ARCFORM

Knee plan

Build the muscles around your knee and keep going this season.

Goal	Load the muscles around your knee, your hamstrings, quads and glutes, so they stop it caving in while the sprained ligament on the inside settles.
How often	Twice a week, at least two days apart, and never in the 48 hours before a game.
Equipment	Band, door anchor, step, bench or chair
Warm-up	2 minutes of marching on the spot, then 10 slow bodyweight squats and 10 forward leg swings each leg.

The session

1 Long-lever bridges

3 × 12
2-second hold

Heels up on a step, legs nearly straight, drive your hips up.

2 Banded knee extensions

3 × 12
each leg

On a chair, band from its back leg to your ankle. Straighten, squeeze your quads 3 seconds.

3 Banded side steps

3 × 12
each way

Band just above your knees, keep your knees pushed out the whole way.

4 Split squats

3 × 10
each leg

Lower slowly for 3 seconds, front knee over your middle toe.

5 Pistol squats

3 × 6
each leg

One leg, sit down to a bench or chair and stand back up. Knee over your middle toe, no caving in.

6 Single-leg hops

3 × 6
each leg

Small hops on the spot. Land softly with your knee over your toes and hold for 3 seconds.

Too hard or too easy?

- Long-lever bridges. Too hard: heels on the floor, not the step. Too easy: 3 × 15, then one leg.
- Banded knee extensions. Too hard: a lighter band. Too easy: 3 × 15, then a 5-second squeeze.
- Banded side steps. Too hard: a lighter band. Too easy: 3 × 15, then the band just below your knees.
- Split squats. Too hard: a hand on a wall. Too easy: 3 × 12, then a 2-second pause at the bottom.
- Pistol squats. Too hard: a higher seat. Too easy: 3 × 8, then 3 seconds down, then a lower seat.
- Single-leg hops. Too hard: hop on two legs. Too easy: hold each landing 5 seconds, then hop higher.
- Step up when every rep is clean two sessions running. Step down if your knee caves or is worse next day.