-making drills into a game setting. The players also participated in teamwork-focused drills to develop a collective understanding of positioning and ball movement. The session finished off with a classic game of Bulldog, which probably got the biggest cheer from the group! Massive thank you to Rayner and all the parents for their support. Thanks also to their caches Rayner and Ridhuan.

3. Cobrats U9 Team

Another fantastic morning in KL, this time with the Cobrats U9s. Despite it being their first year in full contact, the team showed an awesome application for the physical side of the game. Coach Willie took the crew through some drills that focused on how best to go to ground and look after the ball, whilst Coach Nick reinstated the core principles and techniques of the tackle. Coach G then allowed them to showcase further what they had learned with some 1 vs 1 drills. The focus for the U9s was on building confidence in physical contact while maintaining proper technique and understanding the importance of ball retention and support play. The session also featured modified touch games that encourage movement into space and using the fundamental catch-pass skills to create opportunities. Despite some great tackles, safe to say the attack was the winner with some awesome footwork and speed on show. The session finished with some stacked attack versus defence where the U9s showed how best to move the ball into space and get the ball through the hands, reinforcing the importance of teamwork and decision-making in live play situations. Another top morning!

4. Cobrats U14 Team

In The U14's session, the boys showed great skills and a solid knowledge of both decision-making and set piece. The focus of the session was to further develop catch-pass abilities and introduce set-piece elements such as lineouts and scrums.

The boys worked on positioning, collective understanding of play structure, and effective ball movement under pressure. The session moved into opposed play to finish, with a focus on using the ball and getting to the edge within three phases, which they executed extremely well. The U14s demonstrated an excellent ability to make quick decisions with the ball in hand, understanding when to pass, carry, or take contact to maintain team momentum. Once again, a fantastic group of kids, they showed up with a great attitude and enthusiasm.

Will & Nick



5. Abdul Samad School

What enthusiastic and fun bunch the students from Abdul Amad School were. They had some good rugby skills but suffered a bit from not playing too often. The Penguin coaches had a quick chat with their coaches and embarked on a session of practising ball retention, finding & attacking space and realigning from the breakdown. Near the end of the sessions the lads were keen to up the contact so the group moved to a number of tackling drills. Some fine defensive skills were on display.

6. Victoria Institute

The Penguin's have coached at the Victoria Institute school a number of times going back about 20 year and it was great to be back. The session focused on quick turn over and finding space/realigning on both sides off the ball. It was pleasing to watch the players develop as they put into action the skills trained in the game scenarios – both on attack and in defence. It was evident the lads had been well coaches as their passing and positional play was of a very good standard. They had a couple of great players as well whose game understand was great. Thanks for the fun at the end as well!

The Week's Schedule

Date	School/Club	Age Groups/Numbers
Mon 28 Oct	Sri KDU Primary School	U10 - 6
	COBRA	U14 - 25
Tue 29 Oct	Abdul Samad School	U12-U16 - 100
Wed 30 Oct	COBRA	U12 - 25
	COBRA	U14 - 30
Thurs 31 Oct	COBRA	U9 - 25
Fri 1 Nov	COBRA	U14 - 30
Sat 2 Nov	Victoria Institute	U12 & U14 - 80

Thank Yous

A big thanks to the 3 Penguin academy coaches who gave up their time to head to KL, a big thank you to COBRA who helped facilitate the week. In particular, thanks to Felix who was a legend in coordinating everything and to all the coaches of their respective teams, who give up their time and to help create young men through the game of rugby.

Thoughts by Nick

My recent rugby coaching trip to Malaysia was an incredibly rewarding and refreshing experience. Over the course of the week, I had the privilege of working with more than 500 children, ranging from beginners to more experienced players. The passion and enthusiasm displayed by the kids were truly inspiring, and it was clear that rugby is rapidly growing in popularity at the development level in the country.

One of the most striking aspects of the trip was the role rugby plays in shaping young lives. Parents are increasingly recognizing the sport's ability to instil important values such as teamwork, discipline, resilience, and respect. Through rugby, children learn not only athletic skills but also life lessons that help them develop both on and off the field. Something that needs to be pushed more back home in Australia.

The local enthusiasm for the sport is evident, and it is encouraging to see parents embrace rugby for the positive impact it has on their children's character. I look forward to seeing how rugby continues to grow and thrive in Malaysia in the years to come.

A big thankyou to all at the Penguins for this experience, one I will remember for a lifetime.

Photos









