

5 - Learn to Compete

Chronological Age: 16-18 (M) and 15-17 (F)

Training Age: 6-10 years in football

Objectives: Making the Team

- **GENERAL:** Use developing mental skills to integrate skills and understand and read the game
- Entry into high-performance path for Tackle Football. Early specialization into positions
- **PHYSICAL:** Major post-growth spurt windows of opportunity for building speed, aerobic power and muscular strength and power
- **SKILLS:** Consolidation of more advanced skills: play recognition, zone coverage, blocking (tackle) and special situation skills

Development Opportunities:

Technical Skills:

- Throwing, Catching, Kicking
- Ball skills: carry, pass, punt, kick, catch
- Ball exchanges (hand off, pass)
- Tackling, flagging, touching
- Pass protection
- Pass rush
- Defeating the block
- Blocking and block protection

Tactical Skills:

Note - late High school entry may require basic skill development

Others - Consolidate and Refine skills (begin position specialization)

- Defending the run and the pass
- Kickoff, Punt, Field Goal, Point after
- Identifying / Reading Offensive & Defensive Formations & needed adjustments
- Further understanding offensive & defensive strategies
- Increase variety of positional tactics
- Special situations

Physical Skills:

- Build on earlier stages' physical skills
- Strength #1 - Aerobic Power
- Speed #2
- Strength #2 - Muscle Strength, Hypertrophy, Endurance, and Power

Mental Skills:

- Performance Tracking
- Game Preparation
- Performance Evaluation
- Progression of PMR Skills
- Consistency

This stage represents a serious commitment to competition, coinciding with High School and CEGEP age, and often through the Tackle game. Athletes enter highly competitive programs, begin to specialize in their positions, and work toward excellence. Guiding principles are:

- Emphasis is on building solid competition skills
- All athletes are provided with optimal annual training competition and recovery programs
- Programs support athletes to learn from victory and defeat, to live balanced lives, and to always train and compete in a fair, honest and "clean" way
- Work toward international play
- Develop skills to be successful in CEGEP, College, Junior or CIS football

Character - Life Skills:

- Communication Verbal & Non-verbal
- Partnership/Teamwork, Problem-solving, Discipline/work ethic, Fitness/Healthy Living
- Mental Strength/ Coping Skills, Confidence/Risk Taking, Respect/Fair Play
- Pursuit of Personal Excellence
- Accepting Diversity

Game Options to Consider:

- Tackle, Flag or Touch game
- Modifications: 6, 9, 12 A Side Tackle; 5 or 7 a Side Flag or Touch

Figure 9 - Allocation of time in practice

