

THE NEED FOR SPECIALISTS TO DEAL WITH DEVELOPING YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYERS

It is quite reasonable to conceive that young children cannot be taught and coached to play the game in a manner that is meant for adults. Youth hockey coaching is a specialised affair and therefore youth coaches need to be specialists to deal with the developing child. Youth coaches need to be armed with a sound knowledge of the biological, motor, growth-related physical, physiological, psychological and cognitive capabilities and limitations of a growing child.

This would require specialised youth coaching courses to be conducted by the National Hockey Associations or the F.I.H. involving specialists from different areas related to the game. Such a knowledge base would be imperative for the youth coaches to adequately deal with the young players and to prepare developmentally appropriate coaching and training programmes for different age groups.

In order to encourage all hockey associations to spread out with age-orientated training and tailor-made competitions the magic of hockey and allow their children to discover, play and enjoy hockey in an extensive net of academies in all parts of a country we need to school first specially prepared teachers and youth coaches to make them capable to unlock and stimulate step by step the innate potential of the young players. The age-orientated development model of Horst Wein THE KEY TO BETTER HOCKEY which the FIH is offering here free of charge to all their member countries has proved not only to be attractive for the children but also effective from the learning point of view. This is due to the fact that generally children whilst discovering the game generate their experience by themselves with the teacher being a facilitator and not more an instructor as in the past. Their daily training has to be seen as a process of development through gradually increasing demands.

A right talent nurtured in a wrong manner is almost criminal. Few of the suggested reasons for children opting to drop-out from a sport are that they feel they are being made to play a rather difficult-to-handle hockey game in which they are forced to make decisions and deal with situations which are beyond their comprehension and capabilities. They have limited opportunities of feeling being capable and therefore don't have the much-desired fun in the game and for not being given the freedom of play. Moreover, they perceive the adults as too dictatorial as they want the children to do things as dictated.

All these factors constitute the perfect poison to kill a child's desire and motivation to continue with playing and enjoying our game. It is often observed that young children are obliged to play the same hockey in schools and clubs that is meant for adults to play. It is unreasonable to consider the children as miniature adults and expect them to meet the demands of an adult-like game. The game of hockey should be always like the shoes of the children. Perfectly tailored and adapted to them.

Children want to play the game for the sake of enjoying it. They want to deal with situations that are compatible with their playing abilities. They want opportunities to be successful in the game and above all, children want to have fun and enjoyment while playing the game.

A child-centric approach

One of the ways to make the game child-centric is to adopt a modified-game or simplified game approach. This involves playing hockey on a smaller-sized field with a fewer number of players with minimum and simplified rules. There is ample evidence to suggest that simplified games provide a significantly greater degree of learning and success to a young hockey player. Such a play structure has the advantage that it can accommodate more number of players in the field at any point in time, it can be organised as a half-a-day or a one day festival and provides far greater amount of playing time to an individual child.

For promoting the popularity of hockey amongst the children of the world, administrators from all F.I.H. member countries are asked to adapt not only their training but also their official competitions to the changing mental and physical capacities of children in the different evolutionary stages. The more children grew and develop, the more difficult and complex their tailor-made game should become, thus constantly discovering the growing demands of the game of hockey.

Horst Wein
horstwein@eresmas.net

Horst Wein:

THE KEY TO BETTER HOCKEY

An optimal coaching and learning model to unlock and develop the innate potential of young hockey players



Photos: A. Wälti



Recommended by the International Hockey Federation
(F.I.H.)

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Acknowledgements have to go to many players, coaches and sport scientists of all levels and different sports who have inspired me to extend and deepen my hockey knowledge, thus providing me with the raw material for this book.

Throughout this book the words “he”, “him” and “his” have been used for ease of expression but are intended to apply to both male and female players.

Credit has to go especially to the Swiss photographer **Alfred Wälti**, the Spanish photographer **Alfredo Ferrer** as well as to the **Federazione Italiana Hockey** which has offered the photographs of their excellent professional **Marco Massetti** without any charges.



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Photo: A. Wälti

NOTE:

For the program of COACHING PLAYERS 16 YEARS AND UP (Level 5), please consult the books "Hockey", published in *Spanish* language by the National Olympic Committee of Spain in 1992, "Developing Game Intelligence in Soccer", published in *English* language by Reedswain (USA) in 2004 or Horst Wein's first ever Multimedia Coaching Book about Counterattacking (118 pages) in *German* Language (2011).

Foreword

Many years ago there was a superb book called "The Science of Hockey" by Horst Wein, which after its first edition in 1973 became with 81 000 copies the most sold hockey text book ever. Sadly since 30 years it is out of print, although most of the thoughts which were refreshing and different in those days are still as relevant today as it was then.

When my son started to play hockey we looked around for a club that offered good youth coaching. We were pointed to the best in our area and while the coach was good at motivating the kids, the same old line up and wait your turn routines were used and the kids quickly became bored and did not pay attention to what was being said by the coach, which on the whole was very good advice. There had to be a way of doing exercises that kept the kids interest up for the entire session and I thought that I could use some of the very considerable contacts I had through my website www.fieldhockey.com

By good fortune I met FIH Master Coach Horst Wein and mentioned the project to him. I was told by the author of 34 text books - who is actually stimulating football coaches of world-known clubs as Inter Milan, Club Atlético Peñarol Montevideo, FC Barcelona, UNAM "Pumas" de México, Villareal, Schalke 04, Bayer 04 Leverkusen, Cruz Azul, Club America (México) and Arsenal London - that in the early 80's he had introduced in Spain a Hockey Development Model which helped to produce hundreds of fine talents who, to the surprise of the rest of the hockey world, a decade later won Olympic gold and silver medals. What you have now in front is his successful coaching program or model which hopefully will become also for you – The Key to Better Hockey.

I don't know very much about coaching, but I have used these exercises with the kids of our club when the coach was not available. Their reaction has been very positive and saying they have learnt more in one evening than a whole month and thoroughly enjoyed the practice. My son has taken some of the exercises and practised the skills involved on his own and his hockey has improved in leaps and bounds. I have passed on some exercises to clubs that were struggling to win games and the turn around has been truly remarkable. One particular club only just failed to gain promotion to the next league, but that was only due to their early season failure before using some of the exercises contained in here.

I have absolutely no doubt that after his first contribution to the development of modern hockey through "The Science of Hockey" and "The Advanced Science of Hockey", the contents of this digital coaching tool will again revolutionise club and school hockey throughout the world. As proved in Spain, teams using Horst's methods will become so much more successful than their opposition that they will wonder what the secret is. Although his exercises and simplified games are primarily designed for children, adults can use them to master particular skills too, since there is a logical build up from the very beginning of learning a skill through to its successful use in a game.

I know you will learn how to play better hockey through using this CD and I hope it will increase your enjoyment of the sport that I have loved for many years.

George Brink Webmaster of www.fieldhockey.com

PREFACE

All too often, children are introduced to complex sports activities for which they are not yet physically and mentally ready. Expecting a child to comprehend and respond to the complex situations in the full 11-on-11 hockey game format will only beget frustration and feelings of failure.

The Key to Better introduces coaches to a training program that takes into account each young player's current physical and mental development. The program promotes the gradual development of correct technical, tactical, and physical capacities of hockey players ages 7 to 14. This publication features **The Key to Better Hockey**, an innovative system of coaching which is tailored to each age group's cognitive capacities and physical abilities. Most of the books for youth coaching present general instruction and drills to be applied to all children who participate, regardless of their age. But in this publication, however, instruction is substituted by stimulation which is fitted to the specific characteristics of children.

Instead of obliging the children to adapt to the game of hockey, the game has been adapted by the author to their mental and physical development stage, thus resulting in better and more enjoyable learning of the complicated hockey game.

This model is essentially a recipe for coaching hockey. It gives you the necessary ingredients of the game—and the proportions in which these ingredients have to be mixed to achieve enjoyable and effective training sessions. Most importantly, it explains what skills are best taught during each stage of the evolution of young hockey players. All of the research has been done; you can simply apply it to your coaching program.

The Key to Better Hockey is divided into ten chapters. Part 1 explains in chapter 1 and 2 the developmental characteristics of children and describes how most current coaching practices actually work against players' developing minds and bodies. According to these practices, children are coached the same ways as adults, even though the adult game is much too complex for a child's mental and motor abilities. The solution to this problem is provided in the Hockey Development Model which orientates the coaches about an age-orientated coaching in different levels of the complex and difficult game of hockey.



Making use of the Hockey Development Model in schools and clubs will reduce the acquisition of incorrect habits that limit the performance of young players at the senior level. These incorrect habits result directly from the way players have been taught and have competed at lower levels.

Chapter 3 in part 2 of this publication contains basic games and exercises that make up the first level of the Hockey Development Model. You'll learn games and exercises to teach your young players the fundamentals, such as dribbling; passing, receiving, tackling and shooting. Level 1 also contains simplified competitions-the hockey decathlon and 2-on-2 Triathlon-for players ages 7 and up.

Chapter 4 introduces you to the second level in the Hockey Development Model where the children not only play to learn something like on level 1 but now learn to play like the best players in the world. Using a number of simplified game situations, players learn to respond to the cognitive and physical demands of the game. The simplified game preserves the contextual nature of the full game without placing too great a technical demand on players in these early stages.

Learning to understand the complex game of hockey can be best achieved through the practice of a logical progression of simplified games, with a gradual increase in the numbers of players on the team. Mini-Hockey is introduced in which players learn to read the game correctly and learn to play hockey first in their head before using their sticks. Systematically game intelligence is developed, instilling the young player first to perceive and analyse the game situation, then take correct decisions and finally carry out with the stick what the brain demanded some seconds before.

Chapter 5 progresses from Mini Hockey through Hockey 5-on-5 for 10 years old players to Hockey 6-on-6 for 11 years old ones. An age orientated training program is presented - the program of Simplified Games for teams formed by 3 players only- in order to approach kids at that age to the difficulty and complexity of the new competitions.

The development of young hockey goalkeepers is the theme of the chapter 6 and important hints about training Penalty Corners in Attack and in Defence are given in chapter 7 together with detailed information for hitting the ball.

Chapter 8 focuses on Hockey 8-on-8 game for players 12 and 13 years old, explaining the many advantages instead of playing the full game. 8-on-8 Hockey is considered an ideal bridge for leading young athletes to the full hockey game.

Part 3 looks into the future and emphasizes that the only way to develop healthy, happy, and talented hockey players is to follow their natural development. To rush this development is to hinder their healthy formation and future performance.



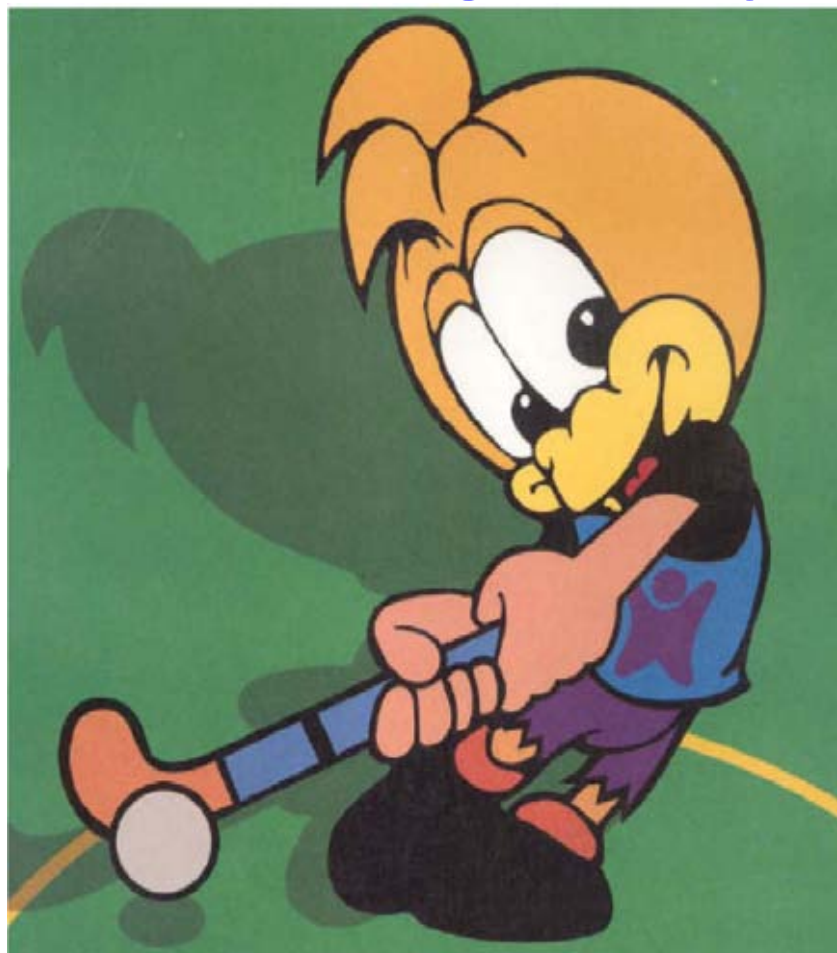
It is time for all coaches, whether novices or experienced, to revise their ways of coaching and tailor their training sessions and competitions to the children they are entrusted with.

"The Key to Better Hockey" is the tool you need to develop a successful hockey program with satisfied young players.

Part

1

A new philosophy of coaching hockey



JAPAN HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

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A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF COACHING HOCKEY

It is widely known that the contents of the training program, the expertise and experience of the coaches with children, the social life in the club or school, as well as the structure of the formative competitions determine to a high degree whether young players choose hockey as their lifetime sport.

The art of developing effective training and competitive programs for children lies in knowing which kind of practice and competition the player is ready for at any given stage of his or her physical and mental development. **Children will only learn quickly, effectively and thoroughly when the demands of the training sessions or the competitions match their intellectual, psychological, and motor skills.**

The concept of readiness (the disposition of a certain degree of maturity) is a prerequisite for any activity and should therefore be applied in all aspects of teaching and learning. Before a child is admitted to school, teachers ask themselves whether that child is ready or mature enough to attend school or whether he or she is prepared to benefit from the teaching process. Teachers determine if the child can successfully meet the challenge of the first school year or if it would be better to let that child mature for one more year with activities that are better suited to his or her mental and physical condition.

The question of maturity is also important in the matter of motor learning. Regardless of the action, adults must determine the age at which there are certain guarantees that the child can achieve that objective. Before teaching a child to ride a bike, for example, you must first ask when children generally acquire the capacity to maintain equilibrium on only two wheels.

Experience has shown us that any attempt to do so before the child is ready (before about four years of age) will fail because nature has not yet provided the means of coordination and balance.

The concept of readiness must also be applied to children's sports activities.

The question coaches should ask is: At what age is a child ready to successfully face the demands of an adult-competition? If one sport or federation had been aware of the concept of readiness, children under 14 in our hockey, handball, rugby, or hockey clubs would never have been subjected, at such an early stage, to test themselves in competitions for which they are not yet qualified, prepared, or simply ready. Children need to be exposed to a gradual stimulation in training and to a series of progressive competitions that, over the years, allow them to grow step by step without any hurry into the adult game.

"There is little to be gained, and much to be lost, by attempting to force young players into the full game before they are physiologically, "biomechanically" and cognitively ready for the activity.

One of the fundamental goals of teaching is to ensure that every player has a high level of success. Therefore we need to assess the development readiness of the players in each age group"

The art of teaching lies in knowing for what activity (a technical move, a tactical behaviour or a complex competition) **the player is prepared for at a particular stage of physical and mental development.**



Unfortunately, it is the force of habit that constitutes the greatest obstacle to progress in youth hockey. Traditional methods are often followed blindly without giving sufficient thought of the consequences, both in training as well as in the structuring of the youth competitions.

In order to move past these obstacles and achieve better results in the future, coaches, administrations, and federations must first review the structure and organization of their youth hockey programs. The complicated adult game has to be simplified until a logical progression of competitions with gradual increasing demands is designed that adapts perfectly to the actual mental and physical abilities and capacities of the child. A child should be presented with only those exercises, games, and challenges that suit their current abilities, interests, and expectations. **The training program as well as the competitions for children should be like their shoes. They should fit perfectly in order to feel comfortable.**

If we are to improve the development of young players, it is crucial that we recognize the mistakes made in the past. **Awareness of these errors is the first step towards more effective training and learning methods.**

***"When you don't know where to go,
it doesn't matter which road you choose"***

Chapter 1:

All things in nature have a gestation period and must go through their proper stages to be formed. Each human being has to pass through different stages of development before finally reaching maturity. Nature does not take shortcuts; there is a natural, unhurried order to it all.

Coaches, players, parents, and administrators should copy the wisdom of nature. Being impatient and hurrying the development of a young hockey player in the teaching and learning processes frequently results in poor performances among older players who had shown promise when they were younger. What coaches need is a training plan or model they can perfectly tailor to fit their players' varying cognitive and motor abilities.

To work with, not against, the developing mind and body of individuals, all youth hockey competitions and training programs must respect the laws of nature and take into account the actual mental and physical condition of their young participants. As children mature, the games in which they compete should gradually become more difficult and complex. **In a well-structured scheme, young hockey players grow at the same rate as their competitions grow in complexity and difficulty** (see the photo: on the right half of the full field 2 Mini-Hockey games and one 5-on-5 game is played whilst the left half is reserved for 6-on-6 Hockey, resulting that 28 players plus reserves play at the same time).

The Natural development of young players



"One mayor difficulty for the progress of Hockey is not that we generally don't accept new ideas, but we resist too long to get rid of the older obsolete ones."

CURRENT COACHING PRACTICES

Most players, no matter their nationality, don't know how to tap into or make use of their potential, which remains unused and dormant. Sadly, the best coaches do not work at the grass roots level because coaching young players rarely reaps them any economic gain. Coaches with greater knowledge and experience are attracted instead to senior teams that can afford to provide them higher salaries.

This failure to attract well-qualified coaches means that young players in schools and clubs are exposed to poor quality and tedious instruction. In most cases, children are coached in the same way that adults are instructed, without taking into account the natural order or progressive development of the young player through time. The makeshift or haphazard schemes that most coaches adopt do not solve the delicate problem of assuring young players quality coaching. Moreover, coaching youth at the initial stages is too important for the future development of the players to allow coaches to hastily assemble idiosyncratic methods of training.



Photo: A .Wälti

“Nature decrees that children should be children before they become adults. If we try to alter this natural order, we will reach adulthood prematurely but with neither substance nor strength”.

Jean J. Rousseau

INTRODUCING COMPLEX ACTIVITIES TOO SOON

One problem with most methods of training and competition is that they employ complex games and playing situations before children are ready for them. Even hockey players competing at the club level generally fail one out of three plays, so we must admit that hockey is a complicated game. Research has shown, generally speaking, that the younger the player, the higher the percentage of failure in competition. A low success rate (fewer than 50 percent of successful actions) is observed when beginners between eight and nine years of age compete with only six players on a team (6 on 6). Players face countless difficulties and complex problems even in a game played with this pared-down team. In competition with 11 players on a team, as still happens in many parts of the world, it was noticed that one team lost the possession of the ball four to six times in just one minute's play (i.e., effectively 40 seconds' playing time)!

Young players should not be blamed for incurring this high percentage of unsuccessful actions. We must realize that all children fail frequently, not only in hockey but also in other physical and mental activities, if they are not brought gradually and progressively to the task.

In today's training and competition, children are asked to face game situations that are simply beyond their limits or scope at that particular stage of their psychomotor development.

Subjecting children to too complex activities before they're ready only reinforces failure and frustration. When individuals experience frequent failure, they not only lose interest and self-esteem but may also come to feel incapable of facing situations that, in fact, are far too difficult and complex for them at the time. Stress and dropping out may result.

DEMANDING TOO MUCH OF YOUNG PLAYERS

Young players struggle not only to overcome the complexity of the game but also the increasing demands placed on them within a limited amount of practice time and personal attention. It challenges both the coaches and players that ever more children are becoming involved in hockey—but with less time and space available to them. **Teaching or learning hockey, as well as competing in it, the traditional way does not sufficiently stimulate the bodies and minds of young players, and much of their talent is left undiscovered.**

Playing the ball for a maximum of 70 seconds in a full match or being active for fewer than 15 minutes of a 90-minute training session doesn't allow players to develop their full potential. Yet players are still expected and pressured to perform at a high level. This puts an ever-increasing demand on the youngsters' physical and mental abilities and capacities.

"Tomorrow's success is founded on today's preparation"

Ossler

USING INEFFICIENT COACHING METHODS

Consider this: many children study a foreign language over the course of eight years in school. If the youth then travel to a country where their mother language is not spoken, however, they are frequently unable to apply the knowledge they have acquired in almost a thousand hours of teaching and learning. Likewise, I believe, most recently graduated physical education teachers, after studying four years of different sport sciences in a physical education department of a university, still cannot resolve the majority of the innumerable problems they encounter during their first physical education lessons. I think this is due to having had insufficient practical applications of their studies and insufficient experience—and then having applied methods that are already out of date. The knowledge gained at universities or in national training centres has helped few coaches to confront the challenges of their profession with success.

To be up to date and make use of the new information (most of which tends to repeat itself about every two decades), physical education teachers (and especially those who coach future teachers) should actualize and constantly augment their knowledge and capacities to help their students learn the latest innovations of their specialization.

The major obstacle for the progress of coaching in hockey is the strength of ease and comfort. **Because of their own inertia or sluggishness, coaches tend to continue with**

old habits rather than continually rethinking what has to be done and how. All too often information is used and exercises and formative programs are applied that have already lost their validity. Many have not even noticed that the information they obtained years before has already diminished in value.

Few coaches look beyond their specialty and combine, mix, or synthesize the knowledge from diverse but related sports sciences with the teaching and learning process.

Consequently, the majority of players and coaches must continue learning from accidents, mistakes, and trials rather than from the instruction received.

Before teaching a specific sport like hockey, coaches should fully understand how a child, adolescent, or adult learns best and analyze the mechanisms that intervene and influence learning in each of the evolutionary stages of the student. As the young hockey player grows and develops, a great variety of physiological, cognitive, and social-emotional changes occur that directly affect the acquisition of coordination and conditional, as well as mental, capacities.

“The tragedy of coaching young players focuses on the fact that many coaches know a lot about the game, but they don't know their young pupils.”

TEN RULES FOR LEARNING EFFICIENCY

1. Acquire good habits. Bad habits double the amount of work for the coach, because he/she must first suppress the incorrect habit and then teach the student to react correctly to the same stimulus. Just as one can learn to speak a language well or badly, one can also acquire good or bad habits and behaviours in hockey.

2. Confront players with problems that are within their capabilities—and also with slightly more complex and difficult activities that, after a certain number of trials, can be mastered without help from the coach. A feeling of capability and success generally nourishes and stimulates learning. When players are aware of their capability and receive some kind of reward for their success, learning will be fun and players will be encouraged to progress even further.

3. Help players learn to recognize the result of every play immediately after the action is over. Players who are conscious of the results of their play in a given game situation will be capable of later reproducing or suppressing the vivid experience in a similar game situation.

4. Teach new aspects of the game within the parameters of ones that are already known. People tend to learn more quickly when they already partially know the abilities and capacities that the coach is trying to develop.

5. Practice the individual elements of a situation to connect the stimulus and response. The first phase of learning is to recognize a game situation that is composed of various elements. To better recognize a situation, it's important to practice it many times. Apart from facilitating recognition of a situation, the repetitions tend to strengthen the connection between the stimuli and the correct answer.

6. Review and repeat material frequently. Because the loss of an ability or capacity starts right after the practice, repetition is vital to learning. A few repetitions succeed in activating only short-term memory. Transferring information to long-term memory requires repetitions of the same task, in the event these tasks will be varied by the coach on more than two occasions over two training sessions.



7. Vary the exercises and games. Without varying the content of a practice, you risk boring players. To avoid monotony, loss of concentration, and lack of motivation in the players—all enemies of learning—the coach must ensure variety in the session.

8. Mix up the flow of content. The more similar the content of different parts of a training session, the higher the interference becomes between them. This is because the last thing learned is frequently superimposed on what was previously learned. Remaining on the same theme or method of presentation of the content for even 15 to 20 minute can lower players' concentration and interest.

9. Motivate your pupils and players, be it through praise or a choice of activities that interests them. Motivation supports learning.

10. Stimulate both the body and the whole mind. Bulgarian scientist Lozanov discovered a "super learning" method in the 1970s: maximum learning occurs when teachers use an activity to stimulate both the left and right hemispheres of the brain at the same time. Hockey's traditional teaching method often fail to adequately stimulate the right hemisphere of the brain, which harbours the creative capacities, intuition, and space and orientation. Each training session should stimulate the body as well as both hemispheres of the brain.



"Without doubt technique is very important in hockey, but in training we should teach our players to use them in competition at the right time."

TIME FOR A CHANGE!

What should coaches do in these days of increasingly sedentary and easy living habits?

People generally do less and less physical exercise. After 8 to 10 hours' rest overnight, children often sit for 6 more hours in school, which they reach by (sitting in a) bus or car. In the afternoon, having sat down for lunch and more schooling, they may travel by bus or car to practice their favourite sport, where they mostly stand in line waiting for their turn, listening to the coach's instructions. Then they return home to watch TV, search the internet, or play video games. Relatively few minutes of the day are reserved for physical stimuli or allowing them to use their creativity, imagination, and initiative. Under these conditions, the entire tradition of coaching must be rethought and carefully revised to give players a more "hands on" role in their own education.

When deciding exactly what role children should be assigned, coaches must consider the physical and emotional needs of the youngsters. They must also understand the stages of development to know at what age children are ready for certain activities. By considering all of this, coaches can provide a non-stressful, fun, and effective hockey program.



PROMOTING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Rather than adhering to current hockey programs that concentrate on the execution of different skills, the modern coach should teach pupils to understand all aspects of the game.

Too much drill will kill the young players' innate potential! Over time coaches should carefully and progressively develop important capacities, including perception, analysis of game situations, and correct decision making under stressful conditions.

***"The natural order accounts
for a progressive development through time."***

Yet a coach cannot foster these qualities through verbal instruction alone. When coaches continually use verbal instruction, they become the main actors in the coaching theatre, thereby curtailing or even killing the active participation of the players. Usurping the active role is detrimental to the players' effective learning. By involving the players, on the other hand, a coach obliges *them* to think, to collect information, to organize the collected information and come to conclusions, to evaluate and judge, to imagine, invent, and create new moves or combinations.

In *Coaching of Performance* John Whitmore wrote that a pupil only remembers 19 percent of what the teacher taught him or her some three months ago through instructing or telling, whereas he can recall 32 percent of what was demonstrated and explained. Yet in cases where pupils were given the opportunity to generate the information on their own, but with the help of a teacher, fully 65 percent of the information was memorized.

That is why hockey players should be allowed to actively participate in the coaching and learning process: to develop as complete athletes who eventually become independent from the frequent instruction of coaches. Learning takes place best when the coach is able to transfer decisions to the pupils.



ALLOWING CHILDREN MORE CONTROL

Creativity can be considered one of a human being's most elevated mental activities. Unfortunately, few coaches know how to stimulate this ability in their players. The teaching styles and rigid methods seen on most hockey fields tend to strangle more than stimulate the players' capacity of fantasy, creativity, and innovation.

"Youth prefer to be stimulated instead of being instructed."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

During training, instead of giving young children sufficient opportunities to cultivate their innate potential, coaches tend to dominate everything, fearful of losing control of the situation by giving up any control to the players. A coach's objective should be to make the others think, instead of thinking for them.

Expert coaches with a wealth of technical knowledge often have a hard time withholding their expertise. They are used to giving away their knowledge through many instructions about what, when, and how to do the task, without being aware that coaching this way will limit their pupils' formation. Giving the players solutions to "remember" should be replaced by presenting them with tailor-made problems that they have to resolve on their own.

STIMULATING PLAYERS' MINDS

To develop players' active involvement in the training and learning process, coaches must master the skill of posing questions. The most effective questions are open ones that require descriptive answers. In contrast, closed questions with "yes" or "no" answers shut the door on the exploration of further detail. That is why coaches should concentrate on open questions, ones that begin with words that seek to quantify or gather facts: what, when, how much, or how many.

Through systematic questioning by the coach the pupils are self-generating the information. Thanks to intelligent questions, many players become aware of problems they have never noticed before. Facing them, players have to think, examine, judge, and evaluate until they find solutions to the problems presented by the coach. On the contrary, when a coach instructs or just tells players what to do in certain moments or situations of the game, he or she does not stimulate any of these active mental processes.

Once hockey coaches have been convinced of the need to modify the traditional way of teaching their players, they soon discover that the process of understanding and learning hockey will shift increasingly to self-teaching.



***"To tell denies or negates another's intelligence;
to ask honours it.
Questions generate awareness and also responsibility"***

John Whitmore

MEETING YOUNG PEOPLE'S NEEDS

The key to developing successful youth hockey players is in understanding and meeting the needs of young players, rather than subjecting them to boring exercises or a game designed for adults. These are some basic, yet important, needs children have that coaches should always keep in mind.

.-Need for security. During training children need a familiar and intimate atmosphere that gives them security and confidence. It's not recommended to frequently change the training site nor the coach or teacher. Returning to games that they are already familiar with (but meeting variations of them) is welcomed by the kids so long as the contents of the training sessions link with something that they already know. The children demand stable relations. Training should always take place in a safe environment, and specific rules should be applied to ensure safety and avoid through specific rules (for instance no hitting with lifting the stick from the ground is allowed for the players less than 10 years) any dangerous situations.

- Need for new experiences. Nothing can be understood completely as long as it has not been experienced. Coaches should allow the children to experiment with tasks. Children need to discover on their own everything that surrounds them. This also applies to the world of sports and in particular to hockey. Kids should be stimulated with games and activities that are within their physical and mental capacities. This method of coaching allows them to develop their abilities and capacities step by step through their own discovery.

-Need to be acknowledged. Children get highly motivated when tribute is paid to their efforts in mastering a skill or problem. Through praise they are encouraged to try even harder. To children younger than 12 years old, the teacher, coach, or parent is like a mirror in which they see their capacity or incapacity. That is why educators and parents have to learn to be positive, to praise the children frequently and keep critical comments to a minimum.

-Need to show responsibility. Children prefer to do things on their own without depending too much on adults. They like to reach independence as quickly as possible. The coaching methods and behaviour of the educator should consider this need, making sure that the children are frequently allowed to find solutions on their own to problems the coach presents. The educator should interfere only when the problems can't be solved by the pupils.

Youngsters can also perform the tasks of putting down or collecting cones, modifying the rules of a practice game, or choosing players for demonstrations or certain activities. Their need to demonstrate responsibility can also be stimulated in each training session by allowing them 10 minutes in which to freely choose what to practice, how to do it, and where and with whom to execute a determined skill or game.

“When improvement in any compartment of performance is possible, good is not enough!”

Coaches who are reluctant to give up some of the responsibility to the children must realize that learning also takes place out of their presence. In any team game, the world over, children organize their play in its logical fashion even if an adult is not available to guide them. First they make sure that the teams are even. They want competition. They want the game to be fair and challenging, thus forcing them to play to their full potential. Second, kids don't need umpires. The players take care of the rules themselves, modifying them according to conditions and the environment: no off-side, more players, bigger field, and so forth. Third, teams are often composed of players of different ages. The younger players learn from the older ones, who, at the same time, are challenged by the younger players. This is how good teams are built at the senior level as well.

-Need to play. Playing games is as vital for children as sleep. Playing is necessary for the health of their bodies and minds. As children learn by playing, the central part of each training session should be the practice and understanding of simplified games.

The art of coaching is to always adapt it to the children's ability and capacity level—and not vice versa. Playing games stimulates communication and decision making; playing hockey without thinking can be compared to shooting without aiming.

-Need to socialize. Children instinctively look for communication with others. The older they are, the more they need company of a similar age. They love to be associated with a group and to identify themselves with a group or team with the aim to achieve common objectives.



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-Need to move. Nature wants her children to be active. Youngsters have no patience to wait in queues for their turn. Rules of the adult games must be modified to allow children to play the ball more often. Games with few players assure active participation.

-Need to live in the present. Generally spoken, neither the past nor the future interests children very much. Their sense of time is completely different than that of adults. Children live intensely in the present moment without bothering about tomorrow or yesterday, which they deem to be far away.

-Need for variety. Children crave variety, which results in less boredom and fatigue. A great variety of stimulates is fundamental to maintaining their attention level. Unless you frequently vary the method of presentation and the contents, most children's attention deviates. You should also vary the grade of intensity of the exercises and games.

-Need to be understood by adults. Children seem to live in a different world. They have different problems, they learn differently, and they don't think as logically as adults do. Their ideas, thoughts, or reasoning often lack coherence. Their emotional constancy depends in a high degree on their speed of biological growth. In general kids don't know how to use their energy well and, therefore, tire easily. They behave exactly the way they feel. For all these reasons, adults who live and work with children should know how to stimulate and guide them in their search for personality and identity.



“Too frequently we give to the young players solutions to remember, instead o problems to be resolved.”

ELIMINATING ANXIETY

In a study conducted by Pierce and Stratton (1981), 453 youth sport participants were asked to identify the worries that bothered them so much that they might not play in the future. Most of these children indicated that not playing well (63.3 percent) and making a mistake (62.5 percent) were the major stressors when playing sports. Related to these anxieties, 44.2 percent stated that their worries prevented them from playing their best and 23.6 percent suggested that the anxiety from being worried might prevent them from playing in the future.

We all know that one main stress factor for children in a competition is the strong desire of their parents and coaches to see them winning. Pressured by the adults, the young players perceive anxiety before, during, and even after the game, instead of competing mainly to have fun with friends.

Administrators, teachers, parents, and other adults tend to evaluate children's abilities and capacities unrealistically high, forcing them to participate in competitions in which the young players will not do well. In turn, the unrealistic expectations thus cause the youngsters to view themselves as failures, destroying their motivation and self-esteem. But self-esteem is the life force of the personality, and if that is suppressed or diminished, so is the person! As a result, children perceive that they will not be able to adequately respond to the performance demands of the difficult and complex competition for which they are not yet ready, one that was originally designed for adults a century ago.

Already before the game, children are aware of the difficulty of the task (pre-competition anxiety). During the game, the young players demonstrate even greater arousal levels when they experience their limitations through making more mistakes than successful moves. Even after the completion of the game, the stress level remains if the completed performance is considered inadequate.

Being more specific, the premature introduction of the 11-on-11 game for prepubescent children causes excessive stress, which then results in negative self-perception. This poor self-image severely hinders the learning process and motivation of the young players. Young children learn most efficiently in non-stressful environments (Wilson 1984).

Prepubescent children have to be exposed in each stage of evolution to a tailor-made competition that assures they perceive their own competence while playing a game. Recognizing the deficiencies in current practices is the first step to a more effective way of coaching hockey. When children's stages of development are not considered in designing a training program, a gap forms between what the hockey program provide them and what the children need in order to learn. It is time to challenge current coaching practices and stop subjecting children to exercises and games that are too complex to match their mental and physical development. By tailoring the game of hockey to fit the bodies and minds of young players, coaches develop successful hockey programs and happy, talented young players.

***“You can help a player a lot by correcting him,
but even more by encouraging him.”***

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYERS

- 1.-The right to enjoyment both in practice and in competition, with a wide variety of activities that promote fun and easy learning.
- 2.-The right to play as a child and not be treated like an adult, either on or off the playing field.
- 3.-The right to participate in competitions with simplified rules, adapted to their level of ability and capacity in each stage of their evolution.
- 4.-The right to play in conditions of greatest possible safety.
- 5.-The right to participate in all aspects of the game.
- 6.-The right to be trained by experienced and specially prepared coaches and educators.
- 7.-The right to gain experience by resolving most of the problems that arise during the practice.
- 8.-The right to be treated with dignity by the coach, their teammates, and by their opponents.
- 9.-The right to play with children of their own age with similar chances of winning.
- 10.-The right not to become a champion.

*"All coaches have the same objective,
but choose different roads."*

A successful approach to Coaching Hockey

An effective approach for coaching young players has at last been developed. In this approach, called the "Hockey Development Model," the process has been perfectly adapted to the mental and physical levels of children from different age groups. The model, which all teachers and coaches may follow, can well replace the makeshift training and competitions that have proved ineffective in the past.

The Hockey Development Model is a complete and effective training program that, since its introduction in Spanish hockey in the early 80's, has dramatically influenced the way youngsters in more than 18 countries in Europe, Asia and South America experience the game of hockey. The model exposes children gradually to the difficulty and complexity of the game. However, far from being a rigid model or training plan, it allows coaches to choose from a proposed menu whatever corresponds to his taste or coaching style. Instead of instructing coaches, the Hockey Development Model stimulates them, enabling them to find the best mix of activities for their particular group of players.



Photo: A Wälti (Switzerland)

“Planning the development of young players is like preparing for a journey. It’s advisable to have a map (plan or model) to avoid getting lost and wasting time and energy.”

THE HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Before applying the model to developing a plan for your young hockey players, let's outline just how the model was created and exactly what it consists of.

Creating the Model

The Hockey Development Model takes into account everything that is known regarding a child's progressive development. It not only respects the laws of nature but also meets the expectations of the young players.

Just as children have basic needs that should be satisfied in designing a hockey program, they also have certain expectations. When children play hockey, they are primarily interested in four things: action, personal involvement in the action, close scores, and opportunities to reaffirm relationships with friends.

Because each of these factors is so important to the well being of the children, all four were clearly in mind in designing the training and competitive programs in the Hockey Development Model. Numerous changes were made to more traditional training and competitive programs in order to please the children:

- + The rules of many traditional exercises or games were simplified or modified to increase activity. We know that whenever children create their own games, they devote a good deal of effort to setting up rules that foster action. Most of the activity during their games occurs around the scoring area, and scores are so frequent that everybody scores at least once.
- + Many exercises and games were designed specifically to increase the personal involvement of every player, allowing them to be in the center of action frequently and therefore feel important.
- + Changes in game rules and scoring methods helped keep game scores close and heightened challenges. In training, teams are often constructed or modified to keep game scores close enough to make the activity both interesting and challenging, even if outstanding players must accept handicaps.
- + The organization of teams and practices was changed so that friends have opportunities to play together in a variety of ways.

Children have four phases of motor development (Gallahue 1973), and the design of the Hockey Development Model takes these into consideration. These four phases are:

1. reflex movements-from birth until about eight months,
2. rudimentary movements-from the end of the first year of life until the end of the second,
3. fundamental movements-from the second year until about the sixth, and
4. specific or sport movements-from the sixth or seventh year onward.

By the age of seven years, most children are fairly proficient (though not yet mature) in fundamental motor skills, and start to use these basic motor skills until they improve both qualitatively and quantitatively. They also learn to vary, modify, and combine them into transitional motor activities. For example, they combine running with jumping, running with passing the ball in different ways, or running (like a sprinter or a hockey, or basketball player) with the ball under control.

This last phase is precisely where the Hockey Development Model begins. This ensures that the children are therefore exposed only to the level of activity that they are ready for. Children from the specific- or sport-movements phase should be exposed to the first level of the Hockey Development Model, then follow the suggested plan step by step and in the timeline indicated.



The Five Levels of Progression

The Hockey Development Model comprises five different formation levels:

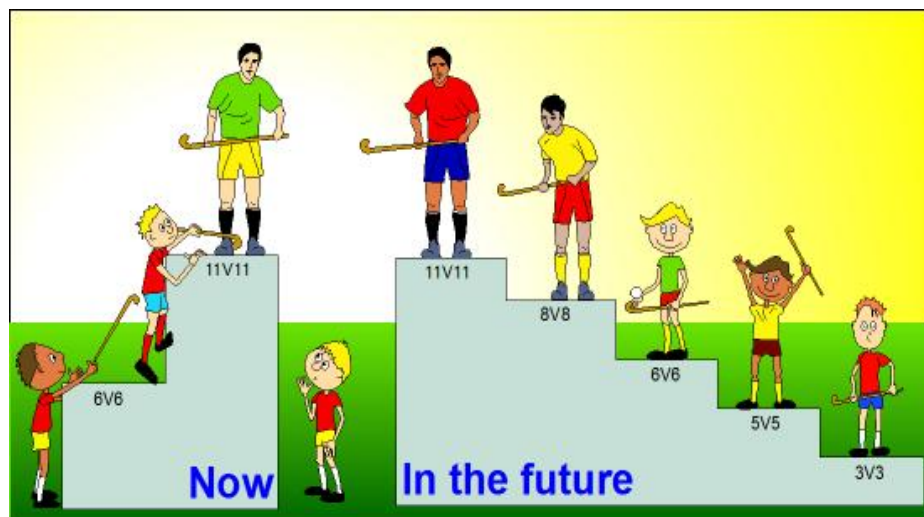
Level 1: Games for basic abilities and capacities

Level 2: Games for Mini-Hockey

Level 3: Games for 5-on-5 and 6-on-6 Hockey

Level 4: Games for 8-on-8 Hockey

Level 5: Games for official 11-on-11 Hockey



These levels represent a progressive sequence of exercises and simplified games supplying the most common game situations for this age group. There may be fewer players, reduced dimensions in the playing field, fewer or less-complicated rules, and so forth. Young hockey players progress slowly from one unit or game to the next one and are continuously confronted with slightly more complex and difficult problems.

They progress to the next level only after understanding and mastering the technical and tactical requirements of the previous simplified game or competition. Their training thus becomes a developmental process of gradually increasing demands.

The step-by-step approach, both for players and their coaches, is one of the keys of success in this method. Each segment is broken down into a series of small steps, leading gradually and methodically to the final goal of each level of accomplishment or formation: being able to perform well in the respective competition of that particular age group.

At the first level, youngsters aged seven years and up encounter a games program of basic abilities and capacities. The emphasis is on PLAY TO LEARN! This includes
- a great variety of multilateral games;
dribbling;
passing, receiving, and shooting;
and tackling.

They are exposed to simplified competitions (like the hockey decathlon and triathlon) and a great variety of multilateral games. Through them children have sufficient opportunities to practice and discover varied motor skills prior to and during their acquisition of hockey-specific skills. Other youngsters, who at this stage of development do not get a great variety of multilateral motor stimuli, may later encounter a proficiency barrier. Learning more complex skills may become extremely difficult for them if their fundamental skills and transitional motor activities have remained poorly developed.

Once through the different multilateral tasks, the children progress to the second Level where the children LEARN TO PLAY, putting in practise basic tactical concepts for learning to communicate and collaborate. This level comprises a progressive series of simplified games for teams of two players, in which the children not only experiment and improve in the correct use of the skills learned in Level 1, but also build up their capacities in communication and cooperation. The objective of this level is to understand and learn to successfully play the Level 2 competitive "Mini-Hockey" and the "3-on-3 Triathlon."

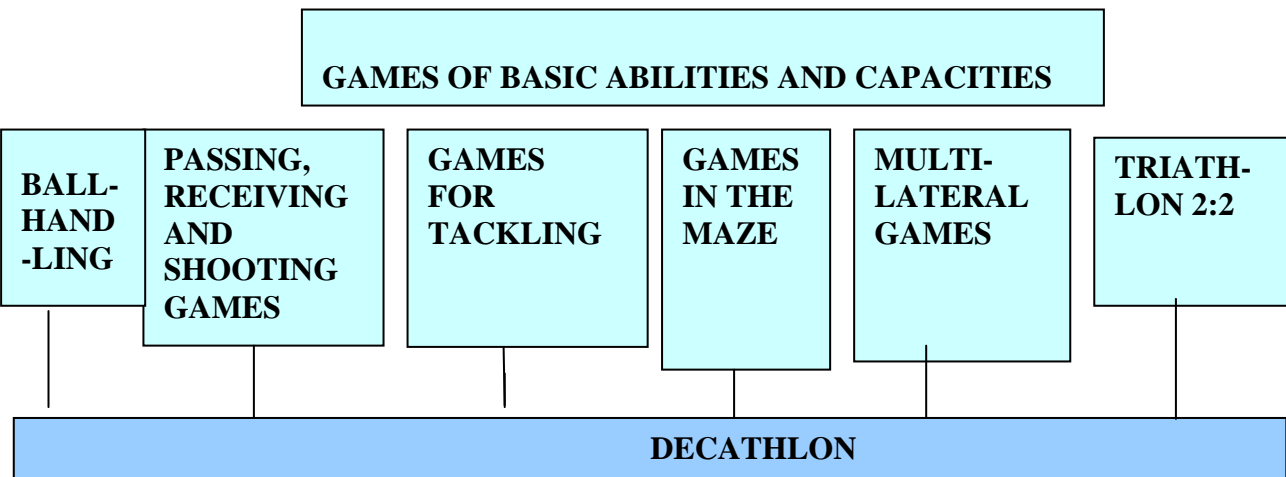
All proposed activities in Level 3 (the program of simplified games 3-on- 3, simplified games for the penalty corner and the sweep hit, 4-on-4 Hockey Triathlon, and the development of young goalkeepers) lead to the capacity of playing 5-on-5 Hockey on $\frac{1}{4}$ part of the official field and 6-on-6 Hockey in one half of the official field but played across its width.

At Level 4 the players will consolidate skills, with help of the activities of the first three levels and level 4 competitions which help them to continue to improve their reading and reacting skills. The objective at this level is to enjoy and perform well in 8-on-8 Hockey between the areas of the official field.

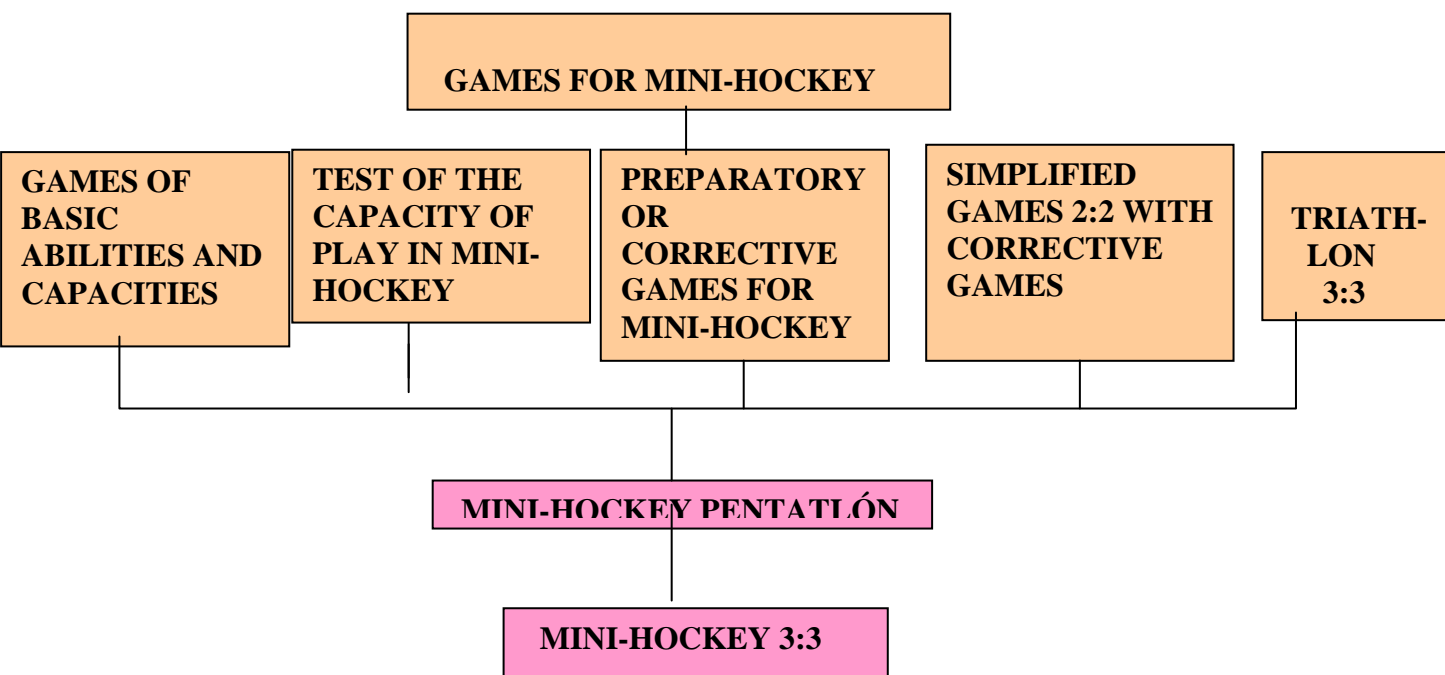
The Level 5 program for the full game is explained in a second volume which is available in Spanish (published 1992 by the National Olympic Committee of Spain) or in English through consulting the football text-book of Horst Wein's "Developing Game Intelligence in Soccer" , published in 2005 by Reedswain –Philadelphia U.S.A..

"We all learn best to play hockey by playing."

1st LEVEL OF FORMATION
(generally for boys and girls from 7 years onwards)



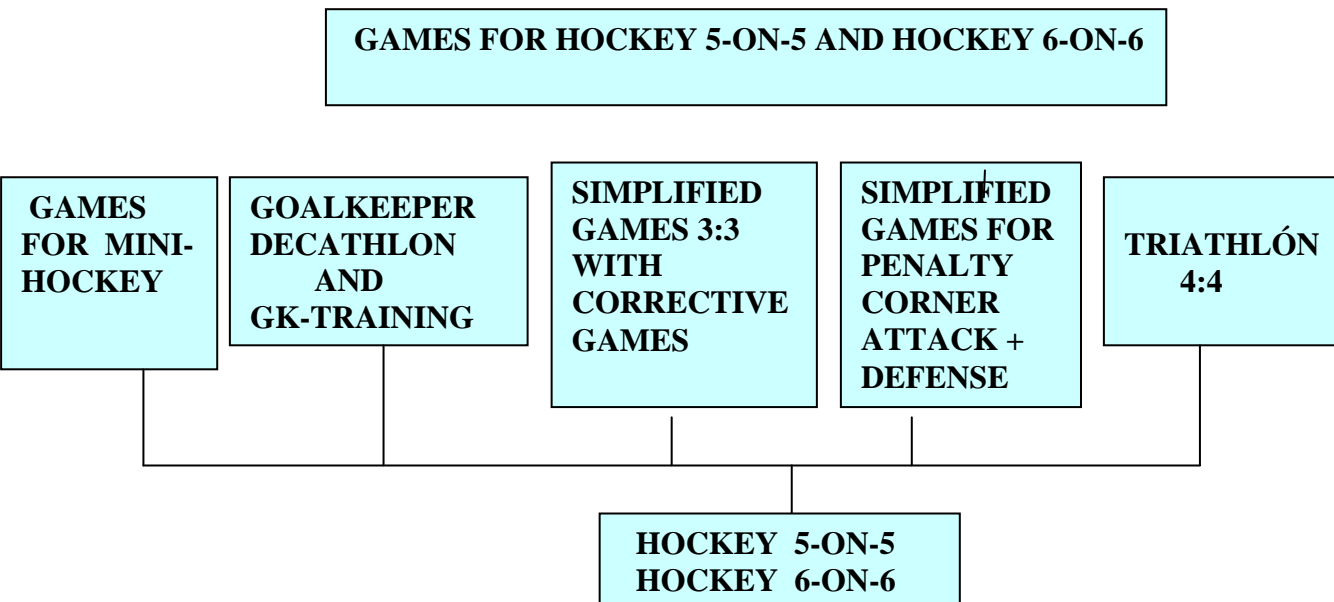
2nd LEVEL OF FORMATION
(generally for boys and girls from 8 years onwards)



"Moving step by step, you are able to travel great distances."

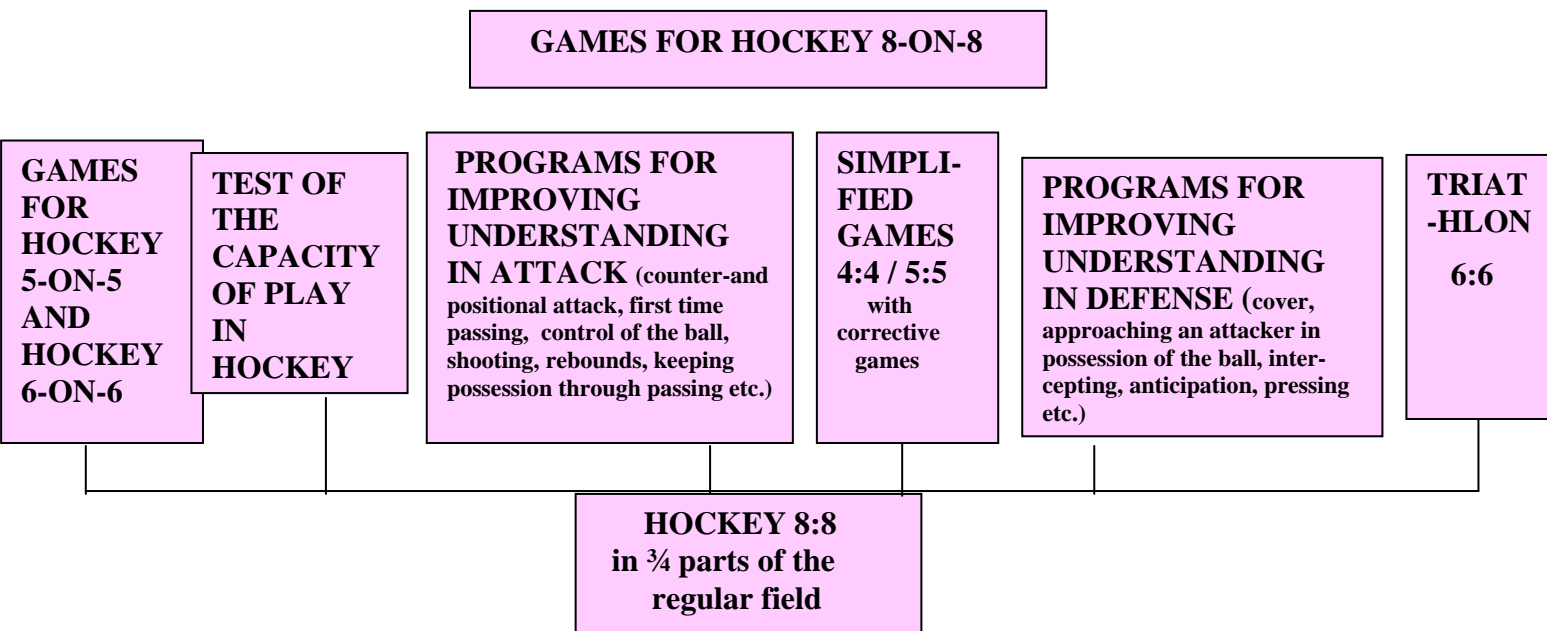
3rd. LEVEL OF FORMATION

(generally for boys and girls from 10 years onwards)



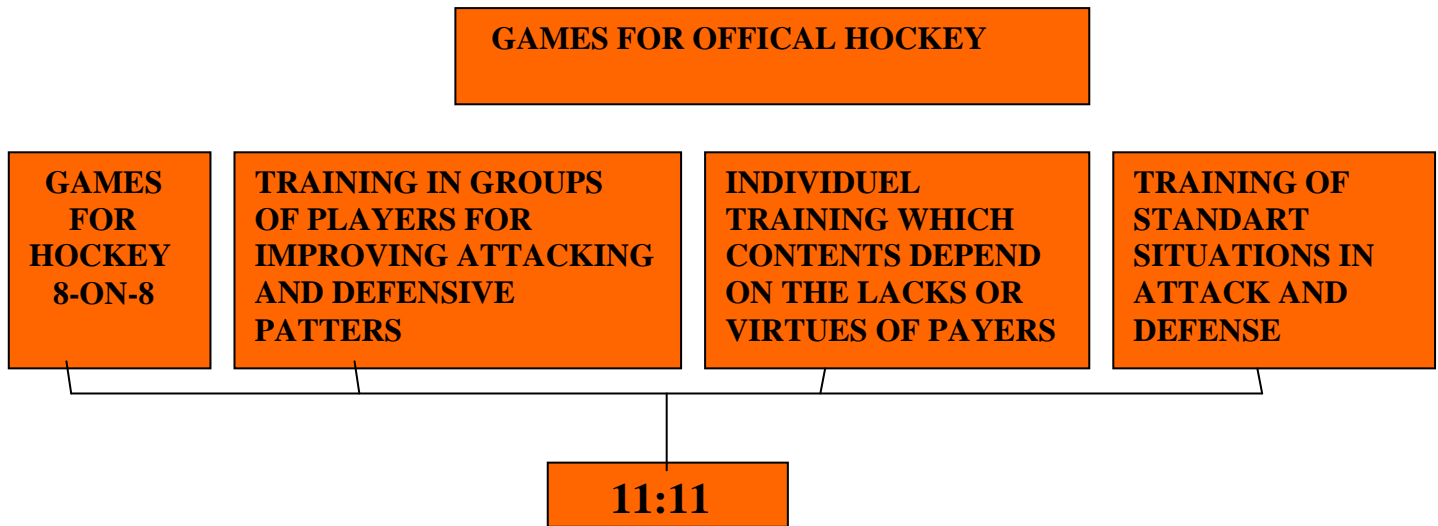
4th. LEVEL OF FORMATION

(generally for boys and girls from 12 years onwards)



5th LEVEL OF FORMATION

(generally for boys and girls from 14 years onwards)



"The success is composed by a serie of small daily victories."

Zig Ziglar

Advantages of the Development Model

To further convince you that the Hockey Development Model is the most effective way to stimulate young players, the advantages of implementing this model are now outlined. It will benefit not only your hockey coaching but also, more importantly, the young players themselves.

Link Between Training and Competition

Each level is composed of various corrective exercises and preparatory games especially designed to match the different tasks that competition demands among the players in each age group. Solid bridges are constructed between learning a subject and correctly applying it moments later in a simplified training game or the official competition. Training and competition are always seen as a unit, one being tightly linked to the other. This differs from traditional methods that often deprive children of an efficient training and learning process that fosters understanding of the game, fundamental for a good performance. Instead of focusing mainly on *how* to execute a closed skill, the Hockey Development Model coaches children on how the skill should be best applied: when, where, and why. This assures that the players are always highly motivated because they see the training practice always in function of the game and not isolated from the competition (as observed all too often among youth hockey players).

Increase in Successful Actions

Players who take part in competitions specially designed for their age (Mini-Hockey 3-on-3, 5-on-5, 6-on-6 and 8-on-8 Hockey) will have far more successful actions than in the traditional game, thereby leading to an increase in self-esteem.

The game of Mini-Hockey played with only three players per team is manageable for 8-year-old beginners and, with an additional goalkeeper, for 9-year-old ones. In the same way, the players under 12 years consider the 6-a-side game as the right challenge and the under-14 players understand the game with eight players per team on $\frac{3}{4}$ of the full field.

The following table provides a brief description of this progression. Each game is explained in much more detail in following chapters.

Enjoyment of the Game

Naturally, when players execute more successful actions, they enjoy the game more. Every two years the difficulty and complexity of the competition is increased in perfect harmony with the growing physical and intellectual capacities of the players. When young players progress with the help of the Hockey Development Model from so simple a base and in such small increments, the occurrence of significant failure is out of question. Enjoyment and confidence in their capabilities become the driving force for the players' motivation and further progress. The correct use of the model reinforces success, whereas the traditional way of subjecting children to the difficulty and complexity of the full game only reinforces failure. As success reinforces success, failure reinforces failure.

“Planning the development of young players is like preparing for a journey. You need to have a map (plan) available to avoid getting lost and wasting time and energy.”

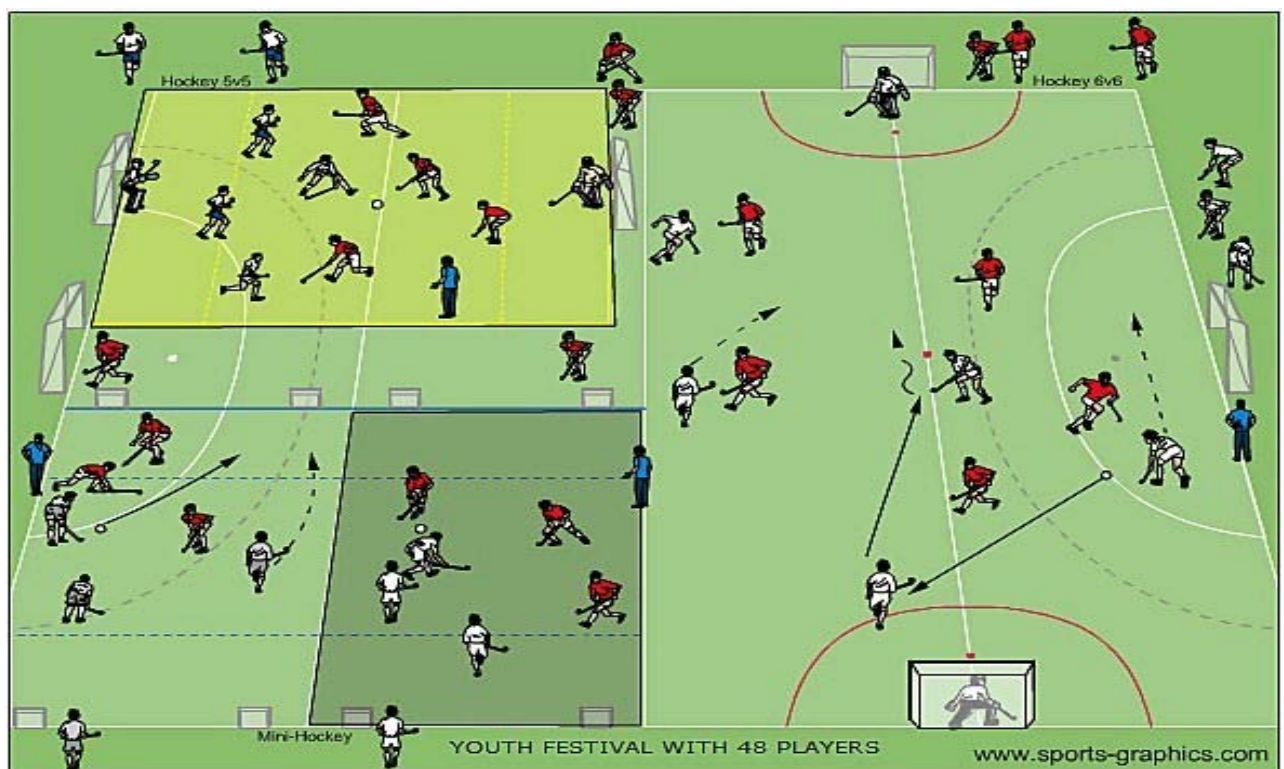
Unfortunately, most people still associate great performance with pain, struggle, and exhaustion. In hockey, the idea that learning can be fun is still novel. Whatever is enjoyable seems to be forbidden. Even though playing is the mode in which children discover their world, too often the moment they get on the training ground, the joy of discovery is quashed.

The following illustration represents the difference between the current way of coaching and the coaching method suggested by the Hockey Development Model. Presently, most children struggle to meet the demands of a competition geared toward adults. However, with the game tailored to a child's development and gradual progress to more complex activities, the youngsters can experience much more success and, most importantly, they enjoy the game.

In the future, hockey competitions will hopefully be tailored to match a child's gradual physical and intellectual development.

AN IDEAL PROGRESSION OF COMPETITIONS

AGE	GAME	RESER—VES	SPACE FOR ONE PLAYER	FIELD DIMENSION	DURATION	REFEREE
8 / 9 years	Mini-Hockey	1	126m ²	23 x 23 m.	3 x 10'	> 16 years
10 years	Hockey 5-on-5	2	99m ²	43 x 23 m.	2 x 20'	> 18 years
11 years	Hockey 6-on-6	3	218m ²	43 x 50m.	2 x 25'	> 20 years
12/13 years	Hockey 8-on-8	4	215m ²	$\frac{3}{4}$ of the regular field	2 x 35'	> 22 years
from 14 years	Hockey 11 vs.11	6	208 m ²	Full field 91x90m.	2 x 35'	> 22 years



“The competitions for the children should be like their shoes, they should fit them perfectly!”

Ease of Application

Players aren't the only ones who reap the benefits of the Development Model. The model provides coaches with a complete and effective training plan that can easily be applied to their players. Applying the Development Model gives even the most inexperienced hockey coach the ability to gradually, yet effectively, guide young players into the full game of hockey. The result is already known after 20 years of experiments: more intelligent and complete hockey players.

To become more familiar with the Hockey Development Model, teachers can even attend a weekend-long refresher coaching course. (For more information, send an e-mail to horstwein@eresmas.net.) In such a course, coaches learn the reasons behind a particular training and competition program for a particular age group and how to implement that program. Coaches not only acquire a detailed knowledge of the model's contents and what objectives to achieve with each exercise or simplified game, they also become familiar with the most effective methods and coaching style to apply.

Fixed Goals

To make the model as useful as possible to the coach, it has been structured in a hierarchical order, both with overall objectives (for example "Games for Mini-Hockey") and specific, partial aims (for example "Dribbling Games" or "3-on-3 Triathlon") for each level. For each game or exercise, specific goals have been identified. Having the goals fixed for each category provides these benefits:

- * Gives coaches guidelines for structuring and developing the training and learning process and allows them, after assessing the content, to add their own training programs to those proposed in the model
- * Helps link the proposed program to the fixed goals.
- * Adds incentives for the children, allowing them to focus their efforts on some definite objective, without having to guess why they are playing some way or what they are aiming toward.
- * Allows the coach to discover whether or not he is achieving the objectives and to make any necessary alterations

With the objectives clearly defined and fixed for each category of children's hockey one of the key elements of this unique teaching and learning model-the children are not exposed to a training process in which mere improvisation and intuition on the coaches' part determine content. The development model incorporates relevant sport science and motor development research in its program. This way, countless correct habits are developed in the early years of learning, resulting in the desired improvement of performance at higher levels.

Most youth coaches teach several days a week, without knowing whether they are doing it right or not. For them, their old habits, acquired long ago, are comfortable; they're methods that they've used frequently without much thinking. When exposed to the simple and effective training programs of the Hockey Development Model, however, they might well double their effectiveness, doing a better job in less time and with half the effort.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Making use of the Development Model every youth coach should always maintain a healthy, positive attitude during training and competition.

Philosophy During Competition

These are some basic principles that all coaches should apply during competition.

For boys and girls between 8 and 14 years old, always consider playing well as more important than winning. While learning to play, the participants must forget about the result of the game. They should be encouraged to take some risks, despite the fact that this kind of play might allow the opponents to score. Players, parents, and coaches should consider competition only as another kind of training.

Mobilize all your efforts to reach victory, but never look to win at any price. Victory should never be considered the only important thing to achieve.

Don't mind losing a match, because defeat is always a possibility when competing; there is no guarantee for winning. If another team beats yours, it's generally because of their better play. It should never be because your team didn't put all its efforts into the game to win it. As long as you have tried hard and played up to your capability to prevent the defeat, you never should feel like losers.

Winning isn't as important, nor losing as bad, as most parents believe. It all depends on what a team was able to demonstrate. Players may win after having showed a poor game played in a destructive manner-and they may lose despite having played much better than the opponents and having enjoyed every minute of the game.

Learn to play in a competition as though it is a matter of practice and train with the spirit of playing an important competition.

Winning is only a consequence of playing well. That is why every player has only to look to give his or her very best. The result will fall like a ripe fruit falls from the tree.

In all youth categories up to 14 years, coaching to win a match is easier than coaching to play the game well. Playing well allows you to discover new solutions to old problems, again and again. Teaching to win, on the other hand, means you limit and restrict the game mainly to those already known skills and tactical moves that are important for winning it (like long clearances, "hit and rush" philosophy, pressing defense, etc.). Yet when you compete this way, in the long run you also restrict and limit the complete formation of the young players.

"If you want to win, you almost have to forget about winning."

L. Moorhouse/L. Cross

Coaching Characteristics

Certain characteristics can help a coach become well-accepted by their young players (Halliwell 1994). Here are some of those identifiable characteristics:

- Previous experience and successes as a player
- Previous experience and successes as a coach
- Pleasant appearance, in physicality as well as in dress
- Correct (healthful) lifestyle (habits)
- Correct proceedings in work: punctuality and efficiency
- Good organization of training sessions, meetings, travel
- Good communication level: knows how to explain concepts and also how to listen.
- Good disposition-always has time for the players
- Ample knowledge of techniques and tactics and how to coach them
- High motivation for passing his knowledge onto the players through questioning
- Positive approach-encourages and motivates players with positive remarks, creates enthusiasm, praises frequently
- Knows to coach from the bench: readjusts his team's play through quick decision making, changes players shrewdly, has a sense of humor
- Can exercise leadership in the dressing room as well as on the ground during training and matches



- Self-control-emotionally stable, transmits calmness and serenity, especially when conflicts arise
- Desires to improve constantly-looks out for new exercises and games as well as for new coaching methods or styles, self-critical in his coaching
- Capacity to observe, analyze, and correct mistakes or wrong habits
- Honest and fair with the young players-doesn't favour any particular player, demands a lot but is fair to everybody
- Open to any suggestion-stays flexible, listens to the suggestions of his players and assistants
- Demonstrates true interest in his players (and for their problems off the playing field)
- A good coach has the ability to observe and analyze their players' movements and correct mistakes.

“When a federation doesn't support research, improvement and progress are put aside.”

Maintaining a Positive Attitude

A coach of young hockey players should conscientiously do and say things that make the young players feel

- good,
accepted,
important,
happy, and
successful.

Try these simple gestures:

- +A warm greeting, using the player's name.
- +A smile.
- +A thumbs-up sign.
- +A pat on the back.
- +Talking with players.
- + Playing some games or activities with them.
- +Asking their advice and listening to what they say.
- +Helping them learn something new or to improve something.
- +Helping players adjust their personal objectives.
- +Attending to all their questions.
- +Showing interest in their friends, family, and hobbies
- +Providing fun and enjoyable activities.
- +Giving encouragement.
- +Praising, avoiding criticism.
- +Including the youngsters in the teaching process through putting forward of questions.



Photo: A. Wälthi

In addition to the right coaching philosophy, a successful hockey program requires organization, community support, sound promotional efforts, and a safe environment.

“The major obstacle for the progress in hockey is ‘the force of habits’. Because of stubbornness many coaches continue with their old coaching patterns without questioning what they are actually teaching.”

Winning Matches versus Developing Talent

The saying 'The most important thing in sport is to take part and play' has long been forgotten in most of the hockey clubs, as many coaches are often using their young players as a platform for climbing the social and professional ladder. The culture of winning in children's sport causes damage on a daily basis—not just to children but also to the clubs they play in. The clubs affected are those whose quality of training is determined by the fact that they stop at nothing to win, regardless of whether their teams are for youths, juniors or beginners.

Unfortunately, very few clubs measure their success based on the number of players who are capable of joining a first or representative team after years of well-planned and well-executed training. Instead of playing to win, the coaches of those clubs concentrate on playing to learn and thus become winners in the long run.

According to a U.S. survey of children who took part in organised sporting activities in the late 1990s, 14 million out of 20 million North American children stopped participating after turning 13. Today the dropout rate for young athletes is alarming. Some studies in England, for example, report that up to 70 per cent of all who participate in youth sports choose to quit. Among the reasons given for this epidemic are starting too soon, playing too often, trying and training too hard, and becoming too specialised. Perhaps bad coaching should be added to that list—as a youth who has a coach consumed with winning at all costs is surely destined to burnout. Of course, it is natural for young athletes (and all too often their parents) to want quick results. But there are no shortcuts in sport, and coaches will fail if they are unable to accept that fulfilling potential takes time.

In many countries there is a lot of concern because of the constant increase in the number of 13- to 15-year-olds who abandon federated hockey competitions after having trained and competed the adult way for six or more years! This large-scale desertion is because hockey, originally considered by children as a simple activity to be shared with some friends, has, with the passage of time, become a bitter experience for many young people. Now as far as they are concerned, it often entails frustration, a very rigid system of competitions and critical parents. It also means for them to be held up to the high expectations of coaches whose objective is not to train young people to understand and master the progressively difficult game of hockey.

Rather, those coaches seek to gain as many victories as possible—at any price—and hence realise the consequent prestige of being able to apply for a better-paying job in the hockey world..

Many professionals who are devoted to the organization, management, research, and teaching or training of nearly every sport debate the winning versus development controversy. It is also a hot topic for discussion among many parents, who regard their children's sporting activities as a springboard to social and economic success.

The key to the problem is that regional federations still claim that there is only one way to practice sport. In those organizations, the emphasis is placed on the search for the perfect player, justifying purely competitive practice that will aid selection of model players.

Unfortunately, in such a system, the less-able players are bombarded with endless objectives and are taught by their coaches to aim at excessive targets in order to achieve the best results as early as possible. Take the following example: In any

youth section of a school, club or other institution, before starting to train young people, coaches have to choose between two very different types of work ethic:

1. Trying to lead their teams to a victory in the short term—at any cost.
2. Seeking to develop the children with an age-orientated, gradual and long-term approach to the complexity and difficulty of the game of hockey.

Unfortunately, the size and strength of young hockey players continue to be the most noticeable features of many teams. It's widely known that the bigger the player, the better results a coach will obtain in training. Players' size is frequently a deciding factor for team selection, especially in competitions for very young players. It can only be countered by clearly superior ball skill. But instead of coaching those ball skills, it is much easier to rely on size. In the older age groups, size becomes less influential, but the skills, not having been worked on, are now fatally absent.

Besides looking out for winning, coaches show a tendency to overemphasise tactics. But the absence of ball skills limits the options, and the only tactics that have any hope of being successful are inevitably negative and defensive.

By continuing to put a lot of emphasis on the win-loss record of a coach, we are creating a generation of players and coaches who are afraid to take risks because of fear of failure. For them, youth hockey is all about winning, very often neglecting the players' development. But the best youth coach is not the one who holds a fine win-loss record, but the one who accomplishes two things. First, he or she knows how to instil a real passion for the game in young students, inspiring a young player to improve on skills away from training (a novel concept for some). Second, he or she prepares players to succeed at the next level or category of youth hockey. That next level might mean preparing to play successful hockey 6-on-6 within the 11-year-old age group, making that jump from the under-16 to under-18 level, or from the under-18 level to the senior club team. Notice that nowhere in that definition did we mention winning.

Of the four major areas of hockey, the technical, tactical, physical and psychological realms, the physical is the easiest and quickest to develop. Therefore, when we continue to judge the qualities of a youth coach due to his or her win-loss record, we are encouraging future generations of youth coaches to focus mainly on physical aspects and old-fashioned coaching styles that facilitate winning. This moves us away from skill development toward coaching a sound understanding of the game with a coaching style in which the young player is an independent thinker who doesn't rely solely on commands received from his or her coach.

It is not uncommon for coaches and, more particularly, parents of 8- to 12-year-old children to be impatient for their young players to achieve good results before their time. This obsession is the driving force behind many coaches' training programs, whereby they plan and supervise practice sessions that are exclusively hockey orientated.

Unfortunately, those coaches neglect fundamental movement skills, coordination, speed, power and endurance as well as basic requirements for any good hockey performance such as perception skills, decision making, creativity, and managing the parameters of space and time.

As a result, there may be rapid successes in competition, but it is only a few years before those successes become few and fewer. Because of the shortcomings of early athletic development without a view to achieving long-term goals and because

Objective: To win

Usually the players chosen are physically more advanced, especially in strength. They are generally the tallest ones. Their efforts to improve, regular attendance at the training sessions and behaviour as a team member receive less attention than does their actual performance on the pitch, which guarantees a win.

There is little room for younger, less-able or underdeveloped players. Hockey is undemocratic.

From the age of 8, excessive emphasis is placed on tactics.

The players rely mainly on long passes.. They play faster than their skill level allows.

There is little thought given to building up the game. Usually the ball doesn't pass through midfield and goes directly to the forwards through long passes

When attacking there are few changes of direction (switches from left to right).

..

The coach instructs with the objective of winning the match and the championship. The player has to obey the coach, who gives orders or instructions from the side-lines.

To win, players are taught to be disloyal, to create traps, be dishonest and to deceive opponents and the referee. The ends justify the means

The game plan has been thought out by the coach as it applies to adult players. There is no time or room for flair.

There is premature specialisation in a particular role. Always the same play and the subs rarely get an opportunity.

Young people are prematurely exposed to adults' competition instead of adapting the competition for efficient learning. It takes many years of disappointments and frustration for the children to finally develop the same correct habits that adults show in 11v11.

Excessive emphasis is placed on physical skill and work-out, as this is the manner in which results are achieved most quickly.

Objective: To promote development

Everyone plays, not just the strongest players. The coach prefers players with ball sense who have an understanding of keeping it in possession and who are intelligent. Good behaviour on and off the pitch is one of the criteria when making a selection about who will play. Putting in effort is also important.

Everyone has the same right to play, regardless of physique and ability. Hockey is democratic.

Matches serve to highlight how much skill players have and allow them to gain experience in tactics.

All players touch the ball. They tend to make short passes and dribbles. The goal-keeper usually throws the ball in order to construct the next attack.

The ball generally advances from defence to the midfielders, with the game based on communication and cooperation.

Often the weight of the attack is changed with the objective of creating spaces for penetration.

The coach motivates the team with the aim of improving performance of each player and the team as a whole. The player decides what the next move will be rather than the coach deciding for him or her, using perception and decision-making capacities.

Players are taught the values of sportsmanship, honesty, respect for rules and loyalty to the team.

The individual is allowed to introduce his or her flair, skill and imagination.

Everyone gets several opportunities in the competition to experience different positions in the team. Everyone plays, regardless of ability.

With the aim to assure more efficient learning of the complex game of hockey, the competition is adapted according to physical and intellectual abilities, at each stage of the young person's growth. More self-esteem and fun are guaranteed.

The surrounding environment is respected and the players' coordination and ability to play under various conditions improve with the variety of competitions to which the children get exposed each season.

To win, during training there is an emphasis on traditional methods of teaching.

Everything connected with hockey is valued more than the individual.
Dubious behaviour to achieve a good result is frequently accepted

To be able to understand the game and to make fewer mistakes, the method of discovering skills and capacities in simplified games is emphasised during training.

Priority is given to the development of the person through sport. Sport is used as 'training for life'.

of early specialisation, there is a higher chance of injury. Children trained in this way are more likely to give up playing hockey than those who have had the advantage of training in other sports (requiring basic skills gradually leading to high achievement).

It is widely known that broad experience and development are required for hockey training. If it is gained at the golden age of motor learning (7 to 11 years of age), a player is able to efficiently learn and apply later the most complicated techniques and tactics that high-performance hockey requires.

To motivate hockey coaches to modify the structure and content of their training sessions, or their vision for the development of their pupils between the ages of 8 and 13 years, it is necessary to enrich their competition menu with hockey decathlons, triathlons and pentathlons. At the same time, coaches can work to change the structure of the traditional youth hockey competitions. It is obvious that almost all teachers or coaches prepare their young players for a hockey competition with hockey-specific exercises and simplified games that simulate situations that arise during their competitive matches. But where the competition would be a multi-lateral one, the coach will be forced to adopt a more diverse training content. So long as children's competition remains exclusively hockey specific, then their coaches' training will also remain only hockey specific.

Consequently, for the development of young players, a correct relationship between diverse, or multi-lateral, and specialised training will only be achieved when 8- to 13-year-olds are exposed to competitions that foster fundamental motor skills *as well as* hockey-specific skills. Through differently structured youth competitions, teachers who want to win will learn and understand that, at this early stage, the emphasis has to be on the young athletes' overall development, avoiding early specialisation.

We simply need to have a clear and better understanding of when winning and losing are important, when they get in the way of proper education and development, and when both the development of a player and his or her strong will to win could be taught at the same time in an age-appropriate way. A solution for teaching to win *and*, at the same time, ensuring a correct development of the young athletes' innate potential could be the mini-hockey pentathlon competition. Additionally, coaches could stage a tournament of hockey triathlons that features three simplified hockey games as well as two more multi-lateral activities that, when combined, would form other pentathlons.

Using multi-lateral competitions in age groups (like i.e. the Mini-Hockey-Pentathlon) will require coaches to expose young hockey players to *fundamental* hockey-specific skills and capacities as well as to *fundamental* multi-purpose activities. This way the focus is on winning and having fun, while at the same time developing a complete hockey player and person.

“The success of youth coaches should not be judged on the number of victories but on the number of players they are able to develop each season to become members of their senior or representative squad. In the long term, developing will always outplay winning.”

Part

2

Coaching Age - Appropriate Hockey



Photo: A. Wälti

“Because of the fact that today we are all getting used more and more to instant food, instant photos, instant coffee, instant transmission of information and so on, many people (parents) in hockey start to think about instant success.”

Coaching Players Aged 5 and 6

Hockey clubs should offer to their youngsters under age of 7 a school of sport initiation that functions as a 'sport kindergarten'. In these centres young players would be exposed to a great variety of recreational and motor activities. Their training would have the purpose of overcoming motor deficiencies and any delays that players displayed in their coordination or the control of their body as well as in their understanding of the parameters of space and time. Here the popular daily games that previous generations enjoyed in the street, the patio or at the neighbouring park would be practiced. Consider the expert opinion that future generations may be condemned to a progressively sedentary life farther away from a healthy and natural atmosphere. Yet with a programme tailor-made for young children, the negative effects of living in a modern society, with computers and televisions, would be reversed. To allow 5- and 6-year-old boys and girls to grow healthier and to be naturally more athletic, children have to be exposed to physical activity at least twice per week for the following reasons:

- *To recognise their bodies, to know the structural and functional possibilities and limitations of their whole bodies, as well as in each of its parts, to be able to consolidate a varied repertoire of basic motor abilities: to roll, to drag, to sit up, to stop, to walk, to raise, to descend, to run, to throw, to jump, to climb, to slide, to push, to kick.

- *To develop their psychological and social state by means of popular games such as relays, runs with a variety of obstacles and tag games; to practice basic motor skills by means of exercises with a partner with and without a ball; to build up confidence in themselves and in their physical possibilities; to learn to communicate and to express themselves verbally and with gestures; to integrate into and cooperate with small groups; to appreciate the pleasure of physical activities; to learn to take care of their bodies and respect the bodies of others; and to know and to take care of their surroundings.

- *To know how to orientate themselves in space while being aware of their closest surroundings using movements such as up and down, ahead, behind, close, far, between and around as well as notions of relative time such as fast, slow, at the same time, after, and notions of rhythm and the combination of several movements.



Photo: A Wälti

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*To have some visual experiences of the ball's movement. They must learn, with a great variety of stimuli to correctly evaluate the speed of the ball, the highest point of its flight, the possible place it will land, the spin that has been given to the ball, the bounces of different kinds of balls on different surfaces. A well-organised school of sport initiation would possess balls of various materials, sizes, weights and elasticity.

*To dominate and control the ball better until they have mastered ball skills and, for those children who practice at home, aspire to become a 'magician of the ball'.

*To learn by means of a great variety of stimuli to confidently handle not only the ball on the ground and in the air but also to simultaneously control their bodies. At this point, the ball becomes the young players' best friend.

As the players in this age group learn to control their bodies and the ball, they should regularly do the following in their practice routine:

1. Dribble the ball

- with the right and left hand;
- with a high bounce that is controlled to reach shoulder height, the height of the hip or the knee and in mixed combinations;
- with half and complete turns;
- letting it bounce through separated legs forward and backward;
- with a hand or a foot whilst balancing one extra ball on the nape of the neck;
- with one foot and another one with the hand; and
- letting two balls bounce simultaneously, touching them with both hands at the same or different moments so that they remain in motion.

2. Pass the ball between two or more individuals with different techniques

- with a hand in a frontal shot;
- from one hand, over the head, into the other hand;
- letting it bounce with one hand against the ground;
- like a discus throw or shot put;
- with two hands like in basketball;
- as though performing an official throw-in from the competitive hockey game;
- with the back to the partner, throwing the ball with two hands over the head;
- passing it through separated legs to the partner behind as in a relay.

3. Receive and then control a ball thrown into the air with two hands

- with either foot on the ground, at hip height, level with the head and over it;
- with different surfaces of the foot on the ground or at the height of the hip;
- with the thigh, the chest or the head, allowing two touches before the ball must be perfectly controlled;
- with and without having to first perform a 360-degree turn; and
- from a sitting position on the ground,
- whilst the ball is still in the air, the standing player has to receive and return a ball thrown from a partner.

4. Mini-volley, with two or three players in a team, using the passing technique of handball.

Once an acceptable level of control and coordination in the fundamental motor skills is achieved, first without and later with the ball, and once they have reached the age of 7, the children of the school of sport initiation may enter the hockey school of their club or municipality. Here they are exposed to level 1 of the Hockey Development Model.

Coaching Players Aged 7 to 9

Once the 5- and 6-year-old boys and girls have completed their first organised motor experiences and practiced some fundamental hockey-specific exercises in the sport kindergarten, they are ready to be exposed to the first two levels of the Hockey Development Model.



From the age of 7 upwards, our aim is to introduce young boys and girls step by step to the game of hockey and foster their interest in this sport. However, before coaches can apply the games and exercises at these levels, they must be aware not only of the specific characteristics and needs of players of this age group but also of some important game alterations to allow better learning. Finally, they must take into consideration some general rules that will stimulate a child's talent. Children aged 7 to 9 have some significant characteristics:

- *They lack fine motor skills.
- *Their movements are usually whole-body actions with little accuracy.
- *They have short bursts of energy and enthusiasm.
- *They are still developing coordination and they are still clumsy.
- *They play or participate for fun and for enjoyment.
- *Their actions are not yet automatic or programmed.
- *They are unsure what actions lead to success at a skill.
- *They see every detail as being important.
- *They are uncertain in their actions and in how to achieve desired outcomes.
- *They lack a clear idea or model of a new skill.
- *They cannot follow too many instructions or handle too much information at one time.
- *They are unable to use feedback effectively.

By being aware of these traits, coaches can tailor their teaching to meet young players' characteristics and needs. The table besides lists additional characteristics of young children and coaching strategies that should meet the youngsters' needs.

TAILORING COACHING PRACTICES TO MATCH YOUNG PLAYERS' CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristic	Coaching strategy
The boys and girls under 10 have similar characteristics when it comes to sport.	Therefore boys and girls should train and compete together, because both will benefit from it.
The children are highly motivated and enthusiastic. They like to be active	Maintain their motivation through a wide range of exercises/games. Avoid queues and players being stationary. The coach should listen to what players say.
The children under 10 are generally egocentric and like to possess the ball the maximum time possible. They are very concerned with themselves.	Provide everybody with a ball and plan competitions 1 against 1 (like the Decathlon) in order to make the maximum use of their egocentric phase. Promote fair play.
The players have not yet established a "motor pattern" to allow the skills to be executed without thinking. Their whole attention is directed towards the ball.	Allow time to learn skills. Improve the skills through a reasonable number of repetitions and vary them before you evaluate the skill level through a competition, which demands a correct execution. Drill practice must be designed to avoid excessive decision-making.
Everybody enjoys scoring. Scoring gives self-esteem and confidence	Practice simplified games as well as Mini Hockey with its variation so that everybody scores and plays the ball frequently.
Their capacity of attention is very limited. They are unable to process a lot of information.	Therefore the activities must be changed frequently. Mix specific hockey exercises/ games with multilateral games. Vary almost every 15 minutes the content and compete with only one substitute. Don't talk too much.
They are just starting to learn how to cooperate	Select games in which cooperation leads to winning (like Mini hockey). The players should not exceed his present stage of development. Ask questions to involve the young players also mentally
They have no clear idea of an ideal performance and therefore rely entirely on their coach	Demonstrate to allow the young players to have a source of feedback.
They are very sensitive to criticism and failure	Under all circumstances be positive. Praise and reward often to reinforce an effort or an improvement.
They are less tolerant to heat and cold than adults	Ensure that they wear adequate clothing. They lose fluid quickly.

Coaching Players Aged 10 and 11

The third level of the Hockey Development Model further develops players' technical and tactical abilities and capacities through a variety of simplified games for teams of three players and later for teams of four players. In addition, level 3 presents a specialised training programme for developing young goal-keepers. Before putting these programmes to work, however, coaches should understand a little more about players.

Coaching players aged 10 and 11 years old is a rewarding field of operation. At this later stage of their childhood, many sources confirm that youngsters are in a 'golden age of motor learning' (Diem lectures). Many favourable conditions exist in the biological, psychological and motor spheres at this golden age: Both the body and mind are in harmony. Leaving the dream world behind, children now strive more than ever before for realism. The world of the unreal, the incomprehensible or of fantasy declines. The children's capacity for abstraction (that is, separating the essential from the less important) develops, and this advance favours their understanding and reading of game situations. For the first time, the senses awaken to the fact that all action is submitted to certain general rules.

Prepubescent hockey players still have an urge for physical activity, which favours their intrinsic motivation to become more and more involved in sports. However, instead of looking to meet their insatiable or unlicensed need for movement, as happened in the years before the age of 10, the youth now strive for good performance, profiting from the fact that their movements are now more controlled and carried out more economically and with single-mindedness. Trying to emulate the sport model, youngsters can show a real dedication for continuous improvement. In fact, children aged 10 and 11 are even more motivated to practice hard when a game is organised so that they can demonstrate their abilities to their friends and to the opposing team.

What does this new level of play mean for coaches? At this stage of young hockey players' evolution, their teachers must make a transition from simply presenting a great variety of multi-lateral and specific hockey activities to preparing a more systematic, intensive and purposeful practice of technical-tactical aspects of the hockey game. Exercises for developing speed, coordination and aerobic resistance are to be considered the pillars of multi-lateral development, while the understanding, practice and mastering of a great variety of simplified hockey games (played with teams of three or four players) are the cornerstones of building their specific improvement.



Special Considerations for Beginners

When coaching young players, consider adjusting the following to better suit your players' needs and skill levels.

Playing Area

The drills and games in the first level do not require the use of an entire hockey field. An area approximately 20 by 40 metres is needed, that is, much less than a quarter of the area of the full field or almost the size of a basketball court. When you organise a simplified game for two teams, as coach you should always take into consideration that the less skilled and capable your players are, the wider and deeper the dimensions of the playing area should be. A small area often doesn't allow the player sufficient time to observe and analyse the game situation, and then make a quick decision about what skill to execute, why to execute it, and when and where to do it best. The smaller the area, in fact, the more demands are put on skills and on attention. Needless to say, a larger playing field facilitates successful play.

If only a small playing area is available, you must reduce the number of players taking part in the game. You compensate with this reduction in numbers for the lack of space; in other words, you are still trying to tailor the game perfectly to the young players' abilities and capacities. If all the players cannot be directly involved in the practice because of limited space, the 'extras' may carry out some additional activities while they wait. For example, they might practice juggling or balancing the ball outside the training area, shooting it against a fence or wall, or even executing exercises for improving their level of coordination and balance with and without the ball. In brief, it is important for coaches to select the correct dimension of the playing area based on the technical, physical and intellectual performance levels of their players and on the number of players involved in the game.

Goal Dimensions

The size of the goals also plays an important part in the teaching and learning processes with young players. To create a game of control, the rules of many simplified games require beginners to control the ball in the opposing wide goal area (between 6 and 20 metres wide). Wild shooting is not desirable!

Players should handle the ball gently and with care, without using violent movements.

Wider goals help stimulate a young player's perception. For beginners (who generally direct most of their attention toward the ball) a wider, uncovered space between the cones is much easier to detect during the dribble. In addition, using wide goal areas gives the wings the same opportunities to score as a centre-forward has, thus leading to the habit of always attacking with sufficient width.

With the use of wide goals, players do not tend to cluster around the goal as is the case when goals are established only in the centre. Thanks to having wide goal areas for practice sessions, young players have greater enjoyment in the game and their self-confidence increases.

The Use of the Reverse Stick

During the first years of practice the coach of young players should instil them to use frequently the reverse stick. Mastering the "Indian dribble" in front of the body is the key to discover the magic of hockey as it opens the door to the world of dummies, surprising short passing the ball with the toe of the reversed stick. But after an initial period (about 3 years) of gaining experience with the reverse stick it should be restricted, especially in the competition, due to its less effectiveness compared to the play with the front stick.

How to structure a Coaching Session

It is not only the quality but also the variety of the activities that determines the degree of success and acceptance of the practice session and its contents by young players. Just as someone in a restaurant orders a tasteful and varied meal after having studied the menu carefully, the coach should create an effective and enjoyable coaching session for beginners by selecting various activities from the menu. For example, at level 1 a coach chooses from a variety of games focused on basic abilities, creating a 'menu' of several courses:

Aperitif—one of the simplified games for two-player teams or, if the beginners still are not ready for that, a multi-lateral game

First course—a dribbling game with one or two variations

Second course—a game for passing, receiving or shooting

Dessert—a tackling game, a game in the maze or a test selected from the decathlon

A drink—a multi-lateral activity or simplified game for teams of not more than three players.

To ensure a high level of attention from the beginners, it is best to change the proposed activity every 15 minutes. A coach should also alternate exercises and games of great intensity with those making less physical demands. The games and exercises in the Hockey Development Model are not to be done in any rigid order. It is up to the individual coach to put together a combination of exercises that is right for his or her players.



Coaching Players Aged 12 to 14

The fourth level of the Hockey Development Model is designed for players aged 12 to 14. At this stage the coach can forge a link from children to the sport for the rest of their lives. However, this can only be accomplished if the coach understands the players and exposes them to an effective and enjoyable hockey programme that is tailored perfectly to their desires and expectations.

The intense physical and hormonal transition induced by puberty leads to a loss of a child's balance in mobility and less responsiveness to the development of motor skills. It is therefore essential at this stage of the young players' evolution that they be exposed to collective (team) activities in which they overcome the characteristic insecurity, unsteadiness and sense of isolation.



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By this time, youth players become more socially aware, more inclined to show off, and more prone to compete with their team-mates and opponents for attention. They may also want to show their independence and may even at this stage feel resentful of authority. For all these reasons, the older youths in this age group can pose special problems for the coach not only from the aspect of discipline but also in accepting what he or she teaches. However, along with these problems come a number of advantages.

As the players are now much more responsive to cooperative activities with other players, this is an age group in which team play is learned with a certain ease. During this stage of their evolution, too, they are making important decisions that may influence the formation of their character and personality.

If some of the team's players are genuine beginners and are unskilled because they have started late in playing the game, this situation can pose a problem. These late beginners may lack the elementary ball skills necessary for team play and may also not be able to learn hockey skills as easily as they might have been able to do some years earlier. Keeping all these characteristics in mind, here are some suggestions for coaching players aged 12 and 14:

- *Acknowledge the players' taste for competition by using competitive exercises, especially those that require the players to attain measurable objectives, such as passing the ball at a target.

- *Consider every player a unique individual.

- *Encourage players as often as possible. Although this is important at all ages, and praise is always preferable to blame, players in this age group are particularly sensitive to remarks from the coach that may reduce their status in the eyes of their friends. Therefore, avoid criticizing players of this age in public!

- *Since the players are physically bigger and may have had experience in other sports, it may be necessary to be more clear-cut and strict in applying the rules.

- *The players are usually anxious to get into full-scale match play as often as possible, so you should explain to the players why each of the practice exercises is important for performing well in the match. This encourages them to accept the need for practice routines.

- *Knowing *why* to do it and *what purpose* it serves is particularly important when it comes to motivating young players to overcome, with a variety of physical stimuli, their lack of coordination, balance (equilibrium), mobility, or any deficiencies in speed, resistance, and strength. In fact, these stimuli for the development of physical capacities and coordination should be interwoven in the players' hockey sessions as often as possible.

“The creativity of the players is the source from which a coach should drink daily.”

Toward a Different Coaching Style

Because the coach's philosophy and training programme often decide whether a child will stick with the game of hockey or look to other activities, coaches must strive to adapt to the sport's ever-changing demands. New knowledge appears daily, opening up possibilities we had never thought of some decades ago. What is considered valid today could already be out of date tomorrow, due to the frenetic evolution in many aspects of life. The path to success in hockey is always under construction. The construction has to be seen as a process, not as an objective that must be reached in a particular given time. The game of hockey evolves continuously, and every coach should aim to adapt to its ever-changing demands in order to stay competitive.

One of the principal aims in the formation of hockey coaches is developing people who can do new things, without blindly repeating what other generations of coaches did in the past. Striving for excellence demands more creativity, innovation and mental flexibility. Instead of teaching their players what they experienced during their past career as a player and coach, they must learn to unlock the innate and dormant potential of their players. How can coaches achieve this? They should make sure of the following:

- *Encourage divergent thinking in their students.
- *Let every player freely express personal opinions.
- *Develop and apply new technical-tactical movements.
- *Be creative to ensure success in the game.
- * Remember that players generate most of their knowledge and experience on their own (for instance when playing Mini Hockey 3-on-3 on 4 goals!).



To sum up, coaches should use a different teaching style, one not as reliant on instructions or commands with the players obeying and being pushed into a receptive or passive role. Instead of acting as a trainer or instructor, coaches should become consultants, observers, planners, or organisers of information and skills, encouraging their players to advance and to excel until they are able to surpass the coach's own limitations.

Tips for Stimulating the Talent of Young Players

1. Use the many variations of Mini-Hockey with four goals (where, instead of attacking one centralised goal, the ball has to be kicked in one of two goals not less than 12 metres apart) with the purpose of systematically stimulating the perception skills. The perceptual capacity has to be considered as a base for correct decision making and for the execution of technical actions. In doing it this way, teaching hockey to young players sufficiently stimulates the perception skills as well as the cognitive capacities, both aspects of the game still underestimated all over.

2. Organise competitions regularly, each tailor-made to the mental and physical capacities of the young kids. For example, play games such as a hockey triathlon 3v3 or 4v4, a Mini-Hockey-Pentathlon, a Goal-Keeper Decathlon, a Decathlon for field players. To stimulate their game intelligence, offer young talents more than a single official competition in one season.

Competing in the same season in several competitions that are different from the traditional ones will improve young players' capacity for adaptation and improve the flexibility of their brains. In all these competitions, children's participation, enjoyment, recreation and fun are more important aspects than winning.

3. For children aged 10 and 11, the season should be divided into two parts. In the first half of the season, a competition is played without awarding points and without establishing a league table. In the second part of the season, a championship is played with three periods of 15 minutes and intervals of only five minutes in which the coaches may exchange comments with the players. Coaching from the side-line is forbidden.

4. In all youth hockey competitions, allow substitutions as often as possible and use them for commenting any necessary technical or tactical aspect observed some seconds before with the substituted player whilst being on the bench. Avoid doing it in the public.

5. To cultivate important but often-forgotten aspects of the game, such as fair play and sportsmanship toward opponents, team-mates and the umpires, each team receives the opportunity to present to one of the two umpires a golden card, with the name of a player written on it, at the end of the game. The player named must always be from the opposite side. In case nobody has demonstrated good sportsmanship, no card is handed to the umpire. At the end of each season, the player who received the most cards from opponents is considered sportsman of the season.

6. To diminish the percentage of anaerobic effort in a game played on the full field, convince the authorities to prohibit 11v11 competitions. Instead, competitions with three, then seven and later eight players on the field should replace the full game. The field should increase in size at the same rate as players increase in their technical, tactical and perceptual abilities, as well as in their understanding of the game.

7. Provide sufficient information on multi-purpose games to make sure that in each preparatory session the players are exposed for 30 minutes to multi-purpose motor activities that improve their level of coordination.



Photo: A. Wälti

8. In all youth competitions, a rule should be created that allows a team that is losing with a difference of three goals (0-3, 1-4, 2-5 etc.) to introduce one additional player into the game. This rule will force the winning team to continue to try hard and play as well as they can.

9. Regularly supervise young players' development in the hockey schools of initiation. Convince coaches of the importance of using the prescribed activities as instruments to strengthen not only technical, tactical, visual, cognitive and physical capacities in the children, but also healthy habits in practicing sport.

10. Consider only those hockey schools of initiation that apply the philosophy and the recommendations of the national or regional body of the appropriate hockey federation. If they fulfil the norms imposed by a certification committee, these schools will have the right to use the badge of the federation alongside their names. This practice will attract the interest of parents and the public, and it will also garner possible benefits. These might include free insurance, discounts on sports equipment, and free access to special training seminars or camps organised by the federation. Other advantages could be help in connecting with other institutions (interchanges), the organisation of sport or cultural events, or the use of medical equipment for injury prevention.

11. Create a manual that orientates the coaches to periodical communication with the parents and informs the coaches how to let parents collaborate in the important tasks of supporting the ethical, moral, physical and intellectual growth of the players and how to leave aside the material interests that consumer society wants to impose on the world of youth hockey.

13. A coach of young, talented players who always wins will ultimately lose in the end. This means the coach has done everything to ensure his or her own professional future and not the future of his or her talented players. In youth hockey we say: "To win one less cup for your school of hockey means that frequently we "win" a great talent for our senior team!"

Chapter 3:

Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities



*“Hidden in every human being exists a child
that wants to play”*

Friedrich Nietzsche

The first level of the Hockey Development Model has the important task of introducing children from 7 years and up to hockey and developing their interest and love for the game. Youngsters can learn efficiently on their own, without too much instruction. If coaches, during these decisive years of children's development, fail to give their young pupils adequate training tools and stimuli to enable them to play with confidence and enjoyment, they may convert their young charges, now full of potential, into future second-class athletes. Coaches should always aim to support the healthy and harmonious growing and development of the children who start out motivated to practice their favourite sport. The less rigid and more varied their teaching style and the training program they adopt, the more pleasant and comfortable the atmosphere will feel to children.



The length of the stick must fit perfectly to the height of the young player. Instead of reaching hip height, the handle should ideally be level with the upper part of the pocket of his short or with the belt.

In this chapter, you will be introduced to a variety of games that form Level 1 of the Hockey Development Model. These games are not to be done in any rigid order; instead, you can assemble a variety of games and create a training session that works best for your group of players. With adequate exposure (at least twice a week) to these games, beginners quickly gain their first experiences in such basic game situations as these:

- Dribbling the ball
- Receiving, controlling, passing, and shooting the ball
- Taking the ball away from the opponent
- Considering their teammate(s) or opponent(s) in attack as well as in defense.

Apart from being exposed to special programs that focus on the correct execution of the fundamentals in simplified game situations, the youngsters will take part in the Level 1 competitions—the Decathlon and the 2-on-2 Hockey Triathlon—that have been specially adapted to their developmental phase.

Because they are so egocentric, few seven- and eight-year-old beginners are capable of successfully playing team games. Every player likes to be the protagonist of the game and tries to keep the ball in his or her possession for as much time as possible. The games and exercises in the first level have been designed with this in mind.

Also during their leisure time the young players should spend, without the presence of a coach several hours a week to juggle with the hockey ball.

The early mastery of the "Indian dribble" must be considered as the key to further discovering the beauty of the game of hockey and to reach quickly a satisfactory level of capacity of play. They should touch it with love and tenderness so long until it finally obeys completely to their orders.

As any well known pianist needs through years more or less 4 hours of daily practice to become famous, two training sessions a week in the club or school are completely insufficient to develop a ball sense which is giving the player an extra edge.

DRIBBLING GAMES

Dribbling games help players develop the ability to carry the ball with different techniques close to the stick combined with and also aid balance, footwork, speed, change of direction, and coordination. These qualities are key to further discovery of the beauty of hockey; possessing them allows players to quickly reach a satisfying level of play.

Although you will find the next section of games (as well as later programs) numbered to represent a progression from easier to more difficult or complex exercises and games, that doesn't mean that you must follow the activities in order. Presenting a more complex problem on occasion challenges the more talented players, while using easier exercises gives the less talented youngsters the confidence and motivation to try harder.

1. HOLDING THE HOCKEY STICK AND TURNING IT WITH YOUR LEFT HAND ONLY

A simple way to starting with a correct grip is to place the stick flat face downwards on the ground. Pick it up with your left hand only and near to the handle's end.

Then, without changing the position of your left hand, move the stick with an anticlockwise turn of your left almost outstretched arm until the point (toe) of the curve is directed towards the ground (reverse stick position). With another clockwise turn of your left arm return then to the original position in which the point of the curve is showing up (forehand position).

When you grip your stick, make sure that you can't see your thumb! Being able to see the thumb of your left hand means that your grip isn't the correct one.



"Love the ball! Consider it as your best friend whom you should treat with tenderness and without violence."

2. HOLDING THE STICK WITH BOTH HANDS, TURNING IT IN YOUR RIGHT HAND

The stick is placed vertically with its flat side on the ground. The handle is close to the feet and the curve furthest away. Pick the stick up with both hands at the same time and make sure that the right one, with an extremely loose (open) grip, is placed in the center of the stick.

Now with the legs slightly bent and the trunk as upright as possible try to move the stick with your left hand only from a forehand position into a reverse stick position (with the curve pointing into the ground).

Make sure that the flat face of the curve is at the end of every turn, always in a vertical position, which allows you to pass the ball or play it in the best way. Did you manage to turn the stick with the left hand only, using the right hand as a ring? It's a serious mistake letting the right hand participate in the turn. Always make sure of the correct position of your left hand!

3. WHILST STATIONARY MOVE THE BALL SIDEWAYS IN FRONT OF YOUR BODY, TOUCHING THE BALL ALTERNATELY WITH FOREHAND AND WITH THE REVERSE STICK



Make sure that the ball is 1m in front of your feet in order to allow better vision. Therefore don't incline your trunk forward and keep your legs well bent and both arms outstretched. When you touch the ball, the curve of your stick must be in a vertical position.

The educator/coach has to check that the right hand is not participating in the turn of the stick and that the left thumb is hidden.

Organize a competition to establish the players with the best technique in the stationary "Indian dribble".

In another competition wins who touches the ball more often with an alternate touch of forehand and reverse stick in 15 and 30 seconds.

The coach must make sure that the reverse stick touch is carried out always with the curve in a vertical position.

4. THE GAME OF "BULLY"

To players face each other in a "bully". Wins who manage to push a stationary ball (placed between both), after three successive touches of their curves above the ball, with his reverse stick through the 1m wide cone goal on his right hand side.

In order to be able to turn the stick (after the 3rd touch of the sticks above the ball) in order to play it with reverse, both players have to grip correctly their stick with their left hand.



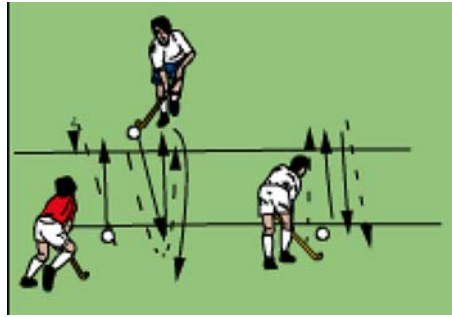
Variation:

Winner is the player who pushes the ball after the execution of the "bully" with his reverse stick through the cone goal on his right and then controls it immediately behind the goal before the opponent can reach it.

“If it is our desire to triumph in hockey we have to look out for new highways of success instead of using always the same bumpy roads of the past victories.”

5. PARALLEL LINES

The coach establishes two parallel lines set 1 meter or 2 meters apart. Two or more players stand side by side, facing the opposite line. When the coach signals, all players pass their ball with one touch across the second line, then turn around and play it back with any technique. The first player to pass the ball 10 times across both parallel lines, without touching the ball inside the zone, wins. Pay attention to the player's footwork and capacity of balance. Which technique assures the quickest turn?



Variations:

- The teacher varies the distance between both parallel lines, up to 5 meters.
- During any change of direction the ball has to be played with the reverse stick.

6. THE TUNNEL

Two players face each other at a distance of 1 meter. Player 1 has 30 seconds to pass the ball as many times as possible through the tunnel formed by the separated legs of Player 2. The first player passes the ball with the front stick through the partner's legs and then runs behind Player 2 to return the ball with the reverse stick to the original side. Meanwhile, Player 2 remains still and counts the number of goals scored by the opponent. Then the players switch roles, and Player 2 gets 30 seconds to pass the ball. The winner is the player who, using either the front or the reverse stick, passes the ball more often through the tunnel formed by the opponent. In case of a tie, repeat the test.



Variations:

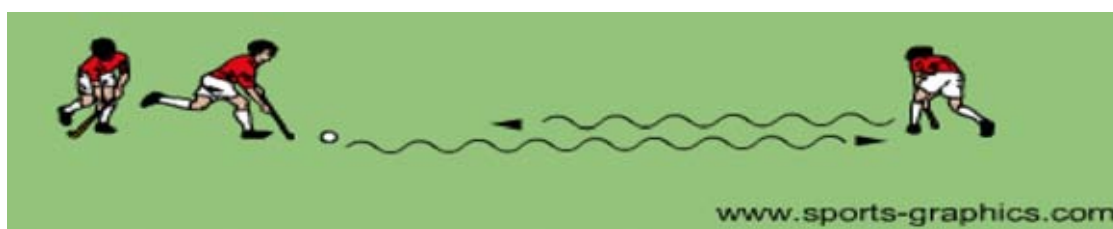
The player who forms the tunnel stands in a neutral zone of 2 meters. The player with the ball passes it from outside of the zone through the opponent's legs using alternatively the front or the reverse stick.

“Any change requires an initiatory period of discomfort, until the body and the mind adjust to the

The stationary player counts the number of goals scored in 30 seconds from outside of the neutral zone. Both players then alternate roles until both have competed twice. The winner is the player who scores the most goals in the two attempts. In the event of a draw, repeat the activity.

- Immediately after a goal is scored, the player who forms the tunnel changes the position of one "goalpost" (one foot) by pivoting and changing directions.

7. EYES UP DURING THE "INDIAN DRIBBLE"

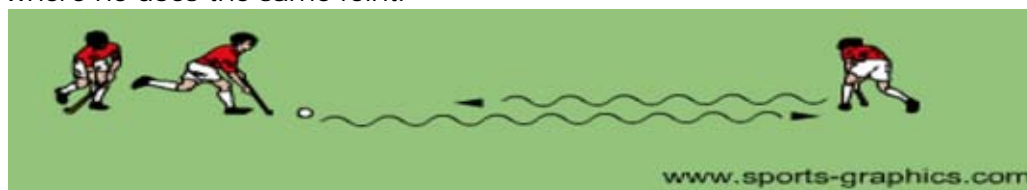


The exercise is done with three players. Player 1, the ball carrier, dribbles to Player 2 who is about 22.90 meters away. While dribbling the ball, Player 1 touches the ball alternatively with the front and reversed stick in front of his feet, always moving it slightly in front (and never backward), he has to lift his head as often as possible to be able to count the number of fingers shown by his teammate (Player 2) in front of him. The latter, after having received the ball, practices the same dribbling and lifting his head to count, but goes in the opposite direction, while Player 3 indicates (twice) different number of fingers.

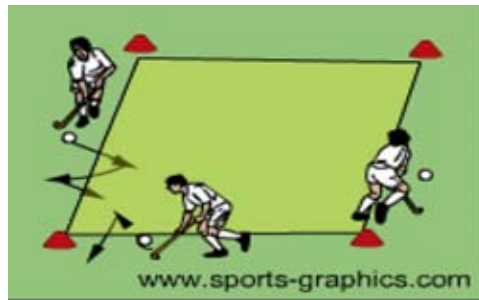
The coach should make sure that players practice different techniques of dribbling the ball. As only with the front stick touching the ball from time to time, with the front stick always in contact with the ball, with the front stick hold with the right hand only and with the reverse stick hold in the left hand only.

Variation:

- Now the player dribbles the ball with the front stick only. Every 5 meters cones are placed at both sides of the path of the dribbling player. Every time his ball comes level with one cone, he should turn the stick into his right hand (until its toe points into the ground) to simulate a reverse stick stop and then continue to dribble the ball until the next cone where he does the same feint.

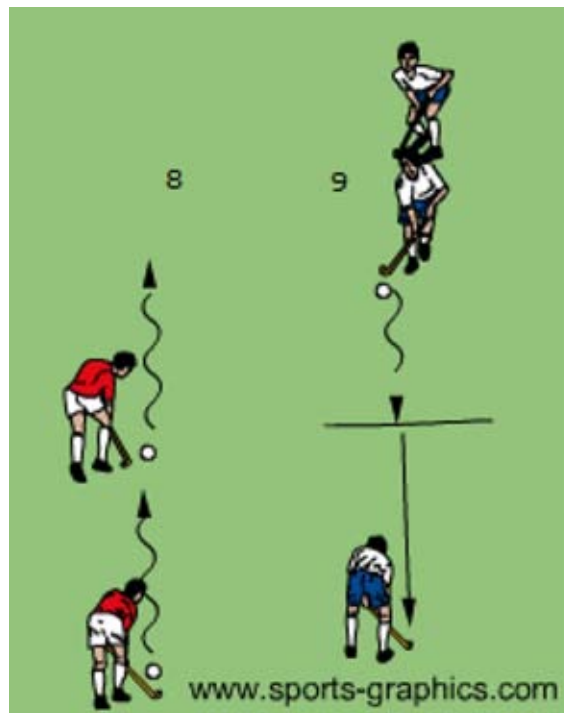


- Various players dribble their ball in both directions around a square (5 meters per side), going continuously into and then immediately out of it, using the "Indian Dribble". The goal is to avoid a clash with other players who dribble in and out of the square in the opposite direction.



8. OPEN STICK DRIBBLE AND STOPPING THE BALL WITH THE REVERSE STICK

Without changing the angle (45 degrees) which the sticks forms with the ground, the dribbler stops the ball with the reverse stick on his right side, level with the left foot which should be in front at that moment. Make sure that the ball is dribbled at least 0.50m away from the feet.



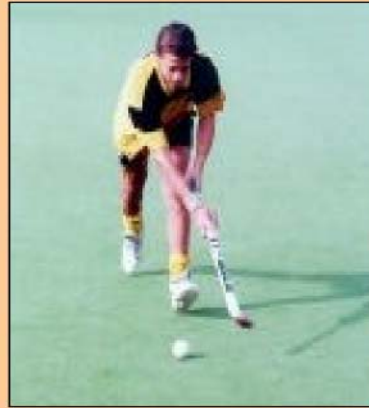
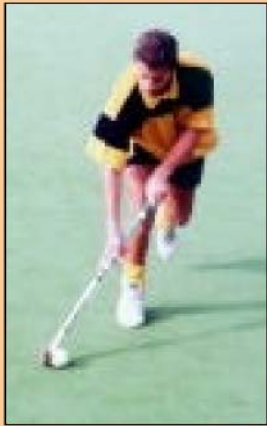
9. DRIBBLE THE BALL IN A FRONTAL POSITION, RESTRAIN ITS SPEED AND PASS IT IN A SIDE-ON POSITION

After having dribbled the ball half way, the player stops it by sudden with his reverse stick (ball is level with the left advanced foot) and then pass it as quickly as possible in a side-on position to the teammate in front of him.

A cone goal between the passer and the receiver could be used for concentrating also on the accuracy of the pass. The team which executes first 10 passes wins.

Variation: The dribbler has to recognize a visual signal given by the opposite player for stopping the ball with his reverse stick.

THE TECHNIQUE OF THE „INDIAN DRIBBLE“



There are a great variety of techniques to dribble the ball:

- with the front stick only in front of the right foot of the dribbler, with the ball always in contact with the curve or controlled close to it.
- with the front stick only on the right side of the dribbler level
- with the right shoulder, with the ball kept always in contact with the curve or propelled forward with soft touches.
- with the front stick only which is held by the right hand only on the top of the handle to allow the ball to be controlled far away from the right foot
- with reverse stick only, generally with the left hand only holding the stick on the top of the handle to allow a control of the ball far away from the left foot of the dribbler and an opponent.
- with forehand and reverse stick -the so called "Indian"
- with forehand and (or) reverse stick with the back turned to the defender (pivoting or "spinning") in order to protect the ball.



Dependant on the game situation in which the player in possession of the ball is involved, he has to choose between the above 6 main techniques the dribble which best resolves the actual game situation. Therefore all techniques of the dribble are essential to be learned by every hockey player regardless of his age, starting always with the "Indian dribble" first, then introducing progressively the other techniques with the front stick and finishing up with the dribble with the right and then with the left hand only on the top of the handle.

Attention has to be drawn to the fact that whilst teaching the beginners and young players the different techniques of the dribble, as early as possible tactical elements have to be introduced (by the presence of an opponent) to achieve better learning results later and awareness about which technique to choose in a game situation.

A good player whilst dribbling the ball, always:

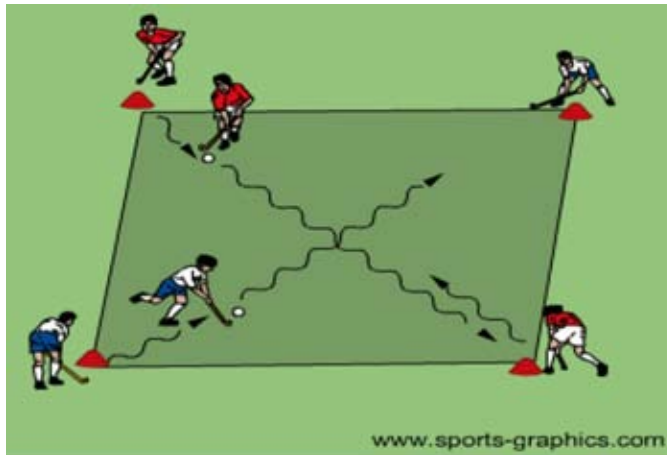
- ensures a correct position of his left hand on the top of the handle. Also when touching the ball with the front stick, he has to keep his thumb always hidden below and the back of his left hand should point upwards and not towards the left side which would allow him to see his thumb. Only a correct position of the left hand allows the stick to be turned into a reverse position any moment.
- keeps his right hand slightly above the center of the stick without gripping it firmly. A loose grip of the right hand allows the stick to be turned easily 180 degrees through the action of the left hand. During the turn, the right hand keeps its position and never takes part in the turning movement because otherwise both arms cross over during the dribble - a mistake often executed by beginners.
- keeps his stick in a 45-degree position with the ground, with the upper left hand always moving close to the thigh and the handle always in extension with the left underarm without bending at the wrist. This would prevent the player from playing the ball precisely.
- keeps it about 1m away from his feet, which will enlarge his field of vision.
- tries to keep the trunk as upright as possible. Most beginners dribble without bending sufficiently their knees and with their trunk inclined too much forward. This has to be considered a serious mistake as it leads to poor vision and a poor preparation for the next move.

The most frequent mistakes observed during the "Indian dribble":

- The player can see the thumb of his left hand whilst touching the ball with the front stick.
- The player crosses over both underarms whilst moving the ball alternately with the front stick and reverse. The reason for that is the firm grip of the right hand, which now takes part in the rotation of the stick.
- The player dribbles the ball too close to his feet with the handle pointing to his stomach instead of being directed to his thigh.
- The player inclines his trunk too much with the legs not sufficiently bent.
- The player bends his left wrist.

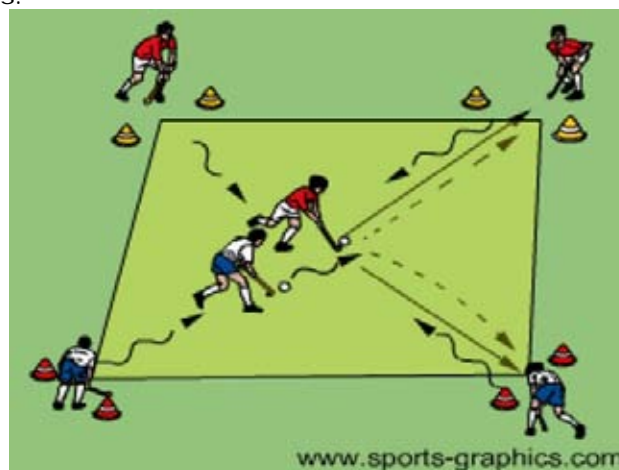
10. AVOID COLLISIONS

To start, two players must dribble their ball to the opposite corner (about 10 meters away), trying to avoid each other player while crossing the path. The players waiting at the opposite corner return dribble the ball using the same diagonal path. First the practice is carried out with two balls and six players (see illustration) or only 4 players, and later the intensity and difficulty are increased by using four balls and involving eight players at the same time. To avoid injuries, do not organize any competition between the teams!



11. PRECISE PASSING AFTER DRIBBLING

Four players pair up and form a square, the partners adjacent to one another. The two players in diametrically opposite corners each have a ball. At the same time, they start to dribble the ball on the left "driveway," or imaginary lane that is left of the cones, until they reach the cone in the center. From there they pass the ball on the run with the front stick to the left through the cone goal of their partner and then carry on to run straight into the opposite unoccupied cone goal. Once their partner controlled the ball behind the cone goal they proceed the same way in the activity. The first pair to score 10 goals wins.



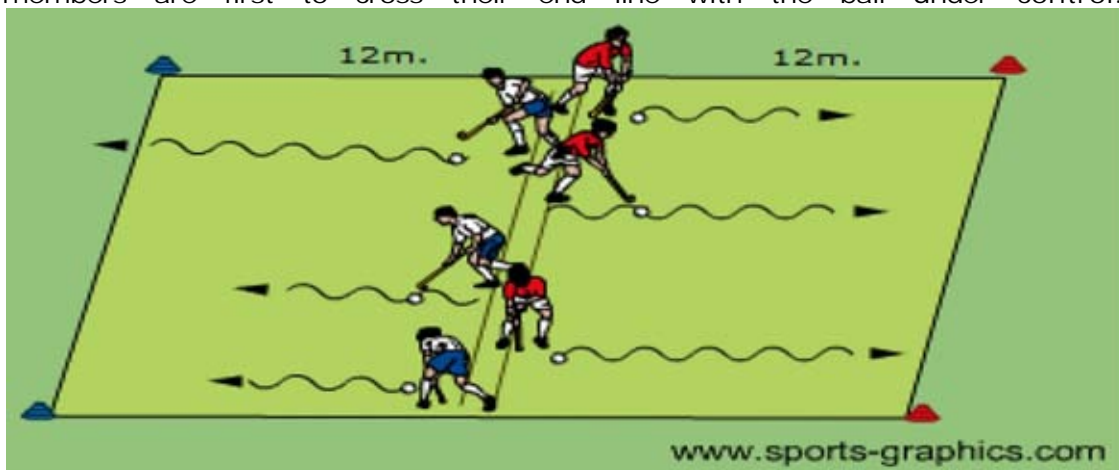
"To rationalize the teaching and learning process, the number of exercises or games have to be reduced and the number of repetitions have to be increased."

Variations:

- Before executing the pass, the player has to carry out a dummy pass in the opposite direction.
- To introduce triangle play (wall passes), the receiver has to return the ball immediately into the run of the passer who runs into the opposite goal. After 10 triangle passes both players change functions. Later on, both practice with an initial pass to the opposite side.

12. RED OR BLUE

Players line up in a row and are separated into two teams, facing opposite directions, each with a shirt or bib of the same colour (for example, either red or blue). One team faces one direction; the other team faces the opposite direction. Each player has a ball for this activity. Practice this drill first without the ball, then with it. Upon the coach's signal, all players dribble a ball until they cross their far line, 12 meters away from the starting point in either direction. A team wins if all its members are first to cross their end line with the ball under control.

**Variations:**

- The teacher designates one team (with the red or yellow shirts, for example) as dribblers. While the players with shirts of this color try to reach the proper end line dribbling their balls, the other team (not using balls) chases the attackers, trying to prevent them from dribbling their balls across the end line.
- Both teams face each other, from a distance of only 4 meters apart. Whilst the called players have to turn around to reach their end line with the ball, the non called chase them without their balls.

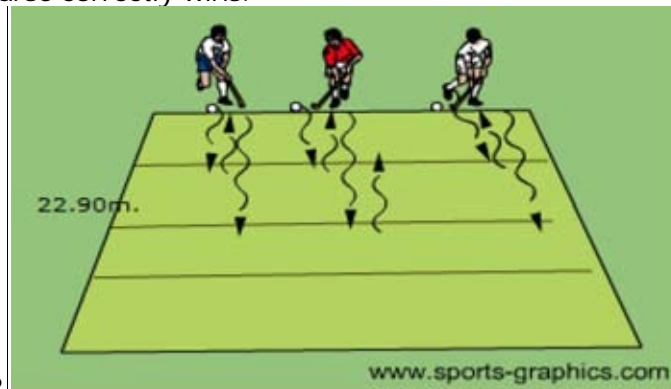
13. ZIGZAG

Set up a practise grid between one end-line and the 22.90m-line, dividing it with three or four lines (see the illustration). Have the children first practice their running and turning techniques on this grid without using a ball. Players run from the starting line to the second line, then touch with one foot and return to the starting line and then run to the second line, returning to the first line and so on before running all the way from the third or fourth to the finish line. The turning around gives this activity its name, zigzag. Next have the players train to dribble the ball as they run the same zigzag course, asking them to use any technique for the turn and later on oblige them to use the reverse stick.

Finally you can organize a competition, splitting players into two performance levels in order to motivate them all. All the lines must be passed there and back with the ball under control.

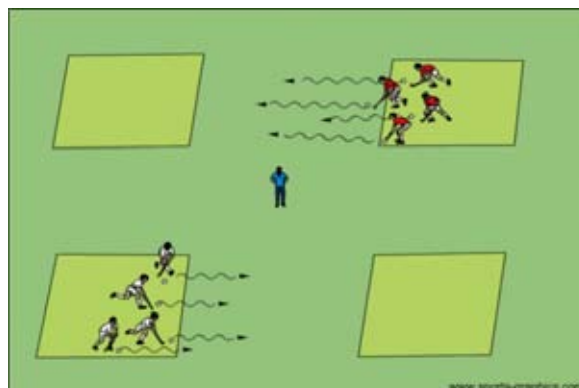
Variation:

- Use a relay with teams of three players each. Set up cones at the lines designating the course, using five cones per team, and place a hockey ball at the first cone for each team. Player 1 on each team collects the first ball placed at the first cone (1) and carries it to the third cone (2). After its deposit, he returns without the ball to catch the second ball from the second cone (3) and dribbles it two cones farther to (4) to place it aside the 4th cone. Continue in this fashion to the final line. After having deposited the first ball at the fifth cone, Player 1 runs out of the field to touch her teammate at the opposite side who does the same zigzag path through the cones, running in the opposite direction. The first team to finish its course correctly wins.



14. CHANGING THE SQUARE

Set up teams of four kids, each with a ball. Form squares (see the illustration), the corners marked by cones. The children should practice this activity first without a ball and later with a ball. Every time the coach gives a visual signal, all a team's players run (without and later with the ball) toward the next square, keeping control of their balls. As coach, give them an instruction or a visual signal to run either in a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction. (Be sure to make it clear which way to run, from what square to what square, as most very young children don't know the terms clockwise and counter-clockwise). The team that manages to control all their balls first in the next square wins. Running with the ball in opposite directions should be avoided because of danger of head injuries through collisions!

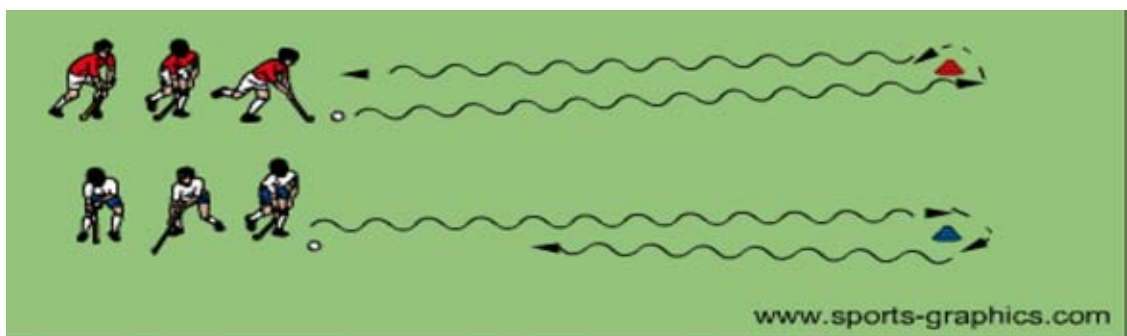


Variation:

- Have a defender situated between the squares. This child tries to delay the opponent's attack and conquer at least one ball. He or she then must dribble that ball into the square from which the attack was launched.

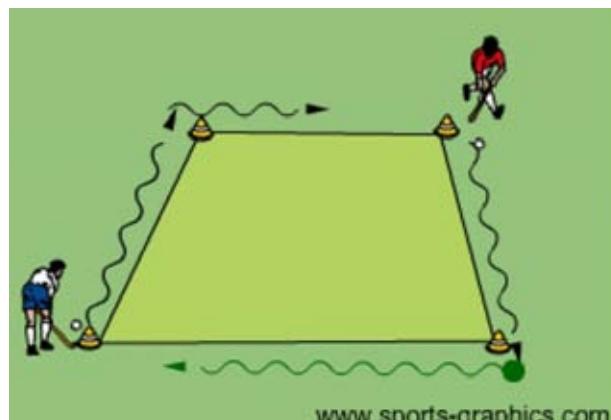
15. RELAY WITH LEFT HAND AND RIGHT HAND CURVES

Before various groups of 3 players compete in rounding a cone, placed at a distance of 12 meters, the coach works out the most effective technique for the left and right hand curve. Left hand curve = the ball is dribbled in front of the feet around the cone. Right hand curve = the dribbler overtakes the ball on his right side before he reaches the cone and whilst rounding it, the curve of the stick is kept close to the ball and brought into the new running direction with the left elbow pointing up. During the curve the ball is kept always behind the right foot.

**16. TWICE AROUND THE SQUARE**

Youngsters do this activity in pairs to practice running and dribbling skills around a square (see illustration). Have players first practice the course without the ball and then with the ball. Two players located at opposite corners of the square simultaneously start out to dribble, going twice around the square in the same direction (clockwise or counter-clockwise). Practice and competition should be carried out in both directions to ensure that all players learn when to use the front stick and when it's convenient to touch the ball with the reverse stick. The coach should question the players continually about the distance of the ball in relation to the feet while dribbling in a straight line and when dribbling around the cones.

- When the ball should be "carried" close to the feet?
- How an attacker might save time?
- Which foot should be used in the change of direction when running clockwise (counter-clockwise)?

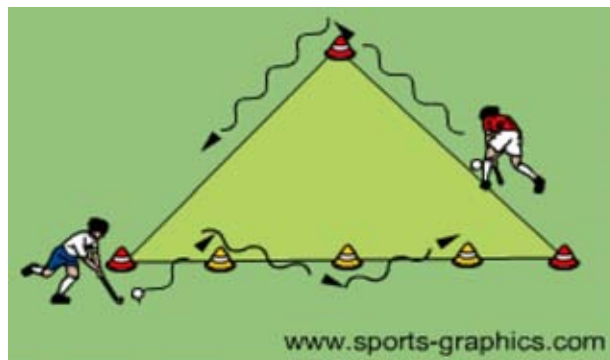


Variation:

More advanced players should dribble the ball with the right or left hand only.



- After having completed half of his way around the square, the attacker must turn around at the second cone and return to the starting point.
- Set up a course around a triangle: mark off an equilateral triangle and set up three cones along one (the base) side of it (see illustration). Children compete in pairs. Both competitors start from different locations around the triangle. As they get to the base of the triangle, they must dribble in and out of the three cones before dribbling up the next side. Players who want to win will learn when to dribble best with the front stick only and when using the front and reversed stick dribble ("Indian dribble").

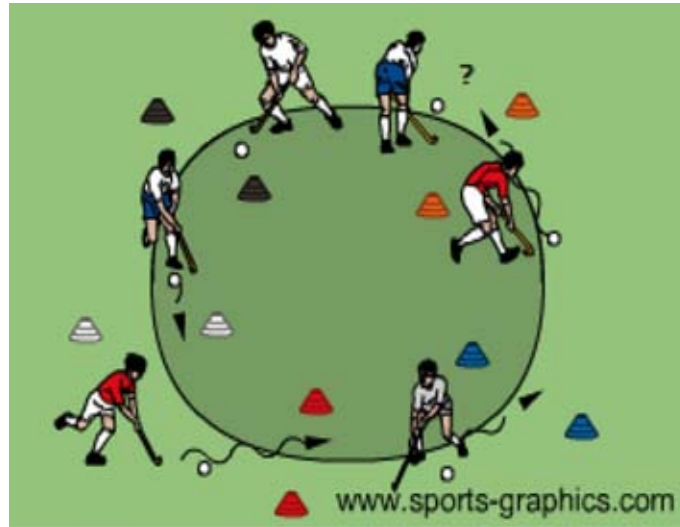
**17. BANDIT**

Mark the field with cones and establish 4 "home bases" with 4 balls each. They are at least 10 meters apart from one another. Form up to four teams per playing field, each team made up of just two players. After you give a visual signal to start, each player steals balls from other teams' home bases and deposits them at their own base. No tackling or defending of the home base is allowed. Whatever team has the highest number of balls after 30 seconds of play wins the game.

"It's a mistake to try to transfer without much thought the experience gained in the teaching of adults towards the training of young players."

18. OCCUPYING AN EMPTY GOAL

This activity is something like a hockey version of "Musical Chairs," a game that most children already know. Mark off a circle, about 15 meters in diameter, using about 10 cones to create the inner and out edges of the path. These cones also designate five goals. Give each player a ball. Six players at a time dribble their ball in any direction around the circle formed by the five goals. After you give a visual signal, all the players try to occupy one of the five empty goals. Whoever doesn't succeed loses a point.



Variation:

- Use the same setup as above, but designate a neutral defender who makes the task of the attackers even more difficult.

19. PIVOTING

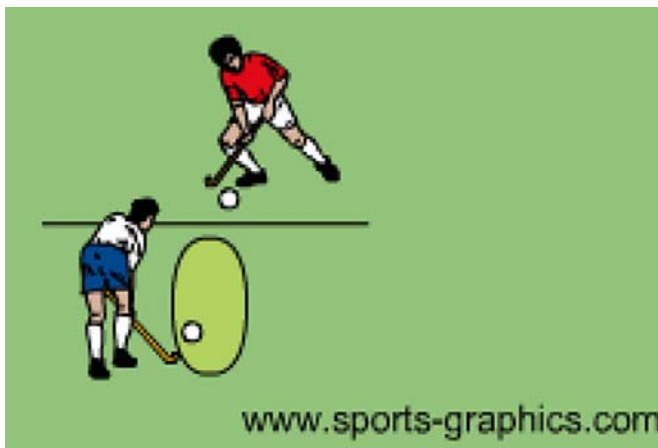
One player, a "receiver," stands 3 meters behind a 3-meter-wide cone goal, facing a teammate who feeds him a 10-meter pass. The receiver runs toward the oncoming ball with the intention of receiving and controlling it with his front stick in front of the goal. Once he gains control, he dribbles the ball sideward to his right cone and then, with a sudden change of speed, turns toward the other cone, making sure he is always placing himself between the ball and the imaginary defender (represented by the cone goal). Once he has rounded the goal, after one or two direction changes, he turns and penetrates behind it.





20. STAYING IN THE SHADE

Try this at a practice when there is plenty of sun and the opportunity for objects to create shadows. Pair up children, and have one be an attacker, the other a defender. Designate a line between them. Position the defender so that the sun is directly behind the youngster, producing a good shadow. The attacker tries to maintain the ball for as much time as possible in the shade of the defender, who continuously moves toward the left and right side in front of him but stays beyond a line drawn between them--which the defender is not allowed to cross. It helps the children to first practice this shadowing without the ball to improve their body positioning, balance, and footwork.



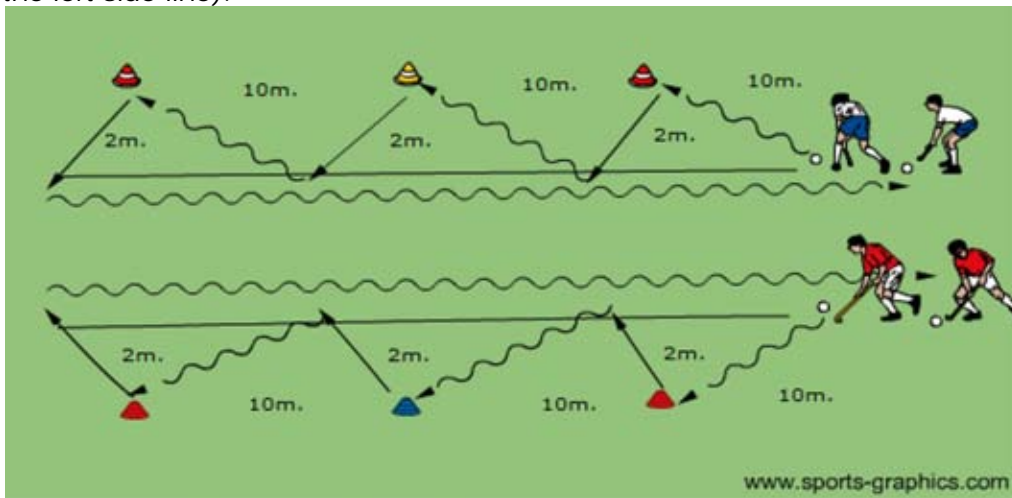
Variation:

Have the players switch roles. The attacker dribbles the ball, First slowly and then faster To either side, while the defender, now with a ball (see illustration) tries to shadow him with the aim of not allowing even a ray of sun to "burn the skin of the ball."

21. PREPARING THE DRAG

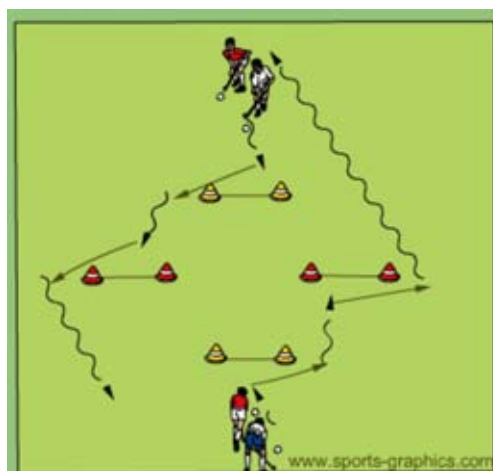
Give each of the players a ball and set up cones in a row for each child to designate a running course (see illustration). Each player carries the ball toward a cone (representing an imaginary defender), then drags it with his reverse stick square to the right side and collecting it after a change of speed and direction at a distance of about 3 meters with his front stick beyond the line drawn at his right side. Explain to the youngsters the idea of dummy moves and feints, and have them practice simulating a dummy pass to the left before playing the ball to the right.

First practice from left to right, later from right to left (side pass with the front stick and control of the pass with the reverse stick at a distance of 3 meters beyond the left side line).



22. DRAG THE BALL FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Position eight cones as shown in the illustration to mark off the drag areas. Explain to the children that they should experiment using different techniques to beat an opponent, including different kinds of body or foot dummies during the execution of the drags. To stimulate the young players' fantasy and creativity, the coach declares the player with the finest technique (no technical mistake) or the most original dummy as winner.



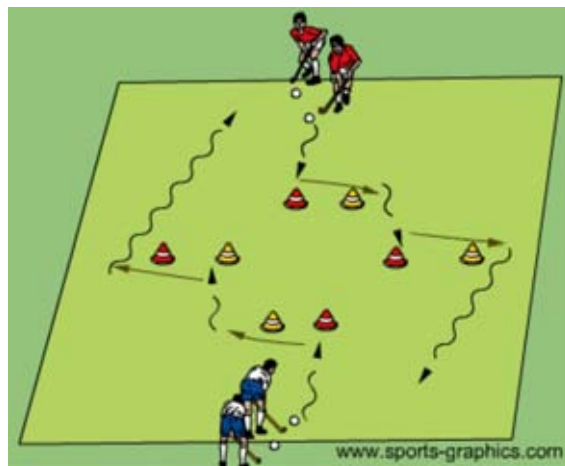
Mistakes are touching the ball more than twice (the first time for changing the direction and the second time for controlling the ball again after the side pass), playing the ball too diagonally in front (so that it runs through the range of a defender), passing the ball too far or less than 3 meters to one side and not using a

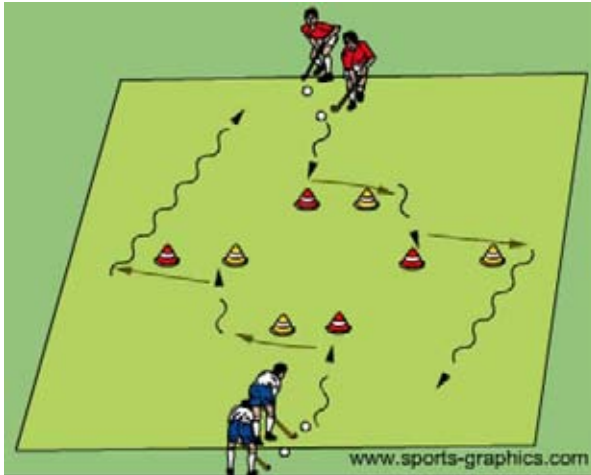
less than 3 meters to one side and not using a change of speed in the moment of changing the direction of the dribble.



Variations: Practice drags from right to left.

The attacker should always dribble the ball first toward the right cone before dragging it suddenly, with one forehand touch only, toward the left one. Once the ball runs beyond the level of the left cone, it should be collected after a quick change of speed with the reverse stick and then carried immediately close to the front stick.





- Drag the first goal from left to right, and the second from right to left.
- Drag the first cone goal from right to left, and the second one in any direction you wish.
- Drag against passive defenders, who remain inside the goal area (between the two cones), one of their feet always keeping contact with or touching the goal line. First

the defender should be outplayed with a drag from left to right, then from right to left, and then as indicated in the last variation (with the conclusion left up to the individual player).

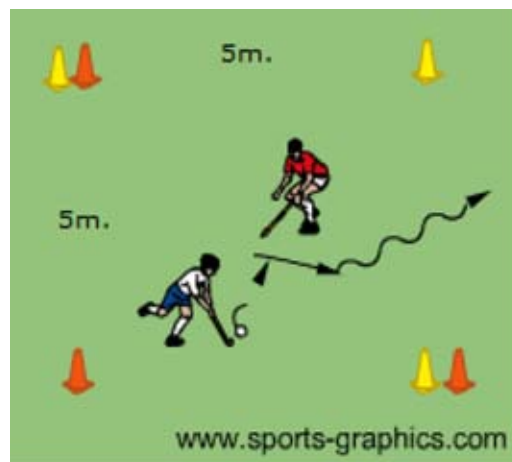


- The defender in the second goal indicates through the position of his stick (forehand or reverse stick) on which side the attacker has to beat him. This activity helps youngsters learn to always observe the defender's stick position before attempting to dodge him. The attacker will also learn to stay out of the defender's range of action.

"As hockey coach it happens to you the same as a singer with his music. To survive you have to be always up-to-date. You can't sing everlastingly the same songs or do the same training. It's essential to renew your repertoire."

23. PLAYING 1-ON-1 IN A 5-METER-SQUARE

Mark off 5-meter squares with cones. Pair up the youngsters, designating an attacker and defender for each pair. To start, the attacker and defender stand at diagonally opposite corners of the square. The attacker scores when he manages to dribble the ball across one of the two red goal lines in front of him. Before using the ball, have the children first practice the game without it—as a tag game—to work out optimal body position, perception skill, and good footwork.



Variation:

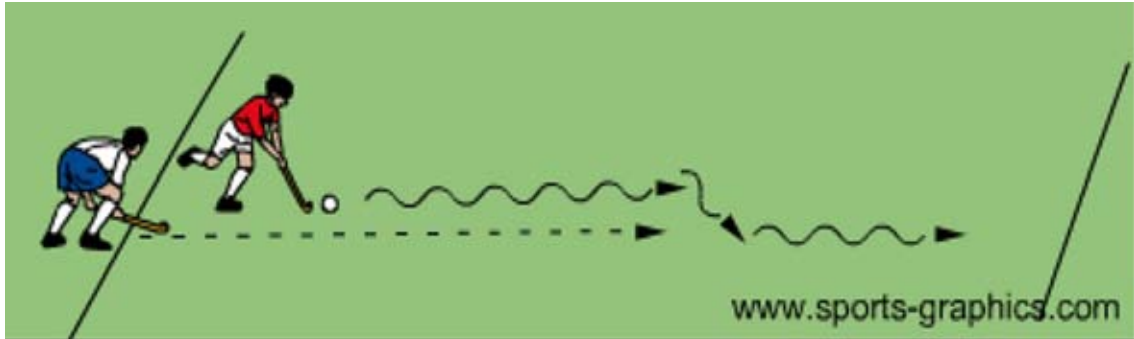
- Give a visual signal for both players to run once around the square, starting from their diagonally opposite corners. The player who first completes the full turn then runs into the center of the square to pick up the stationary ball and dribble it, as in the previous game, across one of the two goal lines.

24. AVOIDING TO BE TACKLED FROM BEHIND

Pair the youngsters, designating an attacker and defender. The playing field should have two lines, set about 15 meters apart. In this game the attacker with the ball has the objective to dribble it across the opposite line without losing possession of it to a defender. To start the play, the defender is less than 1 meter behind the attacker, aiming to tackle from behind or from a side. But once the attacker dribbles the ball for at least 5 meters, he may choose to go backward and carry the ball across the starting line. In reaching either line, he gets a point. To get free of the defender behind him, the attacker may

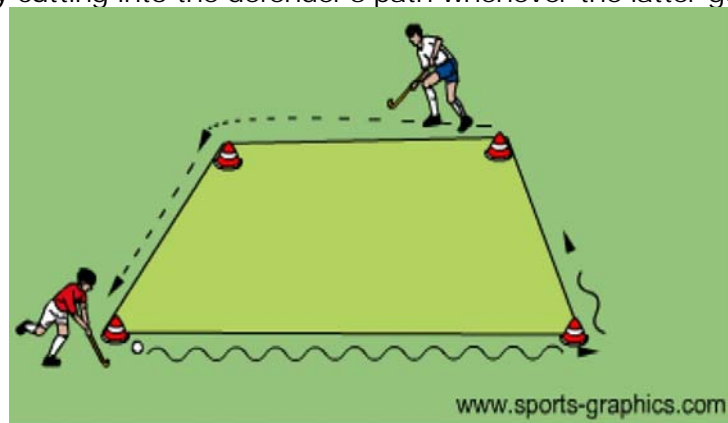
- turn around towards the non covered side of the defender, shielding the ball with his body,
- sell him a ball-stop dummy (turning the stick to simulate a reverse stick stop and at the same time reducing his speed) , and then after an acceleration control the ball on the end line in front of him, or
- cut with the ball into the path of the defender before the latter can reach him and play the ball. In the moment of crossing diagonally in front of

- the attacker, the defender must place the ball from a position in front of his right foot completely to his right or left side. This, of course, depends from the position of the defender.



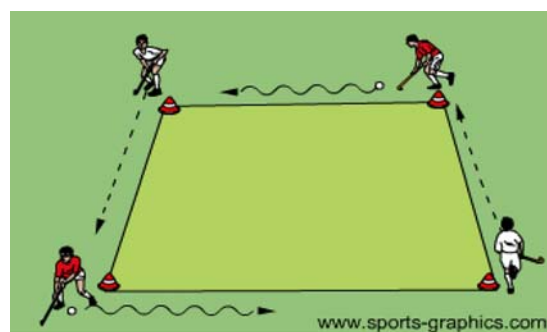
25. CHASING THE DRIBBLER

Outline a square on the playing field with four cones. Direct two players to diagonal opposed corners outside of the square. Only one of them has a ball; the other player chases the ball carrier around the square 8 meters x 8 meters. During the first trial (Level 1) the defender has the task to slightly touch the attacker with his stick. Later (Level 2) he is to touch the ball with his stick. For every cone reached with the ball under control, the attacker gets 1 point. The attacker learns to improve his dribbling by cutting into the defender's path whenever the latter gets near him.



Variation:

- Play this game of "Chasing the Dribbler" with four players: two attackers and two defenders. Give a visual signal for each defender to start from the cone directly behind his attacker, aiming to immediately pressure him. The defender should try to prevent the attacker's concluding a run around the square (award 1 point for a successful defense). Defenders and attackers switch functions until one of them scores 5 points.

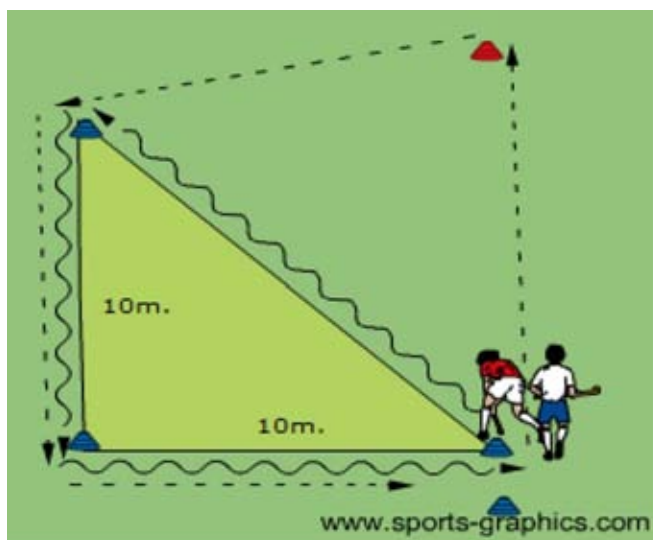




26. HOT PURSUIT

Mark off a trapezoid on the field, with four cones set at slightly uneven distances (between 6 and 10 meters) as in the illustration. A fifth cone serves to form the goal line with the first cone. Children compete in pairs, one being the attacker and one the defender. The attacker dribbles the ball around a triangle formed by three cones. As soon as he/she begins, the defender reacts and follows him/her, trying to prevent the attacker from keeping the ball under control as he/she reaches the goal at the end of the circuit. The defender, however, has a handicap: he must run a longer distance (around all four cones) in order to catch the attacker. Every player attacks and defends at least three times. The winner is the player who, after having completed the dribble around the cones, controls the ball more often in reaching the goal line. In case the result is a draw, have a playoff.

It's recommended to practice also with running clockwise.

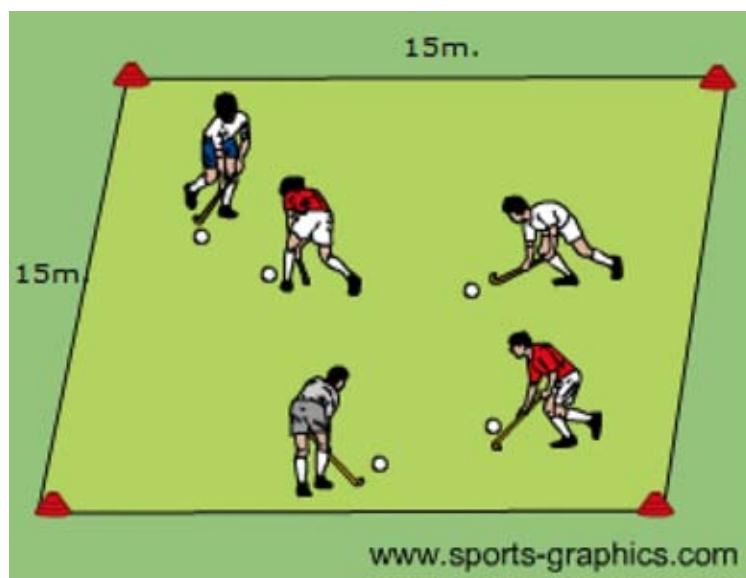


***“Sometimes stepping slightly backward
could be a wise solution for moving forward.”***



27. TACKLE COMPETITION BETWEEN FIVE

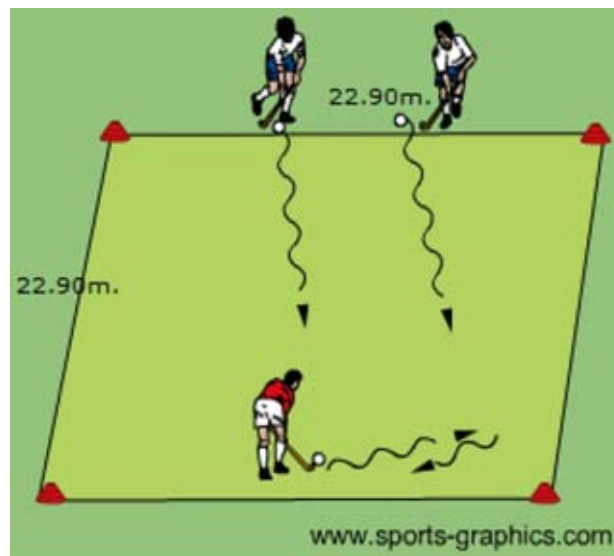
Five children can play this game well, which gives drill on tackles. Designate a playing field of the size 15 meters x 15 meters. Each of the 5 children has a ball. While all players are controlling their own ball, they also all try to dispossess any other player with a correct tackle. Any good tackle with one hand and the left foot in front that disposes an opponent (or plays the ball out of the square) counts as 1 point. In case one player loses his ball, that child returns into the square and continues the game until someone has reached 5 points.



“A great performance is often not associated with struggle, exhaustion and pains.”

28. COPS AND ROBBER

Mark off a square with 22.90meter lines as shown in the illustration. Group the children into three's, with one called the "robber" and the other two "cops." Children play to see how many seconds the "robber" can control his ball within the delimited playing space against both policemen, who also dribble their balls with the aim to touch the one of the robber. The stress conditions of this game give players the chance to practice lifting the head while dribbling the ball, applying dummies, quick changes of direction, and speed, shielding the ball with the body, as well as their capacity to stay out of the reach of an defender. It's good training to practice first without the balls.



Variation:

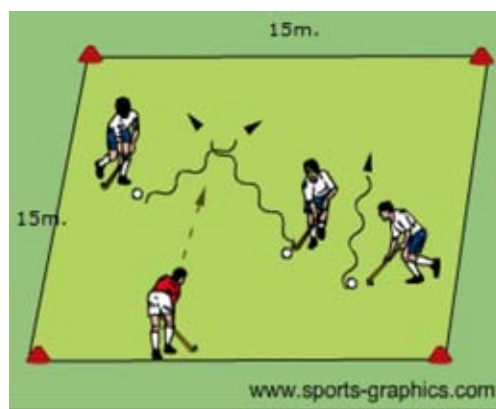
- Perform Cops and Robbers as a relay in two fields side by side. Team 1 positions its robber in the first field ("A"), while its two policemen chase the robber of Team 2 in the second field ("B"). Team 2 meanwhile positions its two cops in Field A. The two policemen who first catch their assigned robber are called winners.
- Use just one 22.90-meter square and pairs of youngsters, one pair each with a ball. Without leaving the square, the attacker tries to maintain possession of the ball for as many seconds as possible against an active defender. After five trials to establish a record, the attacker and defender switch functions. First try out this game without a ball, as a game of tag; then practice with the ball to learn to systematically apply dummy moves and to protect the ball with the body against a defender. After each turn, the two competitors should have a complete rest.

"Too much drill will kill."

29. MAINTAINING INDIVIDUALLY BALL POSSESSION

Mark off the playing field as in the illustration, at first making it about 15 meters square and later a rectangle of 10 by 15 meters. Divide the youngsters into groups of four players: within a group, three children are attackers, each with a ball, and the fourth is the defender. None of the players may leave the playing area. The defender tries to dispossess the attackers of the ball. The attackers, in turn, try to "escape" or prevent the dispossession. The defender tries get near enough the attackers to push as many balls as possible out of the square within the playing time, which is 30 seconds.

While dribbling, the attackers learn to lift their head to see the defender, change speed and direction to keep away from him, and shield the ball in order to his tackling successfully.



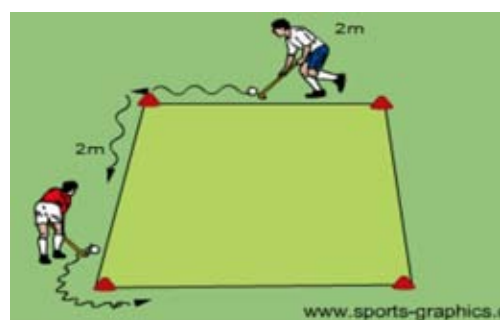
Variation:

With only 5 attempts the defender tries to touch in any time as many balls as possible. Through the practice of this exercise the defenders learn to wait for the most suitable moment of tackling an opponent. Any tackle with a complete stretch of the left arm and the stick touching the ground is considered an attempt.

29. CAT AND MOUSE

Mark off a small square (2 meters), and pair up the youngsters into "cats" and "mice." The pair first practices the game without balls. Then give each child a ball. The "mouse," persecuted by the "cat" (the attacker), tries to remain in possession of the ball for 20 seconds without stepping inside the square. After three rounds of the attacker gaining possession of the ball, the players switch so that the cat becomes the pursued mouse. To make the game more difficult, as players improve, lengthen the playing time to 30 seconds and limit the square to only one meter on each side.

This game helps young players recognize how perception and the capacity to execute dummies at the right instant are as essential as dribble techniques to winning. It also helps them develop speed and coordination.



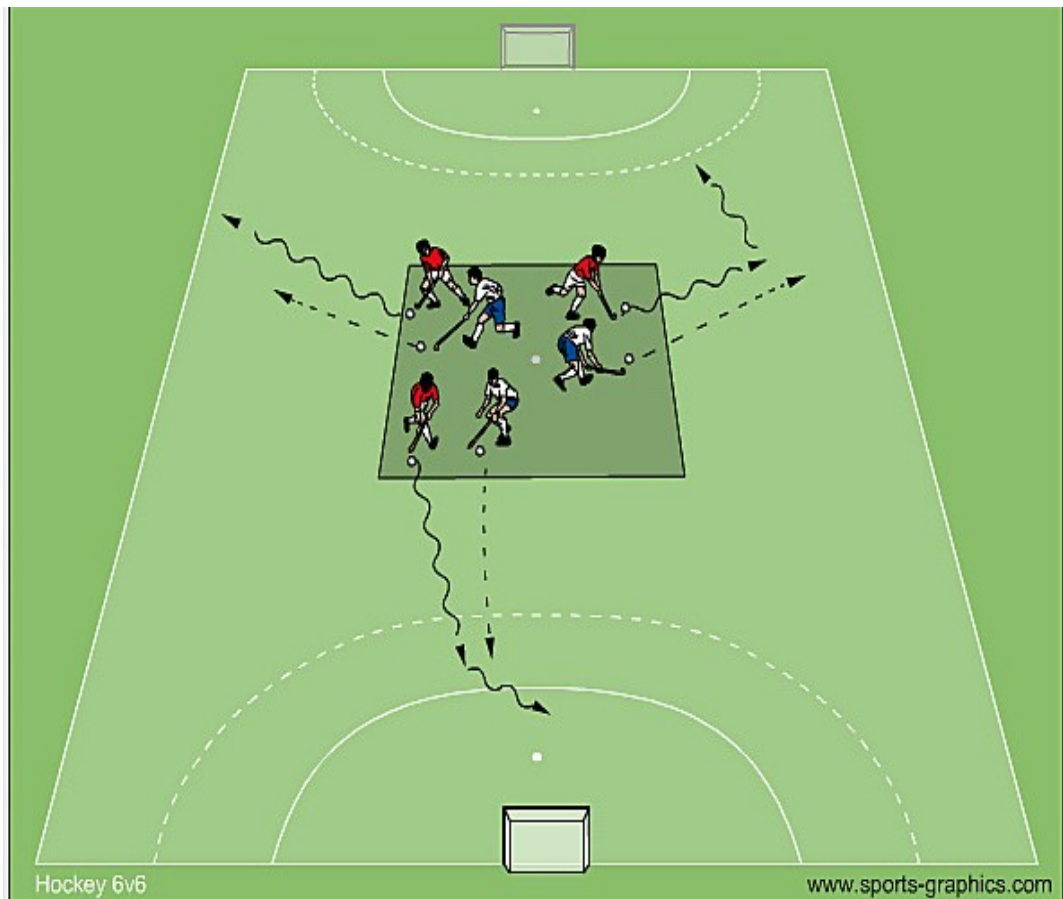
31. ESCAPE

This game involves up to seven pairs. Each of the players should be given a ball, which he has to dribble within a marked-off square on the playing field for 6-on-6 (45 to 55 meters long by 30 to 45 meters wide). Each player has to challenge the opponent assigned to him, once you call on a team to start. Each member of that team must then dribble his ball out of the square in the center of the field, trying to control it until getting across one of the 6-on-6 field's sidelines.

The players of the team not called leave their balls behind and instead chase their personal opponents, trying to dispossess the ball carriers and return as many balls as possible to the center square.

Variations:

- * As coach, give a visual signal (for instance, wave a colored card assigned to one team) to define which team is to attack and which should defend.

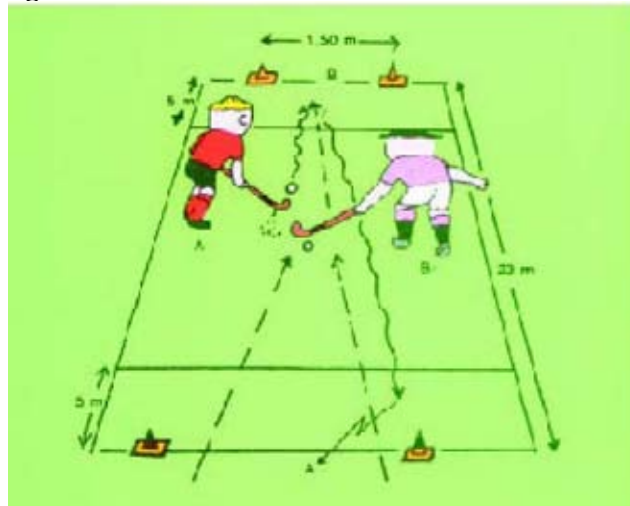


- The attacker tries to penetrate one of the penalty areas and score, while the defender aims to tackle and return the ball to the circle in the center of the field.
- Have as many balls available in the center of the 6-on-6 field as you have pairs of children. Once you have called (announced) the attacking team, each attacker tries to gain possession of one ball and carries it, despite the efforts of his personal opponent, through one of the four or five goals you have set up with cones on different spots of the field.

32. THE CHALLENGE

Set up the rectangular field with four cones to mark off the two goal areas; use one ball for every two youngsters. Pair up the children. Two players stand on the same goal line, one on the right post (cone) and the other at the left of a 1.5-meter-wide goal. After you have given a visual signal, both should run toward the ball placed in the center point of the playing area at a distance of 11.5 meters.

The first player to gain its possession must dribble it into the opponent's shooting zone and score. While the red player at the left post (cone) tries to score at the far goal, the pink player at the right post, once he gains the ball, must dribble it through the open goal from which he started. If these and other hockey rules are broken in the midfield, the defender resumes the game without the ball, from half a meter behind the attacker. If the defender infringes the rules in his own shooting zone, he will be penalized with a free pass from the center of the playing area through the opponent's empty goal. Each time a goal is scored or the ball runs across any end line, the two players change their starting places. The winner is the first player to score two goals.



***“Boredom is simply our emotional reaction to monotony.
A remedy for boredom is to cut out the
soft living. Active people are never bored.”***

L.Moorhouse/L.Cross

GAMES IN THE MAZE

There are two programs referred to as “Games in the Maze”: the Dribbling Maze Game and the Passing Maze Games. The first activity serves to stimulate the young players’ perception capacity, their sense of orientation, their capacity for making quick decisions, and their coordination and, in particular, dribbling techniques with both feet. Because of these many skills to be developed, it is useful to have more variations to ensure plenty of practice and to sustain interest. The second activity in the maze, along with its variations, helps improve the skills of communication and cooperation between the passer and the receiver.

1. DRIBBLING MAZE GAME

Set up the playing field of about 15meters x 12 meters according to the illustration, establishing eight 1.5 meter goal areas that are one meter apart, using two cones for each. Pair up the children and give each a ball. Two players start simultaneously but across from each other at positions outside the maze. Their task is to dribble the ball in any direction through all eight goals of the maze without leaving out any. The winner is the player who returns to the starting point first with the ball under complete control. Have the youngsters practice without the balls at first. Later, more than two players may compete at the same time.



Variations:

- * Instead of goals, other players will form tunnels.
- What player needs less time to run through six different goals.
- As before but oblige the players to complete a full turn before dribbling the ball across a goal line. You might also ask players to dribble the ball backward through the cone goals.
- To score, the players must pass the ball through a goal and collect it behind it without running through the goal (tunnel).
- To win one of the 4 players has to dribble through as many different goals as possible within 10 seconds.



- To score the ball has to be lifted slightly above an outstretched stick placed in all goals.
- To score a valid goal the ball has to be passed with the reverse stick through the cone goal and then has to be collected behind it without the player running through the goal as well.

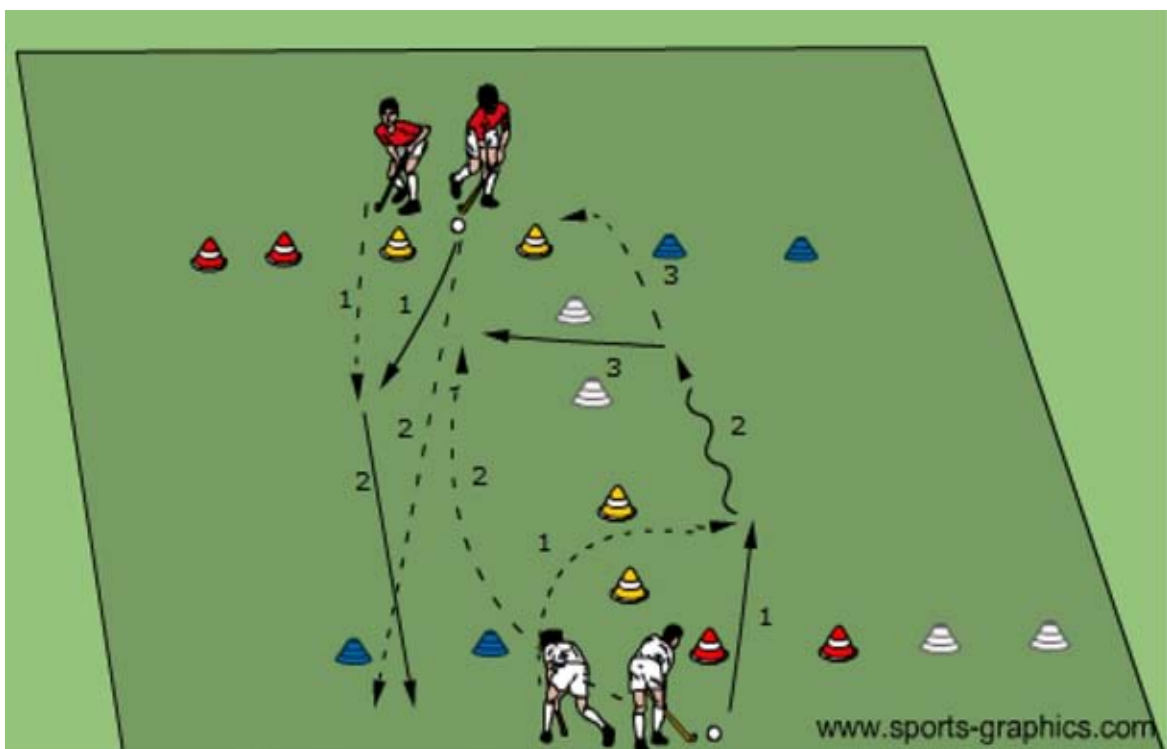


- Set up eight goals with cones of at least three different colors. During the dribble the players have to look out for the position of the goals with the colour you call out or designate. The winner is the first player who runs the ball through eight goals without repeating the same one immediately after having scored in it.

- Two or three players dribble their proper ball through any of the eight goals, while two or three other players enter the maze without a ball to modify the position of some cones. This forces the attackers to continuously look up and adapt to the new situation.
- Before the ball is dribbled across a cone goal, the attackers must complete a half turn with the ball (turn until the player's shoulders point toward the goal). After that the player turns half way back (toward the left or the right) into the original position and then dribbles the ball across the goal line. The youngster must be sure that during the pivoting motion his body is always placed between the goal line (two cones) and the ball, thus learning to shield it later from an opponent .
- Three players occupy three of the eight goals, thus demonstrating to the four attackers that they can score only in one of the five unoccupied ones. The defenders may move from one to another goal but may not tackle at all. The winner will be the attacker who first scores at six of the goals without repeating the same one twice in a row.
- Four attackers play against two defenders who may tackle (unlike the previous variation, which prohibited tackling).

2. ESTABLISHING A VISUAL AGREEMENT BEFORE PASSING IN THE MAZE

Set up the playing field for a maze, as shown in the illustration, which has different spaces between goals. Divide the youngsters into pairs (a passer and a receiver) who will use passing to score goals. The pair that manages to score in six different goals first will win. Make sure that the player moves behind another goal immediately after the pass to make himself available for the next pass. Explain that the players must establish a visual agreement between passer and receiver before the pass is executed.



Variations:

- * Set up eight goals using at least three different colors of cones. During play, you should announce or designate what color cones should be the next goal area. The pair of children that first scores eight goals wins. Players may not score in the same goal twice in a row.
- Play as in the previous variation, but limit play to 10 seconds. The winning pair is the team that manages to score most often within 10 seconds, always using a different goal for scoring.
- While a team (pair) is competing and dribbling the ball through any of the eight goals, two or three other players enter the maze without the ball to modify the position of one of the cones. This ensures that the attackers must continuously look up and adapt to the new situation.
- To score a valid goal it's necessary to pass the ball with the reverse stick (either with the toe of the curve or with the edge of the stick).
- To score, the attackers must slightly lift the ball over an outstretched stick on each goal line.
- Three pairs of youngsters practice simultaneously with the aim to score against two opponents who try to block the attacked goals by positioning themselves on the respective goal lines, continuously moving around the field. Defenders are not allowed to tackle or intercept a pass when they're out of a cone goal. The team or pair that first scores six goals wins the competition.
- Two pairs of children try to score as many goals as possible against an active defender whose play is unlimited. Keep track of how many seconds the defender needs to touch the ball of either pair. Any goal that the attacking pairs score counts for 3 seconds.

“Because of the fact that today we are all getting used more and more to instant food, instant photos, instant coffee, instant transmission of information, etc., people also start to expect instant success in hockey.”

PASSING, RECEIVING, AND SHOOTING GAMES

Besides accurate passing with different techniques, good control of the ball with the front and the reversed stick as it is being passed from teammate to teammate is of paramount importance: it provides a team the opportunity to maintain or instigate their attacking moves.



The high percentage of failure in passing is a consequence not only of technique but also of other errors occurring immediately before the ball is passed. These are some typical errors:

- There is no visual agreement between the passer and receiver.
- The receiver doesn't make himself available at the right instant when the passer is "ready" (i.e., poor "timing").
- The receiver waits for the ball instead of running to it.
- The players show poor passing skills (the ball was passed too softly, too high, or imprecisely, or the pass was executed too late).

1. AGAINST THE WALL

Station the youngsters near a wall, at a distance of 4 to 5 meters. They have to pass the ball to the wall from this point. How many passes can be executed against the wall without having to move more away from his original position?

Use also the reverse stick or alternate one pass with the forehand and the next one with the reverse stick. Insist that the youngsters use different surfaces (curve and the edges) of the stick when passing. Have them repeat the activity, trying to establish a personal record time.

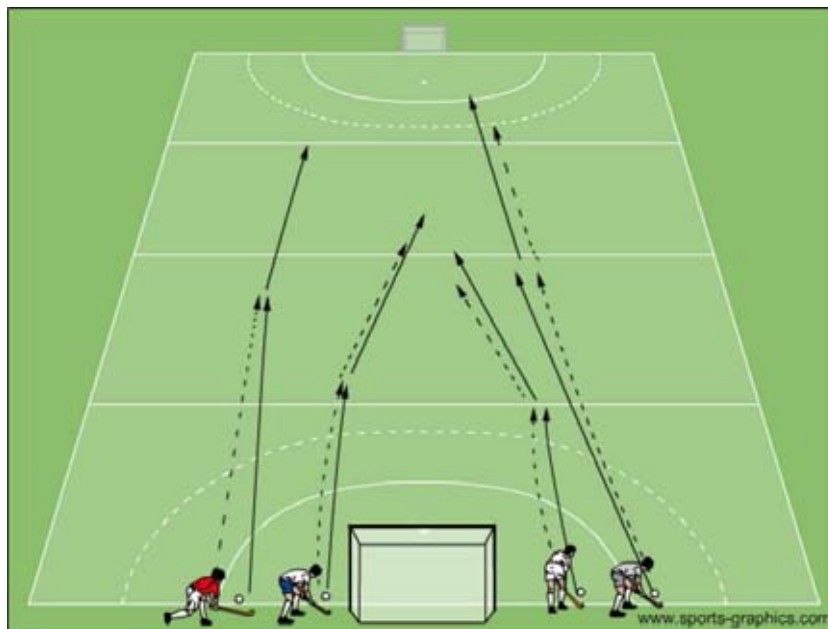
Have them practice with the forehand and the reverse stick or alternate using both techniques. As another variation, see how many passes they can execute within a time limit, seconds or one minute (this requires concentration!) without coming closer than 5 meters towards the wall.

Variation:

- Players assume a side position in relation to the wall, standing about 4 meters away from it. They dribble the ball parallel to the wall and pass it along the ground against it for picking up the rebounded ball on the run a few meters later. This way the children simulate a “triangulation,” initiated with a forehand or reverse stick pass against the wall. They should practice running in a direction so that the wall is to their left and then to right side.
- One pair, standing in a 10m wide cone goal 4 meters in front of a wall. In this “rebound game” one player passes the stationary ball with speed in such an angle against the wall, that it rebounds out of the reach from the second player through the 10m wide cone goal.
- Ask the players to invent other exercises for improving their ball sense and acrobatic skills!

2. GOING FOR DISTANCE AND ACCURACY

Position the children behind an end line of the full hockey field. Every player slaps or pushes his ball from the end line into the depth of the full field. Which player's ball travels farthest? Who needs fewer shots for scoring in the opposite goal? Lifting the stick before passing the ball is not allowed. Have the youngsters also use different techniques for passing. Ask them to describe their experiences concerning the accuracy and distance of their passes!

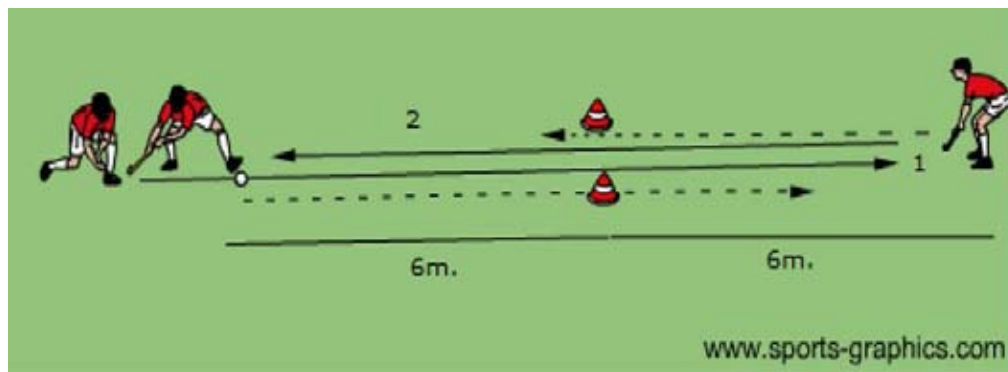


“The natural order accounts for progressive development through time.”

3. ACCURATE PASSING AND CONTROL

This game can be played by individuals or as a team competition with three players per team. Each player has to score from a distance of 6 (later 10 meters) through a 2-meter-wide goal area (marked off by cones) and then have a receiver be able to return the pass to the third player. The passer always follows his pass to the other side and awaits a pass from the third player. Whoever first scores 10 goals with the demanded passing technique becomes the winner. In case a team competition takes place, the winning three players can be either those who first score 10 goals or those who score the most goals within 30 seconds.

Explore what constitutes the most efficient passing technique by using effective questioning with the players.



Variation:

The third player becomes a defender of a 4-meter-wide goal area (marked by two cones) in the center between his two teammates. The attacker who doesn't manage to score has to switch position with the defender in the goal. As coach you may ask the attackers to push first stationary and balls on the move.



There is a great variety of techniques to pass the ball with the front stick and with the reverse:

WITH THE FRONT STICK :

HANDS SEPARATED ON THE STICK:

- push the stationary or moving ball along the ground with the curve close to the ball (with the right and left foot in front),
- slap the ball with a back swing and a follow-through of the stick.

The ball, generally situated in front of the player or in front of his left foot, is played

- sweeping the ball with the upper part of the curve which is always on the ground,
- drag push along the ground with the ball placed inside the inclined curve behind the right foot, which is in front (as pass or for injecting the ball at a penalty corner). The handle of the stick points into the desired direction of the pass (to the receiver).





- flick in a side-on position with the left shoulder pointing into the desired direction of the high pass. The ball is placed slightly on the right side of the body in front of the left foot (top players also manage to flick the ball with the right foot in front),
- scoop the ball during a dribble above a defender. The ball is placed in any position in front of the body,
- drag flick with right-left-right-left steps overrunning the ball (in p.c)

HANDS SEPARATED OR WITH ONE HAND ONLY ON THE STICK:

- deflection with the low forehand or the toe of the curve with different inclinations of the stick and different angles to the oncoming ball as goal shot (tip-ins with the feet on the ground or whilst diving or slipping on the ground) or deflection of the oncoming ball towards a team mate (first time passes),

HANDS TOGETHER:

- hit the ball along the ground with a drive (normal, topspin, slice, chop or "Asian" hit) with the left and sometimes also with the right foot in front,
- sweep hit (with lifting the stick from the ground),
- sweep hit (without lifting the curve from the ground).

“Poor performance at short term doesn’t mean that the long term objectives can not be accomplished.”

The speed of execution, the possibility to disguise the direction of the pass and its high percentage of success makes the sweep the most common technique used for passing the ball to a team mate and also for scoring goals.

In any game of modern hockey the techniques of sweeping the ball along the ground without lifting the stick is because of its accuracy and ease of execution the most common used passing technique.

All these reasons speak for an early introduction of the sweep into the program of the beginners whilst the ability to flick and to hit the ball have to be developed progressively throughout the following years, when the young player has gained sufficient experience in passing the ball with less demanding techniques. Any good player should try to pass the ball in a well balanced position with the feet sufficiently separated and the legs bent, using the weight of the body which has to be transferred towards the front leg in the moment of impact what helps to develop more speed of the ball.

When the curve of the stick remains during the execution of a pass on the ground, more accuracy is assured. Furthermore the passer does not allow the opponent to anticipate the pass.

The impact zone is generally (but not for the drags) the area situated above the curved part of the stick. For making use of the wide impact zone, the player has to bend sufficiently his knees and keep the stick in a low a very low position, between 15 and not more than 45 degrees in relation to the field. That is why the left hand of the passer is in most of the passing techniques in the moment of impact - ball-stick below knee level.

Following after the moment of impact with the curve the line of the ball (whilst remaining in a low body position) assures accuracy of the pass.



Photo: A. Wälthi

WITH THE REVERSE STICK:**HANDS SEPARATED ON THE STICK:**

- push with the toe of the curve,
- slap (as rebound),
- slap with the edge of the stick (flat side showing up),
- flick with the ball in contact with the toe of the curve.

**WITH ONE HAND ONLY:**

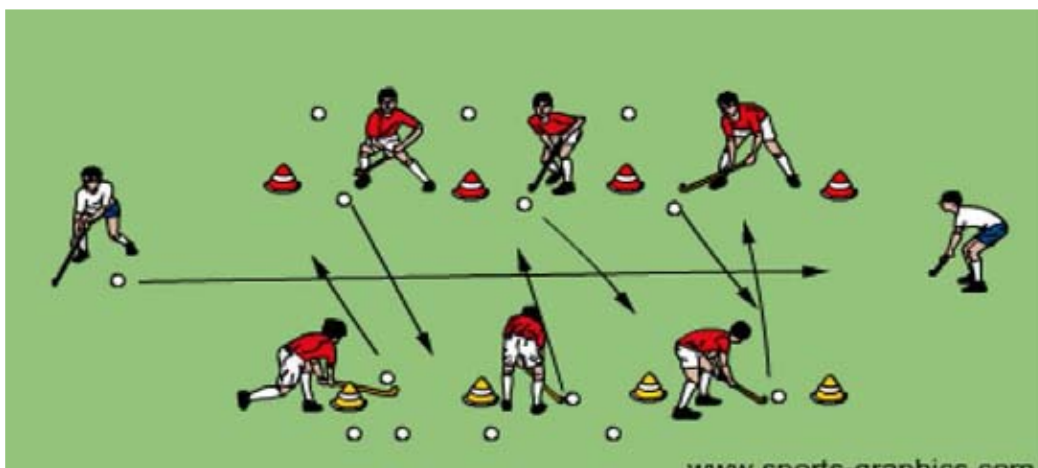
+ passing deflection with the stick placed almost completely on the ground. (diving or with the feet on the ground).

HANDS TOGETHER

- hit with the toe of the curve (45 degree position of the stick in the moment of impact),
- hit in upright body position with the center of the curve (vertical position of the stick in the moment of impact with the ball very close to the right foot),
- sweep hit with the edge of the stick in a low body position.

4. TORPEDOS

This game takes 8 players and at least seven hockey balls. Choose three players to line up next to each other along a line, each of them in possession of a ball. The same number of players stands facing them at a distance of 8 meters. Two other players position themselves outside the "tunnel" at either end, like an entrance and exit. One of the end players has a ball which they pass to each other.

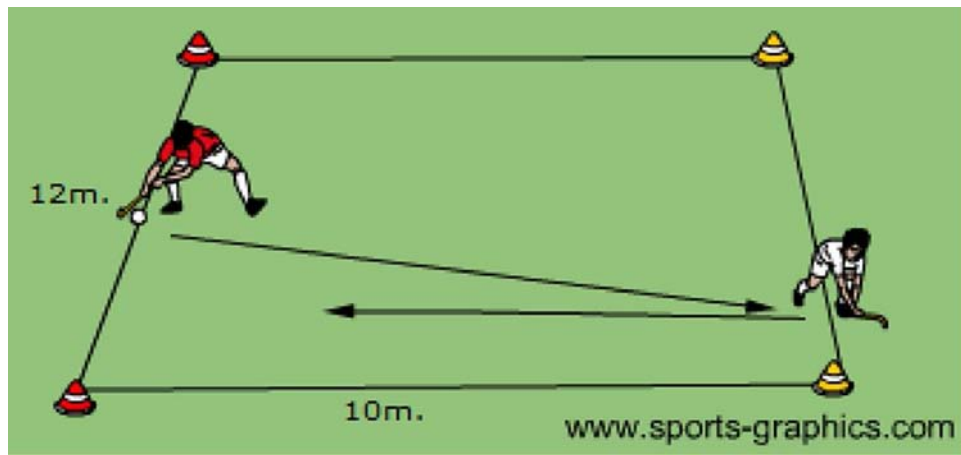


The players forming the tunnel who are in possession of a ball try to calculate and anticipate the direction and speed of the ball going through the tunnel from one end to the other.

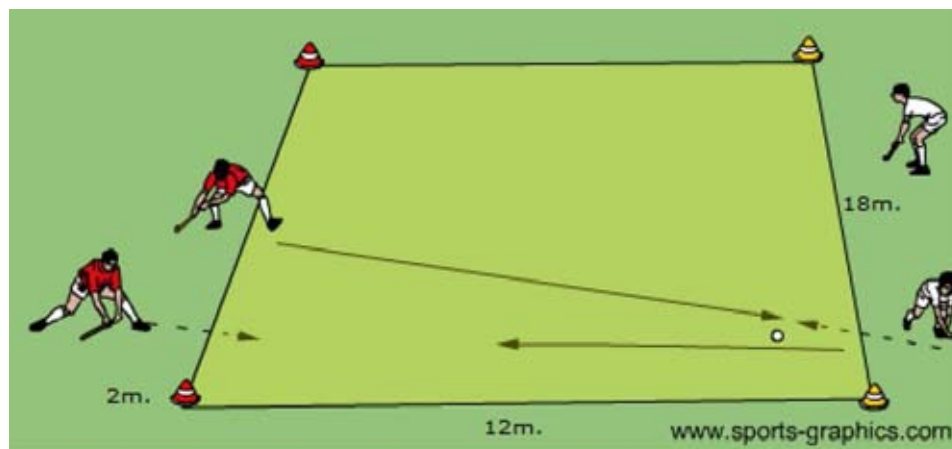
“The traditional coaching which was very much coach orientated concentrated merely on technical aspects, putting aside aspects related to motivation and knowledge.”

5. PASSING A STATIONARY BALL AND RECEIVING IT (1 ON 1)

Pair up the players and mark off playing fields (see illustration) for them with cones. Every two players share a ball. The ends of each field should form goal areas (12 meters wide). The players each stand in their own goal area, which they must defend. Player 1 tries to pass the ball along the ground from his goal line toward the opposite goal. To avoid Player 1's scoring a goal, Player 2, the defender, learns to read the direction and speed of the opponent's pass and then use the maximum surface of his stick for controlling the ball. Then they reverse the action to pass the ball back to the original line. Lifted passes don't score. For any infringement (touching the ball with the feet or the rounded curve or leaving the goal line before the pass was played) a penalty is awarded from the center of the playing area. The first player to score four goals wins the event.

**Variation:**

* Have the receiver start from a point 2 meters behind his goal line. This helps develop the good habit of running toward the ball before controlling it.



*Have the children practice passing and receiving 2 on 2 in a wider field (18 meters). Pass the ball across the opponent's goal line from the spot where it was controlled. Depending on how much explosive power the four players have, you can mark off the goal areas to measure up to 18 meters wide and the distance between them can be increased to 15 to 20 meters in length.

94 BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR RECEIVING AND CONTROLLING THE BALL

A perfect control of the ball - either it is passed from teammate to team mate or intercepted - is of a paramount importance as it assures the possession of the ball and the continuation of the attack. Statistics have shown that between 20 and 25% of all losses of the possession of the ball result from poor control! This high percentage is also a consequence of other errors, which occur immediately before the ball is controlled like -no visual agreement between the passer and the receiver, -the receiver doesn't make himself available in the right moment when the passer is "ready" (poor "timing"), -the receiver wait for the ball instead of running to it, or poor passing skills (the ball was passed too softly, inaccurate or executed too late or too early). That is why the quality of the reception and the control of the ball is mainly a product of the quality of the pass.



For a player to control the ball in the particular game situation, even a youngster, he should learn and apply commonsense principles to a variety of techniques. Teach your young players the following:

1. Watch the ball carefully until it touches your feet or body. Also pay attention to the position and movement of your teammates and opponents before and after the execution of the control. The more experienced and confident you are, the more you can assimilate and process other relevant information while focusing on the ball.
2. Use the maximum surface of your stick and not only the curve whilst controlling the ball.
3. Try to position your body in line with the ball as soon as possible. If you're an attacker, for example, it is relatively easy to receive the ball as you face the proper goal, but often this isn't effective for creating a goal opportunity: it's too slow, and it limits your ability to play the ball quickly into the opponent's penalty area. Therefore you should learn to receive and control balls from a side position as well, which allows you to perceive your teammates' and the defenders' position and movements in the space between you and the goal.
4. Make a cushion for the ball through not gripping the stick too firmly. Keep your arms slightly bent. Relax and incline the surface of the stick slightly forward. This helps your control. Receive the ball in a balanced position at the point of collection. Being balanced well makes for having successful control with subsequent movements. And it allows a receiver to deceive any opponent nearby with a body feint.
5. Position the ball during the control for the next play. If you are the receiver, you should already know what to do next before the ball is controlled. You must select what technique you'll use for the control of the next move: a dribble, a shot, or a pass. It's paramount to be able to execute an intentional or purposeful control for continuing with the attack. *Learning this* principle of ball control well helps any player to perform considerably better.

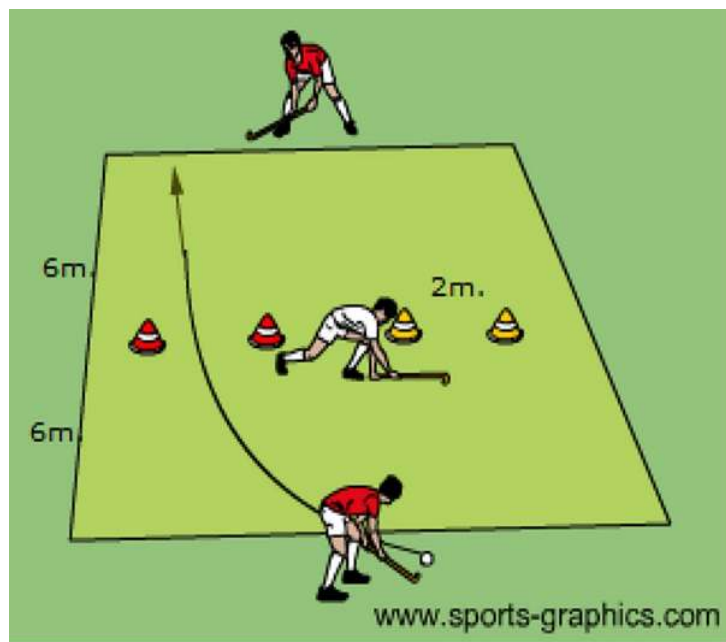
The games in this section are designed to enhance the players' ability to maintain control and make accurate and well timed passes with different techniques. They learn to calculate and anticipate the direction and speed of the ball while receiving and controlling it, including how to read the direction and speed of an opponent's pass. The children practice first passing a stationary and then a moving ball without indication its direction. They also learn to receive the ball to exploit and utilize it for their next action.

***"The culmination of a good pass
is the perfect control of the ball."***

6. DISGUIISING THE PASS

Set up pairs of cones to mark off two goal areas (each 2 meters wide; see the illustration). These goals should be about 8 meters from the starting line. A receiver stands behind the goals and a third player (designated as the defender) stays just in front of the goals, very close to them and facing the player who is passer. Players have five passes to try to score a maximum number of goals in one of the two goals areas (first with a stationary ball set on the ground). A pass through one of the goals is considered valid only when the second attacker behind the defender can manage to control the well-placed pass.

As the children improve in passing, decrease the distance between the two cone goals (from 4 meters to 2 meters). More experienced players should also practice passing with a moving ball (without indicating its direction).

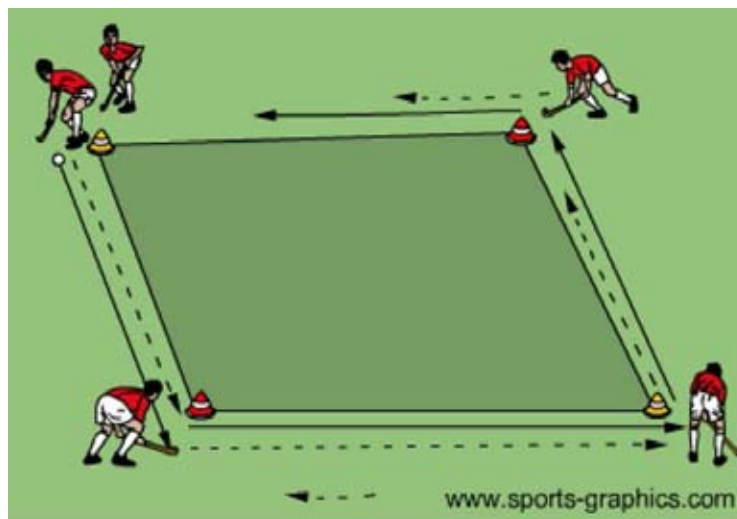


“Coaches concern more about the contents of the training sessions than about their teaching style.”

7. PASSING TWICE AROUND THE SQUARE

Various groups of five children compete with each other, passing the ball outside of a square as shown in the illustration. Besides developing accurate passing skills, the players learn to receive the ball in a way that their next play or in this case their next pass will be delayed as less as possible through an orientated reception and control of the ball in an appropriate position away from the nearest cone. The execution of "purposeful controls," and hard passes help to circulate the ball twice around the square (in either direction) before the other groups may achieve it.

Beginners carry out flat passes with forehand only, later with the use of the "high" reverse stick with the toe of the curve or the "low" reverse stick with the file of their stick and more advanced players may also practise high passes, allowing each player during the reception of the ball first any number and later only two—ball contacts. A passer must always follow the run of the ball. Use also a stopwatch to find out the following week in another competition which of the the teams establish a record for circulating the ball twice around the square.



Variation:

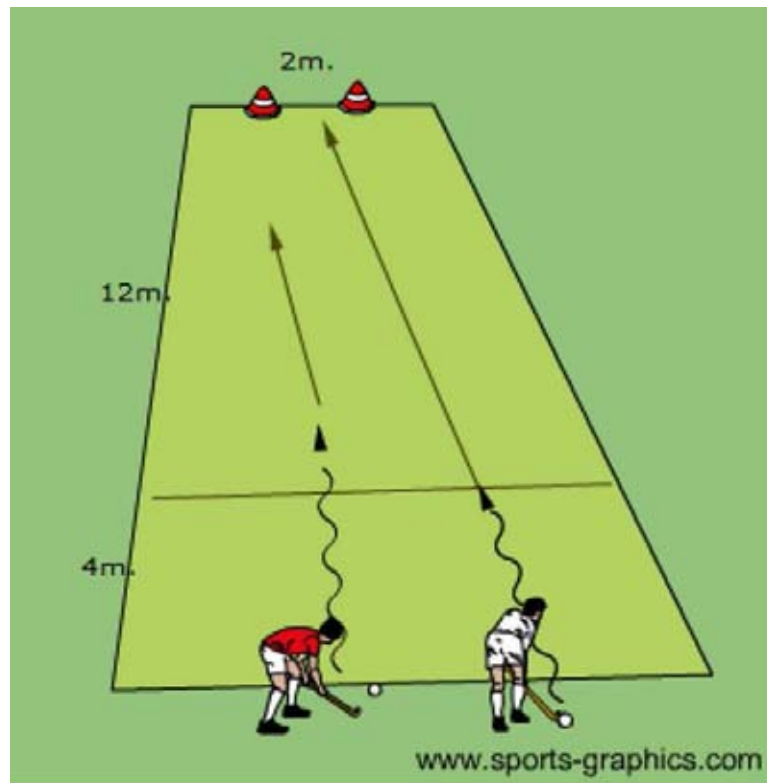
1. When practising clockwise around the square pass the ball always with forehand and receive it always with the reverse stick (high or horizontal stick position).
2. Add a sixth player to create a competition between the five passers and a sixth player who, in the moment of the first pass, must run twice around the square. The competition is between the runner and the ball to see who completes the two turns sooner! The sixth player is not allowed to play the ball. The six players take turns being the runner to compete in speed against the other five passers. All the children should become once the runner.

"Successful coaching at youth level is gauged by the percentage of under18 players being able to join the representative senior squad."

8. QUICK GOALS

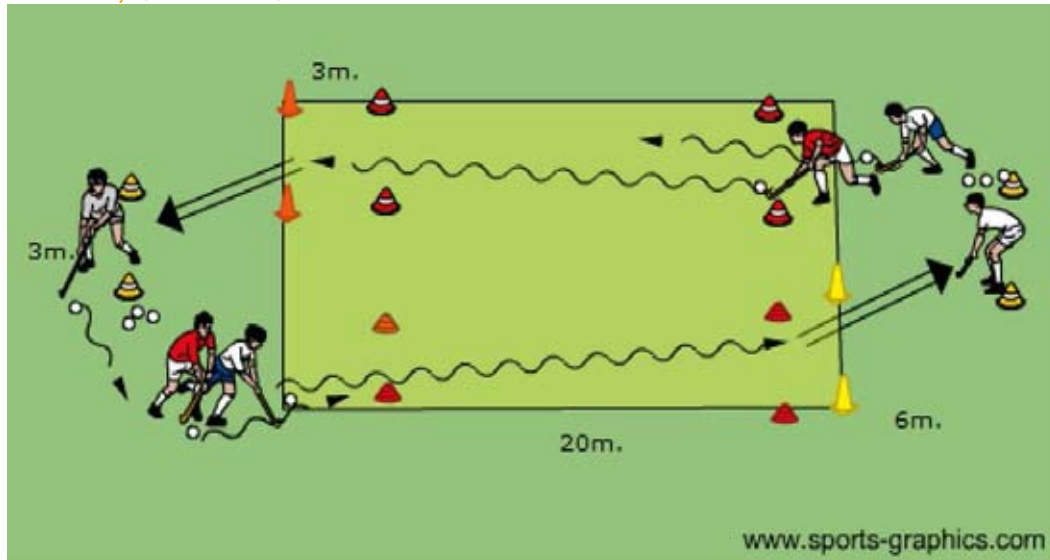
Pair up the children and give each a hockey ball. Set up an area (see illustration), using four cones to mark the corners; the end of the area serves as a goal area and should be only 2 meters wide. Give a visual signal for the two players to set off. They must dribble their ball at least to a 4-meter line and then pass or shoot it from there into the goal area, another 12 meters away. The player who first manages to pass his ball from any point beyond the 4-meter line between the far goal posts scores a point. The winner is the player who scores the highest number of points in five attempts.

When shooting under time pressure, the players ordinarily may choose their technique. As variations, however, you can insist they use a particular technique (see the table "The Passing and Shooting Techniques").



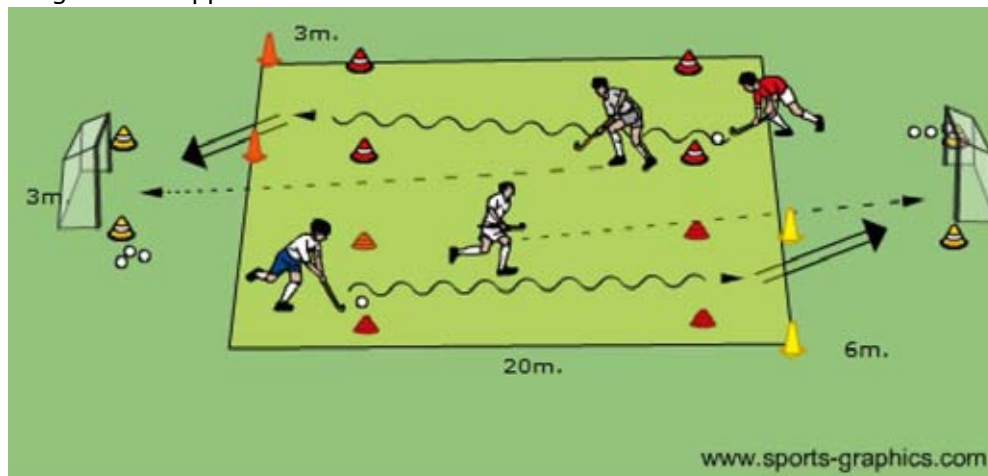
9. SHOOTING CIRCUIT

Out of six children four dribble and shoot and two act as "goalkeepers" at the end goal areas. Mark off an area as in the illustration with 2 opposed goal areas that are four meters in width. The players dribble the length (20 meters) to enter the goal area in front of him. Once he crosses that line, the player must immediately shoot at the defended cone goal (3m. wide) before the ball crosses a 3 meter-line (shooting zone). After the shot on goal, the attacker becomes "goalkeeper"; this former "goalkeeper" takes the ball or a reserve ball placed close to the cone goal and lines up in the next goal area at the right side. He then does the same as the first attacker, dribbling in the opposite direction, again on the right flank. The winner is the player who scores the highest number of goals within five minutes.



Variations:

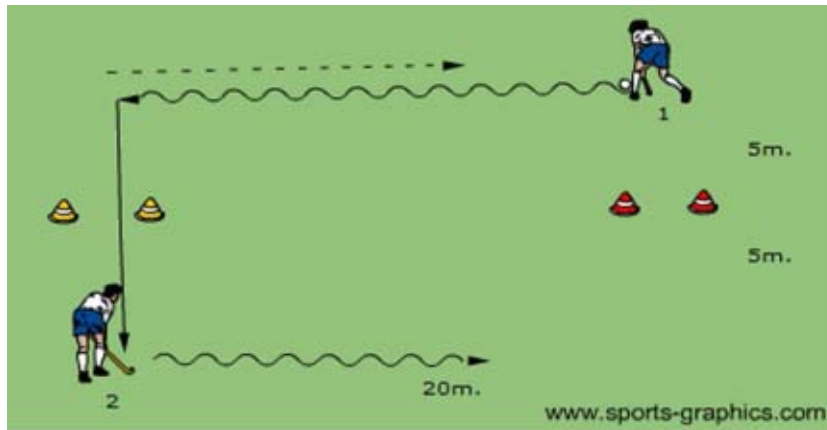
- * The attacker dribbles the ball on the left flank going clockwise, finishing the individual attack with a shot from the inside left position.
- Half way to the opposite goal area, the attacker must beat an imaginary defender—a cone goal—on either side before practicing shooting.
- Several pairs compete simultaneously in opposite directions first counter-clockwise. One is in possession of the ball and the other one is the “goalkeeper” situated just 4 meters in front of him. When the attacker touches the ball, the “goalkeeper” tries to position himself as quickly as possible at the goal in front of him before the attacker is able to shoot from a point within that shooting area of 3 meters. After the first attack, both players change functions and practice on the other side of the circuit. Whoever scores more goals against his opponent within 5 minutes wins.



- Instead of running counter-clockwise and shooting from a right-inside position, the players now reverse the direction and practice shooting from a left-inside position.
- Only for more advanced players. Here the defender places himself 3 meters (after some experience with this game, you can decrease the distance to 1 meters) behind the attacker to his *right* side. When the attacker starts, the defender reacts and follows him with the objective to clear or take the ball before it can be shot from a point inside the shooting zone toward the next undefended goal.

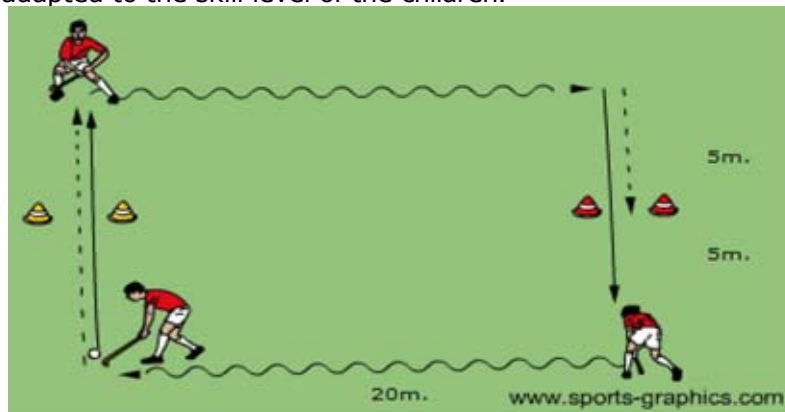
100 10. PRECISE CENTERS FROM BOTH SIDES

Set up the playing field with two pairs of cones marking off goal areas about midway on either side (see illustration). Pair up the players and give each pair a ball. Indicate what technique you want the players to use for passing. Player 1 starts out with a 20-meter dribble, taking his level with the cone goal. There, he centers the ball through the cone goal still at a distance of 5 meters only. Player 2 at a distance of 10 meters, meanwhile, waits there to receive the ball behind the goal. Then the receiver (Player 2) dribbles and centers through the other cone goal. After every pass the player returns to his starting point (see the dotted arrow) and receives the other player's pass. Whoever first scores 10 goals wins.



Variation:

- Play the same game with three players (the 3rd waits behind the ball carrier) and also reverse directions to practice centers from the left to the right. After each pass of the ball through the center, the passer follows the direction of the ball (see illustration's dotted and solid lines) and awaits a pass from where his receiver awaited his pass. Instill passing with the reverse stick and with the ball on the run. The distances for passing have to be adapted to the skill level of the children.

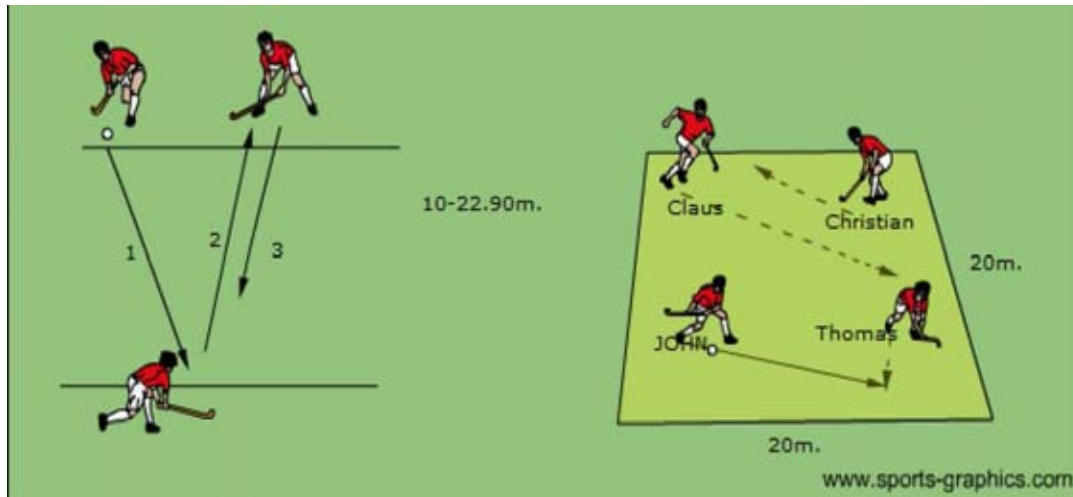


***“Those who don ’t apply new remedies
should expect to suffer new troubles.”***

Henry Ford

11. PASSING ACROSS A WIDE ZONE (see illustration below on the left side))

Group the youngsters in teams of three players. Set up the field to indicate lines about 10- 20 meters apart, and explain that the area between is a neutral zone. Two players, one with a ball, stand on one line facing a third teammate standing on the other line. Player 1 passes the ball across the neutral zone to Player 3 who should immediately return it to Player 2. None of the players may step into the neutral zone to pass. After a pass, each player must follow the ball. Among the different teams, the winning one is whichever can make 10 passes across its neutral zone.

**12. PASSING BETWEEN FOUR PLAYERS** (see illustration below on the right side)

Play in a 1/4 part of the full field or a Mini Hockey field. Group the youngsters in fours, giving each group one ball. The four players run continuously inside the delimited area. The player in possession of the ball has to pass it as quickly as possible to the player whose name you, as coach, will call out. The ball should be received—preferably on the run. Inaccurate passes and those that a player delays in executing count as a negative point.

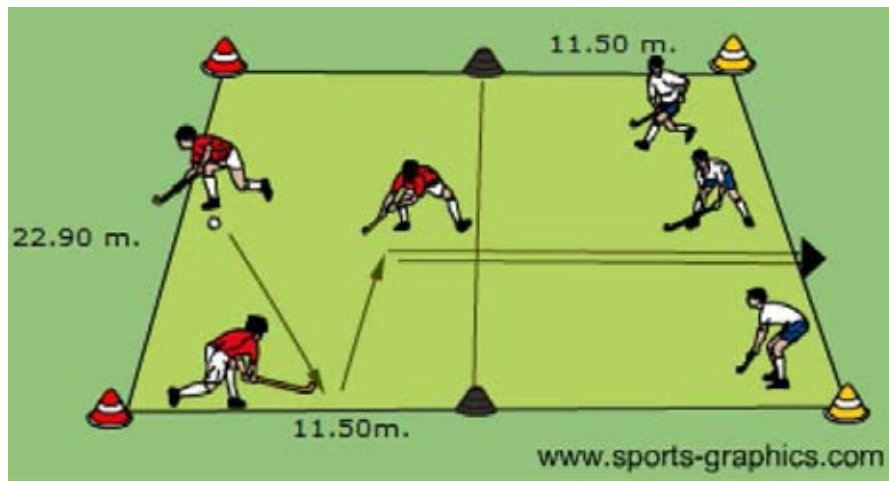
Variation:

- The same exercise is practiced with one defender who should intercept the ball without coming closer than 2 meter to the ball carrier. That means he should not tackle him.

13. PLAYING 3 ON 3 ACROSS THE OPPOSING END LINE

Form two teams of three players each and set up the square playing field with a line down its middle. The teams face each other in the separated playing areas (as in volleyball). Without leaving the team's part of the playing area and without dribbling the ball, one of the three players tries to pass the ball along the ground across the opposing end line, despite the defense efforts of the three opponents in the other team's part of the playing area.

No high passes are allowed. When the ball runs out of the playing area, it should be reintroduced at the spot where it went out. Touching the ball more than twice or with the rounded side of the stick or with the feet is penalized with a goal.



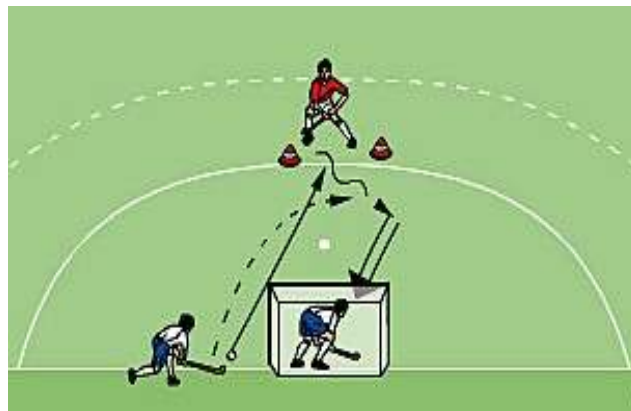
Variation:

- A goal is considered valid only when the last pass from the depth of the field is a firsttime (direct) pass.

14. SCORING AGAINST ONE DEFENDER

Have the children pair up and practice on either side of the hockey goal. Place cones to form a 3-meter-wide goal 3 meters outside of the top of the shooting circle. The defender passes the ball with speed from the end line toward the cones forming that goal. Once the attacker has managed to control the ball in front of the cone goal, he should score against a goalkeeper and the defender who followed his initial pass.

After every 3 attacks, the two players change positions and functions. You might later have the attacker start from 1 meter behind the cone goal to encourage his running toward the oncoming ball.



Question for the youngsters to help them to understand the problems included in this Simplified Game

1. Which you believe is the best way to receive the ball?

Ideally, the ball should rebound into a position that allows me to execute a quick shot toward the goal.

2. How you best play out the defender?

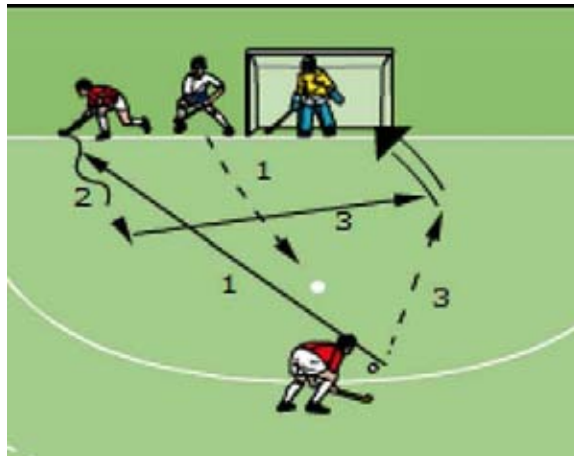
Its more convenient to do it on his reverse stick side, with a well-tempered pass past him, with a tunnel between his spread legs, or when he is stationary and in a frontal position.

3. As defender which is the most efficient way to defend this situation?

To close down the attacker and force him to go towards my forehand side.

15. SCORING WITH 2 ON 1

Again use the same setup as in the game 15 but have the children form groups of three. At the instant a pass is made by the attacker from the top of the shooting circle to his teammate situated on the end line, the defender near the receiver tries to distract him from receiving, controlling, and playing the ball on his own or with a return pass. The 2-on-1 situation finishes with the ball running out of the circle or a goal being scored despite the presence of a constant, active goalkeeper. All the players practice five times in each of the three positions. For every goal scored, both attackers gain a point.

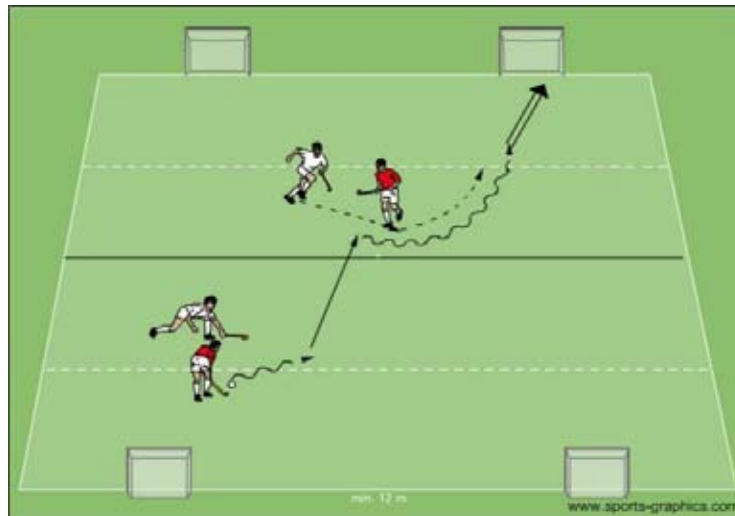
**Variation:**

- For more advanced players a second defender is added. In the moment of the pass to the marked forward on the end line, he is allowed to establish the 2-on-2 -situation.

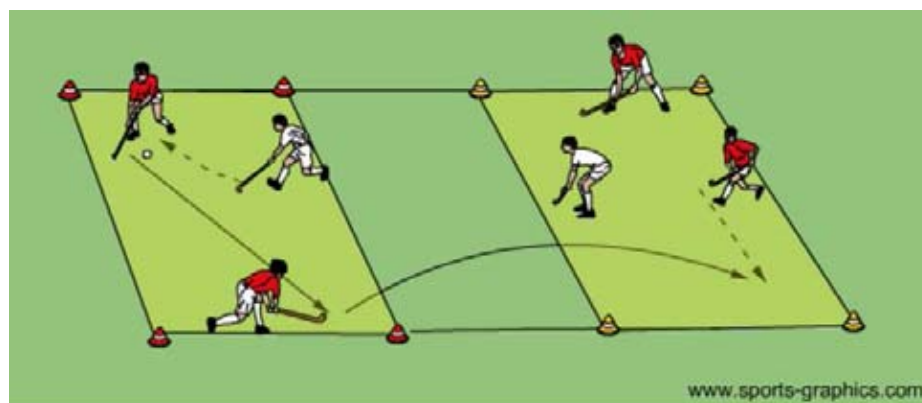
“With frequency the best scoring opportunities appear by accident.”

16. TWICE 1-ON-1 WITH SCORING

The game is played on a Mini-hockey field (use dimensions of 22.5 meters by 25 meters). Form two teams of two players, using just one hockey ball. Each player is given one half of the field for attacking or defending at the same time two-cone goals. None is allowed to leave the area assigned to him. Every two minutes the defenders change their positions and functions with the field players.

**17. ACCURATE PASSING**

Set up two small grids of 6 x 8 or 10 meters. Two attackers position themselves in each of both grids together with a defender. The two attackers maintain possession of the ball against one defender until one of them is able to pass the ball across a neutral zone (which depth depends on the age and level of explosive strength of the players—recommended 6-8 meters) to the opposite grid. Before the two teammates of the attackers had offered themselves for a pass, which the second defender tries to intercept. Once an attacker manages to receive and control the ball he and his partner should return it to one of the two attackers in the opposite grid. Count up the number of successful passes in a two-minute game. The less experienced the young players are, the larger the playing area should be.



“Poor performance at short term doesn’t mean that the long term objectives can not be accomplished.”

COACHING MODEL FOR TACKLING

1st level

Preliminary exercises without ball to learn a correct
succession
of movements (see exercises 1+2).

2nd level

Exercises with a stationary ball (see exercises 3+4).

3rd level

Exercises with the moving ball and an attacker not yet
active (see exercises 5 - 6).

4th level

Exercises/games with the moving ball and an active
defender (see exercises and games 7 - 12).

5th level

Simplified games for learning to consider before
tackling also the position of the team-mate or team-
mates (see games 13+14).



The tackling games in this section encourage young players to experiment as well as to develop correct execution of the techniques for dispossessing an opponent from the ball— and to surprise the opponent with determination and speed. They'll learn to position themselves correctly in relation to the attacker, to tackle with precise timing and with patience. Furthermore, they'll learn to execute dummies and switch quickly to attack after making a successful tackle. By doing these activities in the progressive order you find here, players develop their defensive fundamentals step by step, before engaging in more complex situations.

Photo: A. Wälthi



1. TOUCH THE KNEE OF THE OPPONENT

One defender is facing an attacker. Both of his feet are touching a line, which is drawn 1.50m away from the attacker. No hockey stick is used in this exercise. The objective of the defender is, after having made one step forward with his left foot, to touch with the back of his left hand (!) one knee of the attacker. The attacker tries to avoid the touch and moves his leg backwards which is supposed to be touched. The other leg has to remain in its position. The defender has 5 tries to reach out. After a try he waits at least 5 seconds before he carries out his next attempt. After 5 attempts both players change positions and functions.

In this exercise the defender will quickly learn to assume an optimal basic position for tackling, to bend his legs sufficiently and to keep his point of gravity low. Apart from learning a correct succession of movements (simultaneous step and lunge forward with the left foot and left arm) he realizes that quickness and surprise are important factors for success in tackling.

2. TOUCH THE LINE FIRST

From a position 2m in front of a line, any of the players, situated one beside another with the curve of the stick touching the ground, try to touch first the line with their stick. The teacher in front of them gives a visual signal (through letting a ball fall down or through a simulation of a tackle). The tackle is not considered valid,

- when the defender keeps, during the execution of the lunge, his right hand on the handle,
- his feet remain on the same level (left foot doesn't step forward), or
- in case his stick isn't always touching the ground.

Variation:

- The players stand to the left of the line about 1.5m away, ready to execute a quick and correct tackle to the right side. The players must learn to make quick crossover steps to extend their reach in order to touch the line.
- The same, but now the line on their left side has to be touched with a reverse stick tackle, trying to use the bring the whole flat side of the stick which parallel to the ground and as close as possible to it.



3. TOUCH THE LOOSE BALL FIRST

Two players face each other at a distance of 3.50m with a hockey ball between them. The ball is placed on a line which runs between their legs. After an acoustical signal of the coach, both try to tackle with a correct technique (the left foot is put in front and the left hand alone grips the stick at the moment of impact). The player who manages to move the ball towards the left side of the dividing line, wins.

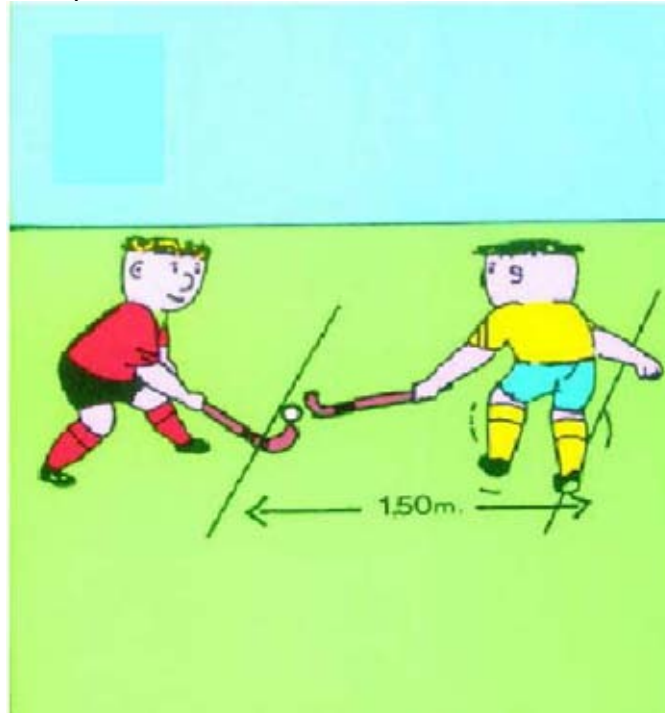
The educator/coach discusses with the players of the disadvantage of assuming a flat-footed position before tackling and of not moving the curve along the ground. The same exercise should be also executed when both defenders assume a position with their left shoulder pointing to the ball in between them. In this case a quick reverse stick tackle is practiced with the winner being the defender who moves the ball towards the right side of the dividing line on which both players stand.

Variation:

More advanced players practice in this exercise the "jab", the quickest and most surprising tackle technique ("poke tackle").

4. TACKLE GAME (see test no.5 of the Decathlon)

Mark two parallel lines 1.50 meters apart, and have the children play in pairs. A defender stands on the first line with the attacker, at a distance of 1.50 meters, faces him with the stationary ball close to his curve on the second line. The attacker, without looking at the ball but instead at the defender's stick, should move the ball aside and out of the defender's reach in the instant the defender starts to lunge forward to play the ball with speed and surprise. The winner is the defender who touches the stationary ball more often with 5 tackles.



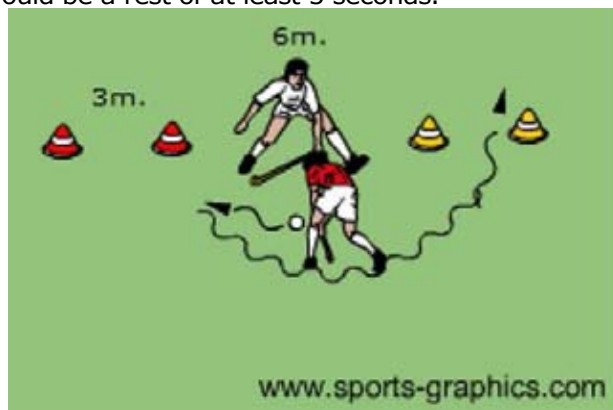
"We have to insist in the importance of the details. It's necessary to perfect each small basic aspect of a business (of a technique or of the game of hockey) when you intend that things function well."

Ray Kroc

Variation to learn to recover after the first unsuccessful tackle :

With two 3 meter wide cone goals on both sides of the defender. In case the attacker avoid the success of the defender's tackle, he dribbles it through one of the two goal areas on his right or left side, separated by a zone of 6 meters. As soon as the defender in between the two cone goals has failed with his first frontal tackle to play the stationary ball, he must quickly recover his basic position and try to tackle (this time in a side position) for a second time—and prevent the attacker from controlling the ball in one of the two cone goals.

Each player must defend his goals during five attacks. Between two tackle attempts there should be a rest of at least 5 seconds.

***3rd level with a moving ball*****5. TACKLING AGAINST A PASSIVE ATTACKER**

Group the children in pairs, giving each two one ball. A defender faces an attacker who dribbles the ball straight to him. When the attacker is about 3 meters in front of the defender, the latter steps slightly to the left until his right shoulder "faces" the right shoulder of the ball carrier who dribbles the ball straight to his right side without being allowed to dodge him.

Once the ball enters is level with him, the defender, now in an optimal side position, executes a quick and technically correct tackle with the curve of the stick always remaining on the ground. Defenders should take care to first touch the ball, and not the stick of the attacker.

In this activity, the defender gains experience in optical-motor assessment. The young player learns to tackle at the very best instant, not too early and not too late.

***"You can help a player a lot by correcting him,
but more by encouraging him."***



Variations:

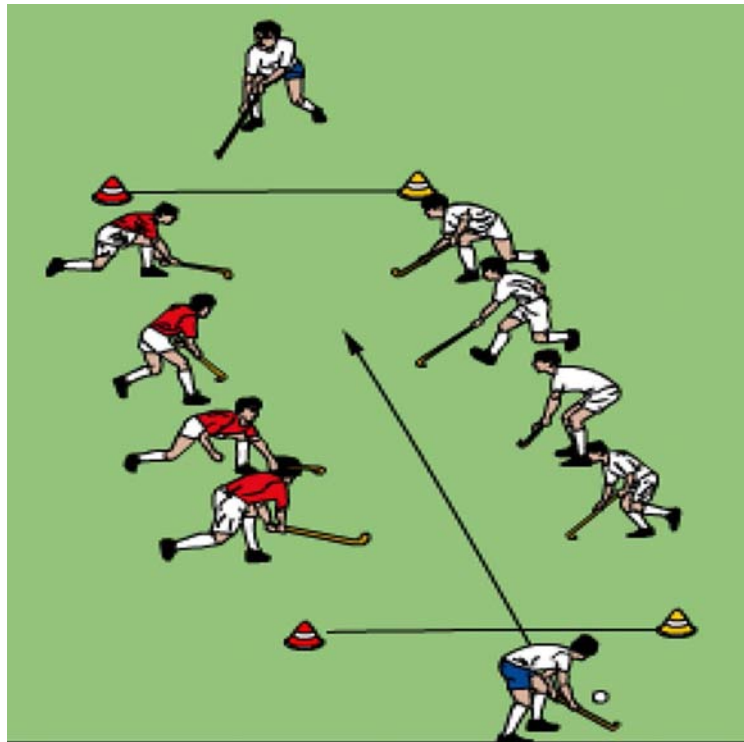
- * The defender must carry out a step-in feint once the attacker is about 3 meters in front of him or her. Immediately after this obvious dummy, the defender recovers, again assumes an optimal basic position (but no longer in front of the attacker), tackles quickly, and tries to surprise the opponent from a side position.

The defender steps completely to one side, allowing the opponent to penetrate. After this quick turnaround, the defender adapts to the attacker's speed and stays with the opponent, shoulder-to-shoulder, until the ideal instant arises for tackling. This usually is when the ball is away from the attacker's

Tackling in retreat against a passive attacker should be taught while having the attacker on defender's left (and also on the right) side. It's best to practice this activity first without a ball and then with it to help improve the basic position, the channeling of the opponent, and the retreat side-on-side with the attacker.

6. INTERCEPTING PASSES

Gather the players in groups of fours. Two players face each other at a distance of 15 meters, passing the ball between them on a line. Three defenders, at either side of the running line of the ball and always about 2 meters away from it, try to intercept the pass. The interception should be practiced from different positions (i.e., with the left or right shoulder of the defenders pointing to the ball carrier, with the defenders facing the passers).



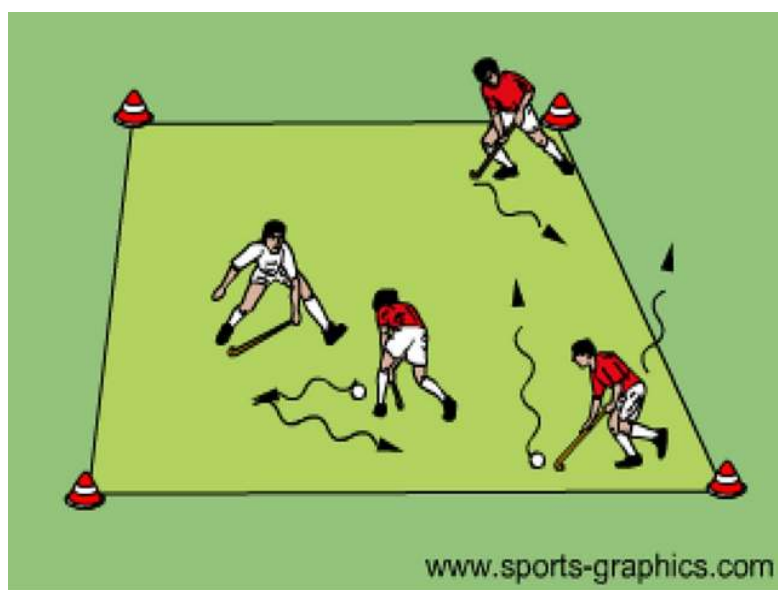
“Learning starts when the coach transfers to his players the decisions which up to that moment were taken by himself.”

4th. level with a moving ball and an active opponent

A smart player attempts to tackle an attacker in possession of the ball only when he is almost certain of success. If there is any doubt, he or she delays the tackle or executes a dummy while retreating and waiting for a more convenient instant to recover the ball.

7. FIVE TACKLES

The children again work in groups of four players. Three players each dribble a ball within a small square (10 meters x 10 meters), while a fourth child without a ball has five chances to tackle. The defender's aim is to clear as many balls as possible out of the square within these five tackles. Any full extension of the left arm is considered a tackle. Besides observing the attackers carefully during their dribbling, the defender must have the patience to tackle only when a good opportunity arises. Executing dummy tackles will allow the defender to achieve a higher percentage of success. The player with the highest percentage of successful tackles (out of the five possible ones) wins.



Variation:

- All four players are in possession of a ball, and they all try to tackle the ball of any of their three opponents while controlling their own ball. When a player loses the ball, he or she must quickly collect it to continue participating in the game. Whoever executes the highest number of correct tackles within a given time (e.g., two minutes) wins. Besides tackling, the participants learn to shield the ball, placing the body between ball and defender, to execute dummies, and to lift the head during the dribble.

“Don’t give up too early! It’s happening quite often that the last key of the key ring opens the door.”



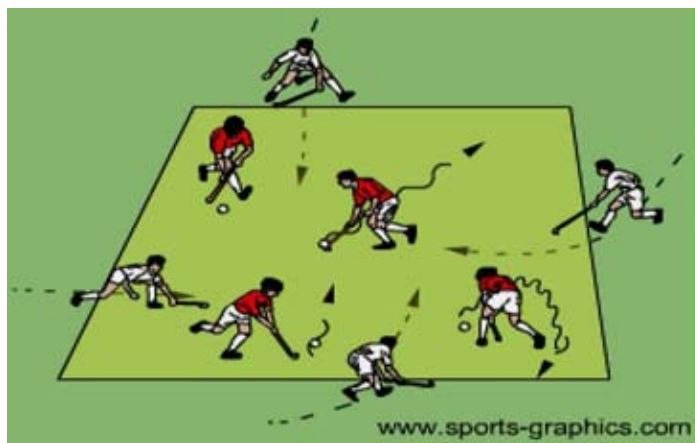
CORRECT AND INCORRECT TACKLING WITH ONE AND TWO HANDS ON THE HANDLE. SEE ALSO THE WRONG POSITION OF THE RIGHT FOOT.



Photos: A. Walthi

8. PRESSING DEFENSE 1 ON 1

Group the players in pairs, one with and the other one without a ball, and mark off a square 15 meters per side. Four pairs start the competition within this square. The tacklers try to push their attacker's ball out of the square as quickly as possible.



Variation:

- You can involve eight players in this game, having the four defenders start from outside the square once you give a visual signal. They may follow any attacker—or you may set it up so that they may tackle only one particular (their personal) attacker. The defender who last clears a ball out of the square is the loser.

9. THE CAGE

Group the youngsters in sets of five and set up several 10-meter squares. Four of the players are attacker positioned outside the square, each with a ball. To score a point, each of the four attackers must manage to run with the ball under control through the square. The defender remains inside the square throughout the game. Call on the attackers, one after another, until they all have attacked twice. After the player inside the square has defended one on one for these eight times, players switch positions until everyone has been a defender. The player who allows fewest goals to be scored wins. As teacher or coach, you should educate the attackers waiting their turn on the sidelines around the square to spot any mistakes on the part of the defender.

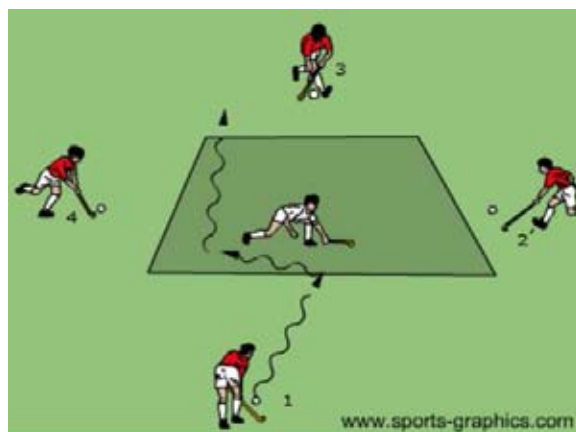


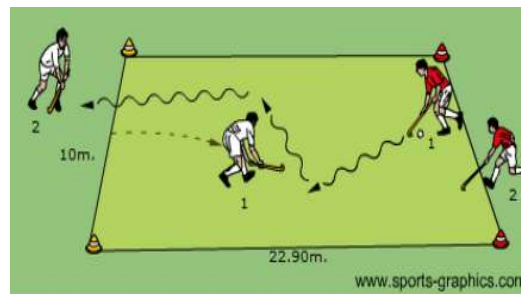


Photo: A. Wälthi

10. TACKLING IN RETREAT 1 ON 1 WITH SUBSTITUTIONS

Set up a playing field 10 meters wide by 22.90 meters long, with goals marked by the cones at the ends. Have two youngsters stationed within the field and two waiting beyond the goals on the ends of the field. The two players within the playing area face each other until one of them is able to control the ball into the opposing goal area (10 meters wide) on the end line. After a goal is scored or after the ball has run out of the field, both attackers must return to their respective goal (to rest). Meanwhile, the two substitutes step in from behind their respective goal areas and continue to play. The practice is over when one team (or one player) scored 6 goals.

The defender learns to assume a correct basic position for tackling (with the knees well bent), to keep the curve of the stick throughout the tackle on the ground and to place himself in a way that his right shoulder is opposite the right one of the attacker. This position in relation to the attacker will enable him to use his stronger forehand for tackling and to channel the attacker towards his right. He may also execute dummies with the body and the stick and switch immediately to attack once he gained complete control over the ball. Dependent on the speed and technical ability of the attacker, he gains experience in using different tackling techniques with forehand as well as with the reversed stick (lunge tackle, block tackle with the stick completely on the ground, tackling in retreat or the jab tackle).



“To cure a disease, it’s not sufficient to undergo a diagnosis. It’s imperative to look for the roots of the problem and to apply the pertinent remedies.”

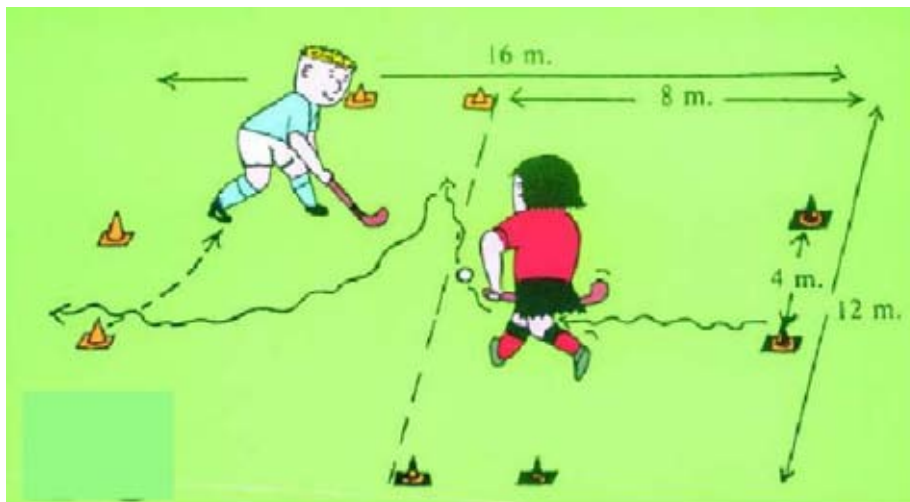
11. GAME WITH 4 GOALS

Set up a playing field as shown in the illustration, with cones set out to leave four-meter gaps. Have two youngsters at a time play in each playing area; there should be a ball for each pair that plays. They try to dribble the ball through one of two wide goals set up to the left (or right) and opposite him or her at the other end of the playing area. The coach assigns the two goals. And the player without the ball tries to defend these two goals.

When the attacker starts to dribble the ball out of his goal, the defender in the opposite goal area should react immediately, leaving it and trying to prevent the opponent from dribbling the ball through n either of the two goals you assigned him (the goal behind and the other one to his right (or left) side) . If the ball runs out of the playing area or if a goal is scored, the game resumes, but with the players switching roles.

After an infringement, the attacker is awarded a free dribble—with the defender no closer than 2 meters' distance. The defender may interfere only after the attacker resumes play. The winner is the player who scores the most goals in 10 attempts.

During the practice of this game the attacker will learn to shield the ball with his body , not to enter the reach of the defender, to penetrate always in the space less covered by opponent and use his fantasy and imagination to tease the him with feints and sudden changes of speed and direction whilst lifting his head to be able to observe and analyze perfectly the game situation.



On the other side the defender learns to condition the attacker, to force him through his body and stick position to go where he wants him to go and to improve his footwork and basic position before tackling.

Before putting this game to the test, have the two players experiment in tag games on the same field without using a ball. They should practice trying out the rules, how to get away from the opponent without getting touched , through the use of dummies and employing sudden changes of direction and speed.

***“The difference
between good and excellent is a little more effort.”***

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12. 1 ON 1 ON THE MINI-HOCKEY FIELD

Use a Mini Hockey field that is 22.90 meters by 25 to 27.50 meters, with pairs of goals set up on either end. Four children participate, forming two pairs which practice one after another the 1-on-1 situation. The game is started with a bully or with both players behind their respective end lines and the ball placed in the center of the field. The object is to prevent the opponent from scoring through dribbling the ball across the own's team goal line (each 6m.wide). Once the defense is successful, a counterattack is launched, with the former attacker tackling back. In order to encourage a defender to channel an attacker deliberately to the right or left side, you (as coach) may award fewer points for scoring a goal on the defender's right-hand side than for scoring a goal on the left-hand side (or vice versa).



5th level: Simplified games for learning to consider before tackling also the position of the team-mate or team- mates

13. ALL GAMES 1:2, 2:2, 2:3, 3:2, 3:3, etc.

(see the programs of the simplified games 2:2,3:3 and 4:4)

14. MINI HOCKEY 3:3 on 4 goals as well as the preparatory or corrective

exercises/games for Mini Hockey (and here the different games 3:1 and 3:2).

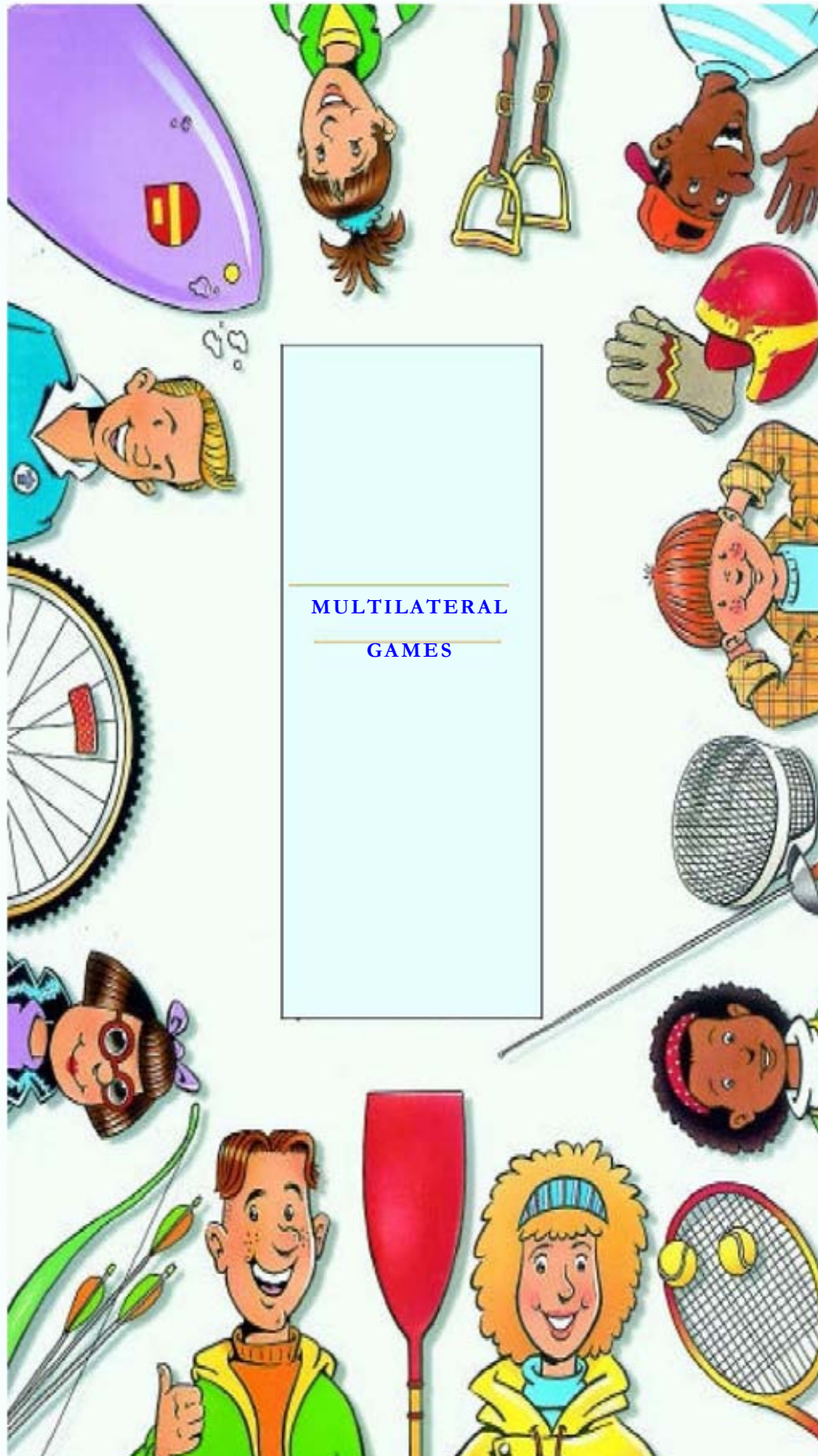
*“There is no greater power on the playing field
than the player’s intelligence.”*

C.L. Menotti

The defender should not only exercise patience and assiduously study what tackling methods lend the highest percentage of success in particular game situations but also develop these tactics:

1. **Avoid running toward and into an attacker who controls the ball**
2. **Use dummies to generate situations that give you an advantage**
3. **Carefully observe the speed and trajectory of the ball**
4. **Select the best line of approach, placing yourself closer to the goal than the attacker**
5. **Use the maximum possible flat surface of his stick including the inside and outside edge when playing with forehand or with the reverse stick),**
6. **Don't indicate through certain movements (grip or position of the curve) which method or type of tackle he is going to execute,**
7. **Vary the method or type of tackle**
8. **Avoid being flatfooted before and during the tackling**
9. **Make sure, in case of necessity, that a second or a third tackle could be executed**
10. **Keep the legs and arms bent before executing the tackle**
11. **Reduce the speed of the attacker who has complete control over the ball**
12. **Be mentally prepared to attack in case your tackling succeeds**
13. **Surprise the opponent (a slow tackle lacks surprise)**
14. **Deprive the attacker of time and space, forcing the player to make mistakes**
15. **Remain in a balanced position when defending, without crossing one leg over the other.**





THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING MULTILATERAL GAMES

The early infancy is characterized by the orderly appearance and subsequent disappearance of numerous reflexes on which later, from 8 months onwards, rudimentary movement patterns are based. During the childhood years (at the age between 2 1/2 and 5 1/2 years) competence in performing fundamental motor skills such as throwing, catching, kicking, jumping, hopping, skipping and galloping begin to develop.

When by the age of 6 years, most children are proficient enough (but not yet matured) in these fundamental motor skills they are starting during the elementary school years (ages 6 to 10) not only to use these **basic motor skills** until they **improve both qualitatively and quantitatively**, they also **learn to vary, modify and combine them into transitional motor activities** (for instance combining running with jumping, running with kicking the ball in different ways or running like a sprinter, a football or a hockey player with the ball under control).

According to the HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT MODEL children of this age should be exposed first to the "Games of basic abilities and capacities" and then follow the suggested plan step by step and in the time indicated.

On the 1st. level of formation ("Games for basic abilities and capacities") the coaches must provide the children with a proper environment and sufficient opportunities to practice and discover a great variety of motor skills prior and during their acquisition of the first hockey-specific skills.



Those who, at this stage of their development, are not exposed to a great variety of multilateral motor stimuli may encounter a proficiency barrier. Participating in and learning more complex skills could later become more difficult for them in case their fundamental skills and transitional motor activities were poorly developed. **The more the beginners progress in the acquisition of hockey-specific skills and capacities (tactics), the less time of the training session the teacher/coach is dedicated to the practice of multilateral games** in which the children vary, modify and combine their treasure of basic and transitional motor skills.

“The most powerful man is who is master of himself.”

Séneca



Generally in the first year of hockey training **more or less 50% of the beginner's program is made up by multilateral activities** in order to let the young players gain through a rich variety of stimuli experiences in motor learning. This will enable them later to learn the specific hockey techniques much quicker. Following the different levels of formation in the HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT MODEL the percentage of general-purpose exercises/games diminish in favor of a hockey-specific based program.

Like the schools offer to all pupils a wide selection of subjects to study, the formation of a young hockey player must guarantee a very rich variety of stimuli in order to achieve with the progress of time optimum performance levels of the player. Besides, thanks to the consideration of multilateral games in the hockey training and learning process, the sessions become more varied, intense and attractive for the children and furthermore ensure better learning.

In order to be able to select suitable multilateral games for the children of various age groups, a table of the sensitivity phases of the children (according to Grosser) is added.

Physical capacities to train	Age						
	5-8	8-10	10-12	12-14	14-16	16-18	18-20
Max. strength				W	M WW	MM WWW	MMM WWW
Explosive strength			W	M WW	MM WWW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW
Strength resistance				W	M WW	MM WWW	MMM WWW
Aerobic resistance		M W	M W	MM WW	MM WW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW
Anaerobic resistance				W	M WW	MM WWW	MMM WWW
Speed of reaction		M W	M W	MM WW	MM WW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW
Max. cyclical /acyclical speed			W	M WW	MM WW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW
Flexibility	MM WW	MM WW	MM WW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW	MMM WWW

Explanations:

M=male, W=female

M/W initiation with care (one or twice a week)

MM/WW training between 2 until 5 times a week

MMM/WWW performance training from this age onwards continuous training

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MUSICAL BEACONS

Ten players jog around the demarcated area and on command race for one of the 9 cones with the player not getting a cone losing a point.

GET THE UNOCCUPIED STICK

Five players stand in a circle with their feet astride their hockey stick. One player “vacates” his sticks and runs in any direction around the group of players and tries to conquer an unoccupied stick but without stepping into the inside of the circle. Whilst looking out for a free or unoccupied stick, the other 4 players cooperate, anticipate the play of the runner and run to the left or right to prevent him from getting a stick which hasn't been occupied by the four.



*“Listening is forgetting,
seeing is understanding and
practising is assimilating.”*

Chinese proverb

LEVEL-1 COMPETITIONS

Decathlon and 2-on-2 Triathlon competitions should be organized periodically as part of the training program for the very young beginners. At Level 1 youngsters are not yet ready to compete with other clubs or institutions, which might create unnecessarily stressful situations.

HOCKEY DECATHLON

The Hockey Decathlon is a simplified competition for beginners. You can also use it as a test to establish the performance level of each player compared with his or her peers. The Decathlon ensures that young players encounter the most important hockey fundamentals in real-game situations: how to execute a skill well is as important as when and where to play the ball. The following ten activities have been pulled from the "Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities".

1. THE TUNNEL

One player passes the ball alternately with his open (front) and reverse stick, through the tunnel formed by the legs of a second player who remains stationary and counts the opponent's goals scored in 30 seconds. Both players alternate their functions after 30 seconds until both have completed twice.



The winner is the player who scores the most goals in the two attempts. The exercise is repeated in the event of a draw.

Variation:

The player passes the ball alternately from outside of a 2m zone formed by 2 parallel lines through the legs of the opponent who is positioned in the center of the zone. Any pass executed from inside the area doesn't count.

Training objectives:

1. After having ensured a correct grip of both hands (attention that the left hand comes from above and grips the stick with the thumb being hidden), play the ball in a technically correct way with forehand and reverse stick.
2. Transfer slightly the weight of the body from the left foot towards the right foot in order to synchronize the movement of the ball and the stick with that of the body.
3. Do not pass the ball too hard and not too soft through the legs of the opponent in order to recover it as quickly as possible.
4. To improve footwork and keep the point of gravity relatively low to enhance quick changes of directions.

Note:

To protect the shinbone, which faces the attacker, the "defender" is asked to put his stick in front of it.

2. THE LABYRINTH

Two players start simultaneously from diametrically opposed positions outside of the labyrinth. Their task is to dribble the ball through all 8 goals of the labyrinth without leaving any out. The winner is the player who returns first, with the ball under control, to the starting point. Both players face each other twice and in case of a draw a tiebreak is played.



Training objectives:

1. To dribble the ball according to the game situation with the open (forehand) or reverse stick.
2. In order to be able to collect information raise the view (head) frequently whilst dribbling.
3. To change the direction of dribbling according to the next goal to be crossed.
4. To find the shortest route, that is, to anticipate mentally the next action.

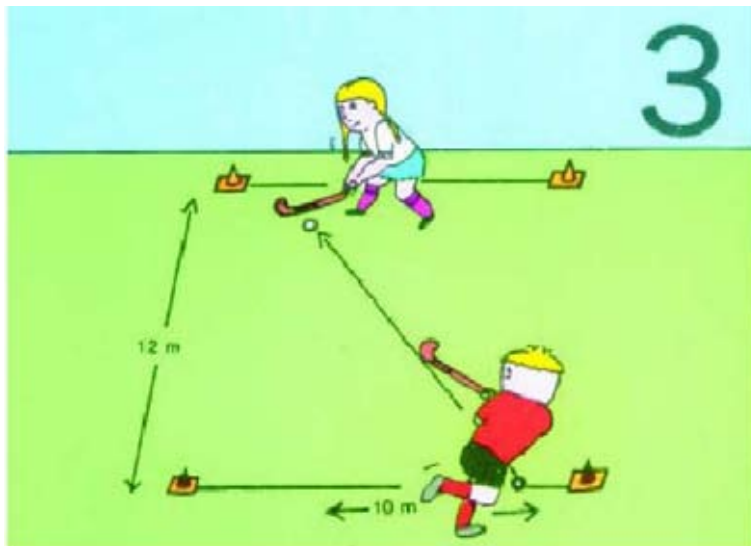
“Conditioning for winning is mainly a process of positive reinforcement.”

L. Moorhouse/L. Cross

125 page above

3. PASSING AND TRAPPING

Two players face each other at a distance of 10m. Every one defends a goal 12m wide. The first player pushes the Mini Hockey ball (100 grs.) from his goal line along the ground into the opposite goal whilst the opponent does everything to prevent him from scoring. During the pass it's compulsory to have both hands separated on the handle. After having trapped the ball or after a goal was scored, it's the turn of the second player to score.



In case of an infringement of the rules (touching the ball with one foot or with the rounded side of the curve or lifting the stick before its impact with the ball), the "offender" is penalized with a penalty shot from the center of the field. The first player to score 4 goals wins the event.

Training objectives:

1. To execute the push or slap in a technically correct way, with the curve always sweeping along the ground.
2. To learn how to disguise the direction of the pass.
3. To trap (intercept) the ball in a correct basic position with the legs sufficiently bent and using as much of the surface of the stick as possible.
4. To intercept the ball in motion with either forehand or the reverse stick (low or horizontal position when the ball is running smoothly along the ground or high or vertical position of the stick when the ball bounces).
5. To anticipate or to read the direction of the pass of the opponent.

"It's a widely accepted fact that improvement in performance is partially related to the quality of the feedback given to the players after having completed a determined play."

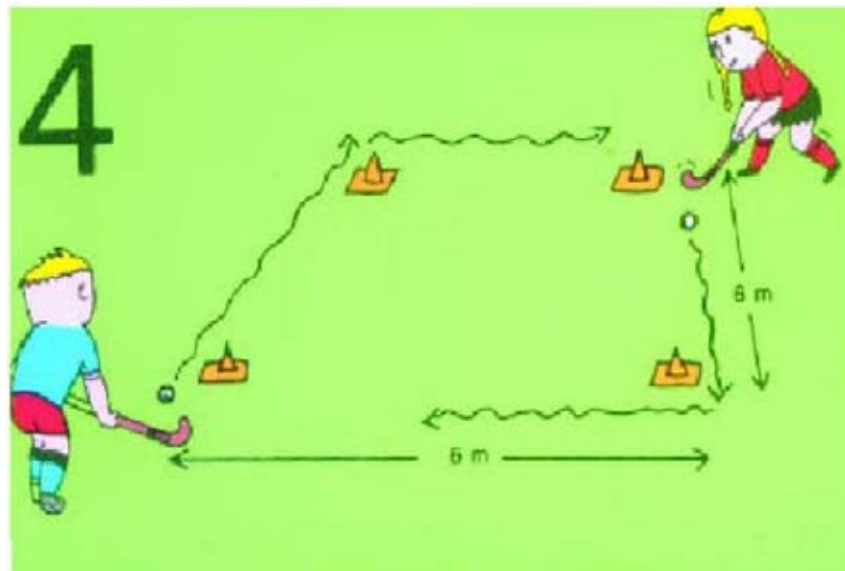
D. Millmann

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4. AROUND THE SQUARE

In a square with 6m sides, two players start at the same time from opposite corners, each dribbles a ball in a clockwise direction along the perimeter of the square. The winner is the player who completes two clockwise circuits and stops the ball with the reverse stick at the starting point. Both players have two goes, and if the result is a draw there is a play-off.

After the competition the teacher stimulates the players with several questions about the most efficient use of different dribble techniques to achieve the desired objective.



Variation:

- The players dribble the ball once around the square and then run with it in the opposite direction to reach their starting point before the opponent can achieve it.

Training objectives:

1. To dribble the ball at speed without losing control of it in spite of several changes of direction.
2. Use the appropriate technique of dribbling when dribbling on a straight line (forehand) and when changing direction close to a cone (only one touch with the reverse stick).
3. When changing the direction of the dribble, first lower the center of gravity and then push the body with a full extension of the outside leg into the new direction. At the same time the ball is played either with the reverse or the open stick.

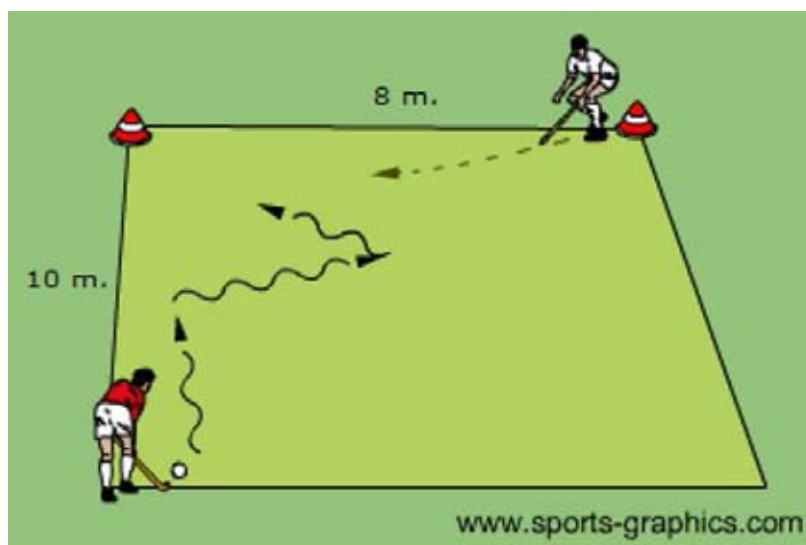
"You learn best by doing rather than just listening"

D. Millmann

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5. THE TACKLE

One attacker dribbles his ball from a position 10 meters in front of a 8 meter wide cone goal with the objective to control it on the goal line despite the efforts of an active defender who starts his defence always from any one of the two cones which establish the goal. Once the attacker touches the ball the defender is allowed to leave his disadvantageous position at one cone and assume a better position inside the cone goal. While dribbling the ball, the attacker tries to make use of the space and penetrates after having perceived it with a quick change of speed and also change of direction. Every player has 5 attacks and has to defend the goal 5 times.



In this test the defender should make sure of having at least two opportunities to tackle. If he fails with his first tackle (ideally in a side-on position), he must quickly recover his basic ready-position with his stick being always on the ground.

Training objectives:

1. To look out for the best line of approach in order to position yourself as defender in such a way that you can tackle the attacker with success.
2. Before executing the tackle, assume an optimal basic ready-position (side-on-position) with the knees sufficiently bent which allows you to tackle in retreat with more than one tackle.
3. To learn to execute a lunge or a jab tackle with speed and surprise for the opponent in the best moment when the ball is away from the attacker's stick.
4. To make feints with the body or the stick before making a decisive move.
5. To anticipate the opponent's move, that is, the direction in which his ball is played.
6. To recover quickly the basic position for tackling in order to be able to tackle a second or third time.
7. To observe attentively, as an attacker, the preparation and execution of the opponent's tackle so as to move the ball out of his range of action.

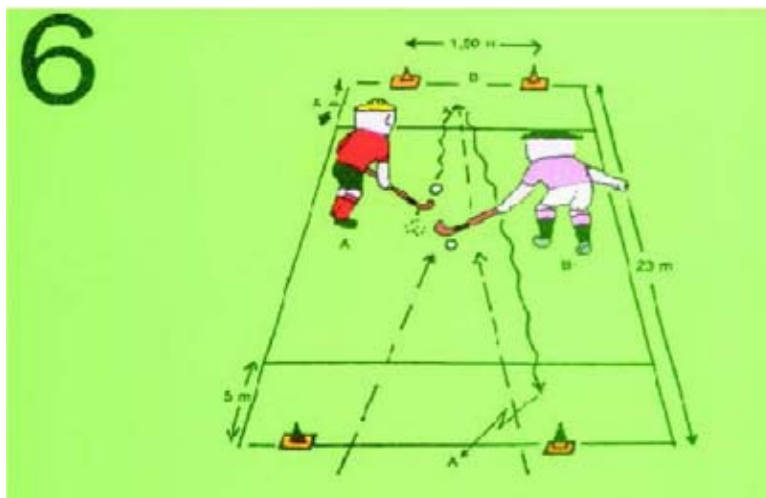
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6. THE CHALLENGE

Two players meet on the same goal line, one at the right post and the other at the left, inside a 1.50m wide goal. When they are given a visual signal, they both run towards a ball placed in the center point of the field. The first player to take possession of it must dribble it into the opponent's shooting zone and score. Whilst the player at the left post (cone) tries to score at the far goal, the player at the right post, once in possession of the ball, must dribble it into the goal from which he started.

If these rules are broken in midfield, the "offender" resumes the game without the ball, from a distance of 1/2 m behind the attacker. If the defender infringes the rules in his own shooting zone, he gets penalized with a penalty stroke executed with a push, slap or flick from the center of the field through the empty goal of the opponent.

Each time a goal is scored or the ball leaves the field over an end line, the two players change switch their places at the start. The winner is the first player to score two goals.



Training objectives

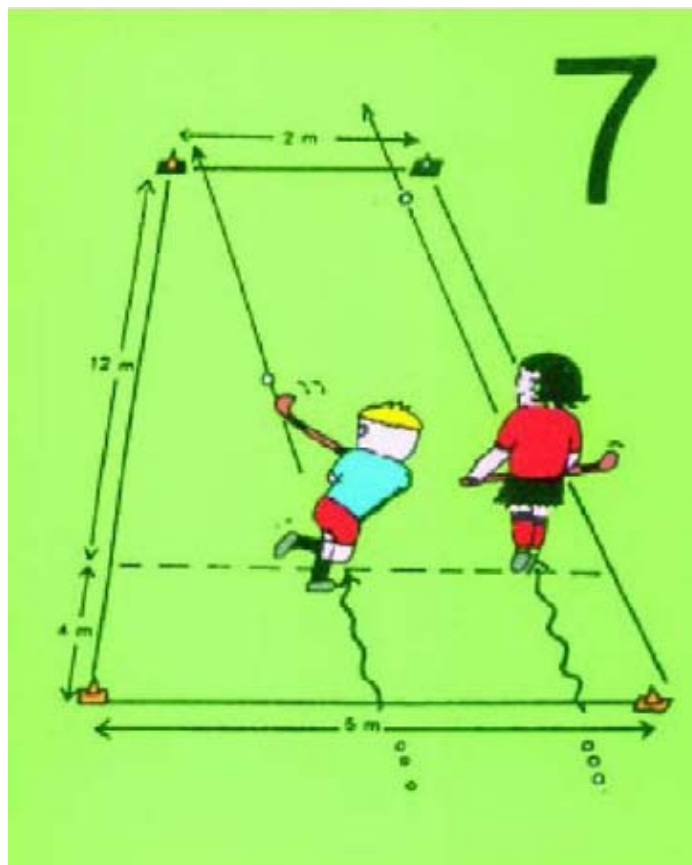
1. To run quickly on to the ball with only the right hand gripping the center of the stick in order to gain the best position to play the ball first.
2. To dribble and keep possession of the ball against an opponent defending from behind.
3. To defend from behind or from a sideways position in relation to the attacker.
4. To score in spite of the presence of an opponent.
5. To ensure a quick transition from attacking to defending and vice-versa.
6. To execute an accurate pass when a penalty stroke is awarded.
7. Not to dribble the ball into the range of the defender.

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7. QUICK GOALS

Two players, each in possession of a ball, set off after having recognized a visual signal. They have to dribble their ball beyond a 4m-line and sweep, slap or push it at a goal (only 2m wide), which was set up 12m away from them. When shooting, the player may choose either technique or the coach can demand a particular one or even oblige a beginner to pass the ball with both hands being separated on the stick.

The first player who manages to pass his ball between the goal-posts (after crossing the 4m-line) scores a point. The winner is the player who scores the highest number of points in 5 competitions.



Training objectives

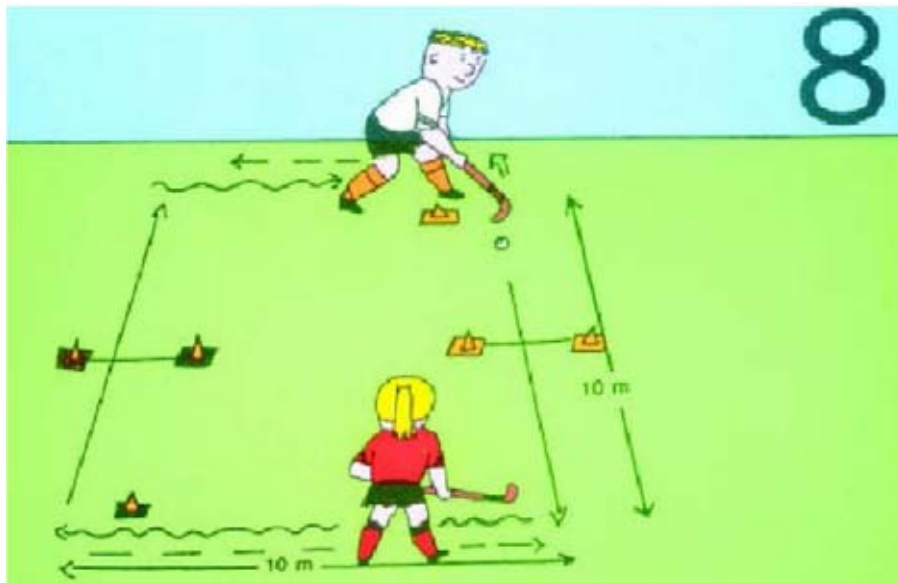
1. To accelerate from a stationary position with the ball.
2. To combine two basic technical moves, such as the dribble in front of the body and executing a push or slap in a side-on position (for advanced players also in a frontal position), quickly and with good synchronization of movements.
3. To execute the push or slap not only quickly and accurately, but also with explosive power so that the ball travels through the goal first, faster than that of the opponent.
4. To lower the center of gravity before passing the ball so as to make sure better accuracy and also more speed.

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8. REVERSE STICK PASSING

After dribbling the ball for 10m, the player must push it on the move through a wide goal (1-1.5m). Goals scored with the stationary ball are not considered valid. After the pass, the player returns to his starting point and waits 5m behind the second goal to receive the next pass of the second player who does the same as the first one.

The winner is the first player to score five goals with the ball being on the move. The distances may be altered depending on the performance level of the player involved.



Training objectives:

1. To ensure accuracy when passing with the reverse stick.
2. When passing with the reverse stick, don't lift the curve before the impact of the ball with the stick. This could lead to inaccuracy of the pass and besides could give the opponent information about the moment and the direction of your pass.

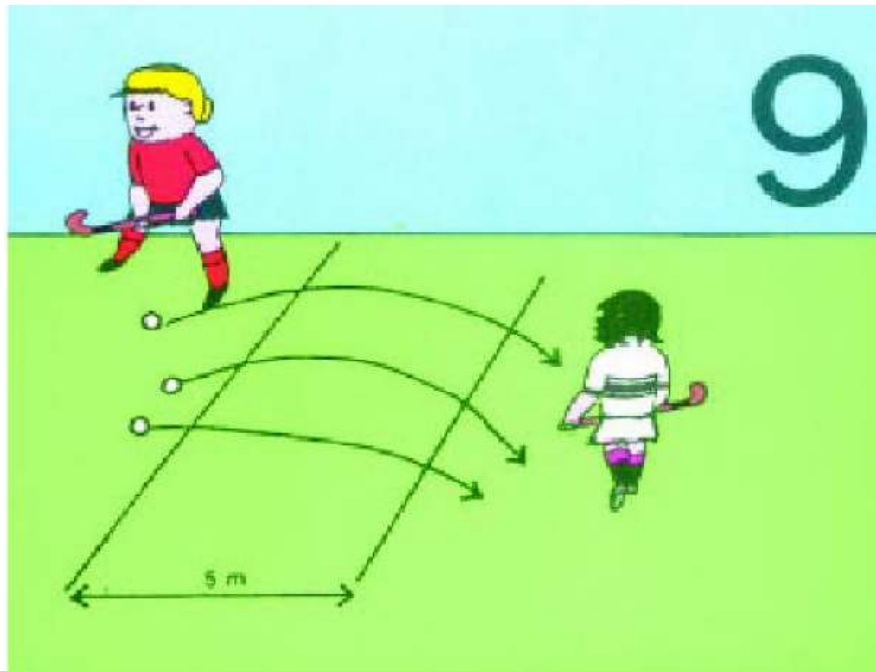
"If any Hockey club or school or coach in charge of developing youth hockey sets an unreasonable high level of performance as a standard, both construct a formula for failure. The best performance and learning comes from an objective analysis of the real playing capacity of young players, and an adjustment of expectations to reality."

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9. FLICK OVER THE RIVER

Two players are separated by a neutral zone between 5m and 10m wide (dependant on their performance level in the flick). None is allowed to enter the zone. The younger player is given first three balls which he has to flick one after another over the "river" in such a way that none of them drop between the two parallel lines. Then it's the other player's turn.

The winner is the first player to execute three consecutive valid "flicks over the river", unless the other player achieves the same result in the same turn. In this case there is a play-off for which the "river" is made wider.

**Training objectives:**

1. To execute a flick with the correct technique over a distance of between 5 and 10m.

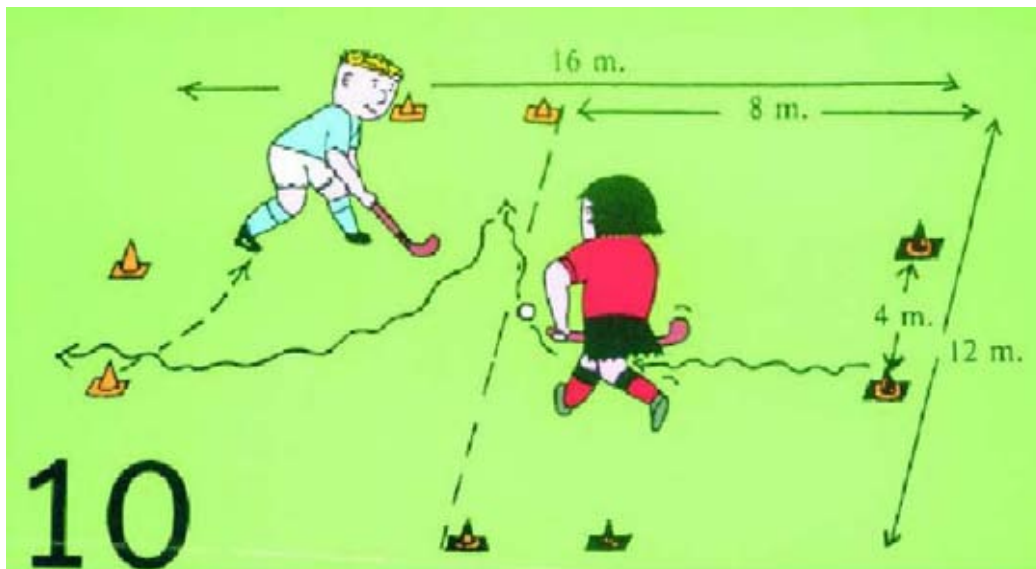
***"If at first you don't succeed
you are doing about average."***

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10. GAME WITH FOUR GOALS

The aim of each player is to score a goal, controlling the ball in one of the two wide goals set up to his left (right) and at the opposite end. The player without the ball defends his two goals, that is to say, one goal behind him and another to his right (left). The attacker starts the game. The defender in the opposite goal reacts, leaves his goal and tries to prevent the attacker from scoring in either of the two goals assigned to him. When the ball goes off field or when a goal is scored, the game is resumed as already described, but the players change roles. After an infringement of one player, the other is awarded a free dribble with the defender at a distance of at least 3m. He may only interfere when the attacker resumes play and touches the ball (see next page).

The winner is the player who scores the most goals in 3 minutes (or two 3-minute periods).



Training objectives:

1. While dribbling the ball, look up to be able to observe and analyze the opponent's position and play.
2. To learn not to dribble the ball into the reach of the defender.
3. By dribbling the ball to one side, to force the defender to move into that direction, and then enter the space thus created with a sudden change of speed and direction.
4. To improve the technique of changing speed and direction with the ball.
5. As defenders, to learn to force the attacker to dribble the ball into a desired space.

“With his exercises and games the coach should guarantee a simplification which enables the player to transfer to the real game.”

Rules modifications for more advanced players:

1ST. TEST:

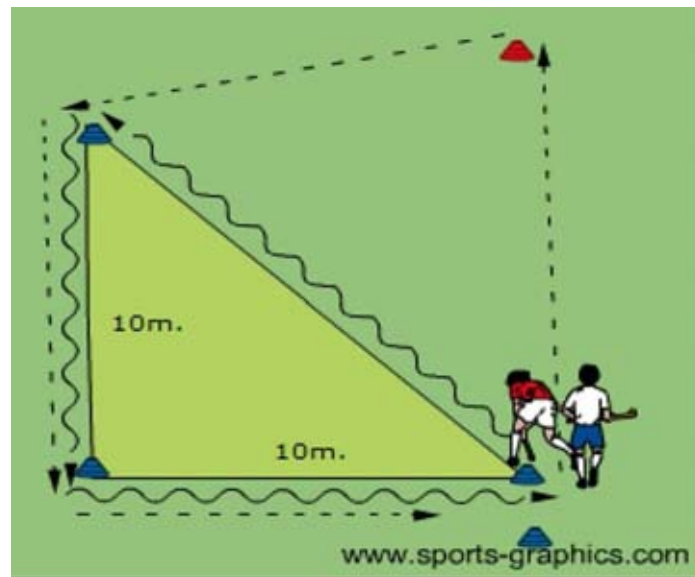
See the variation of "THE TUNNEL". The winner is the player who, in 30 seconds, passes the ball most times through the separated legs and across two parallel lines which form a 2m wide zone. The ball has to be touched alternately with forehand and reverse, without being played inside the 2m zone.

4TH. TEST:

Two players start at the same time. The one who is in control of the ball must dribble it along a triangular route keeping to the outside. Meanwhile, his opponent without the ball must run around the field marked by the four cones with the aim of chasing the attacker and touching his ball before he can dribble it into the cone goal.

Each player has two turns as attacker and two as defender. Once the ball is dribbled in a clockwise and once in an anti-clockwise direction. Whilst defending, the players learn to wait for the exact moment to tackle without touching the opponent's stick.

The winner is the player who manages the greater number of times to keep possession of the ball until he gets to the starting point.



*"A superior player looks for virtuosity,
a vulgar one thinks of convenience and ease."*

Confucius

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8TH. TEST:

After dribbling the ball quickly over a distance of 10m, the player hits the moving ball with sufficient speed through a 2m wide goal placed on his left at a distance of 15m. For every goal scored a point is awarded. The younger player starts the test. In the second leg the players compete in the accurate hit towards the right ("sweep hit" or "reverse sweep slap" with the edge of the stick).

To win the test a player has to score more goals than his opponent.

**9TH.TEST:**

Each of the two players has three balls. After a visible signal is given, each dribbles his first ball from a position 8m away from the 22.90m line. Before touching the line (no crossing is allowed), the player flicks his ball from any distance over the 22.90m zone. Once the flick was executed, he returns to fetch the next ball.

The winner is the player, who first master 3 consecutive flicks over the 22.90m wide area.

"The only way to make successful athletes is through struggle. The best comes from difficulties."

Organizing the Decathlon

There are various possibilities for organizing a decathlon competition. Two of the best options are to structure the decathlon as either a 2-day or 10-day competition.

Two-day competition: an unlimited number of participants run through five tests each day. You can organize the games so that the decathlon is an individual competition or a team competition. To create an **individual competition**, choose between these options:

1. In each test a player meets a different opponent. Players draw lots to choose the pairings for each of the 10 tests. The winner of the decathlon challenge is the player who wins the most tests. If there is a draw between two or more players, use Test 10 or Test 2 as a tiebreaker.
2. In each test a player meets the same opponent. The coach or teacher checks on the pairs to ensure that two players of very similar technical, tactical, physical, and constitutional level face each other in all 10 tests. The winner of the decathlon challenge is the player who wins the most tests against his personal opponent.

In a **team competition**, two teams (clubs or schools) compete, both with the same number of players. In each event, a player from one team meets a player from the other team, changing opponents for each of the 10 tests. The winning team is the one that wins the most tests.

Ten-day competition: only one of the 10 tests will be organized during each training session, and the winner will be sought from among all the participants. If there are fewer than 7 participants, have them all compete against each other until the winner is established. If there are between 8 and 14 participants, divide them into two groups, the winners of which meet in the final.

If there are 16 or more players, a knockout tournament is organized, and both the winners and the losers play their final rounds.



A. Wälthi

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Introducing Each Event

To introduce one of the 10 tests in the training session for the beginners do the following:

1. First prepare the playing area and select two players for demonstration. Then explain step by step the rules of the game (test), slowly demonstrating how the game develops, until all players are clear about the rules. Ask several questions to the players to be sure that the rules are understood and everybody knows how to win the test. Finally, a full demonstration of the test takes place.
2. Give all players the opportunity to practice with a chosen partner for three to five minutes to gain experience in the game (test).
3. After the practice, the beginners should explain in a short dialogue with you their first experiences for winning the test.
4. As coach, you should select who is playing against whom and where (what playing area) their first competition will occur.
5. The first competition takes place.
6. Discuss why one player won and the other lost the first game or test. Discover together the reasons for the win or loss.
7. Use a couple of corrective exercises to isolate an important aspect of the test (for instance the technique and tactics of tackling in the 1-on-1 situation, different dribbling techniques) that adversely affected the performance of the players. Then help the children practice that aspect.
8. Second competition takes place (the winners play against the winners, and the losers play the consolation round).
9. Together with the young players, work out the necessary skills and capacities to win the test. The aim is for all players to have a complete understanding of what to do in every moment of undergoing the competition test (game). That is why one or two more corrective exercises should be practiced to help to overcome any deficiencies observed in the beginners. Sometimes taking one step backward can be the best way to advance.
10. Third competition takes place to establish the most skillful players in this test.

2-ON-2 TRIATHLON

The triathlon competition focuses on different basic, collective situations of the hockey game. Players experiment not only with how to pass, dribble, receive, or tackle but also with when, where, and why to do it, always considering the play of another teammate as well as one or two defenders. By practicing the three simplified games here, players learn to read the situations and react accordingly, despite the increasing complexity of the games. The following figure shows how a triathlon competition can be organized. In this example the different teams designated as Europe compete against the teams designated as Africa until a winner is decided. You can use the blank spaces next to each triathlon game to record scores.

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COMPETITION FOR TEAMS FORMED BY 2 PLAYERS:**EUROPE AGAINST AFRICA**

Teams	ITALY	GERMANY	BELGIUM	WALES	ENGLAND	SPAIN
Names of players						

Teams	Sth AFRICA	KENYA	ZIMBAWE	GHANA	TANZANIA	EGYPT
Names of players						

1st GAME: TWO AGAINST ONE WITH COUNTERATTACK (4x2 min.)

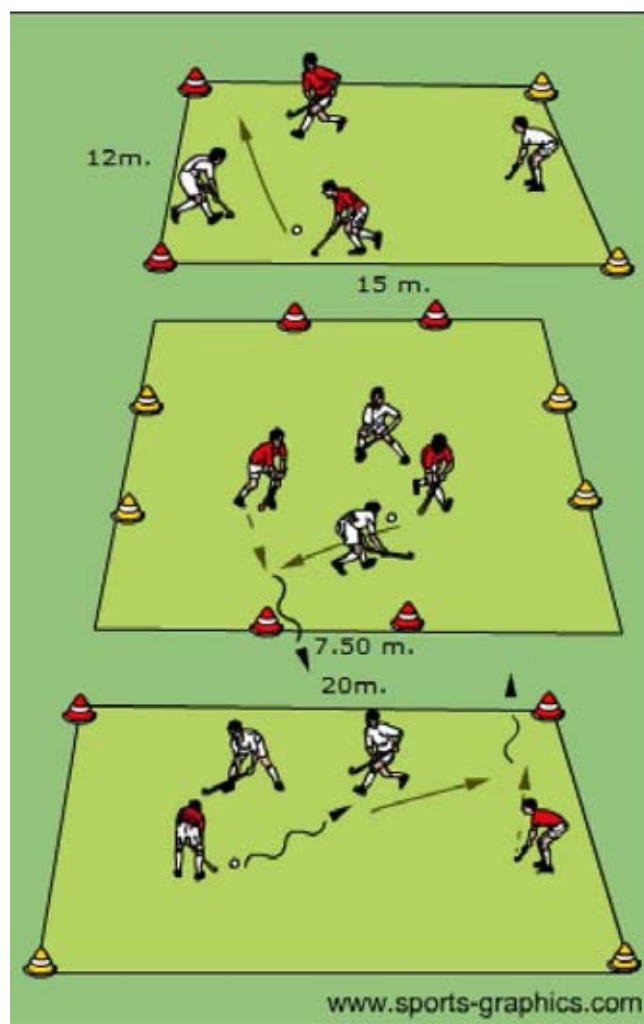
Match	Result
ITA – KEN	
GER – ZIM	
BEL – EGY	
GAL – GHA	
ESP – TAN	
ENG – RSA	

2nd GAME: 2vs.1 WITH 4 INTERSECTING GOALS (3x3min.)

Match	Result
ITA - ZIM	
GER - EGY	
BEL - GHA	
GAL - TAN	
ESP - RSA	
ENG - KEN	

3rd GAME: TWO AGAINST TWO WITH TWO WIDE GOALS (3x3min.)

Match	Result
ITA - EGY	
GER - GHA	
BEL - TAN	
GAL - RSA	
ESP - KEN	
ENG - ZIM	

**FINAL RESULT:**

(sum of victories)

EUROPE against AFRICA

— : —

TECHNICAL DELEGATE:

2 on 1 with counterattack

- During the two minutes of play for each trial, two players alternately attack the 12-meter-wide goals defended by one opponent.
- After a successful defense, the ball is passed by the opponent to the other defender at the opposite goal, who tries to score.
- After having lost the ball, the attackers should tackle back in their own half of the playing area.
- To score a player must dribble the ball across the opponent's goal line.
- After two minutes, switch the attackers with the defenders.
- Free hits or dribbles should be executed no less than 3 meters from the end line or centerline.
- Playing time: 4 times, 2 minute each trial, for 8 minutes.

2 on 2 with four intersecting goals

- The field should have four goal areas, each 7.5 meters wide.
- Each team attacks the two goals assigned to it and defends the other two.
- Free hits and free dribbles should be executed no less than 3 meters away from the goal lines.
- To score, the ball has to be dribbled across one of the opposing goals.
- Playing time: 3 times, 3 minute each trial, with 1 minute's rest in between trials.

2 on 2 with two wide goals

- Set up the field to be 15 meters in length and the goal cones to be 20 meters (width) apart.
- Free kicks or free dribbles should be taken from no less than 3 meters' distance from the goal line.
- To score, the player must have the ball under control in the goal area.
- Playing time: 3 trials of 3 minutes, with rest intervals of 1 minute between trials.

NOTE: It's not permitted to change the composition of any team during the competition in the TRIATHLON 2 on 2.

"Because o the fact that today we are all getting used more and more to instant food,instant photos, instant transmission of information and soon, people also start to expect instant success."

Zig Ziglar

The basic game situations of Level 1 provide children with a solid foundation. Having played and practiced these games, the young players have had adequate stimuli to make their training both effective and enjoyable: they are starting out on the right foot. Coaches can continue to build on this foundation by exposing their players to the simplified games in the next chapter—Level 2.



“There is a little to be gained, and much to be lost, by attempting to force young players into the full game before they are physiologically, biomechanically and cognitively ready for the activity. One of the fundamental goals of teaching is to ensure that every player has a high level of success. Therefore we need to access the development readiness of the players in each group.”

David Hemery in ‘the Pursuit of sporting excellence’

Games for Mini - Hockey

Level 2



THE DEVELOPMENT OF GAME INTELLIGENCE IN HOCKEY – A NEED FOR ACHIEVING TOP PERFORMANCES

Each epoch is characterized by certain tendencies or fashions. This applies not only to music, medicine, fashion but also to hockey.

While teaching and coaching hockey was orientated **in the early 50's and 60's mainly on improving technical skills**. I personally shifted with great success **from the mid 60's onward** this tendency toward the importance of **more tactical knowledge to overcome the long supremacy of the technical superior teams of India and Pakistan**. Besides I used at the same time a different system of play, different to the pyramid system 5:3:2:1, played by everyone around the world. The use of a covering sweeper who allowed his defenders in front to mark their opponents very closely (which often caused "obstruction", a former infringement of the rules) became a fashion all over Europe we smashed India for the first time ever 3:0 in Berlin in 1967. Already at that time the shirt numbers of the players were not selected any more depending on their position on the field and, instead of being a specialist for a particular position and playing mainly in a restricted area of the field, the allround player was born in the last phase of grass hockey.

The more hockey was played on artificial turf **from 1975** onward another aspect of the top performance of a hockey player became obvious and received more attention, without neglecting the importance of the technical and tactical training. I refer to the **physical preparation of the hockey player**, an aspect which had been underestimated by many countries in the time of grasshockey in which the ball was not played more than 26 until 28 minutes during a 70 minutes game. But due to the increased use of artificial turfs and an increase of effective playing time a different and more physical game evolved and optimal physical performance levels became more and more a must for any team hoping for outstanding results. In the last decade of the former century hockey developed further and new techniques and tactics evolved (mainly developed by Germany, the Netherlands and Australia, countries which interpreted best the many modifications of the rules) but none of them has influenced coaching as much as a new tendency which characterized the continuous successes of Germany in the first decade of the new millennium.

Today, to become World Champions or an Olympic winners it's necessary to develop and dispose of complete hockey players with a competitive attitude, an excellent technical ability, a high physical fitness level, a wide tactical knowledge and, last not least, with help of a mental trainer an optimal mental fitness.

*„The correct comprehension of a game situation
is the origin of all actions of any player on the field.“*

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The dominance of Germany in World Hockey within the first decade of the new century with 2 World Cup titles and a gold medal in the Olympic Games in Beijing may explain what Germany did but other teams haven't done. It became obvious to the author during the World Cup Final 2002 in Malaysia when everyone considered Australia, after having smashed the Netherlands in the semi final, as future World Champions. With the surprising win of Germany a new tendency arised which since then has influenced our hockey teaching and coaching and probably will do so in the years to come until the Olympic Hockey Tournament in London in 2012.

It is the **game intelligence** in hockey, that driving force which influences the performance level of any player and team more than any other quality. For me there is no greater power on the field than the game intelligence. As it allows a player to recognize and adapt to the ever changing situations on the pitch quickly in the high pressure atmosphere of the match it makes sure to reduce the amount of mistakes or ball losses to a maximum. As game intelligence is already an important criteria in evaluating the performance level of each player it needs more attention in the future learning and teaching process of hockey.



But the development of the intellectual capacities of youth and adult hockey players is still in its infancy, largely due to the authoritarian teaching style preferred by the vast majority of trainers and coaches to shape and coach their players.

The frequent instructions and hints that the players receive from the sideline before a game and during its development are not sufficient to take the game to a higher level.

The only way to improve the standard of play in the medium and long term is to, among other things, start a systematic development of thinking and tactical awareness from a very early age with the emphasis on a progressive stimulation of their perceptive and intellectual capacities. As the player's ball skills get better and better, he should also perfect his knowledge and thinking, not only developing his muscles and tendons but also his brain.

„In hockey an ounce of intelligence is worth more than a pound of muscles“

It is well known that practicing, experimenting and observing gives any child a wide variety of different experiences. Going one step further and using and interpreting these experiences leads to a correct behavior pattern when faced with different situations both in life and in hockey. **But if nobody guides the child and helps him to interpret his proper experiences, he will never reach his full potential, either in life or in hockey.** What he needs is the experience of an adult, to offer advice, to question almost everything and to give examples. This is not only true for everything the child experiences, for example in school or with the family, but also as far as the development of his overall performance is concerned. As soon as possible, depending on the technical level of the player, all youngsters should be exposed during training to simplified games to gain first-hand knowledge and tactical experiences about the correct way to acquire tactical habits. The more knowledge the youngster acquires, the better! But subjective experiences alone are not enough! The acquisition of experiences and knowledge is much better when it is a result of a well-proven pedagogical process where the coach uses questions and demonstrations to unlock the development of experiences and knowledge, so that they are clearly understood.

Stimulation, encouragement or advice, an explanation or demonstration by the coach, together with the appropriate number of repetitions of the same game situation and subsequently the transfer of the solution to other similar situations that occur in the game forms a solid foundation in the young hockey player's mind for developing his game intelligence.

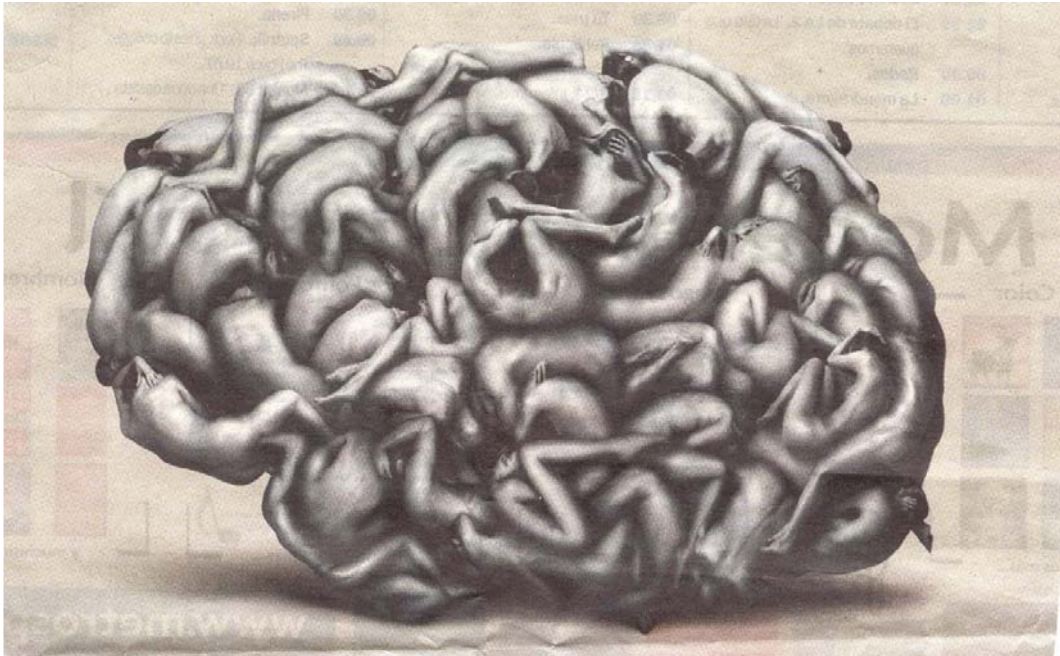
Intelligence must be developed mainly through the global and not the analytic method, exposing the players to a series of technical-tactical simplified games such as 3 v 1, 2 v 1 or 3 v 2. Depending on the simplified game, each player has to face and resolve a series of problems which should be shaped perfectly to his physical, technical and mental capacities. A great variety progressive exercises and games are proposed in this publication which will help to develop step by step the youngster's tactical thinking and awareness until he has discovered himself, with the coach as a guide, a great variety of solutions for almost every situation that he may confront in a hockeygame. It doesn't matter if the solution was discovered thanks to the frequent repetition of a similar situation in training or due to his imagination, creativity and spontaneity. The important thing is that the player has been able to understand and read the situation and resolve the problem successfully.

The ability to quickly and efficiently vary a previously learned skill is only possible when the player has been exposed to a systematic development of his intellectual capacity from a very early age right through to top performance level.

Good perception, a vital requirement for any player, followed by a correct interpretation and comprehension of the game situation and the ability to make good decisions culminates in a good technical execution of the mentally prepared move. All these phases of the playing action must be coached over a period of years in order to be able to raise the performance level of any player.

„Too often we neglect that besides technical competence and physical conditioning the achievement of top performance is conditioned by a systematic and progressive development of perception skills and cognition (understanding of the game), two aspects which up to now have been underestimated in the coaching process of too many teams.“

What does game intelligence mean?



In hockey, every position in the team or task to perform requires a specific type of intelligence. The one required of a goalkeeper is totally different to that of a central defender or a front-line attacker as the problems are not resolved in the same way in defense or in attack or inside the pitch or only in front of the goal.

The intelligence of a player should be considered as the real driving force behind his performance. Often, the difference between one hockey player and another is the level of intelligence he demonstrates in the game. His intelligence explains his success.

A high level in hockey is only possible when making constant use of game intelligence. Neither a player who is physically fit and technically proficient but without an alert mind or intelligence nor one who is capable of resolving problems mentally but is unable to transfer his brilliant ideas into actions which benefit his team can be considered a complete player.

Unlocking and developing systematically a hockey player's game intelligence is still beyond the knowledge of many coaches and teachers.

Unfortunately there is no literature yet about developing this important aspect either in hockey or in other sports and few coaches are prepared to modify their coaching style which is an important prerequisite for being able to stimulate game intelligence.

The continuous commands and instructions given by most coaches before, during and after the match prevent most of the players from using their intelligence. Instead of confronting the players in training with a great variety of problems to be resolved, they receive day by day the solutions to the problems from the coach to which they have to obey. This rigid and authoritarian coaching style doesn't develop intelligent players with awareness and responsibility.

To get more intelligent players on the pitch in the future, coaches need to stimulate more and instruct less. Instead of being instructors on the hockey pitch, they should become consultants, guides or organizers of information, knowing how to complement the teaching of technical skills with the accumulation of game specific knowledge, thus achieving significant learning!

Developing game intelligence in any hockey player implies teaching him to:

- read the game and understand what is happening on the pitch (for which a certain level of perception, knowledge and experience is necessary),
- draw on past experiences when confronting any given situation to come to a correct decision,
- execute with an appropriate skill level, and quickly, the previously thought solution.

Apart from being able to 'read' the situation in the game, an intelligent player can anticipate how the play is likely to develop thanks to the information previously processed. The ability to anticipate, which is always the result of good perception and decision making, is a significant tool for intelligent players.

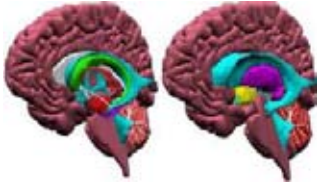
To be able to focus maximum attention on his problem or task at hand and decide quickly and intelligently about his next move, his technical skills should have been consolidated and automated beforehand. Doing so, the quality of his game will be raised and the player will perform at a higher level. *It is necessary to make intelligence work for hockey in order to achieve a better game!*

Nobody is born with a high level of game intelligence in hockey, but to develop their innate potential, players must be exposed daily to a varied and progressive training program with simplified games. They are an ideal tool to unlock and not only develop game intelligence in any player, but also will hone his technical and tactical skills. A varied and progressive training program with simplified games is the best way to develop and improve intelligence in hockey step by step.



„Game intelligence helps performers translate their technical abilities and physical fitness into an effective performance. “

How does a hockey player's intelligence manifest itself on the field?



An intelligent player:

- generally chooses the best option in less time
- not only looks for the best solution to the problem he is confronted with on the pitch by quickly prioritizing all the various alternatives, but also calculates the risk factors involved. He rarely loses focus until he has resolved the situation.
- knows in any moment of the match how to give the adequate speed to the ball and to the rhythm of his team .
- is never rushed and feels secure and confident when performing a particular move anywhere on the pitch. He controls with his eyes all the space around him, in front, behind and to either side, taking full advantage of both very limited space and wide-open spaces! He always appears to have time. He knows that rushing and doing things too quickly tends to produce errors.
- always tries to achieve a balance between taking risks and safety. Too much risk could mean losing the ball or even the match, while playing without any risk rarely helps to turn the match to your favor. He is brave enough to take risks!
- stands out because he can adapt to the ever-changing situations in the game, to the referee, to his teammates , to his opponents and to the pitch and weather conditions.
- knows that things do not always come off. This is why his performance level rarely dips after making a mistake or two or three in a row.
- knows when and where to pass the ball or when it is better to keep possession.
- has good optical - motor assessment or spatial awareness. Assesses correctly the distances between him and his teammates and the opposition or to the lines of the pitch and the location of the goals, acquired through many years of practice with simplified games which also sharpened his decision making capacities.
- keeps it simple. Only a master, an outstanding player, can play simply.
- knows what he is going to do with the ball before he even receives and controls it.
- uses his creativity to the benefit of his team and teammates.

"There is no greater power on the field than the players' intelligence."

- only does what is within his capabilities.
- is a player who contributes all his qualities for the good of his team. A hockey player who doesn't use his intelligence to serve his teammates around him will never succeed in the game because he will then tend to perceive only a portion of the whole game, seeing plays completely isolated and not in context with the whole. This type of player doesn't see everything that is taking place on the pitch.
- frequently asks questions and quickly learns from his mistakes. He is good at memorizing a great variety of plays and reproducing them.
- knows how to play hockey, especially without the ball, constantly making himself available for his teammates to which he offers possible solutions to many situations that arise on the pitch.
- .
- knows how to pace himself throughout a game. His experience allows him to make appropriate decisions such as when to run or when it is a waste of energy.
- is not affected by stress, knowing that a high level of stress tends to narrow his focus and perception capacity and also influences his decision making negatively. This explains why sometimes key players do not make positive contributions in decisive matches. The pressure nullifies their usually intelligent play.



Photo: A. Wälthi

"As hockey is largely a cognitive game it is advisable to focus learning on constructing a significant knowledge database, achieved by a balanced interaction between player, coach and situations in context."

Eduardo de la Torre (1998)

Toward a different style of teaching and coaching young players

During a hockey game players face a succession of more than a hundred problems that they must solve as best they can. They must correctly observe and analyze each particular game situation to make wise decisions about these problems.

Once the decision is taken, they must quickly carry out the appropriate technique without any loss of time. The speed in the decision-making process and in the execution of the skill frequently distinguishes skilled players from less talented or capable ones.

Spectators and journalists often explain the poor performance of young players by pointing to a lack of experience. Too often, this missing experience is because the players have not been given sufficient opportunities in the learning process to read the game and respond to different game situations. Furthermore, in the beginning years of hockey many young players have faced competitions that were too complex and didn't allow them to gain valuable experience. **A coach too often forgets in training sessions that hockey is played against opponents and, to a large extent, those opponents condition the players' next moves.**



Photo: F.Wälthi

The traditional methods of using repetitive practices of passing, receiving, or shooting drills that don't involve any opposition players have failed to take into account the contextual and cognitive nature of the game. They have tended to coach mainly "how to do it" and neglected "when to" and "why" do it. Instead of spending excessive practice time on controlling, passing, or recovering the ball, coaches should dedicate at least half of the time on understanding the game. It's essential to choose, especially when working with youths older than 10 years of age, methods that don't give priority to technique! Instead of copying and obeying the instructions of the coach, players should learn to understand, then solve on their own the different problems in the context of a simplified game.

Unfortunately, the decision making all too often remains with the coach, who continues to confront young players with stereotyped practices that don't demand an active participation of the right hemisphere of the brain (Thorpe, Bunker, Almond 1988). Instead of continuing to concentrate on predictable practices, which doesn't help the players learn to **cope with the unpredictability of game play**, youth coaches should present the game to children as early as possible in order to allow them to enjoy and understand it. They will thereby stimulate such important capacities as vision, creativity, imagination, decision making, and anticipation.

Acquiring these and other important playing capacities doesn't come from practicing just isolated skills, but rather through also participating in simple game situations in which players can learn to respond to the cognitive and physical demands of the game. The coach continuously modifies the rules and the conditions of the simplified game to ensure that all players gain an insight into the game they play. Assuredly, the simplified game preserves the contextual nature of the full game, but without placing too great a technical demand on players still in the early stage of their playing careers.

The following table reveals the advantages and disadvantages of using the analytical method of coaching (concentrating on technique) or the global method of coaching (focusing on real game situations). It is clear that for success both methods must be used in balance.



“The genuine coach generates ideas and opens the mind of his players. His far-reaching task is to let the others think, instead of thinking for them.”

ANALYTICAL VERSUS GLOBAL METHOD

	Analytical method	Global method
Characteristics	Presents one isolated aspect of the game that mainly considers the execution of a technique.	Simulates situations of the real game that are determined by the play of the opponents, the team-mates and the ball carrier.
Advantages	The coach has no difficulty in improving the few aspects that are fundamental to performance of the task. Training this way achieves quick, satisfactory results. It's easy to repeat the same situation again and again until success is ensured.	The coach focuses not only on technical aspects but also on tactical, physical and mental aspects. It takes time to achieve good performance levels.
Disadvantages	An analytic exercise emphasises only one important aspect of the game or one skill at a time. Although improvement is achieved in this particular aspect of the game or skill, it doesn't guarantee overall development.	Mastery of the fundamental skills is often neglected.
Motivation	In relation to the global method, players show lower levels of motivation.	Because of the total involvement of the young player in this activity, a high level of motivation is observed.
Grades of incidents of the different capacities that interfere in play	<p>Capacities of perception: The training situations, little modified, demand little input from the players.</p> <p>Capacities of decision making: As the tasks are already fixed and known in advance, the players are not asked to make decisions.</p> <p>Capacities of skill execution: By concentrating on only one isolated skill, the players quickly learn to execute it but without knowing where, when and why to use it.</p>	<p>Capacities of perception: Team-mates and opponents often face unpredictable situations. Therefore, the demands on perception are far greater than those when using the analytical method.</p> <p>Capacities of decision making: Following the great variety of stimuli or problems perceived, the player must first understand and then resolve them as quickly and as efficiently as possible.</p> <p>Capacities of skill execution: Less emphasis is put on skill improvement in a game.</p> <p>The final conclusion: Both methods have to be used in training and both are considered valid so long as they are used in balance.</p>

“Give the players access to the game in the first instance, then, as soon as they progress, adjust the focus towards technical precision.”

Brenda Read

WHAT ARE SIMPLIFIED GAMES?

Understanding the complex game of hockey can be best achieved through the practice of a logical progression of simplified games, with a gradual increase in the numbers of players on the teams. Just as young players are growing physically and mentally, the difficulty and complexity of the simplified games are growing as well.

The games in this chapter are called “simplified” because they have these characteristics:

- Reduced number of participants
- Reduced dimensions of the playing field
- Simplified rules that are flexible and adaptable to the existing conditions
- Limited numbers of game situations
- Simplification of the problems
- Easier contexts for coaches to be able to observe, analyze, evaluate, and correct the performance of all players in the game

These qualities that characterize the simplified games on this CD will have a positive impact on both coaches and players for several reasons, including these:

- Exposing children to simplified games with teams of only two, three, or four players leads to far fewer technical and tactical errors when later competing in more complex games (e.g., 6-on-6 or 8-on-8 Hockey).
- Frequent execution of the same techniques stimulates the acquisition and perfection of skills, as does having less distraction by many other teammates and opponents. Moreover, with fewer players, there is more time and space available, facilitating correct execution of techniques.
- To become a good hockey player, a child must learn to perceive with acuity and a wide field of vision the current game situation: the position of the ball, teammates and opponents on the move, location of the goals, and lines on the field. The simplified games not only aid the progressive development of perception but also enable young players to analyze game situations and make correct decisions—thanks to the hockey knowledge they have gained through game practice.
- The frequent appearance of the same basic game situations allows players to experiment with different solutions until they are able to resolve on their own the problems presented in the simplified game. Later, when the same or similar game situation reappears in a more complex competition, the player is likely to recognize it and instantly recall a good solution.
- The reduced number of players allows less-skilled youngsters to become intensively involved in the game.

***“The daily work of a coach, without revising it,
is no worth living.”***



- Because each team consists of just two to four players, the simplified games progressively develop the capacities of communication and cooperation between players. These are essential aspects of top hockey performance that have often been underestimated in the past.
- No premature specialization for any playing position occurs; the simplified games make every player play defense as well as offense or attack, on the right and on the left as well as in the center of the field. Simplified games help develop complete and intelligent hockey players.

Simplified games contain a reduced number of players, which allows each child to play an intensive role in the game.

Children don't need a high level of ability and capacity or specific hockey knowledge to enjoy training and competing with simplified games. The simplicity of the game itself immediately attracts young players and encourages them to resolve the problems they find in it. After a certain amount of practice, if the coach observes a deficiency (technical or tactical) that is limiting the children's playing capacity, he or she interrupts the game, isolates the problem aspect, and presents the children with corrective activities or exercises. The goal is to overcome the deficiency discovered in the global game.

For the children, practice appears in a completely different light. Instead of simply working on a skill that the coach has predetermined, the child—having discovered that he or she still lacks something to win the simplified game—is motivated to learn a particular skill determined from the context of the game. The youngster *wants* to master it to a certain degree. So the mastering of a skill is perceived not so much a prerequisite for playing a game but as a complementary part of it; the training has the clear purpose of raising the level of performance in the game in order to win it. This way drill practice does not "kill" the enthusiasm of the young players whose main wish is always to play, and also win games, rather than mastering a determined skill. By using simplified games, a bridge is built between the learning of a new skill and its application in a complex game situation.

***“A player learns and grows by trial and error.
The important thing is to learn from mistakes.”***



Here's a procedure to follow at a training session for introducing a simplified game to your players:

1. Decide on a problem or topic to be investigated (e.g., keeping possession of the ball through passes or running toward the ball when receiving).
2. Set up an appropriate simplified game form to provide the context for exploration and development of the topic.
3. Demonstrate the game with the players as you explain the rules step by step.
4. Give all the players several minutes for practice during which you check whether everybody understands the rules.
5. Set up an appropriate competition for all of the teams.
6. Observe and analyze how they play.
7. Investigate, through frequent effective questioning of all players, the tactical problems and solutions. (See the following section entitled "Effective Questioning.")
8. In order to overcome the deficiencies you discover in observing the game and to convert these into correct habits, present two or three corrective exercises that all teams carry out on their competition fields. You'll find these mainly in the "Dribble Games," "Tackling Games," and "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" sections of this chapter.
9. When the game resumes, once again observe the level of play.
10. Intervene to further develop understanding (demonstrations are often necessary) and present more questions or corrective exercises (games).
11. Again observe critically the development of the play and evaluate the final performance.

"Coaches should make sure that their players learn in an atmosphere of success. They only should expose them to the next exercise or game until the pupils have mastered the previous one. "

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

Coaching is an interaction between the coach and the players. The teaching and learning process, therefore, is a dialogue rather than a monologue. To enhance performance, develop this dialogue to recognize, value, and utilize the attributes and experience of the players. Questioning demands a commitment from the coach to experiment—because most people have a natural inclination to simply tell! While most of the young players live in an environment dominated by telling, when you coach youth hockey players, you help them much more by trying to involve them in the decision-making process during the practice of simplified games; ask them to apply their knowledge and experience.

Once effective questioning is skillfully employed, it allows many game situations (previously approached through telling or instructing) to be tackled differently and, ultimately, more effectively. These are some suggestions to introduce more questioning in training:

- Develop your own sound knowledge of the simplified game and all its objectives.
- Use as few "closed" questions as possible. Open questions demand information, whereas closed questions merely call for "yes" or "no" answers.
- Start most of the questions with "What?" "When?" "Where?" or "How much?"
- Ask questions that follow the interests of the player.
- Ask follow-up questions after listening to the different answers.

Here are examples of questions for the first simplified game, "2 on 1 With Two Wide Goals":

- When does the ideal moment arise for passing the ball? Explain!
- When should the ball carrier *not* pass the ball?
- What is the disadvantage of an early pass? Why?
- Where, ideally, should the teammate receive the ball (in relation to the defender)?
- What is your opinion about the distance between the ball carrier and the receiver? Explain your opinion to us with more detail.
- Which attacker should ideally be in the possession of the ball when the 2-on-1 situation arises? Explain why!
- Describe the target of your pass to the teammate.

"You should never stop, questioning!"

Albert Einstein

- What is the outcome if the pass is directed straight into the teammate's stick?
- What happens when the ball arrives behind the target?
- What happens to the target when both attackers move forward?
- What happens when the defender delays his tackle and retreats?
- How does the speed of the pass influence the situation?
- Is it true that the pass has to be faster the closer the ball carrier gets to the defender? Why?
- What is the most natural attacking move to be carried out by the ball carrier?
- How might the technique of the pass vary as the ball carrier gets closer to the defender before passing?
- How would the defender like the attacker to play?



In the same way, you should ask numerous questions about the defense. Coaches are encouraged to revise or adapt these sample questions to the other simplified games.

"Generally coaches concern more about the contents of their training sessions than about their coaching style."

SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR 2 ON 2

The simplified game situations in this chapter should be included as part of the young players' training to stimulate and help develop their decision-making abilities and to improve the correct execution and application of the most fundamental technical skills.

1st Simplified Game:

2 ON 1 WITH TWO WIDE GOALS

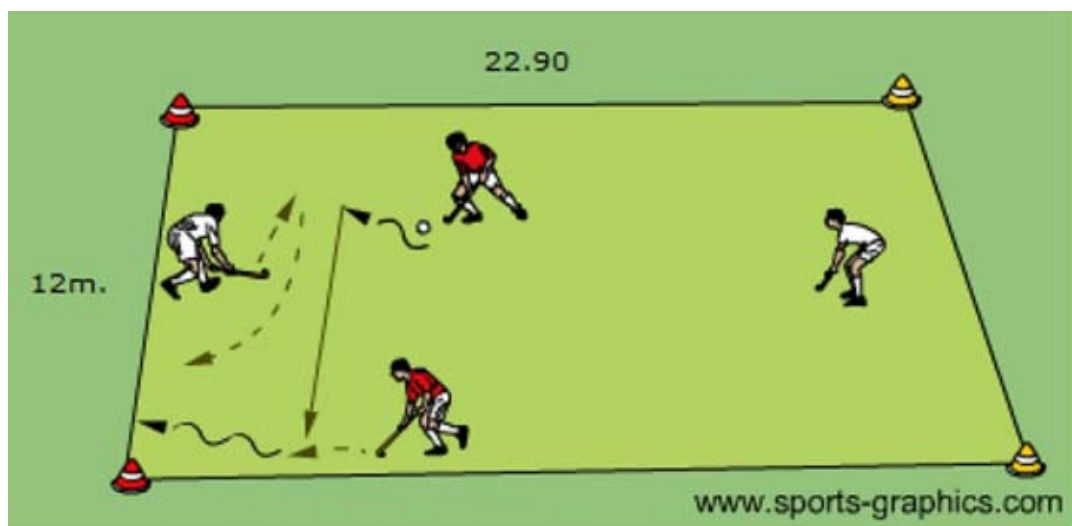
Despite the game's title, four players participate. Two players with a ball, situated in the center of the playing area, alternately attack the goals, each defended by one opponent only. The objective of the attacker is to dribble the ball across the opposing goal line despite the opponent's active defense of it.

The attack toward one goal finishes when

- the defender has touched the ball three times,
- one of the attackers has managed to dribble the ball across the goal-line,
- one attacker infringes the rules, or
- the ball runs across any end line.

In case of an infringement of the rules by the defender, a "free" attack is awarded to the attacking pair. The free attack can be started with a pass or a dribble, with the defender staying no closer than 5 meters.

After 10 attacks (5 toward each goal) or 90 seconds of attacking, both teams switch roles and positions. The pair that scores more goals wins. In case of a draw, a tiebreaker takes place with only two attacks for every team.



Variation:

- Use the same rules, except increase the number of players to six. Two players attack one goal, which is defended by an opponent whose teammate waits behind the goal without any rights to defend. The positions and roles of the two attackers and defenders are reversed as soon as a goal is scored (the ball must be dribbled across the goal line), the ball runs behind any end

line, or the defender wins the ball (after three consecutive ball touches). A third pair of players positions itself with one youngster in front and the other behind the opposite goal. The team that scores more goals in four minutes of play wins.

You can use other options to determine the winner:

- The team that manages to score with a dribble continues to alternately attack the two wide goals.
- The team that scores more goals in a row within a playing time of five minutes is the winner.



Training Objectives:

	Techniques	Tactics
1	Dribble the ball with forehand only without watching the ball.	Lift the view whilst dribbling in order to be able to analyse the game situation.
2	Beat the defender on his reverse stick side, on his forehand or with a tunnel.	Wait for the precise moment of passing (not too early and not too late), without entering into the range of action of the defender.
3	Beat the defender after having carried out a dummy pass to the left or to the right.	Know when to pass and when to dribble.
4	Pass the ball on the run towards the right with forehand.	Communicate with the teammate before passing.
5	Pass the ball on the run towards the right with the reverse stick.	Pass the ball with speed and accuracy.
6	Pass the ball on the run towards the left.	Adapt to the behaviour of the teammate.
7	Receive the ball on the run from either side with forehand or with reverse	Look for a correct positioning before receiving the ball.
8	Execute a lunge tackle, a block tackle, a tackle in retreat or a jab tackle.	Select the precise moment of tackle and know how to delay it.
9	Simulate a tackle with a move of the body weight and/or the stick towards	Tackle in a side-on position and look out for the one-to-one situation.
10		Anticipate the attacker's play, considering the position of the player without the ball as well as the position of the ball in relation to the feet of the ball

To improve the youngsters' understanding and learning, the functions of attacking and defending are separated in this first simplified game. Depending on the level of the players, the width of the goal may have to be made wider or narrower. Once the attackers are able to score 7 or more times in 10 attacks, a more difficult and complex game or problem should be presented to them (see the following simplified games). After introducing the game, it's good to organize a practice of at least five minutes, thus allowing the players to face some of the game's potential problems without experiencing the pressure of a competition.

After the children have practiced one simplified game sufficiently, that activity may serve in one of the following training sessions as an internal competition in which several teams play, somewhat like a tennis tournament with the knockout system. The winners of the first matches advance to the winners' round; the group of losers determine the winners among them in a consolation tournament (see the sample organization chart for such a tournament).

Modifying the Rules

As you coach a simplified game, it's sometimes good to change one or even two of the given rules slightly—once the players have gained experience in the practice and in the competition of the original game. The modification of any rule will undoubtedly vary the possible responses of the players, technically, tactically, or physically. Coaches should have the capacity to modify the rules of any activity depending what their intentions are in following up on the changes.

These 10 modifications of rules might be applied to the first simplified game:

1. Every team disposes of 10 attacks without time limits.

Training objective: to understand what to do in attack as well as in defense.

2. The attacks use only 90 seconds of the playing time.

Training objective: to gain more experience in all positions.

3. The right attacker may execute only one pass to the left or dribble past the defender after a dummy pass.

Training objective: to be able to overcome the defender with a single action (a pass or a dodge with or without preceding dummy pass).

4. The left attacker may choose between a pass to the right with the reverse stick or with the forehand or a dodge.

Training objective: to know the most efficient way to resolve the 2-on-1 situation.

5. A goal is considered valid only when the last control of the ball was executed on the run.

Training objective: to receive and control the ball on the run.

“You ‘ll get more an better work done by working steadily for short periods and then resting than you will by working straight through. Rest periods shouldn’t be too long.”

L.Mourhouse /L.Gross

6. Every team uses 20 seconds for attacking both goals as often as possible with a recovery of two minutes before a new attempt is launched. Every team has four chances to score a maximum number of goals.

Training objective: to launch quick attacks.

7. Both attackers must play the ball at least once with the reverse stick .
Training objective: to stimulate the play with the the reverse stick.

8. During the development of the attacks, both forwards must switch positions.

Training objective: to use the switch systematically.

9. Both defenders may tackle in any part of the playing area. The attackers start from the center and may score in either goal area. Attackers and defenders switch functions after 10 attacks.

Training objective: to create an intentional 2-on-1 situation.

10. Each team attacks and defends two 1-meter-wide cone goals. To score, a player must control the ball inside one of the opponent's two goals, set 12 meters away from each other.

Training objective: to ascertain the width in attack.

By asking the attackers *to score after the control of the ball inside the wide cone goal* with a shot into a regular goal placed 12 meters behind the cone goal, the attackers will gain additionally experience in the conclusion of their attacks.

Corrective Exercises:

It is important to wisely select and apply one or two corrective exercises or games after youngster compete in the simplified game. Learning, consolidating, and perfecting at least some technical, tactical, or physical aspects of the simplified game is best accomplished by training outside of the context of the global game—and with the help of various specific corrective activities. It is not enough that a coach diagnose what the players did wrong. The coach must find the roots of the players' problems and apply appropriate remedies as soon as possible (almost immediately) after the error or problem occurs. With systematic and repetitive application of corrective activities (always right after the competition in a simplified game), the coach can transform the player's spontaneous or natural behavior (often not the correct or most efficient one) into a better one (usually similar to those seen in the adult game).

“When a simplified game is introduced more than one variation must be offered with different grades of difficulty and complexity in order to achieve effective learning.”

Spontaneous, Natural and Incorrect Behaviour	Elaborated and Correct Behaviour
The attacker without the ball is situated too close to the ball carrier.	The attacker without the ball has to stay as wide as possible to make the defense more difficult.
Only for beginners: The attacker without the ball is situated in front of the ball, inducing the ball carrier to play a diagonal pass that is easy to intercept.	The attacker without the ball generally should stay behind the ball for no encouraging the ball carrier to pass the ball through the range of action of the defender.
The attacker without the ball receives it in a stationary position and enables the defender to face and channel him.	The attacker without the ball must receive the ball while running with full speed in order to make optimal use of the space in front of him.
The direction of the pass is conditioning the running free of the receiver.	The position of the receiver always conditions the direction of the pass.
The pass is directed into the feet of the receiver.	Before passing the next moves of the receiver should be anticipated (pass into the run of the receiver).
The moment of the pass is not the precise one. Passing the ball too early or too late results often in the loss of possession.	It's important to select the best moment of passing and to know when to pass and when to dribble.
The attack develops too slowly.	In the shortest time possible the two attackers should profit from their supremacy of numbers (2 against 1).
The attacker with the ball indicates the direction of his pass.	The attacker must learn not to indicate the direction of the pass.
The pass doesn't have sufficient speed.	The ball should be passed also with maximum speed for allowing the defense less time to intercept the ball.
The attackers need more than one pass to play out the defender.	Both attackers should play out the defender with the least possible number of actions (one pass or one penetration only).
In most of the attacks the right attacker is in possession of the ball.	Generally it's easier to play out the defender when the ball is in possession of the left attacker.
The defender runs towards the attacker who has the ball under control.	The defender has to close down the attacker in possession of the ball without carrying out a precipitated tackle.
The defender tackles in a frontal position (shoulder parallel to the goal line)	For being able to condition the attacker and to execute more than one tackle, the defender should assume a side position.
The defender remains on the goal line, leaving all initiative to the attacker.	The defender should act and not react to the attacker's moves.
The defender precipitates his tackle and don't execute any dummy.	For distracting and obliging the attacker, the defender should carry out dummies.
The defender doesn't position himself between the two attackers for inducing the ball carrier to become engaged in a 1:1 situation.	With an optimal position play and dummies the defender should create a 1 against 1 situation.

Every corrective exercise or game proposed here is designed to improve only one or two aspects (see coaching objectives) of the game, aspects that have marred or negatively conditioned the performance of the four players in the previous competition. Consider every simplified game with its specific program of corrective exercises or games as a teaching unit. You can look on the whole program of simplified games for two-player teams as a full season's program, adding only one of the variations in a single training session.

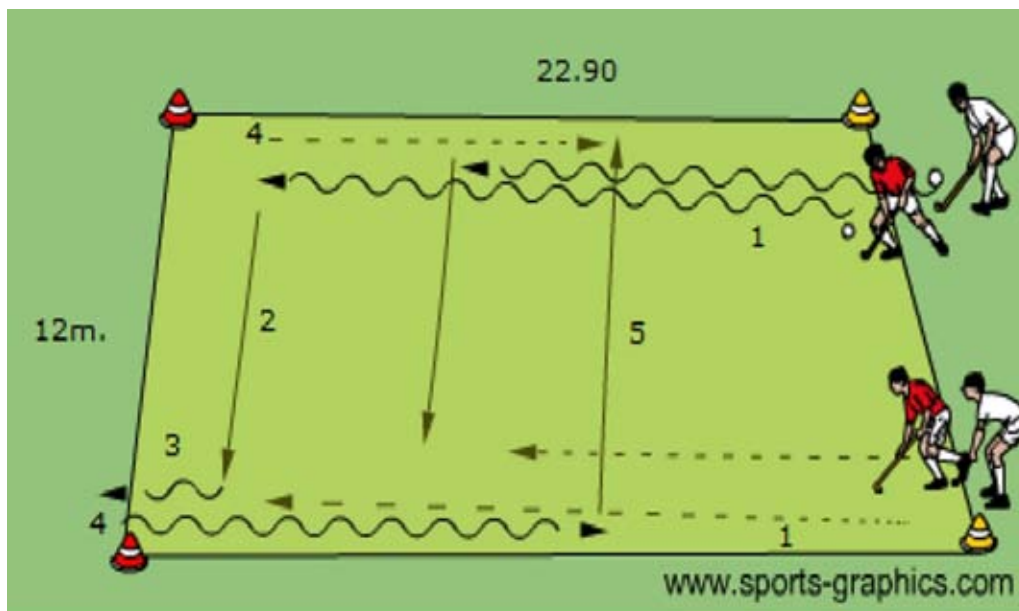
1. Pass and Receive on the Run

Use the same playing area of the simplified game "2 on 1 on two wide goals". Two players on the same team, always staying more than 10 meters apart, attack the opposing goal. As a pair, they pass and receive the ball on the run. After they manage to control the ball at one empty goal, they should turn around without delay to attack the opposite goal and so on. The objective is to score 10 valid goals with 10 attacks.

As a variation, two pairs start at the same time from opposite goals, trying to score 10 valid goals first. A goal is not considered valid if

- the distance between the two attackers has been less than 10 meters or
- the player without the ball places himself in front of the ball.

The coach may ask players to mainly use their reverse stick for passing the ball to the right.

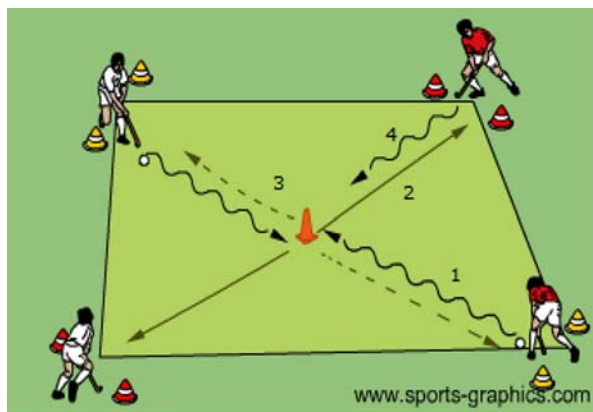


***“Coaches should not fall for analyzing the game according to the result.
We need coaches to see past the result.”***

Ric Charlesworth

2. Look Left and Pass Right

Use the same playing area but mark off four goals as shown in the illustration. Two players from different teams dribble the ball from diagonally opposed positions to the center of the playing area. From there, each has to pass the ball on the run (either with the forehand or when passing to the right with the "low or high" (with the file or the toe of the reversed stick) toward their teammate waiting behind the goal on the right side. Then, it is the receiver's

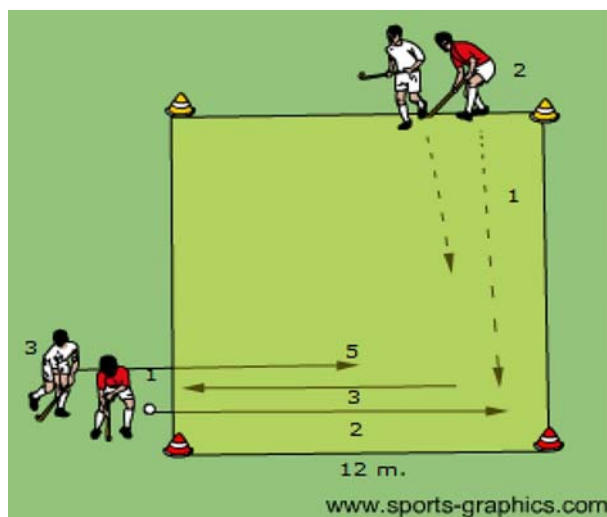


turn to dribble and to pass the ball from the center of the playing area through the goal on his right side to where the former passer ran. In 10 trials every player should be able to score eight times. Before actually executing the pass through the cone goal, the passer must carry out a feint or a dummy pass to the other player at the left side. Care has to be taken, that the reverse stick pass is played without indicating its trajectory through lifting the head of the stick.

3. Reception on the Run

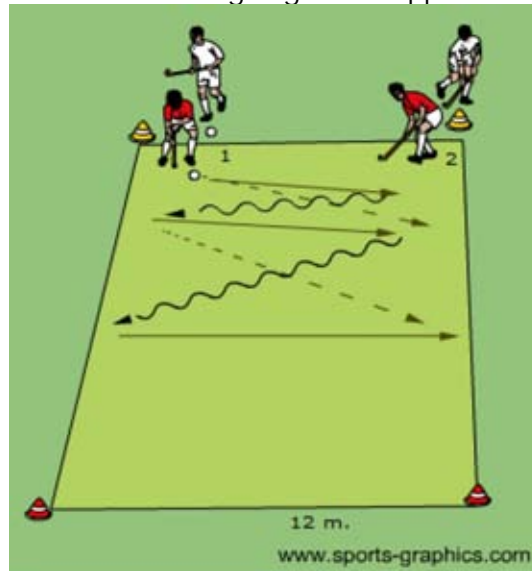
Practice on the same playing field which was used for the simplified game "2 on 1 on two wide goals". Four players occupy the areas at two cones diametrically opposite each other. Player 1, in possession of the ball, receives a visual cue from the receiver, Player 2, in the upper corner of the field, then passes the ball along the goal line toward the unoccupied cone in front of him. There his timed pass must be received and controlled on the run by player 2, who then returns the ball, passing it along the same goal line back toward where Player 1 had been. A third player awaits the pass in that corner and does the same procedure as Player 1, passing to the fourth player, who starts from the same corner as Player 2. Meanwhile, after their passes, Player 1 runs behind the fourth player to proceed from that corner and Player 2 runs behind the third player to continue from that corner.

Dependant on where the oncoming ball reaches the receiver (far ahead in front of him, close to his feet or behind him), it has to be controlled with different techniques (with the reverse stick using one or both hands or with the front stick).



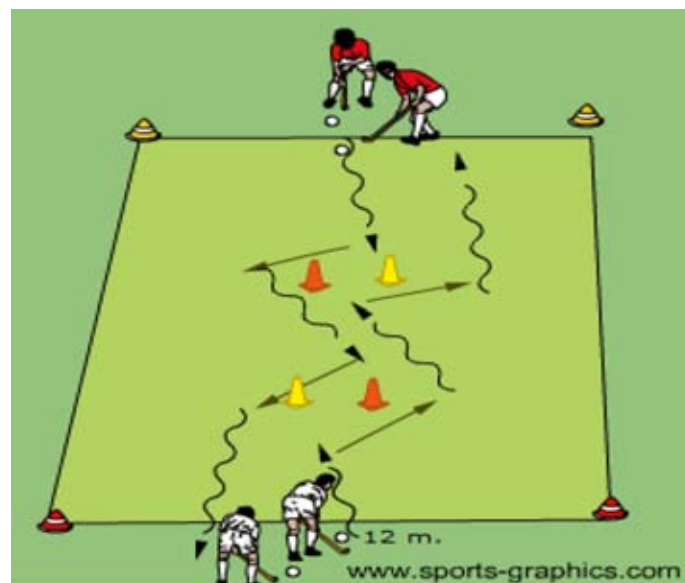
4. The Switch

Again the same playing area is used. Pair up the players. Player 1 sends a pass, and Player 2, having received the initial horizontal pass, dribbles the ball diagonally into the position near his teammate. To avoid having two players be in the same position, the teammate moves behind the ball carrier in the opposite direction and receives the return pass as the player appears behind his shoulder on his right (or left) side. After every switch or dummy switch, the ball is carried across the goal line to start the same process or combination of moves going in the opposite direction.



5. Beating a Defender

Set up the same playing area but put in front of each wide cone goal a third one, of a different colour and 2m. wide which should represent an imaginary defender. You create two of such goals to be beaten by the players on its right and then left side. The four players each dribble a ball toward the first left cone (representing one leg of an imaginary defender), carry out a drag going 2 meters to the right (left), again control the ball, and finally run with the ball under control across the cone goal line. Then repeat the same procedure on the way back and later try to beat the imaginary defender first without and then with a dummy pass on the opposite side.



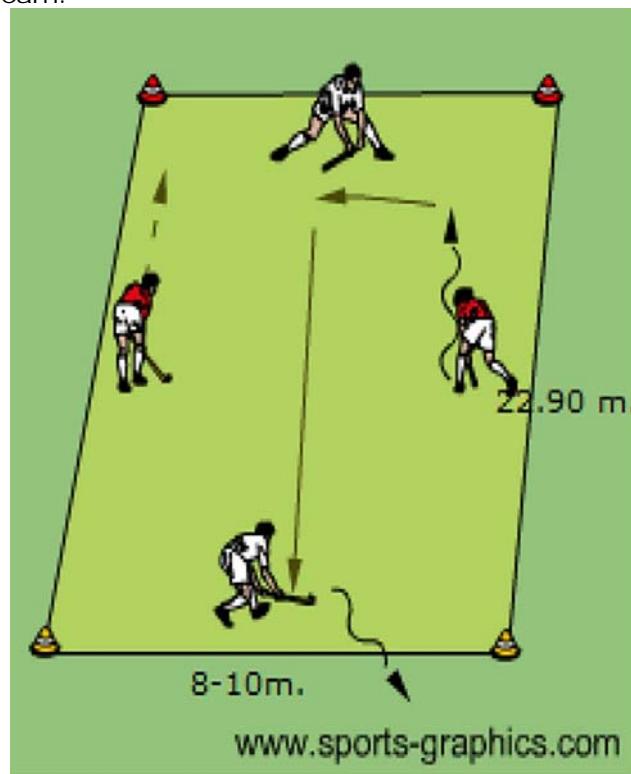
*2nd Simplified Game***2 ON 1 WITH COUNTERATTACK**

Set up two wide goals (about 8-10 meters in width and about 18 meters away from each other) for each field. Divide the children into two-player teams. Each play lasts three minutes, during which two players of one team alternately attack the goals opposite each other. Each goal is defended by one opponent only. To score, one of the two attackers has to dribble (control) the ball across the goal line. The attack is concluded when

- * a goal is scored,
- a defender (who has managed to gain possession of the ball) passes toward his teammate in the opposite goal (after receiving the ball, he should dribble it into "his" goal), or
- there is an infringement by the attackers (after an infringement, a free hit is awarded to the defender, whose task is to pass the ball to his outlet player in the opposite goal).

After an infringement by a defender, the attackers choose between a pass to the teammate or a penetration dribble (in the event that his partner is marked closely). Independent of the result of the counterattack, the next 2 on 1 should be directed toward the opposite wide goal.

The duration of the game is two attacking and two defending periods of 3 minutes for each team.



***“Nothing can be understood completely
as long as it wasn’t experienced.”***

Training Objectives

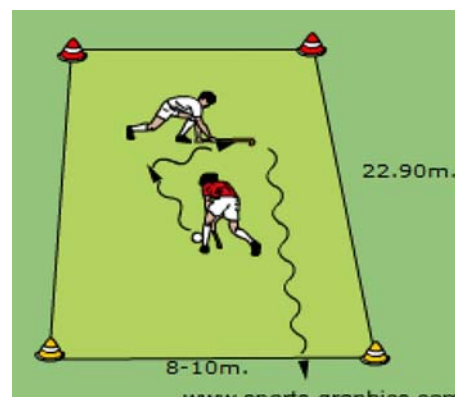
- To look up during the dribble to be able to observe and analyze the game situation and take correct decisions.
- To pass the ball with the front or the reversed stick accurately and with sufficient speed
- To select the best instant for the pass.
- To understand whether it is more effective to pass or dribble into a less defended area.
- To execute a dummy pass, then suddenly accelerate and dribble past the surprised defender.
- To receive and control the ball on the run and to avoid receptions and controls while stationary.
- To always be available for a pass, adapting to the play of the ball carrier.
- To execute a tackle in a side position both correctly and quickly.
- To adapt the tackle technique (frontal tackle, block tackle, tackle in a side-position, "jab" or tackling in retreat) to the game situation; to know which technique is the most efficient one.
- As defender, to read and anticipate the opponent's play.
- Through maintaining a correct position in relation to the ball carrier, to force that player to do what you want him or her to do.
- As defender, to use dummies to distract the opponent.
- To ensure a quick transition from playing defense to attack and vice versa; to execute a free hit as quickly as possible without indicating the trajectory of the pass.

Corrective Exercises:

The first three corrective activities are designed to improve the defense, whereas the last three apply to the attack.

1. Tackling 1 on 1

Practise on the same field where the simplified game "2 on 1 with counterattack" was played. One player of each team enters the playing area, while the other two remain behind their goals (one acts as referee). They substitute their teammates when one scores with a dribble into the opposing goal or if the ball runs out of the playing area. Have the players draw lots to decide who gets first possession of the ball, with the

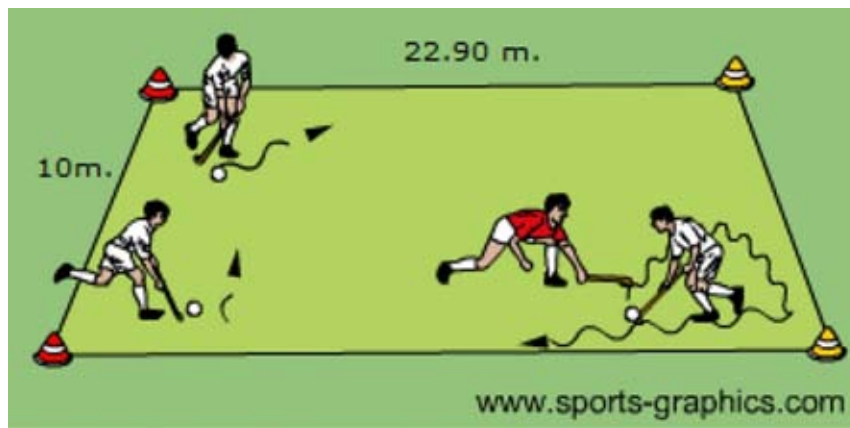


defender initially at least 3 meters away. After a goal is scored, the substitute for the defender behind that goal launches the next attack against the substitute for the former attacker.

Variation: Start the game as described in Test 5 of the Decathlon.

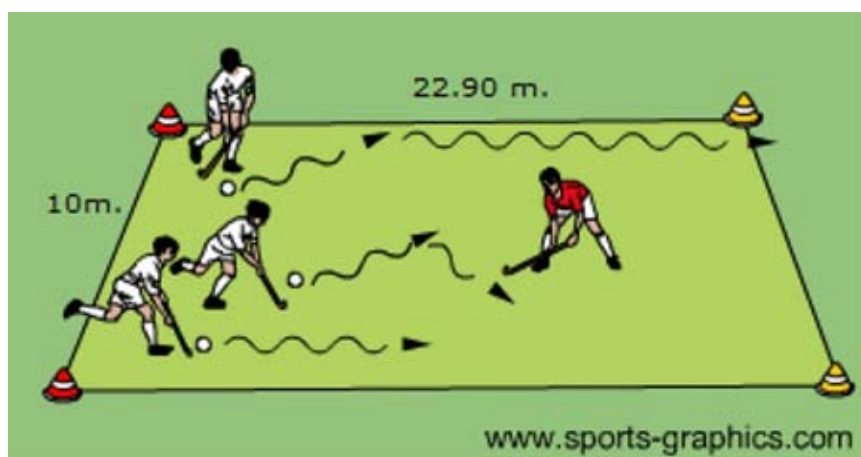
2. Best of Six Tackles

Use the same playing area. Give a hockey ball to each of three attackers; designate a defender. The three attackers must keep possession of the ball for as long as possible without leaving the playing area. The defender may only tackle six times. How many times was the defender's attempt to tackle (moving the curve with speed toward the ball) successful? After every player has had a turn at making six tackles, the one with the best percentage wins. Through the practise of this exercises the defender learns to tackle with patience after having chosen the best moment to play the ball.



3. One Defender Versus Three Attackers

Use the same playing field as in the previous game, and again three attackers and one defender who practice a tag game in the width of the field first without balls. The attackers are trying to get from one goal line to the other one at a distance of 22.90 meters without getting tagged. Then give each of three attackers a ball. They should dribble from any end line with the aim to reach the opposite one without losing the ball to the defender. However, the defender may tackle in any part of the playing area. As coach keep track of how many balls the defender was able to clear out of the area during five penetrations of each of the three attackers.

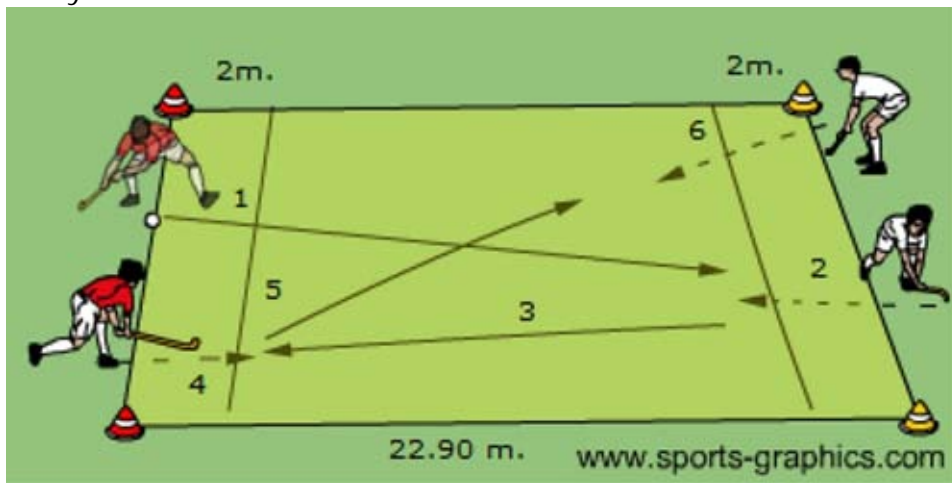


4. Passing and intercepting the ball

Use the same playing field as in the previous two corrective exercises for the game "2-on-1 with counterattack". Form again teams of two players, and have several reserve balls placed besides both cone goals to assure more intensive training. The team which scores more goals with sweeps and slaps within three minutes is declared the winner. In order to practice correct habits in the reception and the control of the ball, the receivers, immediately after the execution of the pass, should run from their 10 meter line into the 22.90m-field. Their return pass has to be taken from the same spot where the ball was controlled.

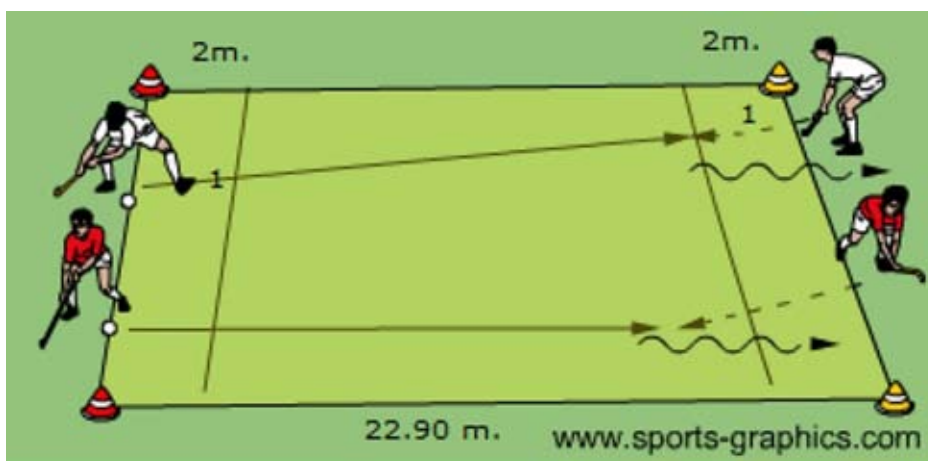
Variation:

- Play with two balls.



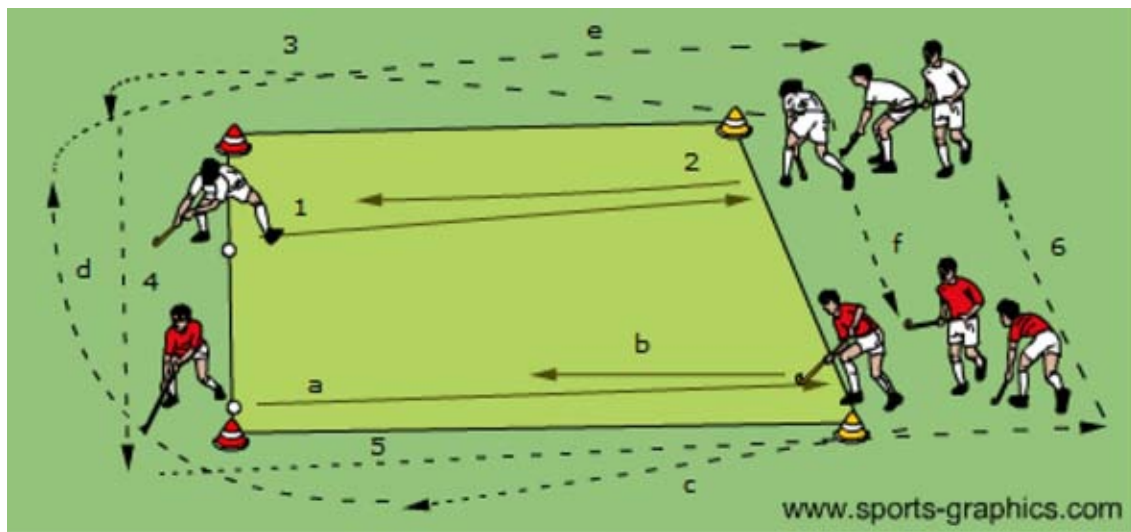
5. Receive and Control on the Run

Set up the field, marking lines as shown in the illustration. After a visual signal given by the coach, one player of each team passes his ball from the goal line toward his teammate. This teammate runs about 2 meters into the field (up to the indicated line on the field), receives the ball, turns around, and controls it in the wide goal before the second player of the other team can do it with that team's ball. After 10 passes the players are asked to exchange roles and positions. Receivers should first control the oncoming ball in a frontal position and later in a side-on position, after having been questioned by the coach about the need to use when which technique.



6. Relay

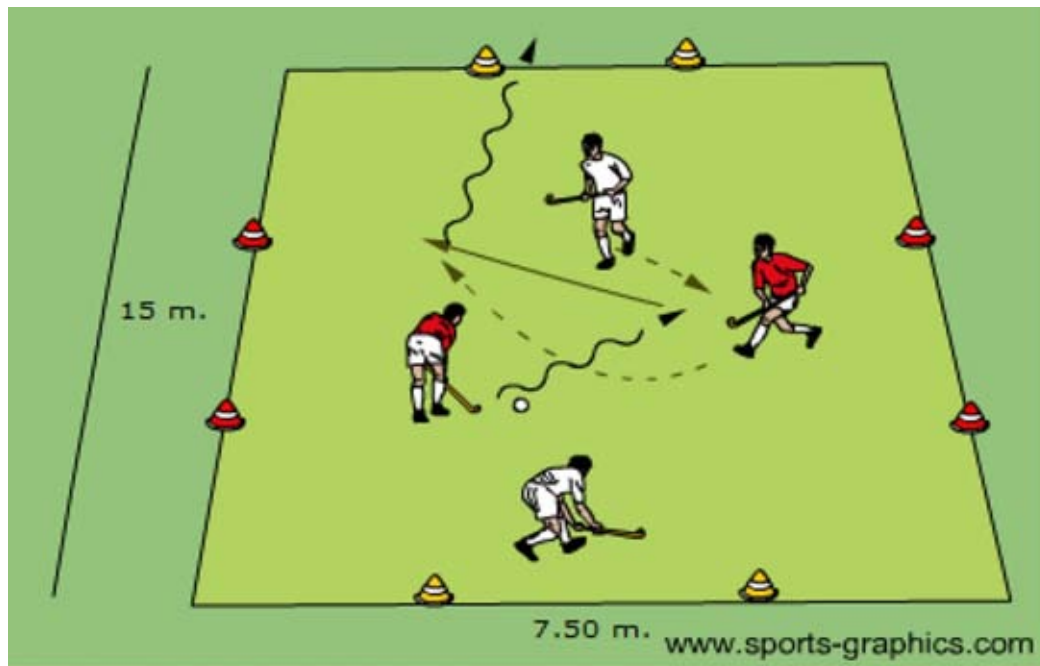
Form teams of four players for this competition between various teams. As coach, you should indicate what technique the players should use for passing. One "captain," without leaving his position in one goal area, passes the ball toward the opposite goal where one teammate (Player 2) receives and passes it back from his goal line. Then Player 2 runs once around the playing area to rejoin his teammates, now being at the end of the line (see illustration). No player may enter the field. The competition finishes when Player 3 has returned the ball to the captain for the second time.



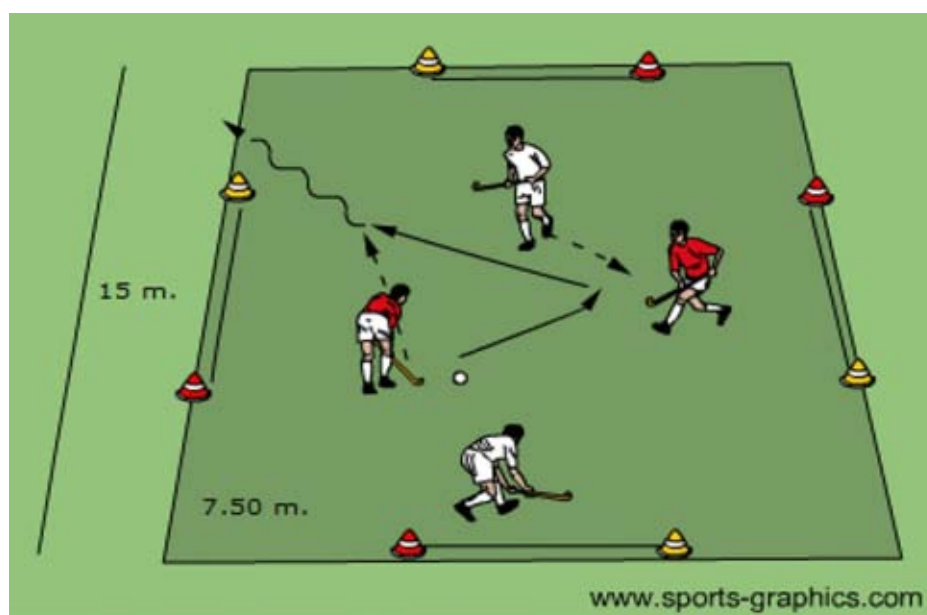
“Playing without thinking is like shooting without aiming.”

*3rd Simplified Game***2 ON 2 WITH FOUR INTERSECTING GOALS**

Set up four goals that are 7.5 meters wide, as shown in the illustration. Each team of two players defends two opposite goals and attacks the other two. The game is started and restarted with a ball toss at the center of the 15-meter square. When the ball runs out of the playing area or a player commits an infringement, a free hit or "free dribble" is awarded to the other team—with the opponent's and the nearest goal at least 3 meters away. A goal is scored by a dribble across one of the two opposing goal lines. The game's duration should be four periods of 3 minutes each.

**Variations:**

- * The cones forming the goal areas remain as above, but each team attacks and defends two of the goals that are side by side (rather than opposite).
- Using the same field setup, the goals are defined across the corner cones instead of across the linear cones (see the illustration).



Training Objectives:

- To be capable of systematically creating a numerical superiority in attack by frequently changing direction and speed.
- To know at each moment of the game what is going on (to "read" the game) in order to make correct decisions in attacks as well as in defenses.
- To be aware of the less-controlled zones of the playing area and systematically use them to your advantage.
- As defender, to force the attackers to play to their counterparts.
- To consolidate the technical-tactical skills of attack and defense that players experienced in the first two simplified games.

Corrective Exercises:

Choose and apply the following corrective exercises between two competitions in the simplified game:

1. Change of Direction

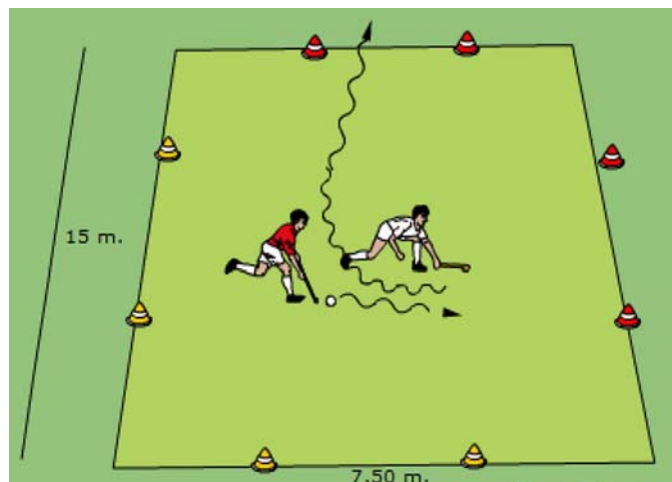
After a signal of the coach one player of each team dribbles the ball between the two cones of one goal. Meanwhile, one of the two resting players loudly counts the number of runs completed. Then the other two opponents practice the same task. Whoever first completes six runs gains a point for his team.

The coach should draw the players' attention to the various techniques for changing direction when arriving level with the post or cone (play the ball with the reverse stick or turn around using only the front stick) as well as to the particular footwork and low body position during the turn.

You can also arrange an individual competition between the four players.

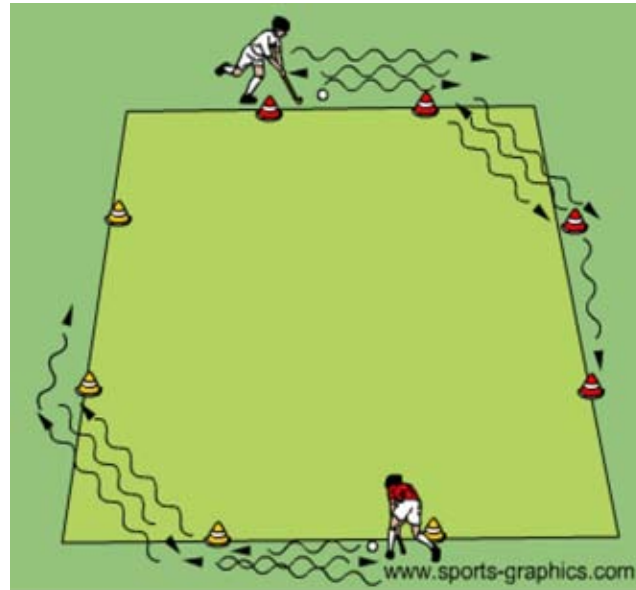
2. 1-on-1

This corrective game begins with a ball toss. The assignment of the goals is the same as in the main game "2 on 2 With 4 Intersecting Goals," but it works best to assign to each player two goals that are side by side. In case of an infringement of the rules, there is a self pass with the defender 3 meters away. After each goal the two players are replaced by two others, so they have time to recover.



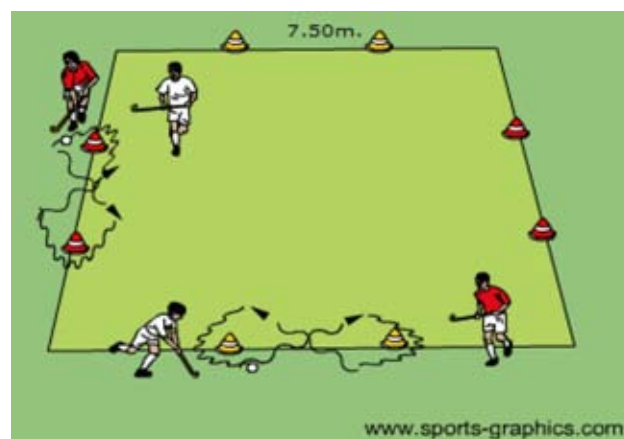
3. Zigzag Dribbling

The practice is carried out on the same field which was used for competing in "2 on 1 With Four Intersecting Goals". Two players from opposite teams start to dribble from the left post of their respective goals to the right (second) cone, return to the first and from there run to the third, back to the second, then to the fourth, back to the third and finally from there to the fifth cone (the starting point from the opponent). The winner is whoever is first to arrive at the other team's goal (fifth cone from the start). Work out the quickest way to change direction. While one player practices the dribble, the other player rests and watches the opponent's run.



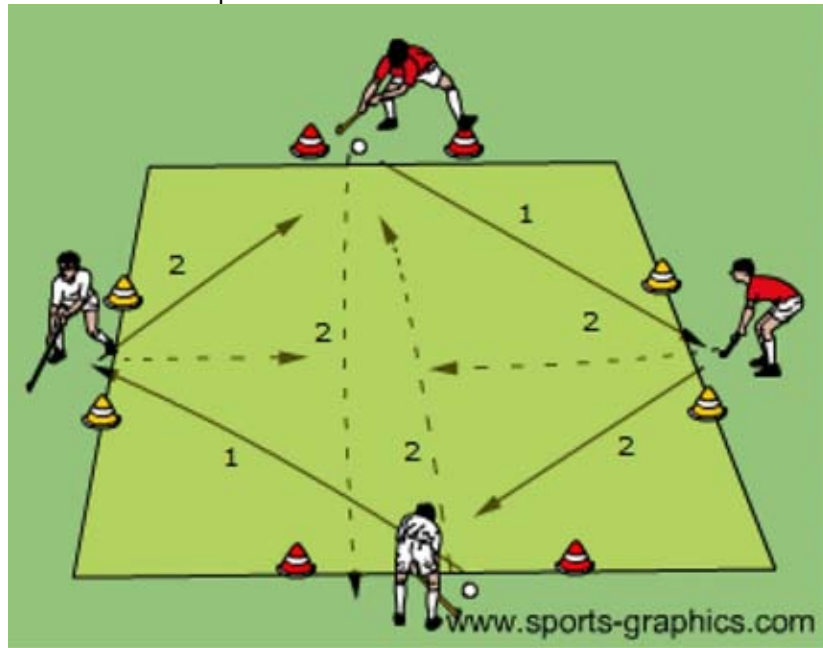
4. Slalom 8

You can use the same setup for the field as with the Zigzag activity. Two players compete at a time, each having a ball to dribble between one goal area, making a figure eight with the dribble around the two cones. The first player to complete a figure eight five full times is declared the winner. While two players compete, the other two should rest. In order to run quicker with the ball, the coach recommends the use of the reverse stick in certain moments of the dribbling. More advanced players should practice with the reverse stick or front stick only with only one hand gripping the handle.



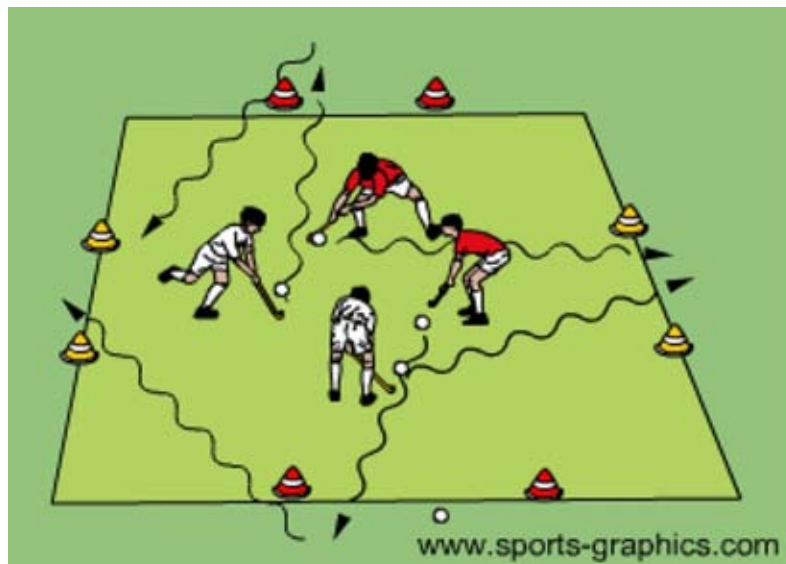
5. Give and Go

The same playing area is used. The four players do the activity at a time, making up the same teams. Each player occupies one goal. The two players of one team are situated in neighbouring goals (see illustration). This allows them to pass the ball counter-clockwise (go clockwise as a variation) through the goal to the teammate. After the pass, the child runs into the opposite goal. Once there, the player establishes a visual agreement with his or her teammate and then receives the ball behind the goal line before passing it again. The pair that first completes one or two rounds wins the competition.



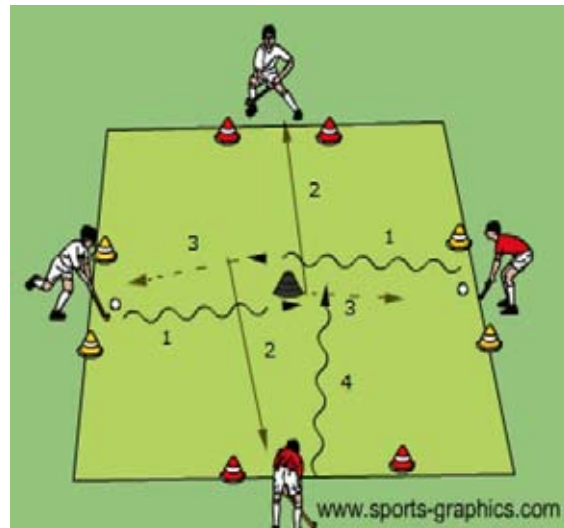
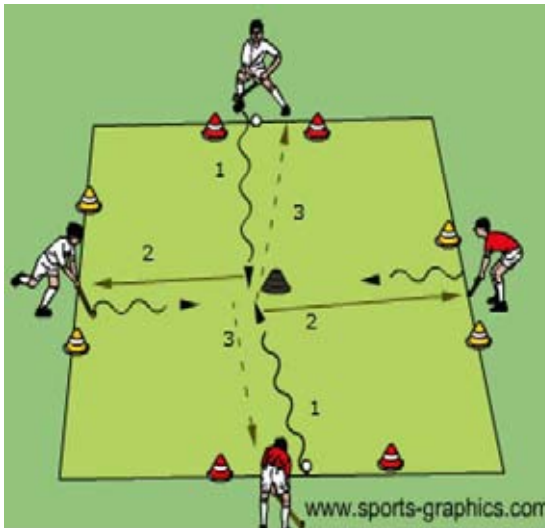
5. Quick Dribbling

All four youngsters which played some minutes before the simplified game "2 on 2 With Four Intersecting Goals", start dribbling their ball from the center of the square through any of the cone goals. The player who first enters the four cone goals on the field with the ball under control is the winner. The goal is considered valid only when the players dribble the ball from inside the field through the goal (see illustration).



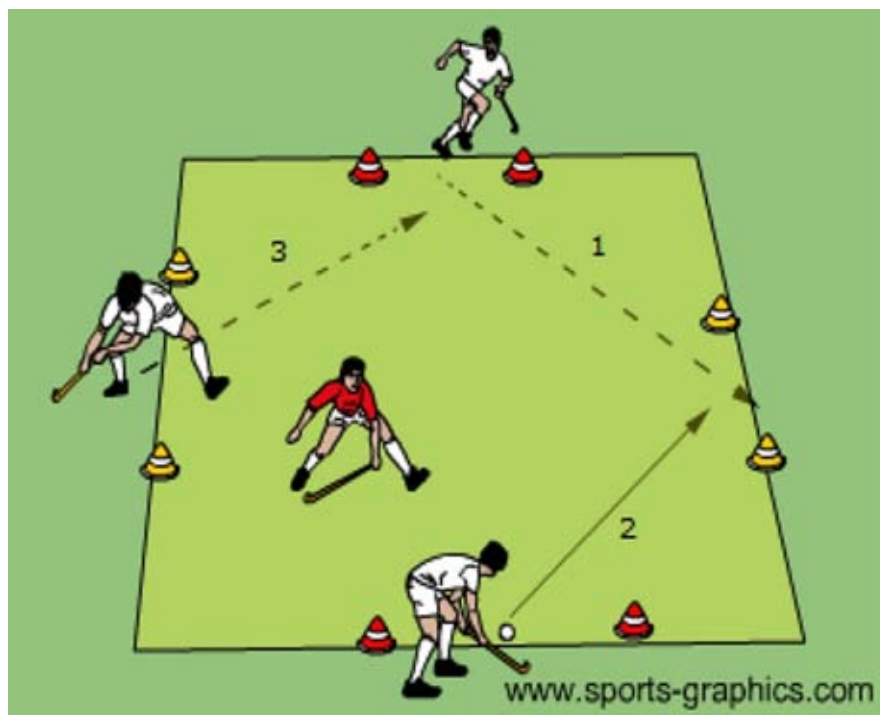
7. Pass With the Reverse Stick and/or the Front Stick

Each player occupies one goal. The two players in possession of the ball, facing each other in opposite goals, dribble their balls past the cone in the center of the playing area. First they run to the left (right) of the cone. After having passed the cone, they must pass the ball to the right (left) toward their teammate. This game gives youngsters experience in passing the ball with the reverse stick (with the toe as well as with the edge of the stick) as well as with the front stick. After the pass, the player positions himself in the opposite goal to await the next pass from the receiver.



8. 3-on- 1

Use the same playing field with four 3-meter-wide goal areas. Designate one defender and three attackers, using one ball. How many successive passes can be executed between the three players against the one defender in the middle without their being forced to play the ball outside of any of the four cone goals?



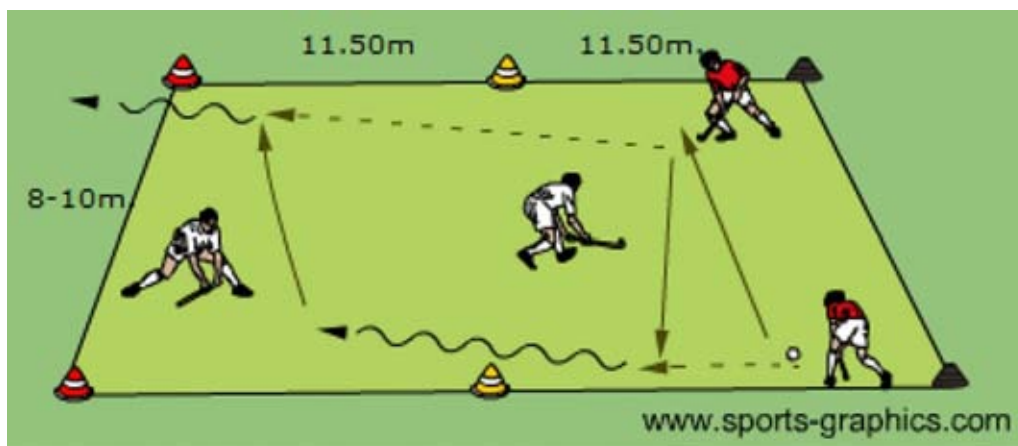
*4th Simplified Game***2 ON 1 TWICE IN A GAME**

For this game, set up the playing field as shown in the illustration, using six cones (having two colors of cones if possible to indicate the different end goal areas, each 8-10 meters wide). Designate two teams of two players each. How many times do two attackers manage to play out, one after another, the two opponents who defend individually in front of their respective goal? To score the ball must be controlled by the attackers on each end line.

Use a coin toss to decide which team starts to attack and which defends individually the two goals situated in a row. No defender may tackle behind his goal line, but the second defenders may come forward of the goal when his teammate in front of him has been passed by the attackers. An attack finishes when

- two goals are scored,
- one of the two defenders manages to take the ball away from the attackers,
- the ball runs out of the playing area, or
- one of the attackers commits an infringement of the rules.

In case of an infringement of the defenders, the same rule may be applied as in the previous games.

**Variations:**

- Propose a time limit for the execution of the attack.
- A goalkeeper may play in the position of the second defender. He must defend a goal area (set the cones only 3.66 meters apart, as a regular goal). Once the attackers manage to play out the first (or "last") defender, the goalkeeper may run out from the goal line to avoid being beaten individually with a pass to the second attacker or with a push from any distance through the goal. Choosing the most appropriate instant for running out from goal is crucial for good performance by the goalkeeper.

"In the past game play was delayed until enabling skills were competently performed and tactics were ignored until "mastery" of prescribed skills was achieved."

R.Thorne/D.Bunker

- More advanced players may play "2 on 1" three times in front of the penalty area, with the third cone goal line being part of the shooting zone line of the 5-on-5 or of the circle line of the 6-on-6 Hockey field. Once all three defenders are outplayed, the two attackers practice goal scoring without any delay against a goalkeeper who defends the regular goal.



- Use three defenders, but only one of the defenders intervenes at a time as seen on the right side of the above illustration. The first defender begins his tackling in front of the first goal line, and in case the initial tackle is unsuccessful, retreats to also defend the second goal. The second defender, meanwhile, is situated at the top of the penalty area in the third goal and intervenes after the attackers cross the second goal. The second defender covers the back area together with the third defender, who is the goalkeeper.
- Instead of supporting the ball carrier on one side, now the attacker without the ball, at the start of the attack, positions himself for a through pass. Here he may expect a pass or may wait for the ball carrier to join him after play with the defender in front of the first goal has succeeded. The second defender is not allowed to mark the teammate of the ball carrier; he must remain in his goal until the ball has crossed the first goal line.

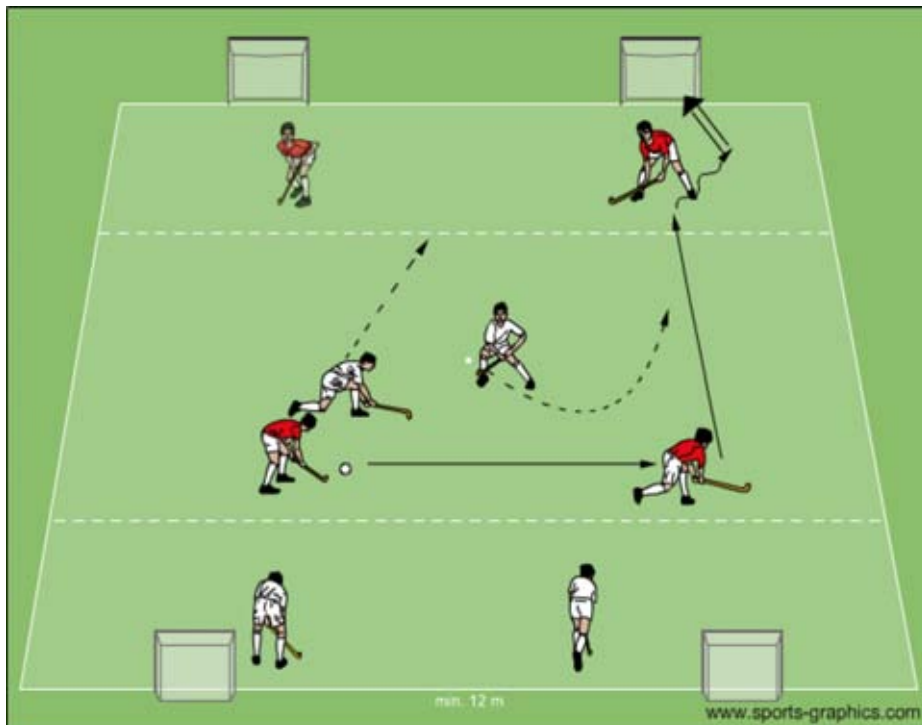
Training Objectives:

The objectives are the same as in the 1st. and 2nd. Simplified Games 2vs.2.

*5th. Simplified Game***THROUGH PASSES TO THE FRONT RUNNER**

The game is played on the Mini-Hockey field (see the illustration for the setup) with two teams formed of four players each. Two of the players must always remain in the opposing shooting zone (which is 6 meters deep), waiting for a pass from their two teammates in the midfield. After having received and controlled the ball within their shooting zone, they try to score in either goal. Once the ball enters the shooting zone, all midfield players (attackers as well as defenders) are allowed to join the two front runners. After every goal or any time the ball goes outside of the field, the former defenders restart the game from the 6-meter-line with either a short pass to the teammate or a dribble, the defenders at a distance of at least 3 meters.

Duration of the game: four periods of 3 minutes, with 2 minutes' rest in which the coach asks questions to the kids. to work out the deficiencies. After every 3 minutes the midfield players switch positions and functions with the front runners.

**Variations:**

- * Only those goals scored by one of the midfield players are considered valid. This rule helps all midfield players learn to support the outlet players after a successful through pass.

Training Objectives:

- * Players learn that before a through pass is played, passer and receiver should connect visually.
- Players learn that during the dribble and reception of the ball, the ball carrier should always be aware of the positions of the two teammates in the depth of the field and the support of the other midfield player.
- Players learn to execute a free hit quickly and before the opposing team has reorganized its defense. They understand that a through pass is preferable to a horizontal pass.

- Players learn to switch quickly from defense to attack and vice versa and to watch for the through pass immediately after having recovered the ball.
- Players learn to hide the direction of the through pass.



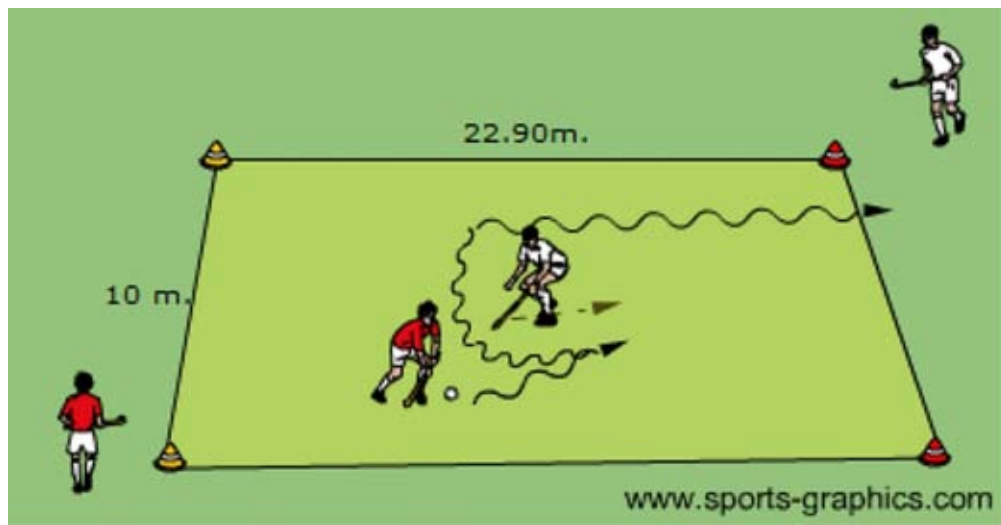
Corrective Exercises:

See the last variation of the fourth simplified game (as well as the ninth simplified game, later in this chapter). Other good activities are found in the program's "Receiving, Passing, and Shooting Games", which lists exercises for improving the accuracy and speed of the pass.

"It's not correct to help the players a lot and do for them the things that they should and can do on their own."

*6th Simplified Game***1 ON 1 WITH SUBSTITUTIONS**

Two opponents face each other in the middle of a playing area 10m x 22.90 meters with the objective to dribble the ball through the opponent's goal. The younger player attacks first. After a goal or the ball's going beyond any end line, both players must leave the playing area and return behind their respective goals. Meanwhile, the two other players, who have so far been behind the goals, now substitute them, entering the field for a new one-on-one situation with the partner of the former defender in possession of the ball. The winning team is the pair of players who first manage to dribble the ball through the opposing goal six times.

**Training Objectives:**

There are three objectives for the attackers:

- Keep the ball out of the defender's range of action and protect the ball with the body.
- Vary the play, outbalance the defender, and use speed (especially changes of speed) and change of direction.
- * While attacking stay alert and aware of the basic position, the positional play, and the defensive actions of your opponent.

There are training objectives also for the defenders:

- * Select the most appropriate technique for tackling and learn to execute the different ones as correct as possible:

1. The jab/poke tackle and the delayed/faked jab tackle (see illustration above)

The jab tackle is the quickest and most surprising tackle technique.

The defender should wait until the ball is exposed or the attacker has momentarily lost control, thus being sure to succeed.

Movement description:

Low point of gravity

Grip: Left hand underneath the stick (frying-pan grip)

Body, arm and stick move in direction of the ball

Upper body and left arm catapult the stick in direction of the ball

Jab the ball from above with a short movement with long starting phase or

Poke the ball from the left or right side.

For a faked tackle, only the arm and stick move toward the ball.

Usual mistakes:

Wrong grip (no frying-pan grip)
 Stick after the jab on the ground
 Body position too high

Variation of the jab tackle: The backhand defence technique of the jab tackle

The jab tackle by the inside marking defender on the attacker.
 Once the attacker leads the ball into an area where the backhand shot is an option, the defender is required to consider the defence of this position. It is necessary to consider the jab tackle as the inside defender.

Description of the proposed defence

The defender needs to get himself level with the attacker, his head needs to be as close as possible to the shoulder of the attacker. The moment the attacker pulls his stick back, the defender executes the jab. When possible the jab should be carried out with the stick in his right hand.

The idea behind the use of the right hand is to allow the player to simulate the same 'body language' as the attacker, and to be able to close his body off from the danger of the follow through. He is able to achieve this by shadowing the attackers' stance and flattening his body against that of the attacker.

The defender has to watch the ball, keep his head close to the shoulder of the attacker. His timing of the jab tackle is crucial.

**Block tackle with forehand or reverse stick**

The defenders stick must be in contact with the ground prior to making a tackle. The positioning of the stick flat on the ground should be delayed to the very last second in order to prevent the attacker from lifting the ball slightly over the outstretched stick. The defender should use the maximum possible flat surface of his stick, including the inside and outside edge, when playing with forehand or the reverse stick. He can block the ball with the flat forehand or backhand.

Movement description:

Extremely low point of gravity

One or two handed techniques

One handed, I sweep the stick over the ground (more distance)

Two handed, I poke the stick over the ground (more power)

Usual mistakes:

No fakes before the block

Use of too wide stick movements warns the attacker

3. Channeling the opponent (obliging him to do what you want him to do)

The defender should learn to condition the attacker to go where he wants him to go. The defender can force the attacker by stepping in on the left side to move towards their strong right open stick side, thus making it easier to tackle. His intention should be to channel the ball carrier towards a zone of less danger.

Movement description:

Stepping in on the left side, no rush tackling

Using the forehand

Enough distance to the attacker

Take direction of motion and speed of the attacker

Usual mistakes:

Missing a delayed tackle

Too much speed when tackling

Defender has not enough patience

Position of the defender is too frontal

There are three main objectives for the young defenders:

- Get close to the attacker, generally, with the right shoulder opposite the right one of the attacker and the left foot placed slightly in front. This position allows a defender to channel the attacker to his strong (forehand) side.
- Tackle with speed and aim to surprise the attacker.
- Use dummies to oblige the attacker to show his intention.
Also review the general recommendations or rules for tackling in the chapter "Tackling Games".

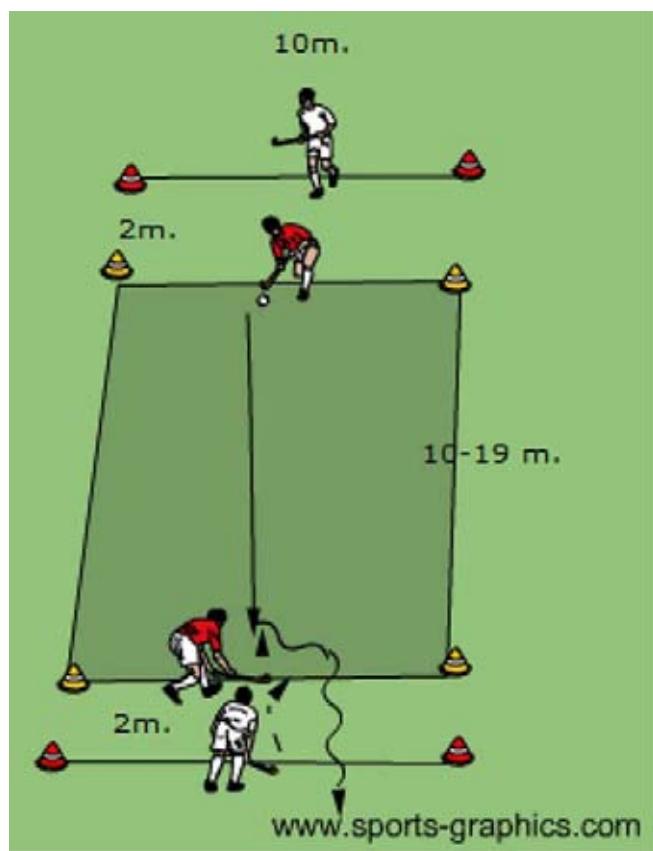
Corrective Exercises: There are many activities to choose among for corrective exercise. See the "Dribble Games," "Tackling Games," and playing one on one on a Mini-Hockey field.

"Tasks that are too difficult result in frustrations and anxiety, whereas those not challenging enough result in boredom." Harter

*7th. Simplified Game***CONTROL THE BALL AND BEAT YOUR OPPONENT**

Set up the field as shown in the illustration. The game is played between two goals at opposite ends of a field that is at least 12 meters long for the youngest players and 22.90 meters long for the more experienced ones. In front and parallel to these goal lines a second line, 2 meters away from the first one, is drawn. At the instant that the red attacker passes the ball to his teammate, the latter runs quickly from the "inner" goal line toward the ball to receive and control it in front of the 2-meter zone, followed by a defender, who shadows him within the 2-meter-zone. The defender is not allowed to tackle in front of this zone, but tries to prevent the attacker from dribbling the ball through the 2-meter zone across the back line. In case the attacker's play has been successful, both attackers remain in attack and do the same play in the opposite direction. But if the defender gains possession of the ball, touching it three times consecutively, or if the ball runs out of the playing area, the

defender has to switch positions and function with the attacker. The pair that manages to score 10 goals wins. If you have more than four players, you may organize a tournament to establish the best team in passing, receiving under simplified conditions, and dribbling with an opponent.

**Variations:**

- Ask for passes directed into the reverse stick of the receiver to improve the skill of receiving and controlling the ball with the reverse stick and then bring it immediately to the front stick. Players should know and experiment with an "oriented" or "purposeful" and planned control of the ball, anticipating during the reception

their following attacking move.

- The defender may intervene beyond the goal line, thus reducing the attacker's time and space for controlling the ball and to try to win the point.

"Consistent achievement in sport depends on consistent high quality training. A better quality practise creates a better quality match."

Ric Charlesworth

Training Objectives:

- * Perfect the communication skills between the passer and receiver.
- Learn to run to the ball, rather than waiting for it to come to your stick, to avoid the defender's anticipating your play.
- Put your body between the defender and the oncoming ball before you receive and control it.
- While beating the defender, try to force him to move to one side; then pass him on the opposite side, using a change of speed and direction.
- Execute as often as possible a control of the ball that will facilitate your next attacking move.
- As a defender, learn to not rush when the attacker manages to control the ball completely. Understand how it is better to move back some steps to help delay your tackle until the ball is a little loose and more available.
- Anticipate the opponent's play.
- Assume an optimal basic position before tackling; always place yourself in a correct line to the attacker.

Corrective Exercises:

Choose among the tackling games or the fifth corrective exercise given for the Second Simplified Game 2 on 2.



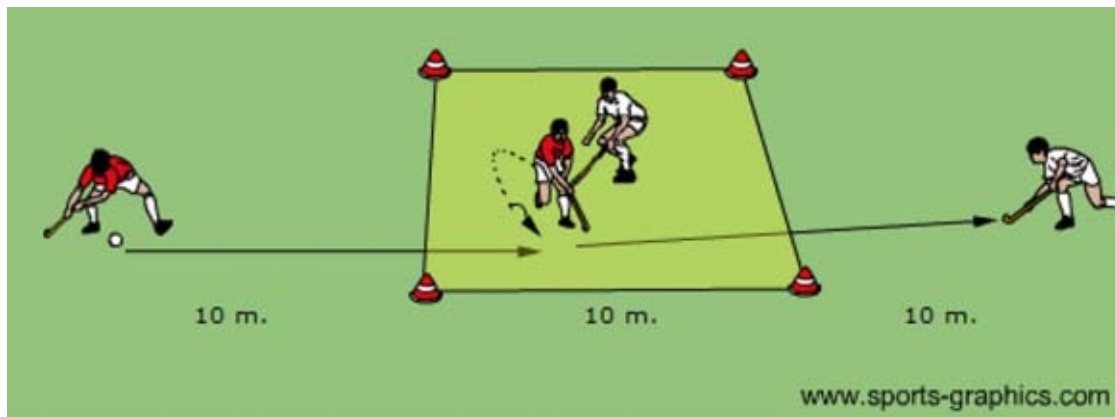
Photo: A. Wälthi

“The coach or player who doesn’t learn from a defeat, will always be a beginner.”

*8th Simplified Game***FREE HIT TO A MARKED ATTACKER**

Four players participate: two play inside a 10-meter square and two are stationed outside, one in front and the other behind the square. Toss a coin to determine which team attacks and which defends. The attacker outside the square executes a free hit to his teammate in the center of the square, who tries to receive the ball despite the presence and defense of an opponent.

For practice purposes the defender should position himself on either side of the attacker or behind him; he may not position himself in front. To avoid the defender's anticipating the opponent's play, the attacker, in the moment of executing the pass, must run toward the ball. Then the attacker tries to receive the ball, control it, and, protecting it with his body, pass it as quickly as possible through the wide goal to the third player behind the square. Player 3 now repeats the actions of the first player, passing the ball to the former defender who is closely marked by the former attacker. The attack is over when the attacker is successful (this scores one point), the ball is run out of the square, or the attacker makes a rules infringement. If the defender breaks the rules, the attackers also get a point. The team (pair of players) that first manages to complete 10 correct controls with subsequent pass to the other player outside the square wins. After completing the first competition, both players of both teams change positions and functions.

**Variations:**

- * The receiver may return the ball to the passer, who then restarts the game from any position outside the square.
- The passer and receiver gain two points if the receiver is able to deflect the oncoming ball with one touch directly into the run of the third player.
- Practice with only three players. After every three free hit, the players switch positions. When the defender recovers possession of the ball, he is asked to return it to the passer.

"From the practical point of view every hour doesn't have 60 minutes; an hour only consists of so many minutes you are able to profit from."

Training Objectives:

- Be able to “read” how the defender marks his opponent. In case the defender marks him from behind, the pass should be directed into the attacker’s front stick; a marking from any side of the attacker requires a pass to the side uncovered by the defender.
- Learn to establish mutual agreement between the passer and receiver.
- Improve in choosing the optimal instant to pass the ball to the receiver.
- Learn to facilitate ball control by the receiver’s gaining an optimal position in relation to the defender, putting his body between him and the ball, thus protecting the ball and not allowing the defender to anticipate the attacking play.
- Learn to select the best technique for reception, depending on the successive play. The angle of the stick in relation to the direction of the oncoming ball (90, 60, or 120 degrees) will determine whether the attacker looks first for assuring possession of the ball or to continue the attack from a side-on position as quickly as possible.
- Learn to deflect oncoming balls directly to the teammate.
- Learn to delay the pass after receiving the ball in case playing it would be very risky

Corrective Exercises: See the Seventh Simplified Game, “Control the Ball and Beat Your Opponent.”



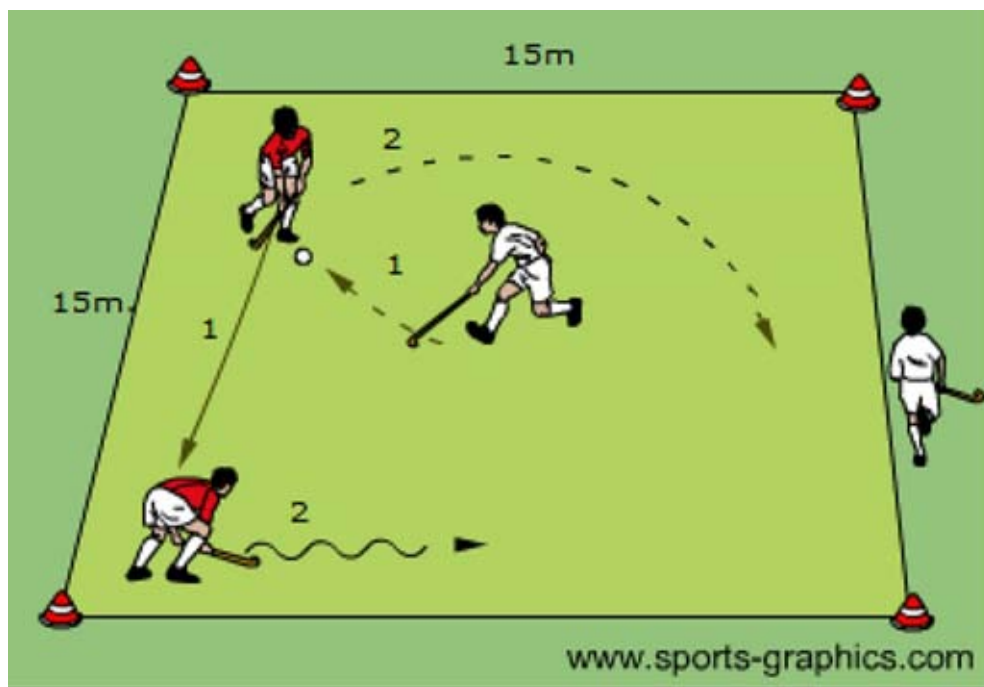
“The aim of education is not only the acquisition of knowledge; it’s the capacity to undertake actions at an appropriate moment.”

*9th. Simplified Game***MAINTAINING BALL POSSESSION 2 ON 1**

In this game, which actually involves four players, two players try to keep possession of the ball inside a square for as long as possible or for 15 seconds. A defender, always starting from the center of the square, does everything to prevent them from achieving their aim. His function is to play the attacker's ball out of the square while his teammate outside of the square (the fourth player) counts the seconds until the ball runs out of the square, or the attackers infringe on the rules. In any of these cases, the defender inside the square switches positions and functions with the fourth player (and teammate) until both have defended five times each in this 1-on-2 situation. After 10 trials the attackers established their record time.

Next, both teams change functions. The first set of (former) defenders now have the chance to improve the result of the former attackers. Whenever a defender infringes on the rules, the time is stopped until the attackers restart the game with a pass or a dribble (!). If there are more than two teams, you might organize a tournament to determine which pair of players can best keep possession of the ball. Players younger than 10 years of age should play in a square that is 15 meters per side. The more advanced the players are, the smaller the playing area should be.

If you have only three players available, the attacker who loses possession of the ball three times becomes defender.



“Look at your pass from the opponent’s point of view.”

Training Objectives:

- Learn to continually be ready and open for a pass, to stay out of the “shadow” of the defender, when you don’t have the ball.
- Know when to pass and when to keep possession of the ball.
- While in possession of the ball keep an eye on your teammate as well as on the defender.
- Keep the ball close to the stick to be able to pass it quickly if necessary.
- Look out and make use of the zones that the defender isn’t covering. Understand that the greater the distance between the passer and receiver, the more difficult is the defender’s job.
- Learn to hide your intentions (the moment of the pass and its direction). Use frequently dummies or feints.
- Avoid entering the defender’s range of action; learn to put your body between the ball and the defender in case no pass is possible and the defender is close.
- As defender, learn to reduce the space and time at the disposal of the attackers. Show will power until you succeed.
- Anticipate the attackers’ play.
- Execute dummies to condition and direct the attacker's play.

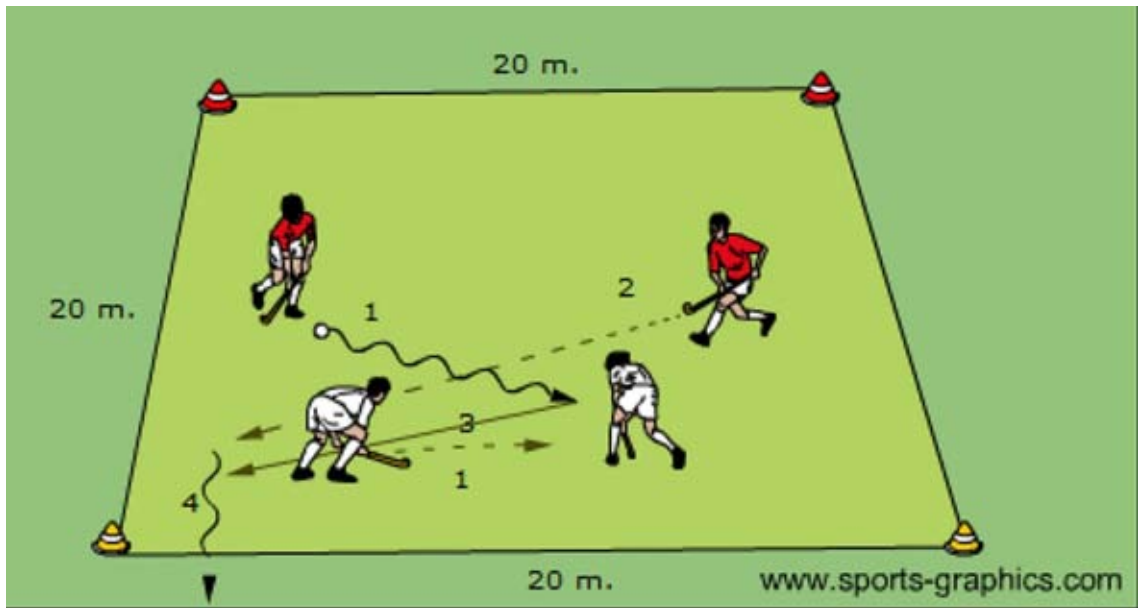
**Corrective Exercises:**

- Offer a tag game with both attackers trying to run from any direction across the playing area without getting tagged by one defender in the field’s center.
- Review the first five simplified games for teams of two players.
- Review the dribbling games “Robber and Policeman,” “Keep Possession of the Ball,” “Cat and Mouse,” and “Escape.”

*10th. Simplified Game***2 ON 2 WITH TWO WIDE GOALS**

Start the game with a ball toss at the center of the grid of 20 x 20 meters with 20m-wide goals, which size dependant on the capacity of play of the children. Divide players into two teams of two players. To score a goal, an attacker must control the ball in the opponent's goal. Usually there are no sidelines. A rules infringement is penalized with a sel-pass from a point at least 3 meters away from the opponents and their goal.

Duration of the game: four periods of 2 minutes each.

**Variations:**

- * The same game is played using four goals (6 meters wide) , one at the left and one at the right side of both original 12-20 meter wide cone goals. To score, the ball must be dribbled across one of the two opponents' goals.
- The youngsters play the game around an open, 6-meter-wide goal area marked off by cones. The team that does not have the ball uses one of its two players as goalkeeper, and this player may not leave the goal line. But once that team manages to win or capture the ball, the goalkeeper may go off the line. After one successful pass between the defenders, they obtain the right to attack the goal from any side, with one former attacker defending it. A goal can be scored from any distance.

***“It’s not so important to possess the ball,
it’s more important to know what to do with it.”***

Training Objectives:

- * In attack, learn to look out systematically for the 2-on-1 situation by frequently dribbling the ball straight to the other defender who marks the second attacker. When this defender turns her interest to the ball carrier, the latter passes the ball to the second attacker who stays wide and controls the ball on the run to give the defense less time to interfere.
- Learn the switch: after a diagonal penetration by the ball carrier, her teammate stays slightly back and then positions himself for a pass with a sudden run behind the ball carrier (see the illustration for the first variation of the 10th. Simplified Game).
- Review and continue to work on the coaching objectives for the previous simplified games.



Photo: A. Wälti

“As the strictest application of the rules of the game doesn’t mean good umpiring, the correct application of all basic principles of play doesn’t result in the best possible plays.”

COACHING SIMPLIFIED GAMES

- Be aware of the progression in the program of the simplified games for teams of two, three, and then four players.
- Know the training or coaching objectives of every single simplified game—as well as how its grade of difficulty and complexity compares with the previous and next games in the program. This enables you as a coach to link the exercise or game with the technical-tactical experience players have gained in the previous games. And by progressing this way, the children, on their own, can resolve most of the problems contained in the game.
- Consider the players' capacity level as well as their actual mental and physical state to be able to adapt the dimensions of the playing area, the goals, and the rules to their state of development.
- Objectively face the actual playing level you find in your players with the level they should eventually achieve in their age group.
- Offer feedback and simplified games, preferably in which every player learns the result of the execution of a skill immediately after his effort and knows the reasons why he failed or succeeded.
- Identify any aspects that are restricting the performance levels of the players, the causes of an error, and the necessary remedies (corrective exercises or games) to help youngsters form correct habits.
- Consider the motivation of every player and create the positive atmosphere during a training session that is essential for learning. Provide every player with sufficient opportunities to experiment with successful moves; present slightly modified situations to consolidate the new experiences players have gained. Always consider youngsters as *active* learners during the training session: psychologists tell us that players learn better when they are given the opportunity to resolve the problems on their own without the help of their coach or teacher.

***“All of us live under the same sky,
but none of us have the same horizon.”***

Konrad Adenauer

MODEL FOR A TRAINING SESSION BUILT AROUND THE COMPETITION IN A SIMPLIFIED GAME

0 MINUTE: INTRODUCTION OF THE SIMPLIFIED GAME

- Rules of the game
- Explanations of the functions of every player during the demonstration of the game
- Finally allow the players time for practice, to understand the game, to ask questions, to respond to the questions of the teacher and to gain their first experience in this particular game.

25 MINUTES:

- Quarter finals of the competition

35 MINUTES:

- Presentation and execution of two corrective exercises/games which are carried out on the same playing area with the same teams

50 MINUTES:

- Semi finals of the competition (winners vs. winners and losers vs. losers)

60 MINUTES:

- Presentation and execution of two corrective exercises/games (train in function of the simplified game)

75 MINUTES:

- COMPETITIONS FINALS for 1 st, 3rd, 5th and 7th position.

“When the coaches of today tend to teach the way they were taught in the past, how we can expect progress?”

GAMES FOR MINI-HOCKEY

The variations of Mini-Hockey, the Mini-Hockey-Pentathlon, and 3-on-3 Triathlon are tailor-made competitions for youngsters under 10 years of age. They all help to unlock, stimulate, and develop the innate potential of the young boys and girls, and in these competitions the coach can (and should) be more an organizer than an instructor. Because there are fewer players and a playing field of smaller dimensions, the eight- and nine-year old players (but also older ones) will always feel capable. This sense of self-esteem is an important experience for them that can also promote hockey, perhaps instilling this game as their lifetime choice of sport.

Tailor-made competitions in which players can demonstrate their decision-making skills will foster feelings of capability and self-esteem.

The Rules of Mini-Hockey 3-on-3

Mini-Hockey 3-on-3 is considered the ideal competition for eight- and nine-year-old players. It should prepare these boys and girls to successfully approach the 6-on-6 game. Boys and girls may still play together on the same team.

Playing Field

Mini-Hockey is played in an area measuring 22.90 by 25 to 30 meters, or on a handball or indoor hockey field (20 by 40 meters). On each end line, there should be two 2-meter-wide goals set up with two posts, each 1-meter-high. Usually the goals are set 12 meters apart. The shooting zones are generally determined by straight lines, drawn parallel to the goal lines and set 5.8 meters inside the field (like the free throw line of the basketball court). On handball fields, the circles with interrupted lines in front of both goals will be used.

A goal is scored when the ball, played by an attacker from inside the opponent's shooting zone, completely crosses the goal line between the two posts of either of the two mini-goals. If, the posts have been moved during the match and the ball, in the referee's opinion, completely crosses the goal line at the goal's original position, the goal still is valid.



Teams

A Mini-Hockey team is made up of only four players, three of them being allowed to play at the same time on the field. The competition should not be played with fewer than three players per team. After either team scores a goal, one player of each team has to be substituted. These players must always enter the playing area at the centerline, after the teammate has left the field at the same spot. In case of an infringement of this rule, the other team will be awarded a free hit or dribble in front of the opponent's shooting area—but at least 3 meters away from it.



Duration

Include three 10-minute periods when only one match a day is played, with a 5-minute break between the periods. If several matches are played on the same day, the recommended duration of play is two 10-minute periods.

Technical Rules

A player may not

- kick the ball or play it with any other part of his body or show any violence,
- pass the ball with a hit (lifting the stick above the ground and use both hands together at the top of the handle).

Free hit: For any breach of rules in any part of the field (with the exception of the defenders in their own defensive zone), a free hit or dribble is awarded for the other side. To put the ball into play, the young player may choose either to pass the ball to a teammate or to dribble it. All free hits must be taken at a distance no less than 3 meters away from the shooting zone and with the defenders also more than 3 meters off the ball.

Penalty: There are no penalty strokes or penalty corners for an intentional breach of the rules inside of a team's own 5.80-meter zone, but the opponent will be awarded a "penalty attack," starting from the center of the field. In a penalty attack all the players, except one defender on the end line, must remain 5 meters behind the attacker in possession of the ball. After the referee has given permission for the attack, they all may interfere in defense as well as in support. The defender starts from the end line. In case of an infringement of the rules by any defender, the free attack must be repeated.

Corners: There aren't any corners in Mini-Hockey.

Push-in and side-out: The ball is brought into play with a free hit from the sideline or from the 5.80-meter line.



Start and restart of the game: Always start or restart the game with a bully in the center of the field.

Disciplinary sanctions: Temporary expulsion from play is the penalty for unsporting behaviour.

Equipment

All players of one team must wear the same color shirt, shorts, and socks.

Protective clothing: All players are required to wear shin guards.

Referee:

A single referee supervises the match and applies the rules. To promote and school future umpires, children under 16 years of age umpire the Mini-Hockey matches.



8 Mini Hockey fields can fit in one full hockey pitch, allowing to play in one half of the pitch one club or school against another club or school with 16 players each. When in the second half another club or school face each other, 64 players are getting involved. For each Mini Field the clubs or schools should provide only one referee who applies the Mini-Hockey rules.



"Coaches should make sure that their players learn in an atmosphere of success. They only should expose them to the next game until the pupils have mastered the previous one."

WHY MINI HOCKEY 3vs3 WITH 4 GOALS AND NOT HOCKEY 6-on-6?
Comparison between two competitions for players 8- and 9- years old

Mini-Hockey with 4 goals	Hockey 6-on-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because of the 2 goals being placed away from the centre of the field, players are using systematically the spaces close to the side lines. Playing with 2 goals stimulates the „reading of the game and its understanding“ and helps to use perception skills and decision making before carrying out the planned move. Stimulates more than any other game the perception, the imagination, fantasy and creativity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the position of the goal in the centre of the field frequent agglomerations of players around the ball happen again and again what does not stimulate the process of learning how to „read the game“. The development of perception skills, the understanding and the decision making become more difficult because of too many players being around the ball. Less stimuli are given for developing game intelligence, fantasy and creativity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient space and time allows children to read and construct the mini game discovering basic communication skills. Sufficient time and space are leading to less mistakes because perception, decision making and execution of the skills is easier. Due to the fact that the same basic game situations appear again and again (i.a. 2vs1-situation) the young players learn very quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As players used to be around the ball there is less time and space available for perception, decision making and execution of the skills. Less time and space to play lead to more mistakes. Due to the fact that 12 players are involved, the game situations are much more complex than in Mini Hockey and don't reappear as frequently.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 8- and 9 –years old players treat the ball as their best friend, with love and tenderness. No clearances or wild and dangerous hitting can be seen in which players “violate the ball”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is frequently seen that players clear the ball wide, far away from the danger zone. Then they are playing against the ball instead of with it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Players learn to attack and defend in a triangular formation which allows the development of better communication and collaboration. Positioning in the field is easy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positioning themselves in the field is often spontaneous and not a consequence of logical thinking.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows an all-round development of all participants as there are no fixed positions in a team which would avoid too early specialization. Everybody has to attack as well as to defend, on the left as well as on the right side of the field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The players stick more to their given position in the field and don't have multipurpose functions like in Mini Hockey. Generally the children already have a specific position in their team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each player scores in each match more than one goal. All players are main actors of the game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less goals are scored by less players.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each player, also the weaker one, is in a side with only 3 players very important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The weaker player have much less participation than the better ones.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many ball contacts demand a permanent visual and cognitive participation of each of the three players. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All players take part physically as well as mentally in the game but less frequent than in Mini Hockey. There are less ball contacts.
<p>+ When playing the Mini Game the hockey of the 8- and 9-years old children is more similar to Top Performance Hockey than to 6-a-side Hockey.</p>	<p>+ For the 8- and 9-years old children 6-a-side Hockey is too complex, too difficult to understand and less recommendable than Mini Hockey which better stimulates the development of their personality and self-confidence.</p>

“A continued participation in an activity is directly related to the amount of success attained by the individual.”

D. Millmann

More advantages to play Mini-Hockey instead of 6-on-6 Hockey

1. Savety: Hitting the ball with two hands gripping the handle at the top is not allowed because of the danger of the high swing up and follow through. Less crowding around the ball, less dangerous situations.
2. More goals - more enjoyment - more participation and ball contacts.
3. Mini Hockey doesn't need a lot of space (just a basketball court) and when playing on the regular hockey field 64 children can play and learn at the same time.
4. Less costs are involved as no equipment for goalkeepers is needed.
5. Mini Hockey is easier to teach because it's more simple, has less players and less rules what allows an easier control and analysis of the game for the teacher.
6. Mini Hockey is easier to learn because of less players being involved. Therefore processing information is much easier as well as correct positioning in the field of play.
7. Playing Mini Hockey allows a better promotion of hockey because only 6 players are needed to play a full game. It's possible to have much more teams for a tournament than with 6-a-side Hockey.
8. Mini Hockey with 4 goals allows more variations which stimulate the creativity, imagination and fantasy of the young players.
9. Systematically improve perception skills in the depth as well as in the width of the field.
10. Mini Hockey fosters better the game without the ball than 6-a-side. .
11. Because of many more ball contacts the technical skills of dribbling, passing, receiving, beating a man, tackling etc improve more.
12. Mini Hockey allows the player to autocorrect himself without being dependant on a feed back of the teacher.
13. Playing Mini Hockey the teacher becomes less important. He now teaches less and the players learn and discover more on their own.

***“The strategies of chess are applicable to hockey.
Every move must be made with future moves in mind.”***

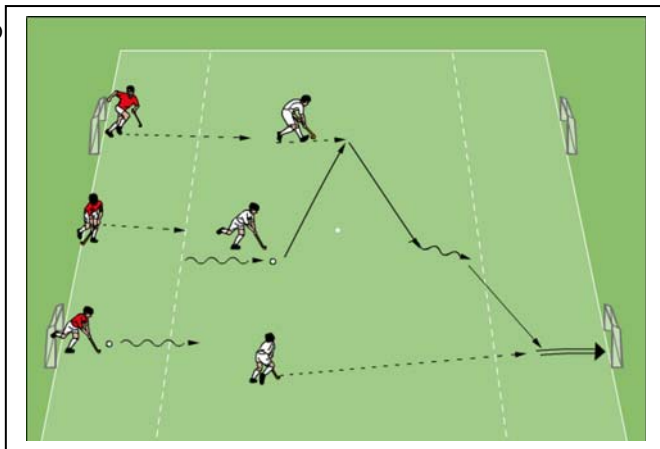
PREPARATORY OR CORRECTIVE GAMES FOR MINI-HOCKEY

The following games are designed to help children focus on building the skills most important to playing successful Mini Hockey. The players familiarise themselves with the pitch and learn how to pass the ball securely and quickly to each other, how to control and run with the ball and how to shoot accurately from inside the shooting zone. While they are practicing, the coach explains the rules of Mini Hockey little by little.

A. Attack 3v0 Games

1. Attack 3v0 Without Defence

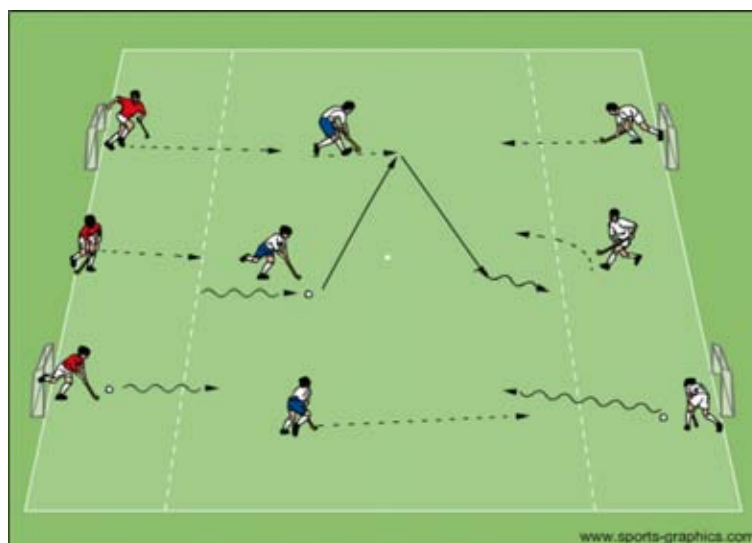
A team of three players line up across an end-line. Two of the three begin from inside the two goals, with the third in the centre. All three then progress down the field to attack the opposite goals using any combination (but everybody has to touch the ball at least once) until they are capable of scoring without opposition. A valid goal is scored from any point inside the shooting area.



An attack finishes with a goal or the ball going across any side-line or end-line. The winner is the team that scores the most often within 5 or 10 attacks.

2. 3v0 in Opposite Directions

Two teams of three players start from opposite ends of the pitch at the same time. Without pausing after completing their attacks, they continue until one team has scored five goals.



3. 3v0 in a Triangular Formation

The three players of a team must always remain in a triangular formation during the development of an attack. A goal does not count if, during the development, the players are positioned all in a line and a less than 5 meters separated.

Effective Questioning

Why must you play in a triangular formation?

- *It offers more passing options.*
- *The opposing team has fewer opportunities to attack successfully.*
- *Even inaccurate passes reach their destination without the defender being able to intercept them.*
- *A player receiving a pass can more easily play the ball directly to the next player.*
- *It is easier to actively control and run with the ball.*

To “polish off” and eliminate any deficiencies in the dribble, passing, or receiving skills, the coach should consult the exercise activities or games proposed in “Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities—Level 1” (chapter 3), allowing players ample opportunities to review and practice their developing skills.

4. 3v0 With Interchange of Positions

To score a goal, the three attackers must interchange positions during the passing move so that when they score, each of them is in a different position than when they started.

Effective Questioning

Where do you have to play the ball in order to get forward as quickly as possible?

Into the path of your team-mate.

Why should all the attacking positions always be occupied?

Because this will eventually enable you to pull the opposing team's defence out of position. Set up a Mini -Hockey or Basketball field, with four goal areas as shown in the illustration and the two shooting zones of 5.8 meters. Choose up several teams, each having three players, who will compete against each other. Each team starts its attack from one end line. Before the team members score in either goal area from inside the shooting zone, every player must have touched the ball at least once. Each team tries to score five goals with five attacks. An attack finishes when the ball leaves the field, enters the goal, or simply misses its aim.

What is the point of interchanging positions?

Interchanging positions confuses the opposing team and makes it more difficult for the defenders to cover the attackers.

The players learn to follow their own pass and not simply stand and wait. This creates space for the other players to push forward.

5. 3v0 Receiving on the Run

A goal only counts if all passes are taken on the run, without stopping the ball.

Effective Questioning

Why should you pass the ball into the path of your team-mate when there is no defender in front of him or her?

Because your team-mate can get forward faster if he or she runs onto the ball rather than running with it. As a result, the defenders do not have enough time to challenge.

6. 3v0 First-Time Passing

A goal only counts if each player has made a first-time pass. The players should also shoot first time.

Effective Questioning

When and why should you pass the ball first time rather than control it?

If an opponent is close to you when the pass arrives, or if an attack needs to be speeded up and you want to give the defenders less time to challenge for the ball.

When can a pass be helped on its way with your first touch?

If it is played to you accurately or is played at a pace that makes it easy to deal with. A player must be available to receive the pass comfortably.

When should you hold on to the ball before passing it rather than playing a firsttime pass? If the ball is passed to you inaccurately or too fast, or if no team-mate is available to receive the pass.

7. 3v0 Using the Reverse Stick

A goal only counts if the ball was passed by each player once or twice with the reverse stick.

8. 3v0 Fast Attack

This is a game between all of the teams of three players. The teams have to score a goal in the shortest possible time. Which team needs less time to reach the shooting zone and then score in either of the two goals? Each player has to touch the ball at least once. If no stopwatch is available, the game can be carried out in opposite directions. (In this case there is a risk of collisions, but it makes the players aware of others around them.)

The coach's adept questions guide the players to the best possible attacking combination.

He or she especially directs their attention toward the player who starts the play and to the direction and number of passes made. After several attempts, the players learn to always start the attacks with the right winger. The winger passes the ball to the centre forward, who runs onto it in the centre of the pitch and immediately passes the ball to the left winger into the shooting zone who scores first time.

B. Attack 3v1 Games

1. Attack 3 v1

Three players of one team start at their Endline and build up an attack on an Opposing team's two goals, defended by only one player. The same player can defend all the time, or one of the two players waiting on the touchline can switch places with him or her. If the defender wins the ball, he or she must shoot as quickly as possible from any distance at one of the opposing team's goals before the three attackers can regain possession of the ball. After six attacks, another team of three defenders takes over, using rolling substitution.



Variations:

- If four teams of three players are available, the coach can organise a tournament. Three teams attack and one team defends with one player.
- Instead of one defender, a goal-keeper defends both goals.

Effective Questioning

Which attacker should have the ball when the defender challenges for it?

The centre forward.

Where should the centre forward position him- or herself when a winger has the ball? *If the defender challenges on the flank, the centre forward hangs back or takes up a position behind the defender, where he or she can receive a through pass (triangle formation). The attacker on the opposite flank takes up positions that take account of the off-the-ball play of the centre forward.*

When must you pass the ball? *Neither too early nor too late. Pass when the defender is about to challenge. If the passer's timing is good, the defender cannot recover and challenge the player who receives the ball (this is the basis of success in two against one situations). Pass the ball when you are just out of reach of the defender (illustrate the defender's reach with a wide lounge). This distance may change if a defender backs off when faced by an attacker who is running at him or her with the ball.*

Why is it best if the centre forward has the ball? *Because he or she is the only attacker who has the option of passing in both directions to open up scoring chances. The task of defence is at its most difficult when the defender is isolated.*

What do the team-mates of the player in possession have to pay attention to? *They must remain far enough away from the defender and roughly level with the player in possession so that they can run onto the ball outside the reach of the defender.*

What do you do if the path to goal is free or suddenly opens up? *Run with the ball toward the goal and try to score.*

What do you do when you do not have the ball? *Take up a good position in front of one of the goals, outside the reach of the defender.*

What must you do to ensure that you can always receive a pass? *Pay attention to the position of the defender relative to the player with the ball, and to the position of the third member of your team and the position of the goals. Never position yourself so that the defender is directly in line between you and the ball.*

Which passes should you avoid in 3v1 situations? *Avoid passes that do not gain any space so that you keep your numerical advantage and other defenders cannot intervene by tackling or intercepting.*

What should the single defender do? *He or she should try to make the centre forward play the ball to one of the wingers as soon as possible. On the flank the single defender has a better chance of closing down the winger who has fewer options. The defender should only challenge for the ball if the attacker lets it roll too far away from his or her foot.*

"No practice waste the talent." Leonardo da Vinci

What else must you watch out for when you pass? *Before you come within reach of the defender, disguise the direction of the pass by feinting, using a foot or body movement.*

In this way you trick the defender. Now play the ball diagonally into the path of a team-mate, who receives it while level with the defender. After passing, remain involved in the play (follow the ball, overlap down the flank or take up another position to receive a pass).

2. 3v1 Continuous and Alternate Attacks Toward Both Ends

A team of three players in the middle of the pitch attacks toward each end of the pitch alternately and tries to score. At each end, the two goals are defended by only one player. After 10 attacks, the two teams swap their positions and functions. An attack ends when the defender touches the ball or when a defender gains possession and passes the ball to the team-mate in the other half, who then scores.

The third defender who waits outside of the field substitutes always the defender whose tackle was successful.

Variations

- Inside the shooting zone only one-touch passing and shooting are allowed.
- A goal can be scored also after recovering the lost ball from the defender.



3. 3v1 in a Triangular Formation

A goal only counts if the three players remain in a triangular formation during the development of an attack (they must not play in a line). See the same game 3v0.

Variations:

- A goal only counts if the attackers besides moving forward in a triangle shape play the ball twice with the reverse stick.
- A goal only counts if all the passes has been controlled on the run.

See also the Effective Questioning section accompanying the game 3v0 in a Triangular formation .

4. 3v1 Fast Attack

See rules of the games 3v0 Fast Attack and apply them to the 3v1-game Fast Attack. The team of three players that scores a valid goal in the shortest time wins.

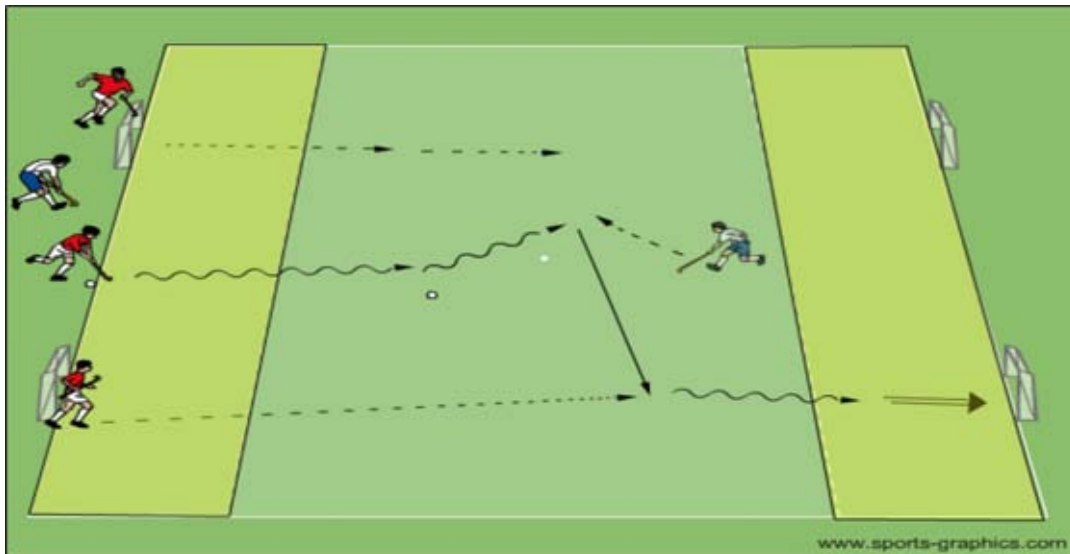
Effective Questioning

Where should the ball be when the attack starts? *Preferably with the centre forward.*

What is the most successful way to attack in a game of 3v1? *The centre forward runs with the ball at the defender. At the right moment, the centre forward plays the ball into the shooting zone, into the path of one of the wingers. The winger then shoots first time at goal.*

5. 3v1 plus One Additional Defender Supporting From Behind

Three attackers play against one defender. A second defender positioned 6 (or 4) metres behind the attackers to simulate a recovering player joins play at the attacker's first ball touch. The third player in the defending team takes a pause and replaces one of his or her team-mates when the next attack takes place. He or she waits behind the start line in a corner of the pitch for a second attack.



Effective Questioning

What is the best way to score in this game? *By running with the ball and passing it at the right moment, before the second defender can intervene. Unnecessary passes, which gain no ground, should be avoided.*

Which player should have the ball when the attack starts? *In order to lose as little time as possible, the centre forward should have the ball.*

How does the centre forward start the attack? By passing to one of the wingers or by making a forward run with the ball? *The centre forward dribbles the ball first toward the defender and only passes the ball after having him committed. With an initial pass the defender may have time to intervene.*

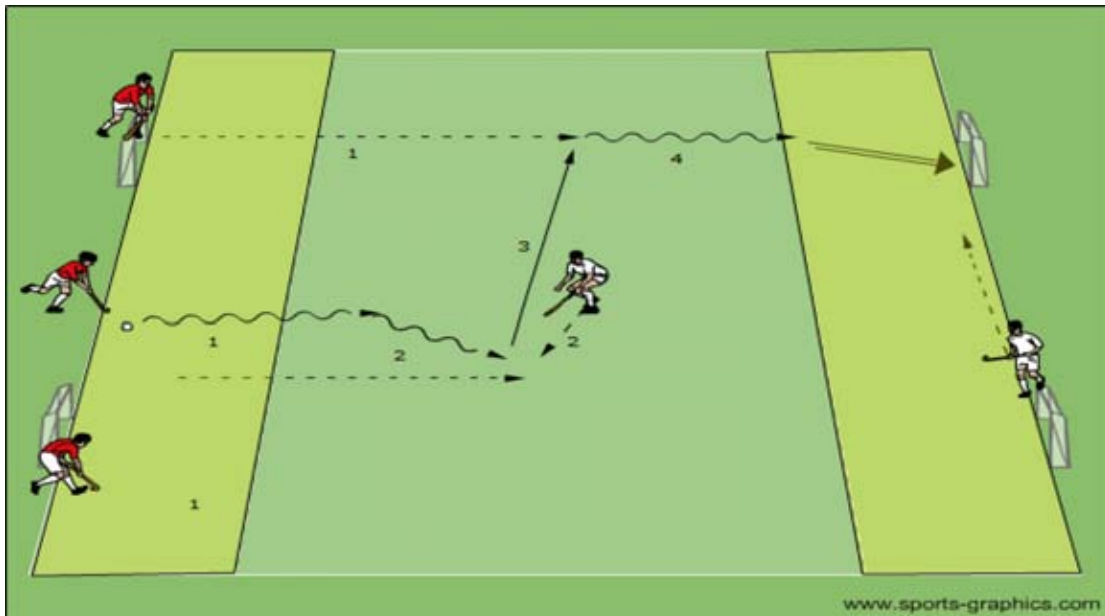
What is the best time for the centre forward to pass the ball? *When the defender challenges, preferably when the centre forward is just outside the reach of the defender so that the pass cannot be intercepted.*

Which factors play a role in the timing of the pass? *What the defender does, the direction of the second defender's run, the positions of the other two attackers and the position of the defender in relation to the two mini-goals are all factors.*

Should the winger first control the ball in the shooting zone, or should he or she shoot first time? *To give the defender as little time as possible to challenge, the winger should shoot first time.*

6. 3v1 plus a Covering Player

Three attackers play against one defender and a second one who covers him, remaining always on the end-line.



Effective Questioning

Which forward should be in possession of the ball? *Ideally the central attacker as he has better options to pass the ball*

What should he do? Dribble the ball or pass it? *Passing the ball to a wing attacker before committing the defender is a bad solution of this problem. He should dribble the ball first straight to the defender and suddenly moves away from him towards the covering defender on his side behind him. Once he has moved the defender out of the center, he should pass the ball to the opposite side where the wing can score for not having a covering defender to beat.*

7. 3v1 plus an Additional Defender Supporting him from one side line

A second defender helps the first one in front of the two goals from different positions around the field—for example 10 metres from any of the side-lines. As soon as one of the three attackers touches the ball, both defenders have to set off to prevent the attackers from scoring.

"A player's performance level is not determined by comparing it with the other players. It should be related to his capacities."

8. 3v1 plus Two Additional Defenders Supporting From Behind

The pressure on the attackers to act quickly is increased by having two additional defenders behind them. From a position 8 metres behind the attackers, the two additional defenders run back to help their team-mate.

The aim of the attackers is to pass the ball with speed and accuracy to each other at the right moment, to know to make themselves available for a pass and to shoot quickly.



Effective Questioning

How do the two additional defenders influence the play of the attackers? *If the attacker with the ball observes the two defenders behind, he or she knows which of their team-mates is farthest from a defender. When the first defender challenges, the attacker should pass the ball into the shooting zone so that the least-defended teammate can run onto the ball and shoot first time.*

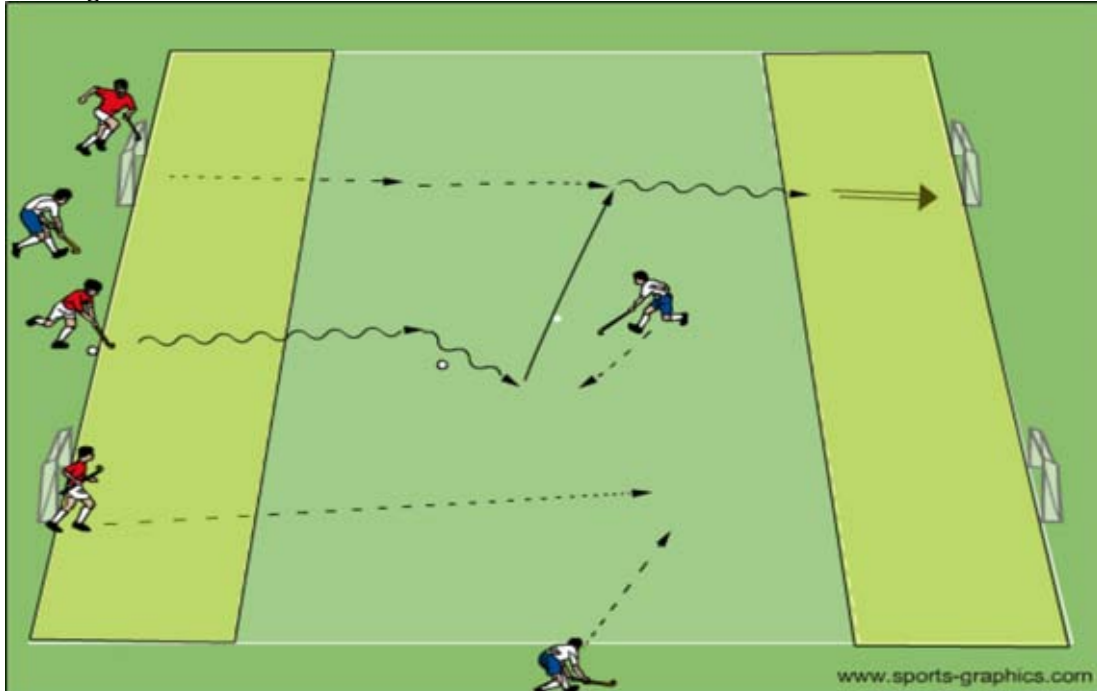
Should the defenders coming from behind challenge the player in possession or try to close off his or her passing lanes? *While the first defender tries to hold up the centre forward, the other two defenders should try to close off the passing lanes. The three defenders should learn to agree in advance what they intend to do.*

How can the last defender influence the play of the attackers? *If he or she takes no action to slow the attack and close down the passing lanes, the centre forward will not pass the ball. And, if the defender does not position him- or herself exactly in the middle but rather more to one side, the ball will be passed into the path of the attacker who is farthest away from the defender.*

“When the coaches of today tend to teach the way they were taught in the past, we should not expect any progress.”

9. 3v1 plus Two Defenders (one from behind and the other one from the side-line)

Two additional defenders (one on the flank and the other one behind) pressure the attackers to speed up their play. While the first defender is positioned in front of the two goals, a second defender starts from 8 metres behind the attackers. A third defender helps the first two from different positions—for example 10 metres away from any of the side-lines at different levels. As soon as an attacker touches the ball, the defenders set off to prevent the three attackers from scoring.



Effective Questioning

Which attacker has the best chance of scoring? *The attacker who is farthest from the three defenders when the ball is passed.*

When should the centre forward pass the ball, and to whom? *When the last defender is about to challenge, the centre forward should pass to the team-mate who is farthest away from the defender at the side and the defender behind him or her.*

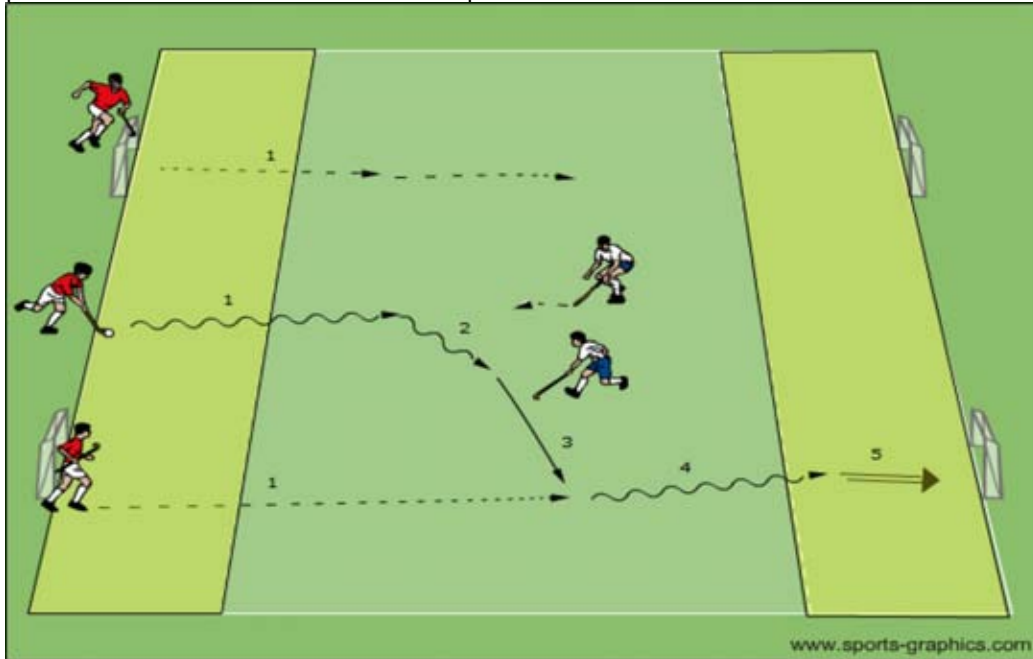
***"Man must live in the middle of risk and safety.
Risk leads to self destruction,
Safety leads to stagnation.
Between both lies survival and progress."***

Gunnar Breivik

C. Attack 3v2 games

1. 3v2

Different teams of three players take turns in attacking the two goals on each end-line. Initially the goals at each end are defended by a covering defender in the shooting zone and one midfielder in the centre of the field. Subsequently the restrictions of the covering defender are lifted. How many successive goals are the attackers capable of scoring against the two pairs of defenders (without losing possession or allowing the ball to go out of play)? An attack ends when a goal is scored, when the ball goes out of play, or when a defender wins the ball and passes it to the other defender or pair of defenders.



Effective Questioning

Where do the attackers have to apply the first two-against-one situation? *It is important to create a two-against-one situation or supremacy in numbers where the covering defender has difficulties assisting his or her team-mate. Therefore the player with the ball can easily steer this through the direction of his or her run at the first defender.*

A two against one is most effective on the right flank because the attacker on the left flank (provided they are right footed) can disguise the direction of a pass more easily (pass with outside of right foot, or feint to pass or run in one direction and then run into the centre).

Which attacker has the best chance of scoring? *Usually the attacker who makes a run down the flank does. As the defender must first of all prevent the centre forward from breaking through in the middle, the centre forward can pass to the flank after running into the middle. The defender is thus wrong-footed by the direction of the run with the ball.*

If the centre forward runs with the ball toward one of the two defenders, his or her team-mate on the same flank makes a run off the ball toward the wing, thus creating a two-against-one situation. The team-mate receives the ball from the centre forward before the second defender can intervene.

What factors influence the interplay of the three attackers? *The off-the-ball runs of the two team-mates of the player with the ball, the positions of the two defenders relative to each other, the positions of the defenders relative to the mini-goals and the moment when a defender first challenges for the ball are factors.*

2. 3v2 Fast Attack

The team of three players that scores in less time, wins.

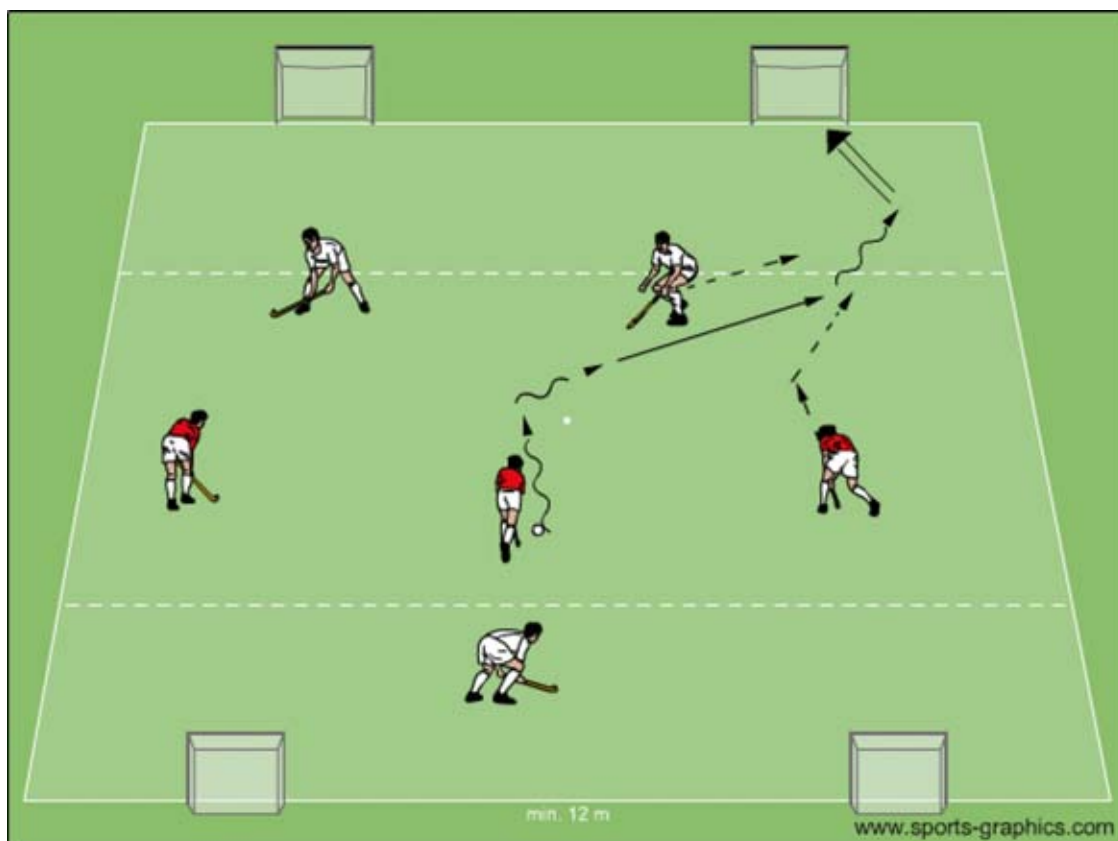
Effective Questioning

See the questions on the fast attack games of 3v0 and 3v1.

3. 3v2 to 3v1

While one pair of mini-goals is guarded by two defenders, a single player defends the other pair. The three attackers first attack the goals defended by one player and then the goals defended by two players.

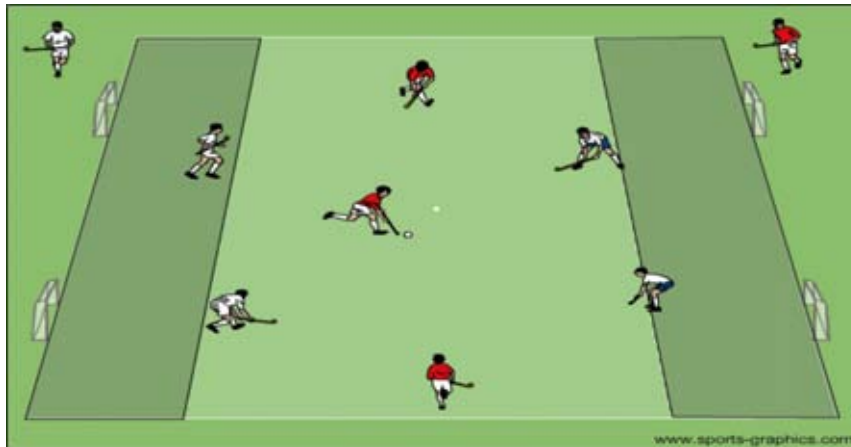
An attack ends when one of the three defenders wins the ball and passes it to another defender, or when the ball goes out of play, or a goal is scored. After 10 attacks the teams of three swap places and tasks. The team that scores the most goals in 10 attacks is the winner.



4. 3v2 in Both Halves of the Field

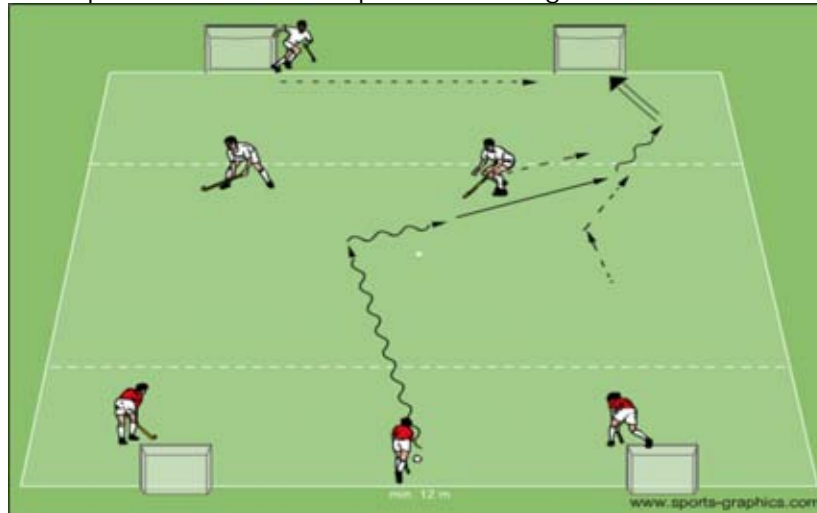
After each attack against two defenders, one of the two defenders joins his or her team-mate in the other half so that two defenders always face the three attackers.

5. Continues 3v2 (10 attacks) with Three Teams



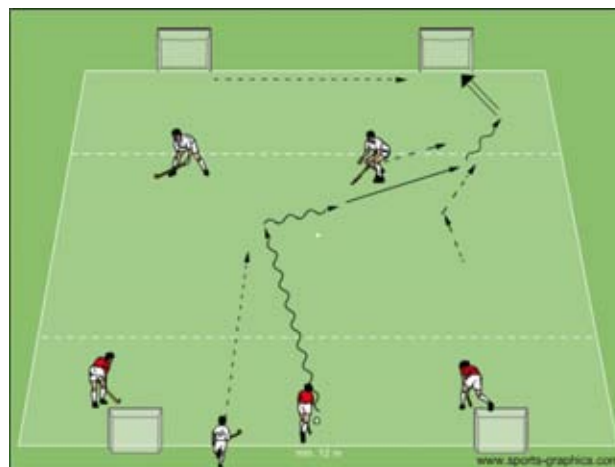
6. 3v2 Plus a Covering Defender

See the game and questions from "3v1 plus a covering defender"



7. 3v2 Plus one Additional Defender Supporting From Behind

See the game and questions from "3v1 plus one additional defender supporting from behind"



8. 3v2 Plus one Additional Defenders Supporting from both Side-Lines

See the explication and questions from the 3v1 game.

TESTING AN INDIVIDUAL'S PLAYING CAPACITY

Ordinarily, during hockey sessions, you will expose the young players to a varied program of activities, proposed in Levels 1 and 2 level of the Hockey Development Model. For contrast and motivational challenge, however, as well as for your own checking of progress, pick three times during the season to organize a test of their capacity to play Mini-Hockey well. Before you propose the following test, group the youngsters in sets of six players and assign every boy or girl a number.

1. 1-ON-1 CHALLENGE

Player 1 challenges Player 2, Player 3 plays against Player 4, and Player 5 competes against Player 6. The game is played on the Mini-Hockey field, applying Mini-Hockey rules. The game starts with a ball toss. While two players compete, the other four wait behind the end lines. When a goal is scored or the ball runs across one end line, two other players substitute for these first two players. In the following challenges between the same players, the one who lost the first competition will attack, from the center of the field, the opponent from a minimum distance of 3 meters. The player who finally manages to score three goals against the same opponent is the winner of the 1-on-1 Challenge and accumulates 1 point for the test. Always have one of the players who is not involved in playing the game act as referee. The official rules of Mini-Hockey without a goalkeeper apply.



*“Playing is essential as sleeping –
necessary for your health and your mind. ”*

2. 2-ON-2 CHALLENGE

A team of Players 1, 2, and 3 plays against a team of Players 4, 5, and 6; that is two teams of three players are formed. Only two of the team's members, however, may play simultaneously. Every time a goal is scored, one player of each team goes off and the third player comes in as the substitute. The team that scores more goals within 5 minutes is the winner. Every player from the winning team gets 2 points for the test.



3. MINI-HOCKEY 3-ON-3

Players 1, 2, and 4 form one team that faces Players 3, 5, and 6 as the other team. The game is played with the official rules of Mini-Hockey, without a goalkeeper, during three periods of 3 minutes each. Every player of the winning team will gain 3 points for the test.



The test is won by the player with the highest number of points. If you have 12 players available, form two groups. The first three and the last three will face each other in "playoffs" for the final individual rankings of 1–6 and 7–12.

"The mainly technique orientated traing has cut out the fun and enjoyment o the practise which is generally generated by game playing."

Mini-Hockey 3-on-3 Variations to stimulate the Development of Creativity and Game Intelligence

To add even more variety to the training program for the 8 and 9 years old beginners, you should let experiment and enjoy the following Mini-Hockey Variations.

1. Dribbling the Ball across the End-Line

To score a player has to control the ball on the opponent's end-line.

Variation:

After having scored the successful team keeps the possession of the ball with the aim to dribble the ball across the opposite end-line.

2. Mixed Mini-Hockey

One team scores with a shot from inside the shooting area in one of the 2m-wide cone goals whilst the opponents have to dribble the ball across one of the 6m-wide cone goals on the opponent's end-line.

Variation:

After every goal the tasks of both teams are reversed.

3. Mini-Hockey with Handicap

Every team which scores with a shot from inside the opponent's shooting zone or controls the ball in one of the two 6m-wide cone goals of the opponent loses a player. That is why the scoring team must play until the next goal with one player less than the other team (2v3). If the team with three players manages to score, the third player of the other team returns on the field, while the scoring team loses again a player (3v2). A team which scores with two players wins one point. Objective of both teams is to score three times playing under-numbered (2v3).

Effective Questioning for stimulating the Game Intelligence

Why do we play Mini Hockey with a handicap? So that you learn how to adjust to different game situations and how to continuously read the game. Initially you play 3v3, then 2v3 or 3v2, or even 1v3 or 3v1.

4. Mini-Hockey on two 6-meter-wide cone goals

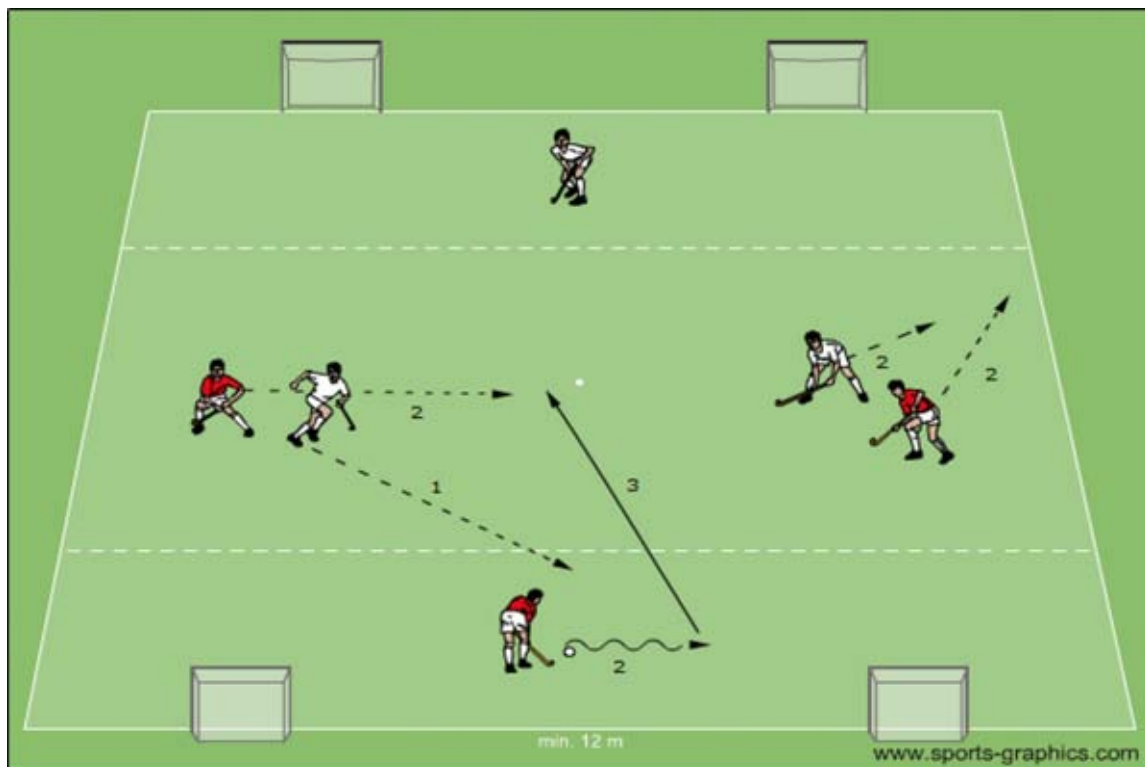
See the official rules of Mini-Hockey. Instead of shooting into one of the two goals from inside the shooting zone, an attacker has to dribble the ball through one of the two 6-meter-wide cone goals.

Variations:

- A goal only counts if each of the three players has played the ball at least once since the moment when the team won possession.
- A goal only counts if all attackers are at the moment of the score in the defending team's half.
- A goal is only valid if one of the 3 attackers is in the moment of the score in his own half, thus maintaining a good balance between attack and defence.

5. Mini-Hockey with Keeping Possession in 3v2 Situations

Each team must have one player in its own shooting zone. The other two players remain in the midfield. Each team tries to keep possession of the ball for six seconds, being pressured by two opponents. Once the three attackers manage to retain the possession of the ball for the given time, the player in the shooting zone may move up-field and score together with the two midfielders against the three opponents, set up in a 2:1 formation. Once his or her team loses possession, one of the three attackers returns to the shooting zone. Meanwhile, the other two players now defend against the three new attackers who keep possession of the ball before they are being allowed to attack.



Variations:

- With the exception of the following rules, the official rules of Mini-Hockey apply. A team has to pass the ball four times with the reverse stick before its defender is allowed to push up into the midfield to score with his midfield players in any of the opposing team's goals. This improves specific skills, like reverse stick passing or passes with a distance of at least 10 metres and even first-time passes.

Effective Questioning for stimulating the Game Intelligence

What do the players have to do between winning the ball and scoring?

- *Secure possession.*
- *Build up an attack in the direction of the shooting zone.*
- *Pass the ball into the path of a team-mate whenever possible.*
- *Shoot.*

What is the best way to retain possession?

- *Avoid unnecessary 1v1 situations.*
- *Pass the ball to the feet of a team-mate whenever possible.*
- *Run into space, look for free space and use it.*

6. Mini- Hockey with One Player who covers

One player of each team has to remain always in his proper shooting zone and can not advance into the midfield (see illustration the page before). After each goal this defender swaps places with a midfield player.

Variation:

When the team is building up an attack, the defender can push forward into the midfield, provided a teammate falls back to cover for him or her at the same time.

Effective Questioning

Why should one of the three players remain in the shooting zone? *So that there is a balance between defence and attack and there are more passing options.*

What are the tasks of the player who hangs back behind his or her team-mates?

- *The player who hangs back can help out if his or her team-mates make a defensive mistake and can cover the backs of the midfield players.*
- *He or she can take up a position to receive a back pass and can launch an attack with passes.*

- A goal is only valid if all three players of the attacking team are in the defending team's half when the scorer shoots. This encourages all three players to attack as a compact unit.
- To maintain a balance between attack and defence, one of three attackers must be in his or her own half of the field when a goal is scored. The player is then in position to slow down an opposing counterattack if his or her team loses possession.

7. Mini-Hockey with Three Teams

One team of three attacks alternatively the two goals on both end-lines. The goals are defended by one opponent remaining only on the end-line, one defender who remains only in the shooting zone and one midfielder who may defend in any place of his own half. Once the 3 defenders steal the ball and manage to pass it to a teammate the attackers have to turn around and attack the opposite goals. After ten attacks the three teams switch positions and functions until all have attacked ten times and all have defended 20 times (but in different roles).

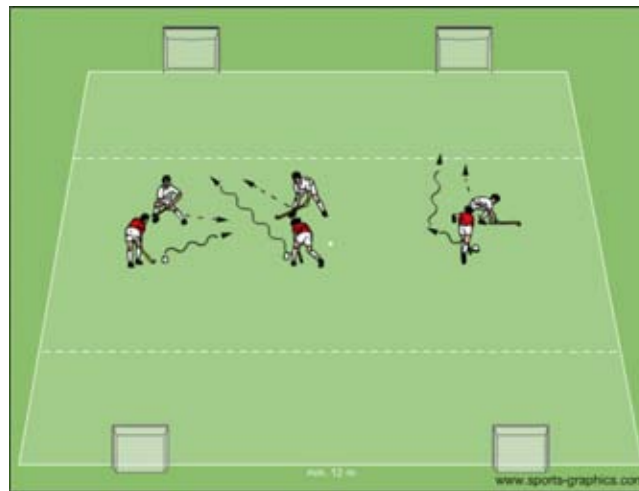


Effective Questioning or stimulating the Game Intelligence

How does the positional play of the last defender on the end-line influences the build-up of the three attackers? *The players should attack the goal furthest away from the last defender, preferably using a long through pass. When the ball is in midfield, the last defender observes the attacking play from a position midway between the 2 goals, so that he can quickly defend or cover the goal that is attacked.*

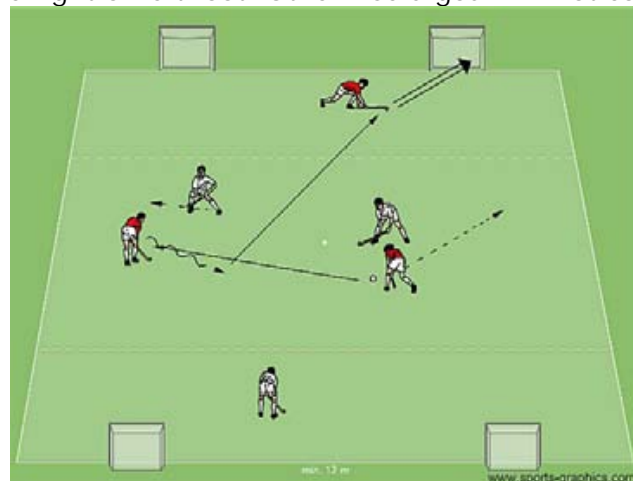
8. Mini-Hockey: Three Times One –on –One.

The coach selects three pairs of players with a similar performance level. They compete with each other at the same time, assigning the ball five times to the same player before he is asked to defend five times. One pair's game finishes when a goal has been scored or the ball went out of the Mini-Hockey field. In case of an infringement against the rules a self-pass with a distance of at least 3 meters is awarded.



9. Through Passing to a Front Runner

Each team positions a striker (front runner) in the opponent's shooting zone. The striker expects to receive an accurate through pass from one of the two team-mates, who are not allowed to leave the midfield. The striker controls the ball (preferably standing side-on to the goals in order to see them) and shoots at one of the goals. As the players' skills become more proficient, the coach may not only ask the striker to stand side-on but can also ask the players to use different passing techniques with the right or left foot. Otherwise a goal will not count.



Effective Questioning

When is the best moment to play a through pass? *Immediately after winning the ball, before the opposing team has time to regroup defensively.*

What conditions must be satisfied before a successful through pass can be played?

The passer and the receiver should have a visual agreement (eye contact) so that there is an understanding between them. The receiver should always receive and control the ball standing side-on to the goals, which allows him or her to see what is going on behind.

Is it better to pass along the ground or in the air? Why? *Passing along the ground is better, because high passes complicate the play and slow it down. High passes result in more mistakes.*

Variations:

- The midfielders can only enter the shooting zone after the ball has been passed into it. This forces the striker to receive, control and orientate the ball versus a space where there is no opponent.
- The striker is not allowed to score. This means that one of the two midfielders must quickly offer him- or herself up-field in the shooting area where he or she receives the ball from the striker and then scores.

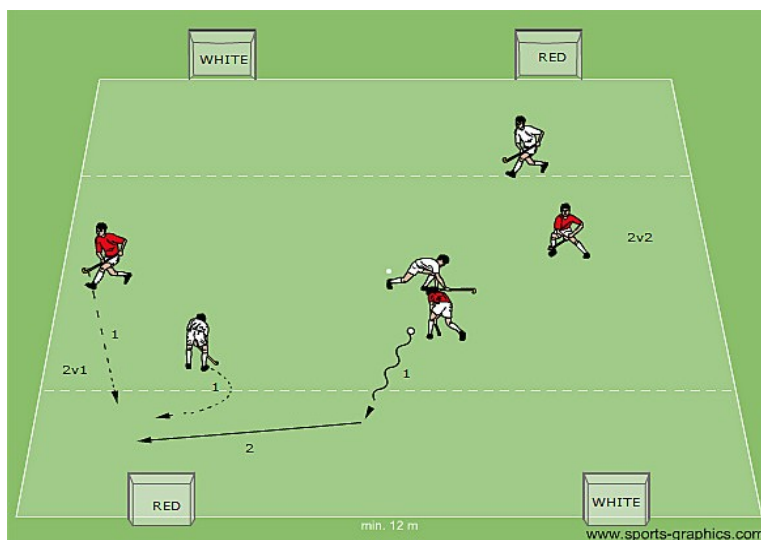
Effective Questioning

What do we have to do to score a goal? One of the two midfielders has to run into the opponent's shooting zone and call for the ball.

Which of the two midfielders should make the forward run? *Usually this will be the player who is closest to the striker. In some game situations a switch of flanks is better, because the midfielder who is farther away then has a free run at the goal.*

Why do the two midfielders not both make forward runs? *If the defenders win the ball, they will be able to counterattack, because no one is covering in midfield.*

10. Attacking Diagonally Opposite Goals



Each team attacks two diagonally opposite goals and defends the two other goals. A goal is scored by shooting into one of the two goals from inside the shooting zone or by dribbling the ball across one of the two 6m-wide cone goals.

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Variations:

The coach and his assistant (or player), both behind each end-line, suddenly and simultaneously change the colour of the cone goals and act accordingly so that one team always attacks two of the four goals.

A goal can be scored only by dribbling the ball across the coloured cone goal-line marked during the flow of the game. Modifying the colour of the goals during the development of the game helps to improve the player's perceptive skills, since their field of vision is an area of 360 degrees.

Effective Questioning

Which of the two goals is the best one to attack? *The players should attack the goal that is defended by only one defender. To do so, they should create a two-against-one situation and exploit this successfully to score.*

How should the attack be carried out (by running with the ball or passing)?

- *Passes make the game faster and enable free space to be used more effectively.*
- *Frequent changes of direction when running with the ball may create more space and cause the defender to make a wrong decision or a positional error.*

How can the attacker create a situation in which his or her team has a numerical advantage? *By changing direction when running with the ball and then switching the play.*

11. Choose Any of the Four Goals

The three attackers always attack the goal to be less defended. The coach can specify whether a goal has to be scored by shooting from inside the shooting zone or by dribbling the ball across any goal-line (6 metres wide).

**Variations:**

- A goal only counts if the nearest defender is at least 5 metres away when the ball is dribbled across the goal-line.

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- A team of three players has 10 ball possessions with the other team defending the four goals. An attack ends when a goal is scored, or the ball goes out of play or when a defender touches the ball. Each attack starts in the middle of the field. The defenders have to position themselves intelligently to prevent the attackers from scoring. The objective of the game is to teach the attackers to use the space with intelligence and to play so securely that they are able to score 10 times with 10 ball possessions.
- The four goals can be positioned anywhere on the end-lines or side-lines.

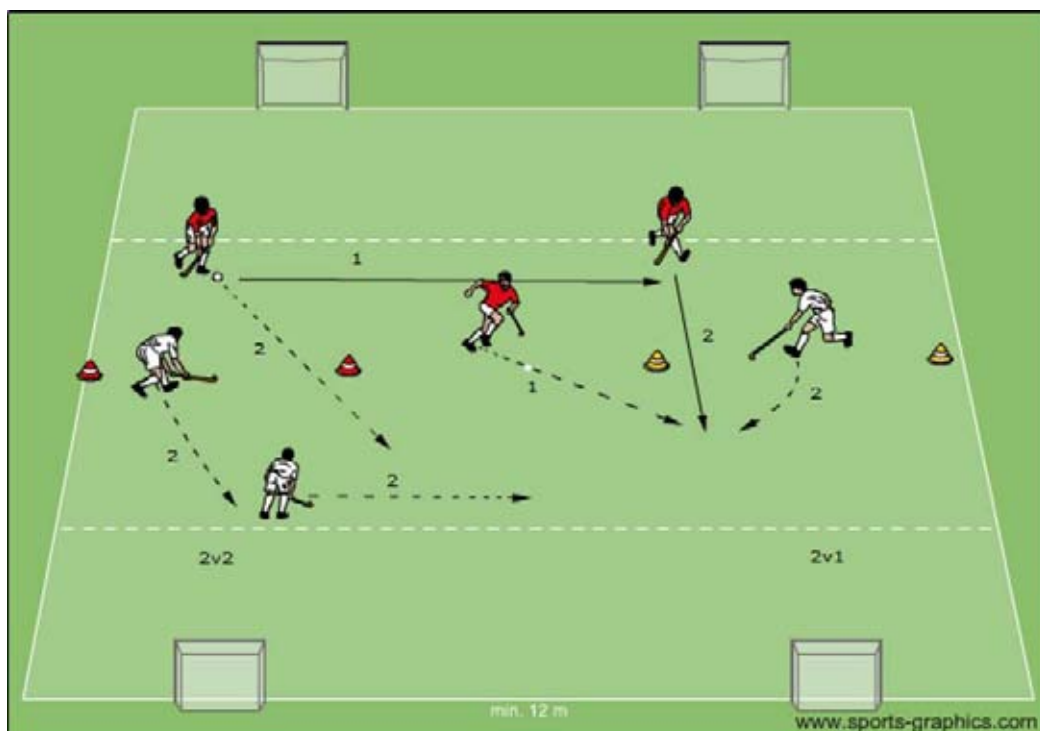
Effective Questioning

How can I disguise the direction of my attack? *First of all by running in another direction to fool your opponent. You can then accelerate and change direction to leave your opponent behind or take the ball past him.*

What does the attacker with the ball have to pay attention to? *He needs to take his eyes off the ball (head up, peripheral vision) so that he can see what the defenders are doing in front of the goals and what his two team-mates are doing so that he can employ the right tactics.*

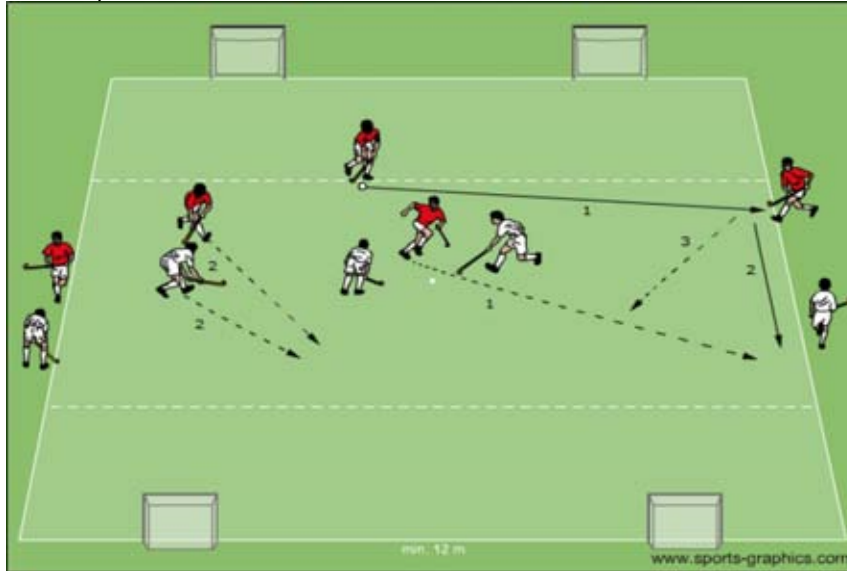
12. Giving Width When Attacking

This variation on mini-hockey encourages the players to build up attacks by playing down the flanks and to give width to their attacks. Two 6-metre-wide goals are formed by placing cones near the side-lines, about half way down the field. The attackers must not start the buildup in the centre (danger of counterattack if possession is lost) but must attack using the wings. A goal is only valid if the attack has started with a dribble or pass of the ball through one of the two cone goals in the centre of the field.



13. Mini-Hockey with One Outlet-Player on Each Side-Line

A Mini-Hockey team is now formed by five players, three playing inside the field and one additional one is offering him- or herself for a pass, moving on each side-line. Once they receive the ball (preferably from the opposite part of the field) being on the side-line they may enter the field while the passing player has to move out and replace the receiver.



14. Channelling Attacks

The official rules of Mini-Hockey apply. If a team scores in the goal on the right it is awarded three points, and if it scores in the goal on the left it is only awarded one point. In this way, the defenders learn how to close down the available space and channel attacks toward the side of the field where they are better prepared.

15. Make It, Take It

After scoring, the attackers immediately attack the other two goals at the other end of the field. The defending team cannot pressure them inside the shooting zone in which they have just scored. This means that the defenders can only defend the counterattack in the midfield. The team that scores the most goals in sequence is the winner. This variation is especially good for improving the players' concentration.

Effective Questioning

What do we learn when we have to attack the goal at the opposite end immediately after scoring a goal?

- You learn how to quickly adjust to a new situation and play the ball out of a crowded zone to give your team more time and space to create a scoring chance.
- You learn how to control the pace of the play (you can speed up the play or slow it down).

What is the best way for the attacking team to score several times in succession?

Immediately after scoring, the scorer should not try to run with the ball but should play it to a team-mate who has made a run into space in midfield. All of the players who helped in the move that led to the goal should put distance between themselves and the ball and run into space in the opposing team's half of the field.

LEVEL 2 COMPETITIONS:

Mini-Hockey Pentathlon

There is no doubt that a young player's versatile preparation is a prerequisite for successfully developing more complex skills later. The learning of hockey-specific skills becomes extremely difficult if fundamental skills and coordination have been poorly developed.

As most youth coaches have an enormous desire to win the next match (they hope to become better recognized by the parents and their club), they generally focus the teaching and learning processes exclusively on those hockey-specific skills that, to a high extent, determine the competition's result. They train what the competition obviously demands. Because a competition demands that players execute and apply basic hockey skills, the coaches concentrate exclusively on the players' acquiring and consolidating these skills. There is no time left for creating a rich and varied activity program that forms a solid base for future successes, fewer injuries, fewer dropouts, and greater motivation in hockey.



To encourage (or even oblige) youth coaches to include multilateral activities in the training they offer, it's essential to change how we structure official competitions for beginners. When the actual competition demands only hockey knowledge and specific skills, it's logical that coaches concentrate the players' efforts on practicing them again and again. However, when this competition is replaced by a multilateral one that demands many other abilities—capacities essential for a complete hockey player—it becomes an entirely different matter.

A Mini-Hockey Pentathlon springs from these ideas and convictions. To help players win the pentathlon, their coaches will prepare the young players not only with specific skills for the three mini-hockey matches but also with a multilateral training program for the two other games that are inserted between the Mini-Hockey games.

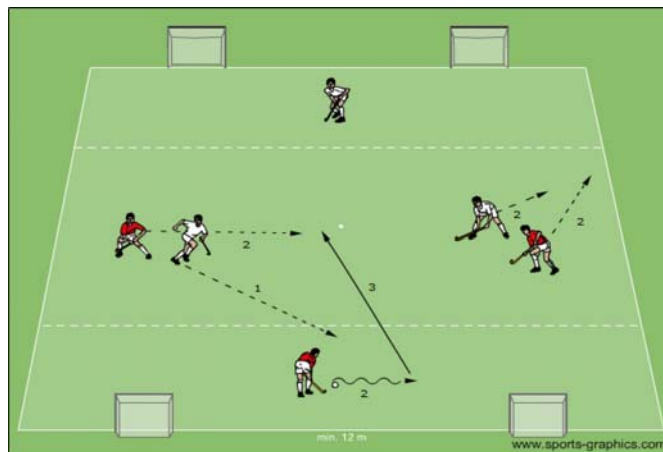
“The ability to process during your play visual information (processing means perceiving and understanding or recognizing the pattern) is an essential component of high –level performances”

A.M. Williams

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1. Mini-Hockey with Keeping Possession in 3v2 Situations

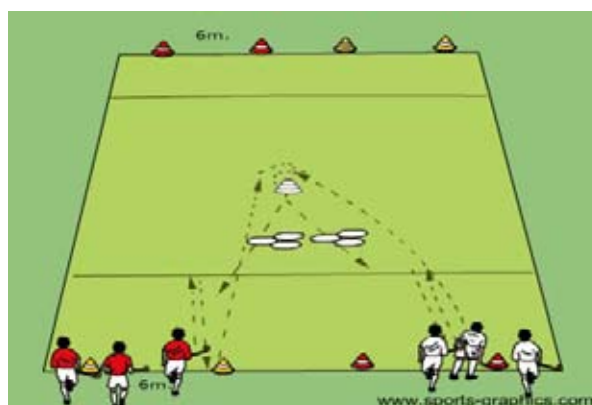
Each team must have one player in its own shooting zone. The other two players remain in the midfield. Each team tries to keep possession of the ball for six seconds, being pressured by two opponents. Once the three attackers manage to retain the possession of the ball for the given time, the player in the shooting zone may move up-field and score together with the two midfielders against the three opponents, set up in a 2:1 formation. Once his or her team loses possession, one of the three attackers returns to the shooting zone. Meanwhile, the other two players now defend against the three new attackers who keep possession of the ball before they are being allowed to attack. With the exception of this rule and having no substitutes, the official rules of Mini-Hockey are in force. Duration: Two periods of 7.5 minutes.



2. COORDINATION RELAY

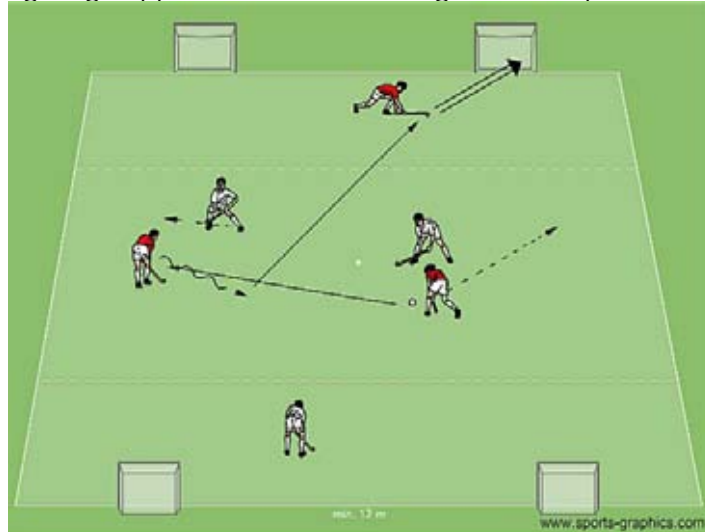
Each team lines up in one of the two goals of one shooting area. Give a visual signal for the first player of each team to do the following:

- Run 6 meters to the limit of the shooting area in order to reach out and touch the line with the stick (1).
- Return to the starting line, where he touches with the stick one of the two cones of his goal (2).
- Turn to the cone situated in the center of the field (3), run around it, and head toward the two sticks or any other obstacle (which lies in the path of the running player who has to jump over the 1.5-meter-wide "river").
- Jump over the "river" (4).
- Continue to run toward the starting line to touch with the stick again one cone of the goal (5).
- Once the cone has been touched, the next player starts doing the same routine. Each player has to run twice.
- The team wins that manages to first complete two relays.



3. MINI-HOCKEY WITH THROUGH-PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD

One player of each team must remain in the opposing shooting zone where he stays open to receive through passes and then score in either goal. After every goal, the three players from each team must rotate positions. Once the ball enters one of the shooting areas, all four midfield players may move into these zones for defending or for giving support. Duration of the game: two periods of 7.5 minutes.



4. TAG TWO ROBBERS

One team, made up of three "police officers," is stationed in its headquarters (one of the two goals of one shooting zone). The coach signals the start of play, and they run one after another into the shooting zone where three robbers have to avoid being tagged by a police officer (cop). Once a cop has managed to touch two different opponents, he returns quickly to his headquarters to give his fellow cop (tag him or her with a touch) the right to chase two of the three escaping robbers. The relay or tag is over when all three police officers have done their job and have returned to the starting point. If one of the three escaping players moves out of the shooting zone, this counts as a successful tag by the cop. To establish the winner keep track of the time each team needs to "arrest" the thieves with two touches. Every team has to tag and escape twice.

The players practice running without or with the stick which they should carry in the right hand only.



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5. MINI-HOCKEY 3-ON-3

The official rules of Mini-Hockey (but without substitutes) apply. Duration of the game: two periods of 7.5 minutes.



The duration of the entire pentathlon is about 70 minutes like an official game of hockey. The team that wins at least three of the five tests is declared grand winner of the Mini-Hockey-Pentathlon.



“The natural order accounts for progressive development through time.”

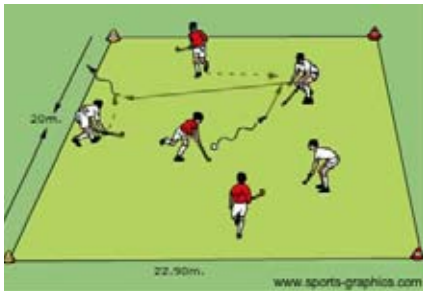
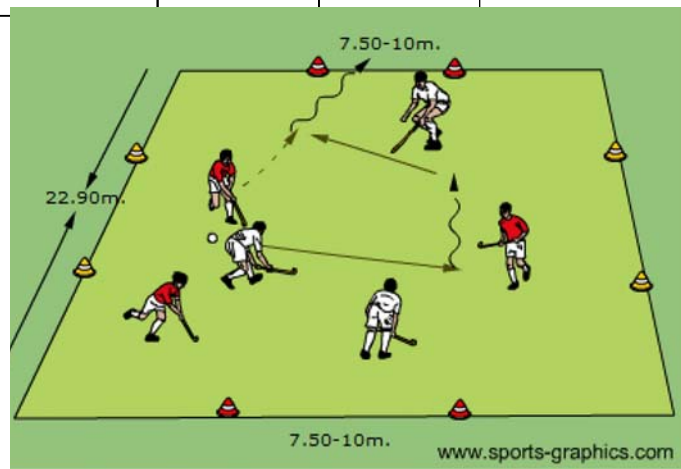
3-ON-3 TRIATHLON

ASIA AGAINST AMERICA

	INDIA	PAKISTAN	JAPAN	MALAYSIA
Teams				
Names of players				
Teams				
Names of players	ARGENTINA	CHILE	USA	CANADA

**1st GAME: 3-ON-3 WITH
4 INTERSECTING
GOALS (4x3min)**

Field	Match	Result
1	IND-ARG	
2	PAK-CHI	
3	JPN-USA	
4	MAL-CAN	

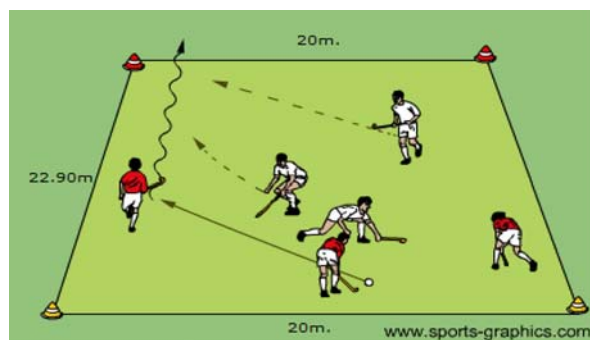


2nd GAME: 3-ON-2 WITH COUNTER-ATTACK (4x3 min.)

Field	Match	Result
1	IND-CHI	
2	PAK.USA	
3	JPN-CAN	
4	MAL-ARG	

3rd GAME: 3-ON-3 WITH 2 WIDE GOALS (4x3 min.)

Field	Match	Result
1	MAL-CHI	
2	JPN-ARG	
3	PAK-CAN	



FINAL RESULT:
(sum of victories)

ASIA against AMERICA

.....

3-ON-3 WITH 4 INTERSECTING GOALS

- * Each team attacks the two wide goals assigned to them and defends the other two.
- there are no side-outs.
- free hits should be taken not less than 3m from the goal line.
- bully at the start of the game.
- to score a player has to dribble the ball from a spot inside the field across one of the two opposing goals.
- duration of the game: 4 x 3 min. with 1 min.rest..

3-ON-3 WITH COUNTERATTACK

Duration: 4 times of 3 min.

- During 3 min. One team attacks alternately the two 20m-wide cone goals.
- Two opponents defend the goal whilst the third is placed in the opposite one, waiting for a pass from his team mates.
- After each attack the defenders have to rotate: one of the two joins his team mate in the next goal for a two against three-defence.
- Once the ball has been lost by the attackers, these should tackle back immediately but never behind the centre line.
- A goal is scored with a dribble across the goal line. Both teams may score .
- Every 3 min. Change between attackers and defenders.
- The free hits should be taken not less than 3m from the goal-line.

3-ON-3 WITH TWO WIDE GOALS

- Dimensions of the field: 22x90m. x 20m.(with goals 20m.. wide).
- Bully to start the game
- Free hits should be taken not less than 3m. from the goal lines.
- To score the ball has to be carried across the opposing goal line.
- Duration of the game: 4 x 3 min.

Note: it's not permitted to change the composition of any team during the triathlon competition.

PROPOSITION FOR STRUCTURING AN INTERNAL MINI-HOCKEY LEAGUE WITH A PROGRESSION OF VARIATIONS

To ensure the stimulation of game intelligence the 8-9 years old hockey players are exposed every month through a modification of the mini rules to a different, more difficult and complex Mini-Hockey game:

October: MINI-HOCKEY – ONE DEFENDER IS OBLIGED TO REMAIN ALWAYS IN THE PROPER SHOOTING ZONE (COVERING PLAYER)

November: MINI-HOCKEY WITH OFICIAL RULES

2nd weekend: A goal is only valid when everybody touched the ball after its recovery

4th weekend: A goal is only valid when in the moment of the score all team members are inside the opposing half.

December: MINI-HOCKEY WITH DRIBBLING THE BALL THROUGH ONE OF THE TWO 6M-WIDE CONE GOALS

2nd weekend: An acrobatic skill has to be shown when crossing with the ball the goal-line.

3rd weekend: A goal is only valid, when one team mate remains in his own half for covering

January: MINI-HOCKEY ON DIAGONAL OPPOSED GOALS

1st and 2nd weekend: Scoring with a shot from inside the shooting zone

3rd weekend: Scoring with carrying the ball across one of the 2 goal lines (6m.wide).

4th weekend: During the development of the game the position of the 4 goals are modified.

February: MINI-HOCKEY – BEFORE GOING TO ATTACK KEEP THE BALL FOR 6 SECONDS IN POSSESIÓN WITH ONE PLAYER STAYING BEHIND.

March: MINI-HOCKEY ON ANY OF THE 4 GOALS

1st weekend: Scoring with a shot from inside the shooting zone.

2nd weekend: Scoring with dribbling the ball across any goal-line.

3rd weekend: Scoring with carrying the ball through any goal with an opponent at more than 4m. distance.

4th weekend: During the development of the game the position of the 4 goals are modified.

April: MINI-HOCKEY WITH PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD TO A FRONT RUNNER

2nd weekend: When the ball arrives in the shooting zone, everybody can move up to support or to tackle the receiving player.

4th weekend: The front runner is the only player who is not allowed to score what obliges one of his midfield players to move up and offer himself for a pass to be able to score..

May: MINI-HOCKEY WITH LONG PASSES FROM THE MIDFIELD THROUGH ANY OF THE 2 GOALS

1st and 2nd weekend: A 4th player offers himself behind the 2 goals to receive the long pass in a side-on position outside the Mini-Hockey field.

3rd and 4th weekend: A 4th players defends both goals from a position in front of them inside the Mini Hockey field.

Taking Hockey Further Toward 6-on 6 Hockey

PROGRESSION OF MINI-HOCKEY COMPETITIONS

1	<p>3-on-3 Mini-Hockey:</p> <p>One player on each side must remain in the opposing shooting area (through passes).</p>
2	<p>4-on-4 Mini-Hockey:</p> <p>Three against three in the midfield without being allowed to leave it. The function of any of the midfielder is to pass the ball through any of the two opposing goals which a fourth player of each side must prevent. This defender remains in his own shooting zone and initiates the attacks.</p>
3	<p>5-on-5 Mini-Hockey:</p> <p>A goal may be scored when the three midfield players manage to pass the ball out of the midfield to one of the two frontrunners ,who receive behind one of the opposite team's cone goals.</p>
4	<p>5-on-5 Mini-Hockey:</p> <p>Instead of three only the two midfield players of one team should manage to pass the ball out of the midfield to a frontrunner behind a cone goal, that means he is out of the Mini-field.. A fifth player, a defender, positioned in inside the shooting zone front of the front runners tries to avoid this through pass with good anticipation. This way they play 2-on-2 with 2 front runners and an additional defender in the proper shooting zone.</p>
5	<p>2 on 2 on the Mini-Hockey Field with two front runners and an additional defender and a goalkeeper</p> <p>As in 4 the game is played initially in the Mini Hockey field and concludes outside of it with a 2 – on-1- situation close to the 6-a-side shooting circle and the goal, defended by a goalkeeper..</p> <p>Once the ball is passed out of the midfield to one of the front runners both of them continue to play the game outside the Mini Hockey field. This way we play 6 against 6 in 3 different sections of the 6-a-side field.</p>
6	<p>Every group of players (goalkeeper, defender, midfield players and frontrunners have a different roles to fulfil in the 6-a-side game which they first have to understand and then try to experiment.</p>
7	<p>Every 7.5 minutes the coach asks the players to switch positions and to fulfil a completely different task. As a progression the two cone goals on the end-line of the Mini Hockey field are removed with the front runners moving freely to any side without moving into the Mini pitch.</p>
8	<p>Once one of the two midfield players passes the ball to one of his or her front runners, he or she may move out of the midfield as well as one of the defending midfield player of the other team, in order to support the attacking or defending action of their team mates.</p>
9	<p>6-on-6 Hockey:</p> <p>Play a free game, without limiting the players in their function and positioning (as we did in the previous games).</p>

All activities proposed in Levels 1 and 2 have as the objective that players under 10 years of age can learn to enjoy and successfully play Mini-Hockey. All the games (of basic abilities, as well as the simplified games) presented in this chapter together with their tailor-made competitions, are seen as so many pieces forming a complete puzzle, one called Mini-Hockey. As the youngsters play Mini-Hockey, your reviewing with them the games for basic abilities in Level 1 and the more difficult and complex ones of level 2 (all of these should be considered as corrective exercises for Mini-Hockey) will help them improve and consolidate most of the hockey fundamentals. In addition, having the players practice the different variations of Mini-Hockey (including the Mini-Hockey-Pentathlon), thanks to the two goals to attack and to defend, further consolidates the basic skills of passing, receiving, tackling and playing the game without being in possession of the ball. Mini-Hockey is an important tool to teach the young players to gain experiences in such important capacities as perception, anticipation, and decision making, essential for playing successfully with 10 years 5-on-5 and with 11 years the 6-on-6 Hockey game.



“There is no question that the drills are needed to better the technique but practising them without referring to the context of a real game situation is of little value because the performer needs a context before the drills make sense.”

Part

3



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer (Terrassa)

Games for Hockey 5-on-5 and Hockey 6-on-6

“When we do what we have done always, we will never reach any further.”

Understanding hockey involves comprehending how the game develops and works. The coach must teach players not only many individual and team skills but also thinking skills. Without understanding the most common situations that occur in the game, it's difficult to make correct decisions; without mastering the playing skills, on the other hand, these decisions cannot be carried out. The most natural way to develop "reading and reacting skills" is to expose the youngsters to many different simplified games, which teach the players how to be in the right place on the field at the right time. This is precisely what the simplified games in Level 3 are meant to do.

Reading the game means observing and analyzing the location of team-mates, opponents, and the ball as well as the speed and direction of play. This ability allows participants to anticipate the next play.

THE BASIC THREE GAME SITUATIONS

Everything that happens on the hockey field occurs in one of these three situations:

1. The ball is loose and neither team has it.
2. The team has the ball on offence.

The team is on defence, preventing the opponent from scoring.

These three conditions frequently changing phases, but during each of them the player must constantly read and react. How to react depends on the player's position in relation to the ball and his or her proximity to the team's own goal. A golden rule, a precondition of interpreting any game situation, is that the player must face the play to perceive the situation; only then can he react. Turning one's back to the play (as many front runners do, for example, when they receive the ball) is a cardinal mistake.

Loose-Ball Game

The reaction of the player closest to the loose ball dictates whether the team will be on offence or defence. This player's first thought should be defensive until he or she can read the situation perfectly. Generally, the closest player's reaction to a loose ball is to become the ball carrier. While the face off is going on, all other players involved in the game situation (team-mates of the possible attacker and those of the possible defender) must know their roles in advance in case their team-mate wins, loses, or draws in the loose-ball game. During the loose-ball game, does the player correctly recognize his proximity or closeness to the ball?

Does she know how to assess her distance to it (in relation to that of the nearest opponent), taking into account her and the opponent's speed? When the situation is not clear, does he recognize whether his distance to his own goal allows him to make an offensive or a defensive decision? Statistics have shown that the team that wins most of the loose balls usually also wins the game. Therefore, to improve a win-lose record, the players should concentrate on winning those loose balls!

Offensive Game

While the player who is closest to the ball chooses between beating his opponent or passing the ball, he also considers his team-mates' positions further away from the ball. Some of them should support the ball carrier and join the attack. The more support the ball carrier receives, the more options he has. He should have at least three safe passes to his fellow players, who by their running free give width and depth to the attack and help spread the defence. The width of the attack is determined by how far apart the players position themselves in the outside lanes and by their occupying all attacking positions. It also depends on where they are in the center lane, from which distribution or passing of the ball is the easiest. The depth of the attack is the distance between the players who are closest to and the furthest from the ball up in the field. Whenever possible, there should be low, medium, and high depths on the attack.

How quickly the transition takes place from defence to offence or vice versa is of great importance. Modern hockey is a game of quick transitions. The most dangerous attacking situations can be created after a successful tackle, when the new attack is launched literally within a second. Generally it takes more time for the defence to recognize that they have to change their roles.

Attackers who make use of quick transitions from defence to offence generally attack an unorganized defence, whereas a slow transition might result in an attack's being against an already-organized defence.

The first player, who either beats his opponent and carries the ball up the field (or passes it to the closest supporting player), and the nearest supporting player are the key players. When an attacker without the ball creates passing options, the transition becomes much quicker than in the case when the ball carrier is forced to keep running with the ball in order to create space and time for himself.



Defensive Game

The player of the other team who was not as close to the ball in the loose-ball situation then becomes the defender. He is the key player on defence: after all, his quickness and kinds of movements determine how his team-mates have to defend. If he is aggressive, his team-mates defend by close one-on-one coverage, but if the first opponent is passive, his team-mates only cover the zone.

He should quickly put pressure on the ball carrier, at the same time receiving immediate support from the closest team-mate and the rest of the defending players. The role of these defenders depends on their distance from the ball also and whether they are the second-, third-, fourth-, or fifth-closest player to the checking defender. While facing the ball and personal opponent simultaneously, with the head swirling or turning at all times, the defender may decide to switch opponents without forgetting to choose a correct position between the attacker and his own goal. Does the closest checking player reduce the space and the time of the ball carrier? Does he get immediate support by team-mate defenders? Does the whole defensive unit still give immediate support to the checking player after it seems obvious that the opponent will win the loose ball? The ball carrier who is being checked by the closest defender often is not the most dangerous player—someone among the potential pass receivers is.

It is part of a coach's functions to watch how her defenders perform in these four types of play or roles:

1. As ball carrier
2. A player checking the ball carrier
3. A player supporting the ball carrier
4. Players who are covering the checking defender or the area away from the ball

The more a young hockey player understands the game, the better he or she will be able to see, read, and react to all game situations.



"The youth prefers to get stimulated rather than being instructed"!

Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

ORGANIZING THE TRAINING SESSION

Here are a few recommendations for structuring a training session for players aged less than 12 years old:

1. Instead of starting with a warm-up (which is not mandatory for children less than 12 years), the session should always begin with a simplified game in which the coach presents specific game-related problems to the few players of each team.
2. During a 10-minute game, observe and analyze the technical and tactical playing performance of the players. After the game, assign and have carried out a series of corrective exercises to ameliorate the problem situations you have discovered. The choice of these corrective exercises depends on the technical-tactical aspects that have lowered the quality of play (for example, you might work on tackling at the right instant, not too late and not too early or on receiving skills).
3. After isolated skill practice (always seen as a function of performance in the simplified game), the game resumes. See whether the weaknesses you had previously noticed have been overcome with the help of the corrective exercises or whether other aspects of the game still need improvement. Through systematic questioning from you as coach, players can become aware of the importance of specific hockey knowledge; ask them to work out the correct patterns.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

"Knowing yourself and knowing your opposition, every battle you will be victorious. Success is composed by series of small daily victories."

Sun Tsu

Other Training Tips:

- To facilitate the observation, analysis, decision making, and motor response of the young players, never more than six youngsters per team should participate in the simplified game.
- The space in which the simplified game takes place should initially be rather wide and deep to give the players enough time to decide their moves and enough space to carry them out. Only when the level of technique is high enough to allow the players to draw their attention to other aspects inherent in the hockey game, should the coach reduce the time and space. Gradually, then, both these parameters become similar to those of the official competition.
- Learning and perfecting basic abilities and capacities must be considered an important part of each training session. The more game-like the situation is that you present to the players in training, the more they are able to transfer the experience to the game.
- It should be obvious that you alternate exercises and games of high intensity with those of low intensity.
- As the capacity of play improves, the multilateral games are introduced less often in the training sessions. The multilateral games, apart from being used to contribute to the intensity, variety, and the fun of the training, ensure the important and indispensable development of basic abilities and capacities.
- The training of coordination skills and physical capacities (such as various kinds of resistance, speed, and strength) should be an integral part of the practice session.
- At this stage, Level 3, thanks to players' improved perception and capacity of abstraction, instead of explaining a determined skill or tactical move in detail, coaches need provide only a demonstration of the sequence. This is usually sufficient to allow them to reproduce the same pattern with ease.
- It is especially important for coaches to treat everyone the same way and not show favoritism. Generally, prepubescent hockey players are pleased with their coaches if they are fair with everyone.

“Knowing when not to move is as important as knowing what move to make.”

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SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR 3-ON-3

The simplified game is still an ideal framework for discovering, understanding, and resolving specific game-related problems.

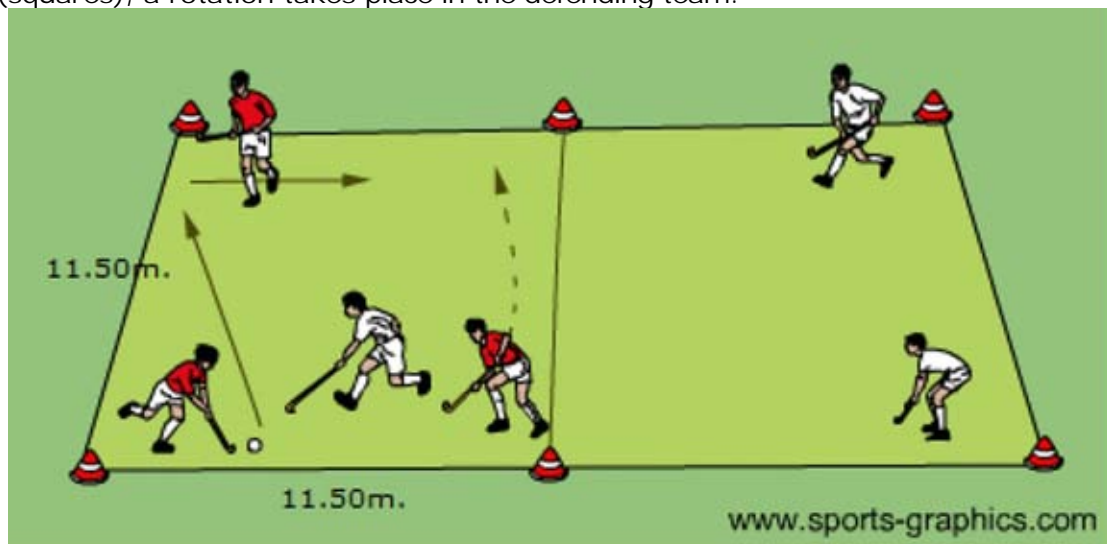
1st. Simplified Game:

MAINTAINING BALL POSSESSION 3-ON-1

Mark off two adjacent squares of 8 to 10 meters. In one, three attackers keep the ball against one defender. In the adjacent or other square, two of the defender's team-mates wait for a pass from their colleague if his or her defence in the 1 on 3 succeeds. Once they control the ball, the former defender joins the two team-mates to try to keep possession of the ball in another 3-on-1 situation.

A switch of play from one to the other playing area also occurs when one of the attackers infringes on the rules or the ball played by the attackers runs out of the limited zone. In both cases the defender passes the ball from the sideline to one team-mate in the adjacent area, with the opponents staying at a distance of at least 3 meter. Immediately after the successful push-in, the player joins his team members in the adjacent area. Here it's their turn to keep possession in the new 3-on-1 situation. If one defender runs out of energy, he or she may switch positions with a team-mate of the adjacent square. After a 5-minute practice, organize a competition with one player of the adjacent area counting the seconds of ball possession.

Duration of the game: three periods of 3 minutes each. After 9 minutes of play the team that achieves the best time is winner. After every change of area (squares), a rotation takes place in the defending team.



“What a player should always try to achieve is that instead of being dependant on his opponent, he should make his opponent dependant on him. How? By always having the ball in his possession.”

Pep Guardiola

Variations:

- *After passing to a team-mate, the attacker must move at least 5 meters out of his former position. Using this rule helps develop the players' orientation and perception.
- *To stimulate ball control, the attackers must play aerial passes. Passes along the ground are not allowed.
- *Count (keep track of) the number of successive passes played exclusively with the reverse-stick.
- *Count the number of first-time passes during one ball possession.
- *Have three attackers face one defender in both playing areas. The group that keeps the ball longer wins.

Training Objectives:

- * Learn to avoid playing the ball into the opponent's range of action.
- * Learn to pass the ball with precise timing, not too early and not too late.
- * Learn when to pass and when to dribble.
- * Learn to pass the ball accurately, fast enough, and without indicating its trajectory.
- * After passing the ball, be prepared to receive it again; learn to support the ball carrier and consider the support given by the team-mates.
- * As defender, learn to press the ball carrier and anticipate the opponent's play.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Where the two team-mates of the defender should ideally position themselves in the grid aside? Explain why!

It would be ideal when the 2 team-mates offer themselves for a pass as far away as possible from the centre line which separates the 2 grids. Doing so they will have sufficient time to receive and control the ball (as the defenders are far away) as well as to decide upon the next move

Which are the tasks of the 3 attackers who should maintain the possession of the ball as long as possible?

Generally the ball should be passed only when the ball carrier is under pressure. In case both team-mates are supporting the ball carrier, the pass should be executed to the better-positioned player who is further away from the only defender. But in case nobody is available for a pass, the ball carrier may dribble into an open space to gain some time for a pass or look out for better passing options. When dribbling the ball the attacker should shield it with his body, positioning himself between the defender and the ball.

Each pass should have sufficient speed and its direction should not be indicated with the eyes or any body movement. After a successful pass the passer should offer him immediately in an unoccupied space.

When the attacker should avoid a pass and instead keep the ball close to his feet?

In case he doesn't see any passing option he should keep the ball in his possession and dribble it into an unoccupied space where he might get new angles of passing.

How a pressed attacker should act in a 1-on-1 situation?

The ball carrier should position his body between the defender and the ball, shielding it for so long until he gets support from a team-mate.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

What are the characteristics of a good pass?

A good pass always reaches a team-mate who is not immediately put under pressure by a defender.

A good pass is not executed too early or too late and allows a teammate to play the ball in more favourable conditions.

A good pass has sufficient speed and has been disguised for not allowing the defenders to read the intention of the passer.

A good pass is generally played along the ground where it can be controlled easier and quicker than an aerial pass.

Why aerial passes should be avoided when the objective is to maintain the possession of the ball? *Passes played along the ground are quicker and easier to control than aerial passes.*

Tell me when in this particular game arises the ideal moment to pass the ball?

When being put by an opponent under full pressure, the attacker should better pass the ball. That means that the pass is born by a necessity.

Explain what is the task of a player who passed the ball with success!

Immediately after his successful pass he should move out of his position and offer himself again in an area not controlled by any opponent.

When the team's objective is to maintain the possession of the ball should you pass the ball into the run of your team-mate or directly into his front-stick?

To facilitate the team-mate's reception the ball should be passed directly into his front-stick.

When do you have to play the oncoming ball directly (with one touch) and when you decide to control it?

In case an opponent presses me in the moment of receiving the ball, I play a first touch pass, and deny controlling it as this involves risks of losing its possession.

In case an attacker loses the possession of the ball, what we expect him to do?

The attacker (as well as all his team-mates) should switch immediately to defensive functions without creating a pause between attack and defence.

What does an intelligent defender who pretends to conquer the ball from 3 attackers (1-on-3 situation)?

He approaches the ball carrier diagonally in such a way that he obliges him to do what the defender anticipated: Passing the ball to an opponent, which the defender intentionally left unmarked.

Corrective Exercises:

Most of the "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" as well as all the 2-on-2 simplified games make good material for remedial work.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

"It's not correct to help the players a lot and do for them the things that they should and can do on their own."

2nd Simplified Game: FAST ATTACK

Set up a 5-on-5 or an 6-on-6 Hockey field. Divide the youngsters into three attackers and three defenders, with an additional goalkeeper. The three attackers start with the ball from the centreline of the field and try to beat a defender (the "sweeper") situated in front of the shooting circle. When the attackers first touch the ball on the centreline, the two defenders situated 8 to 12 meters behind them begin pursuit, trying to help the sweeper, who is doing everything possible to delay the attack. The attack ends

- when a goal is scored,
- when the attackers commit a rules' infringement,
- when the ball runs out of the playing area, or
- when the defenders can touch the ball three consecutive times or pass it once between them.

When the defenders commit an infringement of the rules inside the circle, a penalty stroke from 7 meters against a neutral goalkeeper is awarded. After five fast attacks, both teams switch positions and functions until each team has defended and attacked 10 times. After each attack the "sweeper" rotates. In the second series of attacks, the players in attack as well as in defence must assume different playing positions. The defenders who support the sweeper now should also start from different positions on both sidelines.



After the first practise, use open questions to work out with your players what the most effective fast attack would be, considering aspects of the dribble or passing, where to dribble, when to pass and where to run without the ball.

Variations:

- After a successful tackle or interception, the defenders must pass the ball across the centreline or through one of the two goals, which should be established on the centreline in the wing positions.
- The attackers may not pass the ball more than three times (or you can specify twice).
- Three attackers play against two defenders, with one tackling from behind. (This variation is for more advanced players.)

"The attitude of a player is for the coach more important than his aptitude."

Training Objectives:

- Consolidate the execution of the basic skills of dribbling, passing, receiving, and scoring at high speed.
- Create correct habits for counterattacking: for instance, initially pass the ball from the depth of the field directly into the path of the team-mate, receive the ball on the run, use direct passes instead of receiving and controlling the ball before making a pass.
- Learn to read the game: know when to pass or not pass the ball, always considering the actions of the three defenders that condition the attacking play.
- Learn to look out for an effective attack. Three offensive actions are better than four. After carrying the ball to the central defender in front of the circle, a diagonal pass into the run of one of the supporting players to either side allow the team-mate who run from his wing position into an inside forward position to have a good shot from a good angle. This will finally assure a successful conclusion of the fast attack.
- Learn to cooperate in defence and to systematically delay the counterattack when there are too few supporting players.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Which of the 3 attackers should have the ball at the initiation of the fast attack?

This depends on the position of the 3 defenders in front and behind the attackers. Generally the centre forward should have the ball as he has the shortest way to score and the best passing options.

How the centre forward initiates the fast attack? With a pass to one of the wings or with a quick dribble?

A pass to one of the wings would slow down the attack and give the 2 defenders coming from behind an opportunity to interfere. But when the centre forward is carrying the ball quickly to a space on the left or right side of the central defender, he obliges him to move out of his central position. Then the pass has to be executed into the opposite direction into the run of the other wing that in the meantime has taken over a more central position in front of the goal post closest to him. This allows him an optimal shooting angle.



Photo: Alfr. Ferrer

When arises the best moment for executing a pass?

When the central defender is about to tackle, the pass should be played into the run of one supporting team-mate. A good timing of the pass (not too late and not too early) as well as its direction will not allow any defender to prevent the attacker from carrying out a shot on goal in this 2-on-1- situation.

Which factors the centre forward has to consider before passing the ball?

The pass depends not only from the position of the central defender (Is the defender in a frontal or in a side-on position?) but also from the behaviour and closeness of the 2 defenders who are tackling back from behind the 3 attackers as well as of the availability of the two supporting wings (Who have a better shooting angle? Who run into an offside position?)

What is the ideal position of the centre forward when one of the wings is in possession of the ball?

In case the central defender tackles the winger in possession of the ball, the centre forward should fall back or run into the space behind the defender (attention with the off-side rule) to offer himself for a through pass. He third attacker always adapts to what his other two team-mates do.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

“The application of a corrective exercise or game is the consequence of the difficulties which the coach observed during the global practise of the simplified game.”

What are the tasks of the two attackers without the ball?

They have to support the ball carrier, always remaining behind the ball (off-side) and position themselves sufficiently far away from the defender for not being pressed by him when he looks out for a shot at goal from a position, ideally in front of the nearest goal post. This allows an optimal shooting angle.

When passing the ball, which other remarks you would like to add?

When the attacker passes the ball:

- *he should never indicate its direction and mislead the defender through dummies, fakes and fints or through just looking into another direction.*
- *he should direct the ball into the run of the team-mate to allow him to receive the ball level with the defender,*
- *he should immediately offer himself in front or behind the ball receiver to allow the attack to flow.*
- *he should do it with preference into the opposite direction of his attacking move. Once he took the opponent with him he allows the receiver of his pass on the opposite side more time to think and to act as the defender is far away.*

In case there is an unmarked space in front of him, what the attacker should do with the ball?

He should penetrate with the ball and look out for a shot on goal.

Tell me something about the tasks of the other two attackers when the third one looks out for a shot on goal?

First they should make themselves available to receive the ball without being in an offside position and in case the third attacker took the shot they should look out to occupy an optimal position in front of the goal for taking the rebound. In doing so they should not disturb each other and should not come too close to the goalkeeper.

How you resolve a game situation in which you have a numerical superiority 3:1?

First of all no time should be lost for concluding the attack before the only defender receives support from behind.

That is why as few passes as possible should be played to overcome the defender. A second aspect is to play as simple as possible to avoid unnecessary risks and mistakes. That happens when the ball carrier passes the ball at a correct time (when the defender tackles him), that means not allowing the defender any time to tackle again the receiving left or right winger while shooting at goal.

What a single defender can do when he faces three attackers?

He has 2 opportunities:

1. *Delaying their attack through retreating in the field and gain some time for his midfielders to support him. Doing so the numerical inferiority 1:3 could be turned into a situation of equal numbers (3:3).*
 2. *He should force the ball carrier in the center to pass the ball as early as possible or as far as possible away from the goal to a winger who, generally, has less passing options than a center forward and therefore could be better channelled. Instilling the three attackers to execute 2 or more passes will allow his midfielders to join him in defence.*
- Whilst delaying the attack and retreating in the field he should change his attitude in case he notices that the ball is out of control of the ball carrier.*

How the position of the two midfield players behind the 3 attackers influences the attacking move?

Before the fast attack is initiated by the ball carrier he should perceive and analyse the game situation (particularly the position of the opponent in front and of the two behind him). Depending on their position the ball should always be passed (in the moment the central defenders shows intention to tackle) into the run of a team-mate who is furthest away from the midfielders tackling back from behind.

Should the two defenders behind the three attackers try to tackle the player in possession of the ball or better try to intercept the passes between them?

Whilst the central defender tries to delay the individual attack from the centre forward the other two defenders may gain some time to assume positions up the field, which will allow them to intercept the pass to any wing.

Anyway, the 3 defenders should work out a plan to stop the three attackers from scoring.

How the last defender could influence the attacking play?

When he does not tackle the opponents, their attack is slowed down and when he moves slightly out of the centre to one side he encourages the ball carrier to pass the ball into the opposite direction to the attacker furthest away from the defender. Knowing these two facts the defender can oblige the ball carrier to pass in a way he has anticipated.

Corrective Exercises:

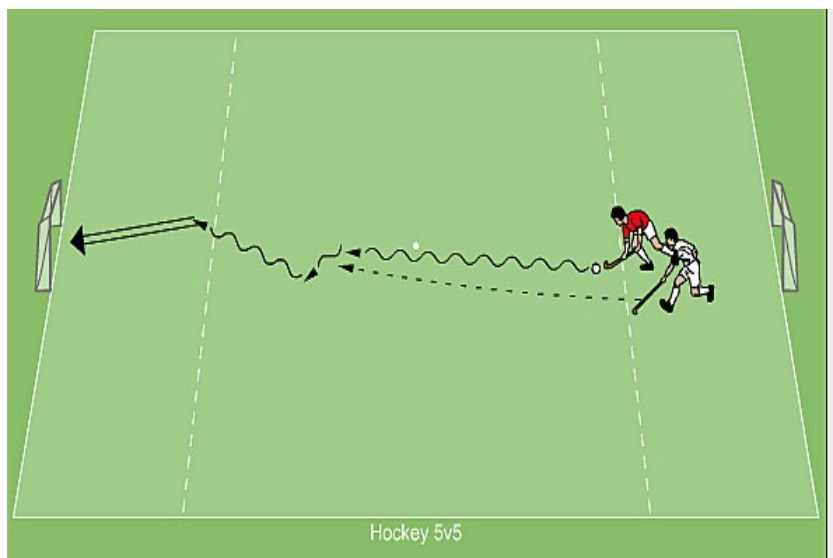
The following corrective exercises should be included in the training program as needed.

1. Dribble and Tag Games

Review the "Dribbling Games" and especially the "Tag Games" in chapter 3, "Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities."

2. Tackling From Behind

One attacker starts with a ball from the one shooting zone line of the Hockey 5-on-5 field. A defender stands 1 meter behind this attacker and follows him after he touched the ball, trying to tackle successfully before the attacker can control the ball in the opposing shooting zone of 10m.



For attacking with success the forward must

- * move quickly,
- invade the path of the defender who nears him (to avoid a collision and an infringement of the rules, the defender must slow down his running speed), or

- feint a stop of the ball with the reverse stick; while the defender reacts to this new situation and prepares a tackle, the attacker can suddenly change speed and escape.

After three attacks, the defender and attacker switch functions. Make sure that both players have a similar capacity in running speed.

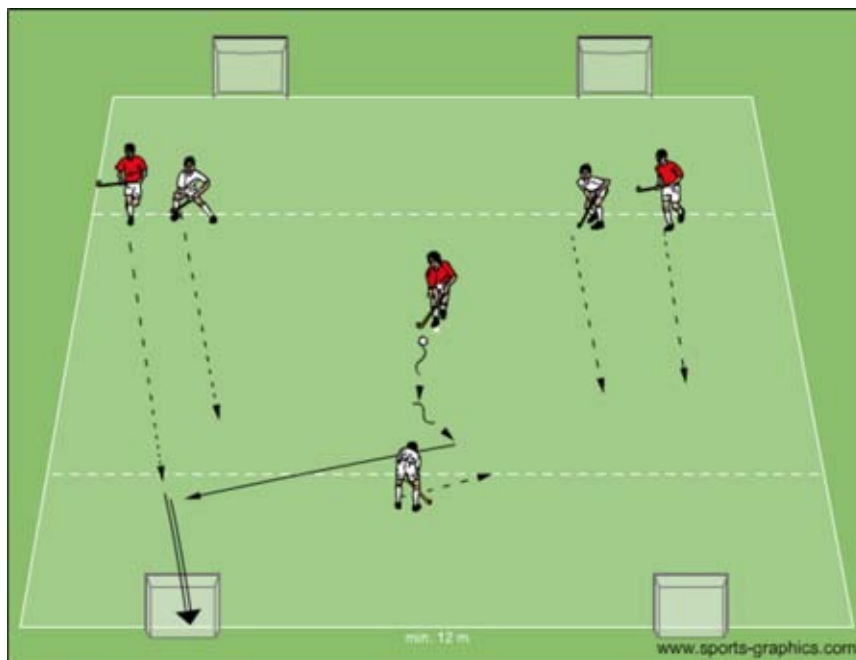
3. Delaying the Opponents' Attack

Review the rules of a "penalty attack" in the Mini-Hockey competition. This practice uses six players. After the coach's visual signal, an attacker in the centre of the Mini Hockey field dribbles the ball toward one of the two opposing goals defended by an opponent who starts from the end line. This defender closes down on the attacker and channels him to one side of the field. Meanwhile, after the initiation of the attack, four other players (two attackers and two defenders) run from the opposite end line onto the field to support the single attacker or to tackle or intercept his pass.

A goal can be scored only from inside the shooting zone. The attack of the three (one plus two) finishes, when

- one of the attackers scores,
- the attackers lose the ball to the defenders,
- an attacker infringes on the rules, or
- when the ball runs out of play.

The players rotate positions on the second and third attacks, and the teams switch functions after each full rotation. The team which manages to score the



highest number of goals in six attacks wins. In case of a foul by one of the defenders, the attack has to be repeated. As a variation, the two supporting defenders and the two supporting attackers may start from the line of the shooting zone, thus putting more pressure on the attackers.

“The good coach doesn’t instruct anything to anybody, only helps his pupils to discover and to think.”

3rd. Simplified Game:

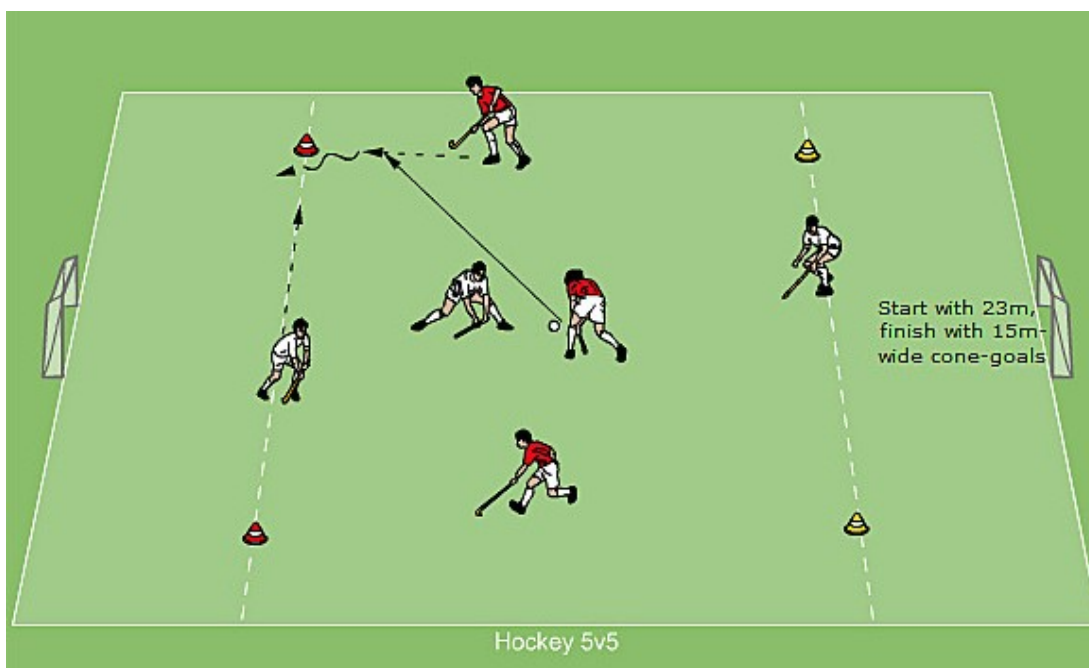
3-ON-1 PLUS A DEFENDER WHO COVERS

The game, which involves six players, is played between the two shooting zone-lines of the 5-on-5 hockey field or between the centre-line and the shooting circle of the 6-on-6 field. Set up cones to establish the two 15 or first 23 meter-wide goal areas on the circle line and centreline (6-on-6) or on the shooting zone-lines (5-on-5). Three players are in possession of the ball and start their attack from the centre-line, aiming to alternately control the ball into the shooting zone or circle. Both goals are defended by a single defender who must always remain on the same line without entering the field. One additional midfield player plays in front of them and has to tackle first. After the conclusion of the first attack, with or without success, the three attackers turn around to attack the opposite wide goal, tackled by the same midfield player who turns around and the other defender who covers him always remaining on the goal line.

An attack finishes

- when a goal is scored with a dribble across one of the two cone goals,
- when the ball runs out of the 6-on-6 field, or
- when one of the two defenders wins the ball and manages to execute a pass to one of his two team-mates.

Duration of the match: three periods of 2 minutes until every defender has played once in each position. The forwards are also asked to switch their positions every 2 minutes.



Variations:

- When the midfield player wins the ball, the other two defenders may leave their positions on the end lines and move to receive a pass. If they manage to pass the ball twice, they now attack, while the former three attackers have to take over the defending positions and functions.
- After dribbling the ball across the goal line, the attackers have to score immediately into a goal defended by a neutral goalkeeper.

Training Objectives:

See the 1st Simplified Game for 3-on-3, which has the same objectives.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence

Which tasks a ball carrier has to fulfil before he plays the ball?

First he has to analyze the position of the closest defender, the distance in relation to him and the position of his two team-mates. But before he comes to a decision about his next move he also has to perceive the position and attitude of the covering opponents behind him. Only after having processed all this valuable information he is able to choose the best possible attacking move.

The ideal solution would be to dribble the ball diagonally toward the defender in front of him and oblige him to move slightly out of the center and then pass the ball into the run of his team-mate on the opposite side.

Which mistakes do the 3 attackers make frequently?

-Instead of playing in a triangle, which allows more passing options, they remain all on the same level.

-The wings come too close to the ball carrier instead of giving sufficient width to their attack.

-The "last" pass before controlling the ball on the goal line has not been directed into the run of a wing.

-The ball carrier doesn't hide his intentions and through his gestures give the covering player an opportunity to anticipate where he is going to play the ball

Corrective Exercises:

Choose from earlier simplified games for keeping possession of the ball in 2-on-1 or a 3- on-1 situation.

"In hockey the brain counts a lot. All players have two legs, two hands, two ears, and two eyes, but only one brain!"

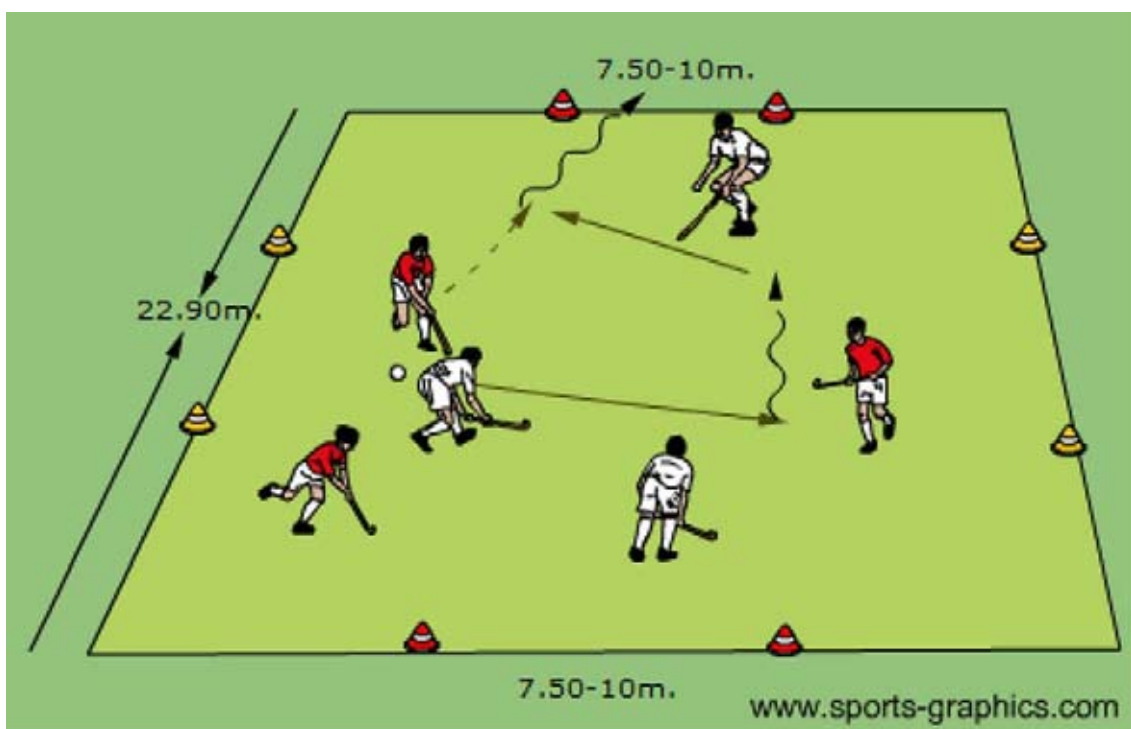
4th. Simplified Game:

3-ON-3 WITH FOUR INTERSECTING GOALS

Teams of three players simultaneously defend two opposite goal areas (which should be between 7.50 meters until 10 meters wide) and attack the other two. The illustration shows the setup and field dimensions.

The game is started by a ball toss into the center of the square. When the ball runs across any sideline, there is a push-in or free dribble from where the ball left the playing area. During the push-in or free dribble, the opponents must be at least 5 meters away from the ball. To score, a player has to dribble the ball through one of two opposing goals.

Duration of the game: four periods of 3 minutes.



Variation:

Use the same variations as for the game "2 on 2 With Four Intersecting Goals."

Training Objectives:

- Practice and consolidate the technical and tactical objectives of the game "2 on 2 With Four Intersecting Goals" and of the previous simplified games.
- Learn to always attack the goal that is less well defended.
- Learn to always attack in a triangular formation, while the defense must assure width and depth (cover), and be able to pressure the ball carrier to force him to commit mistakes.
- In attack, learn to watch for a 2-on-1 situation—and to avoid the 1 on 1.

- Be able to suddenly change the direction and rhythm of the attack without dribbling the ball too close to a defender.
- In defence, learn to pressure the ball carrier to force him to commit mistakes.
- Learn to channel the opponent's play into the desired direction (for instance, into a team-mate's tackling area or away from the goal).
- Ensure width and depth coverage.
- Learn to delay the tackle to gain time for receiving the support of a teammate.
- Defending in 1-on-2, learn to delay the tackle to avoid getting outplayed before the support of a team-mate arrives

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Which of the two cone goals should be attacked?

When in possession of the ball the 3 attackers have to watch out which of the two cone goals is less defended. This depends particularly on the position of the central defender and his distance to either of the two goals.

How the attackers can systematically create an over numbered situation (2:1) in front of one of the opponent's goal?

When the ball carrier directs the attack toward one goal, he obliges the central defender to support his team-mate in the attacked goal. In case he changes by sudden his direction and speed and carries the ball toward the opposite goal he creates with support from his other team-mate a 2 on1- situation.

Corrective Exercises: See the simplified game "2 on 2 With Four Goals."

Photo: A. Wälthi



5° Simplified Game:

3-ON-2 WITH COUNTERATTACK

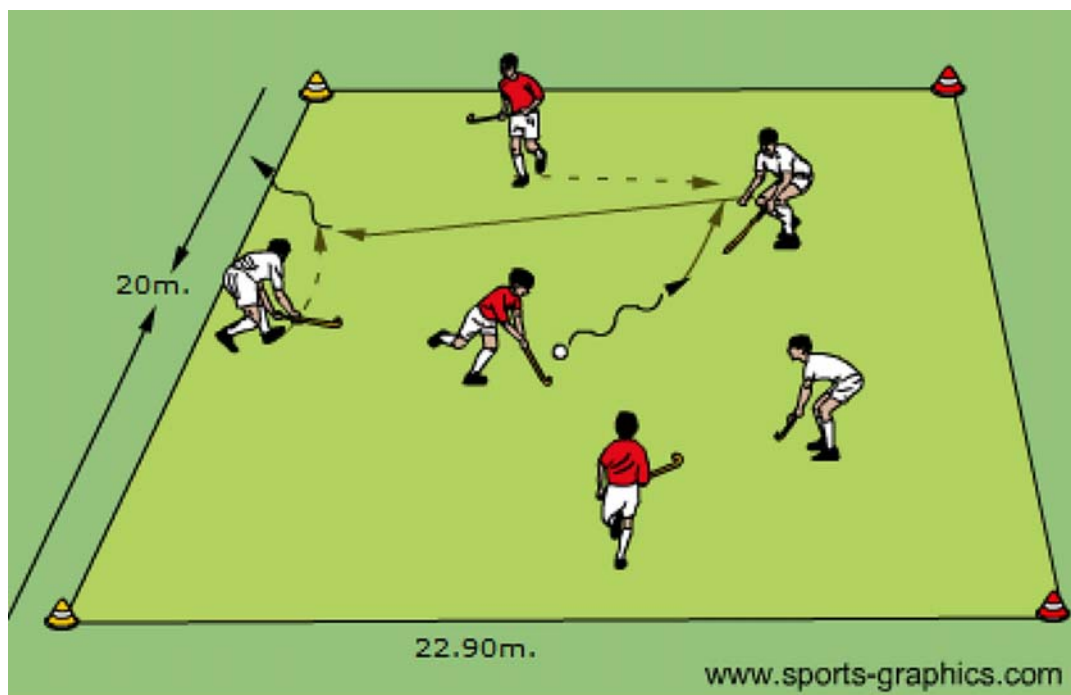
Use a 6-on-6 hockey field with two 20-meter-wide goals established on the centreline and level with one shooting circle. On the full field play between the centreline and one 22.90 meter line. In each half of the playing area, station one team of three players that is to alternately attack alternately the two goals. Two of the three opponents always defend the goal that is being attacked to prevent the attackers from dribbling the ball across their goal line. Meanwhile their third opponent remains in the opposite goal, ready to receive a pass from one of his team's two other defenders, should they manage to win the ball from the attackers. After receiving the ball, the third defender scores with a dribble across his own goal line without any tackle back from the attackers (they may tackle only in the upper part of the field). An attacks ends

- when the attackers score a goal,
- when the ball runs out of the playing area (across one of the end lines), or
- when the defense, after having recovered the ball and passed it across the imaginary centreline to the third defender, scores.

After the conclusion of each attack, one of the two defenders must quickly run toward the opposite goal to re-establish (with the third defender) the "3 attackers on two defenders." In case of an infringement of the rules by an attacker, a free hit is awarded to the defenders—still with the attackers being allowed to defend only in the upper part of the field and never beyond the centreline.

During a free hit for the attackers (taken no closer than 5 meters from the goal line), the defenders, too, must remain at least 5 meters away from the ball.

Duration of the game: 10 attacks for each team or, for more advanced players, four periods of 3 minutes each.



"There is one hint for the coach to ensure an excellent relation with his outstanding player. He should not try to modify him."

Variations:

- The three defenders don't have to switch positions. Therefore, the attackers practice the 3-on-1 attack at one goal line, and the 3-on-2 attack at the other goal.
- Instead of using two 20-meter-wide goals, the game is played using four 6-meter-wide goals (as a type of Mini-Hockey).
- Behind each end line a hockey goal is established at a distance of 14.50 meters. Immediately after having crossed with the ball under control the end line, the same attacker practices shooting with a neutral goalkeeper.
- In one half of the 6-a-side, 8-a-side or 11 –a-side pitch two defenders clear the ball from the end line towards the 3 attackers on the centre line. Immediately after the clearance the game is on. Whilst the attackers should score the 2 defenders have to counter-attack with a long pass through one of the 2 cone goals (6 meters wide) placed in the wing positions on the centreline.

Training Objectives:

- * Practice and consolidate the technical and tactical objectives of the "2 on 1 With Counterattack" and the previous simplified games for 3-on-3.
- Learn to systematically create the 2-on-1 situation in attack and to achieve a high percentage of success.
- Learn to tackle back immediately after losing possession of the ball.
- As defenders, acquire the patience to wait for the best moment for tackling or intercepting the ball.
- As defenders, learn to force the attacker to play the ball into the desired direction.
- As defenders, learn to counterattack quickly.
- As defenders, think continuously about what to do next, not forgetting to switch positions after an attack is concluded.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

In a 3-on-2 –situation, which one of the 3 attackers should become the ball carrier?

The centre forward has ideal possibilities to distribute the ball to either side. Dependent on the support he receives by his two wings and the behaviour of the two defenders he applies a 2-on-1-situation on the right or left side.

Should the ball-carrying player in the centre pass or better dribble the ball?

This depends on the distance and attitude of the defenders. In case none of the defenders presses the attacker with the ball he penetrates or he dribbles the ball directly towards one defender to instil him to tackle. When this happens, he creates a 2-on-1-situation with his wing from the same side.

***“The more we increase the speed,
the more difficult it is to maintain accuracy.”***

Tell me when you should pass and when you should dribble the ball in a 3-on-2 - situation?

In case the ball carrier perceives an open space in front of him he should penetrate and maintain the possession of the ball, but in case there is an opponent in front of him, instead of taking him on, he should pass the ball in the correct moment into the run of one of his supporting team-mates.

On which criteria it depends that you pass the ball toward the left or toward the right side?

The direction of the pass not only depends on the position and distance of the defender in relation to the supporting attackers but also depends on the way both defenders have decided to stop the attack in numerical superiority (they may defend on the same level, may retreat or one defender positions himself slightly in front of the other one who then covers).

In which direction the ball should be passed in a 2-on-1-situation?

The ball should be passed diagonally into the run of the team-mate after having committed a defender to a tackle.

The receiving player should receive the ball always being level or slightly in front of the defender (possibilities to be in an off-side position) but always far outside of his range of action.

What is the most efficient way to resolve a 3-on-2-situation?

While approaching the two defenders the ball carrier should suddenly run straight to one of them what encourages this defender to tackle. In the same moment the team-mate from the same side has to move further away from the defender to establish a 2-on-1-situation.

What the 2 defenders can do to avoid the success of the 3 attackers?

First they should do everything to encourage the attackers to pass the ball to one wing. When this happens the wing is pressed and channelled to the sideline with the second defender covering.

In case the centre forward has the ball both defenders should delay their attack and retreat in the field in order to gain some time. Whilst retreating body fakes and stick dummies should be executed to induce the attackers to commit mistakes or to play more than 2 passes what would slow down their attack.

Which are the most frequent mistakes committed by the defenders in a 2-on-3- situation?

Besides rushing to the attacker who controls the ball close to his feet another important mistake is when both defenders are playing in line, on the same level, because then nobody is able to cover the tackling player. During the retreat patience is needed to wait for the most suitable moment to tackle.

Corrective Exercises:

Use the first four of the 2-on-2 simplified games.

"I insist in the importance of the details.

It's necessary to perfect each small basic aspect of a business (or a simplified game) when you intend that things function well".

Ray Kroc

6th. Simplified Game:

THREE TEAMS ON TWO WIDE GOALS

Dependant on the age of your pupils use either a 5-on-5 or 6 on 6 hockey field between the two shooting zones or circles. One team of three layers is in the centre of the field and alternately attacks one of the two wide cone goals, established on the circle or shooting zone lines. This goal and the opposite one are each defended by two midfield players well in front of the goal, and a third one who covers them without being allowed to tackle, being away from the goal line. The start with it's recommended to have only one midfielder and two defenders who cover him, being always on the goal (circle) line.



The attackers have 10 attacks (5 toward each goal) in which to try to dribble the ball as often as possible across this line (to get 1 point) and score in a regular goal without (or later with) a goalkeeper (to get an additional point). After every three attacks, the cover defender changes with one of the other two defenders of his team who is in front of him. An attack finishes

- when a goal is scored,
- when the ball runs across one circle line without being controlled ,
- when a defender gets possession of the ball and passes it to a teammate, or
- when the attackers commit an infringement of the rules.

The winning team is the one that gets most points in 10 attacks.

***“The player who runs has to think,
and the one who thinks has to run.”***

Cesar Luis Menotti

Variations:

- To simplify the attack and practice goal scoring, the defense either has
 - one defender in front of the circle, one defender who covers playing on the circle line, and a goalkeeper;
 - two defenders playing on the shooting zone or circle line only and a goalkeeper;
 - or two defenders on the goal line with a goalkeeper and one defender in the midfield in front of the two covering defenders.
- Each 3-on-3 team has 2 minutes to score a maximum number of goals. The faster they develop their attacks, the more chances exist to score.
- A goalkeeper is added! Once the ball is carried from an attacker into the circle or shooting zone he interferes to prevent the attackers from scoring.
- The teams change, depending on the outcome of the attack. When the defenders manage to win the ball and also execute at least two passes on their team, they become attackers of the opposite goal. While launching their attack, the former attackers defend the goal where their attack failed. If the attackers score with a dribble, they continue to attack.
- The attackers can only play a maximum of 4 (3) passes, and work to find the most effective attack.

Training Objectives:

- The attackers will learn that before passing the ball, they should consider not only the positions and actions of the defenders but also the movement of the covering defender on the circle line.
- Understand how essential it is that the attacker in the centre is the one who should be in possession of the ball—either when the defenders are close or when one defender is going to execute a tackle.
- Consolidate the skills learned in the previous simplified games, and especially the principles of assuring width and depth in attack.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence: Please consult the questions and answers from the previous Simplified Games.

Corrective Exercises:

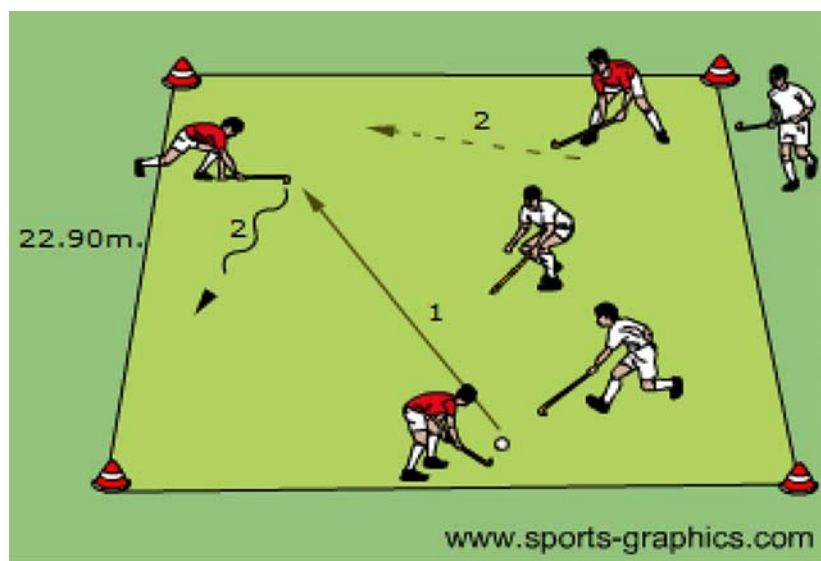
Use the first five of the simplified games for 2-on-2.

***“There is no major power on the field
than the player’s intelligence.”***

7th. Simplified Game:

MAINTAINING BALL POSSESSION 3-ON-2

See the rules of the Simplified Game for teams formed by two players "Maintaining Ball possession 2-on-1." The main differences are that the number of players per team has increased here from two to three, and the dimensions of the field are increased (to a square measuring 15 to 22.90 meters). The attacking three players have six possessions of the ball and aim to keep the ball for as long as possible. When the ball runs out or is pushed out of the playing area by the defenders, one of the two attackers should be replaced by the third one, up to now waiting outside the area. Keep track of the seconds the three attackers keep possession of the ball. If you have more than three teams, you can organize a tournament to establish the best team.

*Training Objectives:*

* Learn to consider and then make use of the space available in the depth of the field.

- As an attacker learn to always position yourself in a triangular formation to ensure there being two options for passing.
- Be able to disguise the direction of your pass.
- Develop sufficient speed of the ball when passing.
- Know when to pass and when not to pass.
- Learn to look out systematically for the 2-on-1 situation.
- Remember to lift the head while dribbling the ball.
- Learn to run in an uncontrolled space immediately after a successful pass.
- If there is a pressing defence, learn to use direct or wall passes.
- As defenders, learn to constantly diminish the space and time available to the three attackers and to anticipate their play, especially in the depth of the field.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

What are the main tasks of the player in possession of the ball?

He has to play in an upright position which allows him to perceive and read the game situation in every second, telling him when and where to pass the ball or when and where to dribble it in an unoccupied zone of the grid. When he decides to pass the ball he should not indicate neither its moment nor its direction through any movement the opponent may anticipate.. After a successful pass he should move immediately into an unoccupied zone, communicating constantly with his two team-mates.

What the 2 attackers without the ball should do?

First they should make the playing field as big as possible. They achieve it through running away from the ball carrier and occupy positions in which they are not marked by any defender. In case they receive a ball when being under pressure, they should look out for a first time pass. They should always be on the move and communicate with their team-mate in possession of the ball. .

What the two defenders should do to gain possession of the ball?

They have to press (double) the ball carrier, especially when he is in a corner of the grid. Whilst one is tackling him and covering the space on his left side, the second defender is anticipating a pass to the right side. Dedication and aggressiveness is necessary to make the playing field for the attackers as small as possible. Last not least executing dummies whilst tackling is another way to force the 3 attackers to make mistakes.

Corrective Exercises:

Use the 9th Simplified Game for 2 on 2, the first six Simplified Games in this chapter for 3-on-3, and the "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" (see Level 1).

Variation:

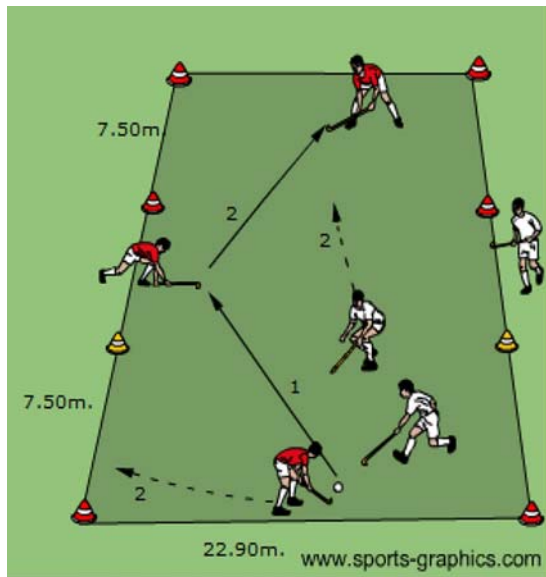
- This variation applies to more advanced players. Mark off a playing area 22.90 meters wide and 22.50 meters deep, separated into three zones of 7.50 meters each. The players are three attackers, two defenders, and one substitute for a defender. The more experienced the players are, the less wide and deep the area of play. One zone is assigned to each of the three attackers. Without being allowed to leave their assigned area, they try to keep possession against the two defenders, who may play in any of the three areas. Initially, none of the defenders is situated in the first attacker's zone. But immediately after the attacker touches the ball, both defenders may press him. When one of the defenders tackles successfully and manages to touch the ball three consecutive times, or when the ball runs out of play, the substitute (who should track the time with a stopwatch) moves into the playing area and replaces one of the defenders. With every attempt, the three attackers should try to keep the ball for 10 (or, later, for 15) seconds. The winning team is the one that keeps the ball the most times for 10 (15) seconds within 10 attempts.

If only five players are available, the successful defender changes position and function with the attacker who failed.

"The game is an integrated element of various dimensions (technique, tactics, cognition and physiques) which unfortunately are still taught and trained separately."

Training Objectives:

- * Learn to consider and then make use of the space available in the depth of the field.



- As an attacker, avoid positioning yourself in a straight line with your team-mates. Always position yourself in a triangular formation to offer two options to the ball carrier.
- Be able to disguise your pass.
- Gain sufficient speed of the ball when passing.
- Know when to pass and when not to pass.
- Learn to look out systematically for the 2-on-1 situation.

- Develop the habit of lifting the head while dribbling the ball.
- Learn to run into an uncontrolled space immediately after a successful pass.
- If there is a pressing defence, learn to use direct or wall passes.
- As defenders, learn to constantly lessen the space and the time available to the three attackers and to anticipate their play, especially in the depth of the field.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

“From the practical point of view every hour doesn’t have 60 minutes; an hour only consists of so many minutes you are able to profit from.”

8th. Simplified Game:

THROUGH PASSES WITH THREE TEAMS

The game is played by 3 teams of 3 players on the 5-a-side hockey field but it's also adaptable for using one half of the 6-a-side Hockey field between the centreline and one end line. A central zone with a depth of 10 meters and a width of 22 until 45 meters is flanked by two zones, which are only 7.5 meters deep (limited on both sides by one end line and the centre line) and between 22 m until 45 meters wide (on the 6-on-6 Hockey field). In each of these two exterior zones a team of 3 players faces one defender.

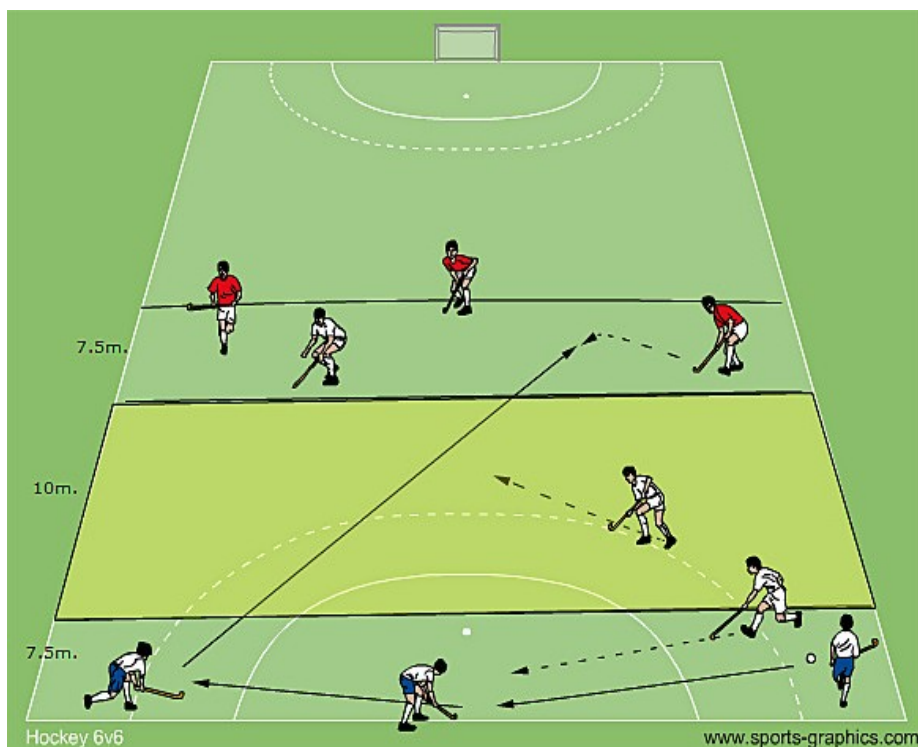
In the zone of initiation 3 players try to maintain the possession of the ball against one defender with the objective to create space and sufficient time to pass the ball as often as possible across the central zone to the opposite zone where one of their 3 team-mates should manage to receive and control the long through pass.

Three defenders, one in the first zone, a second in the midfield and a third in the zone of reception do their very best to force the 6 attackers to commit mistakes.

None of the 9 players is allowed to leave the zone assigned to him in order to fulfil his offensive or defensive functions. Only the defender in the zone of reception is allowed to do so in order to anticipate the pass played to one of his 3 opponents.

After 10 ball possessions of the two attacking teams a rotation takes place between the 3 teams until each team played once (for 10 attacks) in defence.

The winner are the two teams, which managed to play more through passes which reach a front-runner.



Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Which requisites are necessary to play a successful through pass ?

Before a through pass is delivered the ball carrier has to perceive and analyse the game situation in order to identify the availability of a zone in which the ball can be delivered. Then the passer should agree visually with the potential receiver (eye contact) to find out whether he is ready to communicate with him. Finally with a cue (head or hand-stick movement), which the opponent is not aware of, the potential receiver should indicate to the passer where he wants him to serve the ball with a correct direction and sufficient speed.

The ball carrier has the choice between 3 different attacking moves. Which one he chooses in which situation?

His 1st option is a through pass to an unmarked front-runner and in case this is not possible, he looks for a 2nd option which is a pass to a better positioned team-mate in the same zone and as 3rd option he carries the ball out of the range of action of the defender, shielding it with his body to gain some time or receive different passing angles.

Which position a front runner or midfield player should assume when receiving long passes out of the defense?

A side-on position allows him to see the passer as well as the defender (and the goal) behind him. Furthermore the side-on position allows him to continue his attacking move much quicker (may be a shot at goal) without being obliged to lose time for his turn.

When an ideal opportunity arises in a game to play a through pass?

This happens immediately after having recovered the ball from the opponent. A through pass is then more successful as most of the opponents are still having an offensive attitude and therefore none of our attackers is marked.

Tell me what are the functions of the 3 defenders, which have to play in 3 different zones?

The defender in the initial zone should reduce the time and space of the ball carrier for not allowing him to play a precise through pass to a front-runner in the opposite zone. With his aggressive attitude he should instil the player with the ball to a dribble.

The defender in the central zone chooses a position more downfield to get more time to intercept passes which don't have sufficient speed or/and miss accuracy. He communicates especially with the third defender some meters behind him in the zone of reception.

This defender, as well as the one in the central zone, has to read the game and anticipate the trajectory of the long passes in putting himself in the position of a receiving player. There are many cues between the passer and the receiver) which the second and third defender will learn to interpret to their advantage.

As a receiver you would prefer to receive an aerial pass or a pass played along the ground?

Whenever possible flat passes should be played to a front-runner, as aerial passes are difficult to control and besides time consuming, especially when a defender is close to the receiver. .

Variations:

1. The defender in the central zone may play in any of the three zones.
2. Instead of passing the ball along the ground the attackers are obliged to execute aerial passes what develops the skill of receiving and controlling aerial balls.
3. In case 12 players are available 4 attackers play against one defender in the grids outside and two defenders act in the center zone, intercepting passes.

“The distance doesn’t matter. It’s only the first step that is difficult.”

Training Objectives:

- As a passer, learn to communicate and establish visual agreement with the receiver; pass the ball exactly when the receiver is ready.
- Be able to disguise the direction of your pass.
- As defender, don't allow the attacker sufficient time to think and play.
- Learn to anticipate or read the opponent's play.

Corrective Exercises:

Use the 5th, 9th, and 10th. Simplified Game for two-player teams as well as Test 3 of the "Decathlon" to improve the reach of defenders and teach the attackers to disguise the direction of their pass.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

“The way in which the players communicate among themselves and in which they communicate with themselves, ultimately determines the quality of their team.”

9th. Simplified Game:

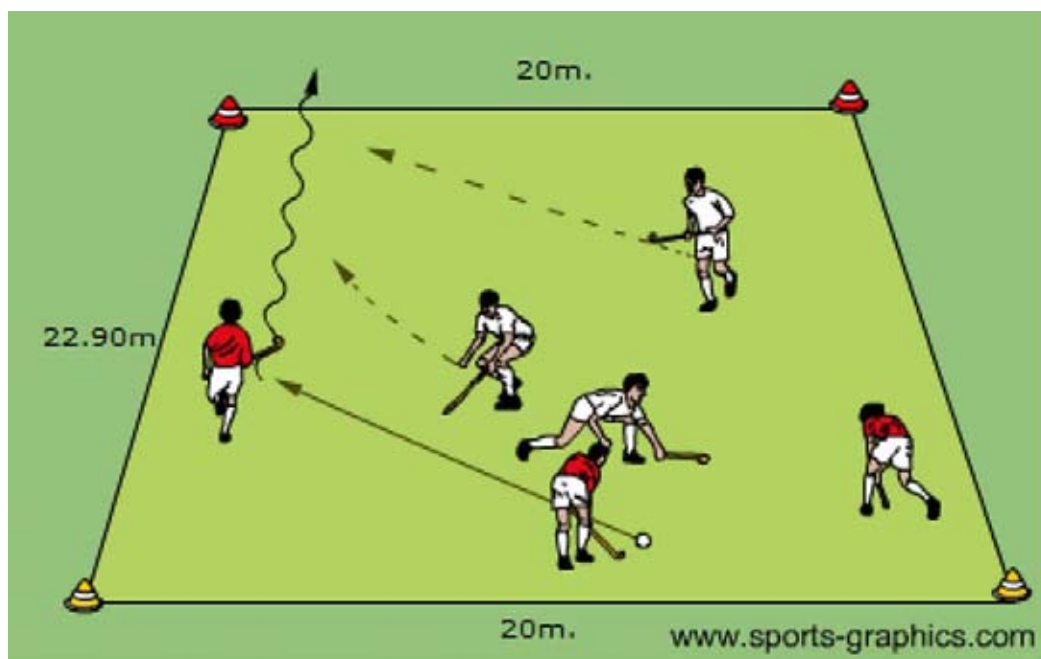
3-ON-3 WITH TWO WIDE GOALS

Players use a grid 20m. wide and 22.90 m. deep or play in one half of the 5-on-5 field, playing between one end line and the centreline. Set up goals on both lines (see illustration for the dimensions and placement). To score, an attacker must dribble the ball under control across the opponent's goal line, which is the width of the 5-on-5 or around 20 m.

Duration of the game: four periods of 4 minutes each.

Variations:

- After controlling the ball across the opposing goal line (10m-line in 5-a-side Hockey or the circle line in 6-a-side Hockey), the attackers have to conclude their attack with a shot on goal which is defended by a neutral goalkeeper. Both teams attack or defend alternatively for 4 minutes, applying the official rules of 5-on-5, 6-on-6, 8-on-8 or 11-on-11 Hockey.



- The same game can be played with four goals (each 5 meters wide), two of them placed on each goal line separated by a distance of at least 12 meters. To score, the attackers have to either dribble the ball into one of the opposing goals.

“All behaviour of a player is the consequence of his present personal feeling.”

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

What the 3 attackers have to do to control the ball on the opposing goal line defended by 3 opponents?

The 3 attackers have to form a triangle, assuring always sufficient width and depth to their attack. This way they are creating sufficient space in between the defenders which could be used to their advantage. The attackers should always look out for creating 2-on-1-situations and avoid 1-on-1-situations which may give the opponents the opportunity to counterattack.

Which pass is for the ball carrier the most efficient one?

To encourage the ball carrier to look out for through passes, one of his team-mates should offer himself behind the defence where he receives the ball and score.

How a front-runner should receive the ball?

He should assume preferably a side-on position which allows him a quick continuation of the attack and besides gives him a much better vision, especially at the very end of the playing field where goals are scored.

What a player has to consider when restarting the game after an infringement of the opponent?

He should execute it as quickly as possible (especially when one team-mate is unmarked) to surprise the opponent's defence or he does it very slowly to study carefully all possible passing options.

When we have to accelerate and when we have to slow down our attack?

A change of pace is always indicated when playing in a numerical superiority (for instance 3-on-2) or when a gap appears in front of the ball carrier. Slowing down the attack is a necessity when one team-mate is in an offside position, when none of the team-mates had offered him in an optimal position or when most of the attackers are exhausted.

Where, generally, on the field there is some space to be explored?

Generally there is some space available on the opposite side where the ball is played. This space should be used systematically with long, flat and speedy passes into the run of a team-mate.

What are the key points for executing successfully push-in?

No risks should be taken with a push-in. It's execution should happen quickly and before the opponent has time to mark all of our players.

In which way a defender should mark his personal opponent without the ball?

He should always position himself between the opponent and the goal but slightly more inside and closer to the goal than his opponent. From this position he should perceive the ball and (!) his opponent at the same time.

How a defender should position him in relation to a ball-carrying attacker?

He should never face him in a frontal position as this gives the attacker the opportunity to beat him on either side.

He better meets him in a side-on position, which allows him to accompany the attacker as well as to channel him into the desired direction (for instance toward a side line or toward a team-mate who covers him).

"No practise waists the talent!"

Are there any other considerations for the defender to take into account when he faces 1-on-1-situations?

He should always initiate his tackle from a tiptoe position (on the balls of the feet), keep the weight of his body equally distributed between both legs, to maintain balance he should not separate both legs more than shoulder-wide and put one foot in front of the other. He should bend the knees slightly to be ready to tackle at every second when the ball may be too far away from the feet of the attacker. When executing the tackle it must be a very quick and surprising one without putting all the weight of the body to the front leg as this prevents him from executing in case of a miss a second tackle. Whilst observing carefully the ball (not the legs of the opponent), he should have in his vision the other opponents and also his team-mates close to the ball. In case his tackle was successful he should switch as quickly as possible from a defensive pattern to offence.

Which tasks have a defender who is close to a 1-on-1-situation?

Without losing attention to his personal opponent, he should anticipate a possible failure of his team-mate and cover the space at his shoulders to be explored by the attacker.

When a defender should mark the opponent and when he should mark the space?

The way of marking depends on the distance between the defender and the attacker. When the ball is close, let's say less than 15 meters, the defender should mark his opponent very closely, being more inside and closer to the goal than the attacker. In case the ball is further away the marking is less tight. This allows the defender to intercept passes in the space as well as passes directed into the feet of the opponent.



Photo: A. Wälti

*Training Objectives:***In attacking, players work toward these goals:**

- To know what to do when you are not in possession of the ball: that is, make yourself available for a pass in an area that is not controlled by the defending side. This way, the player in possession of the ball has the choice to either penetrate in the space that the attacker has created or pass.
- To attack in a triangular formation, ensuring width and depth.
- While dribbling the ball, to observe the behaviour of both opponents and team-mates so be able to make good decisions.
- To avoid revealing the next move.
- To take responsibility for each attacking move; any mistake may result in a goal for the opponents.

In defending, players work toward these goals:

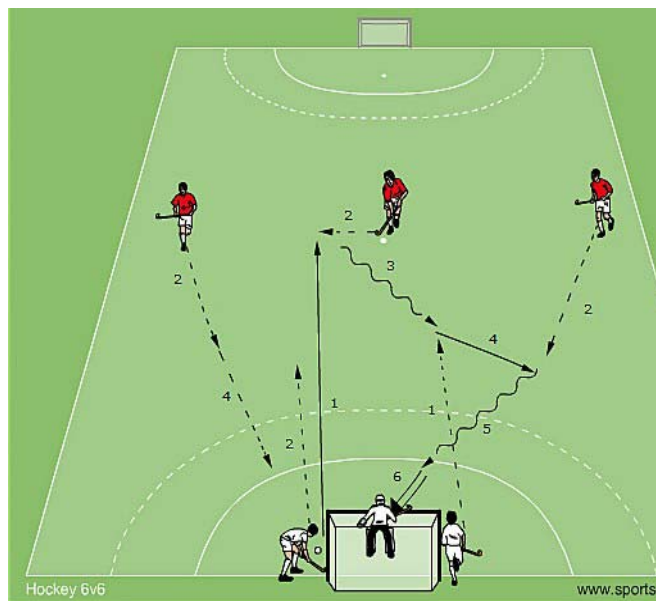
- No player rests on the defence; on the contrary, they all participate fully in attack as well as in defence so that three defenders are always active.
- To ensure always width in the defence, covering the whole width of the goal.
- To make sure that cover is always provided for the player who is tackling a ball carrier (defending in a triangular formation).
- To channel the attack into the direction you want and then keep the ball in this area, crowding it also with your team's other defenders.
- To delay tackling as necessary, until being sure of receiving support from a team-mate.
- After each conclusion of the opposing attack, remembering to complete the defence at the opposite side (concentrate on your task).
- To be able to take free kicks quickly and before the opponent defenders can build a "wall" in front of one end line.
- To initiate a counterattack quickly, with or without the help of the other team-mates.
- To disguise the direction of any long pass.

***"To cure a disease, it's not sufficient to undergo a diagnosis!
It's important to look for the roots of the problem and to apply the
pertinent remedies!"***

10th. Simplified Game:

3-ON-2 WITH SHOT ON GOAL

Use half of the 5-on-5 or 6-on-6 hockey field and place a goalkeeper in the goal together with one defender besides each of the goal posts (see illustration). One of them clears the ball towards the centre line where three attackers are picking it up with the aim to score a goal from inside the shooting area against the two defenders rushing out to stop them from succeeding their aim. After 5 attacks the two defenders switch positions with two of the three attackers.



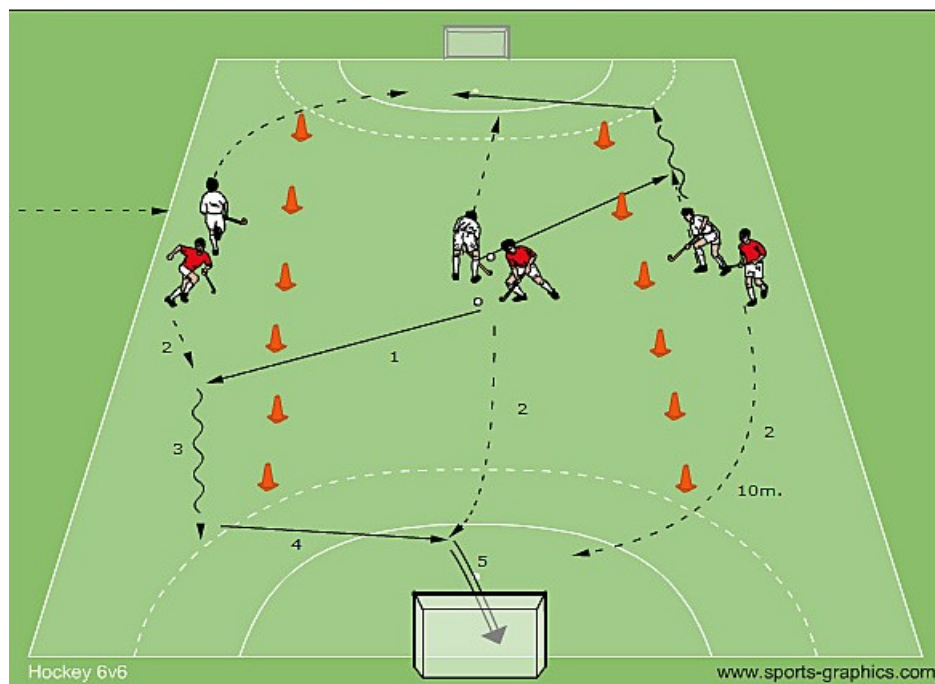
Training Objectives:

- As attacker, use the space behind the defenders and make also use of the width of the field during the attack.
- During the attack assume always a triangle formation which helps the forwards to overcome the two defenders.
- As attackers look always out for 2:1-situations through dribbling the ball directly towards one of the two defenders (fixing him) in order to commit him to a tackle in a 1-on-1-situation, what will allow the ball carrier to pass to his wing attacker on the same side.
- Avoid going into 1-on-1-situation when playing over-numbered (3 versus 2).
- Look out for the rebound of the goalkeeper's pads.
- As attacker, use the space behind the defenders and make also use of the width of the field during the attack.
- As defender, cooperate (cover) and communicate with the defender closest to the ball carrier, especially when he decides to tackle when the ball is with one of the wing attackers.
- As defender, delay the tackle as long as possible whilst retreating and carrying out dummies with the body and with your stick.
- As defender, cooperate (cover) and communicate with the defender closest to the ball carrier, especially when he decides to tackle when the ball is with one of the wing attackers.

11th Simplified Game:

CROSSES WITH DEFLECTING

Using cones for dividing either a 5-on-5 or a 6-on-6 hockey field into three corridors, the two lateral ones between 5 and 10 meters wide. Each team attacks one goal; one of the team's players should be in the right-wing and another in the left-wing position, while the third player enters the central corridor. Both centre forwards pass the ball to one of their wings, who must receive it within his zone. After having controlled the ball, the wing advances without any opposition until he arrives more or less level with the penalty stroke point in order to centre the ball to the centre forward, who followed in the central corridor, or the opposite wing. This wing in the moment of the execution of the cross is allowed to leave his corridor and position himself for executing a deflection or direct shot on goal from in front of the second goalpost. The centre forward, however, occupies the zone in front of the first goal post. Both teams practice in the same attacking formation for at least three minutes. Then the places are switched until everybody has played in all three positions. As a next step, hold a competition, in which the team scoring more goals—with a direct shot—out of 10 attacks wins. The competition is over when all players have performed 10 times in the centre forward position.



Variation:

- The coach permits the wing to centre the ball when stationary. Later the centre has to be taken with the ball on the run.
- A goalkeeper is included in the game, but may play only remaining on the goal line.
- The goalkeeper plays with no special restrictions imposed.

More experienced players practice this game with a defender who marks one of the other two attackers. The wing must therefore decide to which attacker he should centre the ball: to the centre forward or the wing of the opposite side.



Photo: A Wälti

Training Objectives:

- * Learn to centre the ball with speed and accuracy into the front stick of the team-mate.
- * Gain experience in the direct shots on goal.
- * Learn to assume an optimal position in front of the goal before executing the shot on goal.
- Learn to run toward the oncoming ball before executing the direct shot.
- Learn to deflect the oncoming ball with different heights in different angles.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

What are the tasks of the player who centres the ball?

The wings should be capable to execute well-timed centres, which have accuracy and should be directed 8 until 10 meters in front of the goal, what makes the task of a goalkeeper more difficult.

Centres with a trajectory along the ground and high speed are more dangerous than soft ones and the ones slightly lifted what difficult the reception of the ball through a forward

Which aspects have to be considered by players who score direct with a deviation ?

Before scoring the attacker has to "read" the speed of the ball and its trajectory. Any mistake in the optical-motor assessment may result in a wrong decision-making and bad execution of the deviation.

Whenever possible the attacker should run toward the oncoming ball in order to his deviation more speed.

Know how to gain an optimal position in front of the goal and how to apply correct techniques of a deviation of the ball with the stick on the ground.

Corrective Exercises: See the first 2 variations which are helpful remedial activities.

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LEVEL-3 COMPETITIONS

The 4-on-4 Triathlon and hockey competitions further develop the innate potential of players 10 years and older.

4-on-4 Triathlon

Include the Triathlon periodically in the training program to enhance players' abilities to read and react to more complex situations and to an increased number of players. In the schedule here, "Europe" takes on "Asia" until a winner is decided. The following simplified games make up the 4-on-4 Triathlon.

"The great majority of the players die from the hockey point of view, before they were born completely."

4-on-4 Triathlon

EUROPE AGAINST ASIA

COMPETITION BETWEEN TEAMS FORMED BY 4 PLAYERS

Teams and
name of four
players

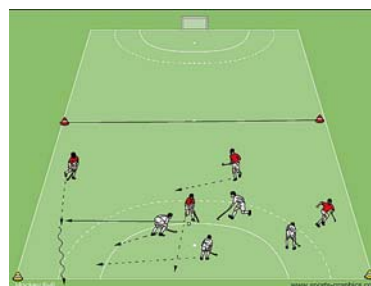
SPAIN	GERMANY	HOLLAND

Teams and
names of four
players

CHINA	KOREA
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1st. GAME: DRIBBLE ACROSS THE OPPOSING GOAL LINE

Field	Match	Result
1	CHI-ESP	
2	KOR-GER	
3	JPN-HOL	

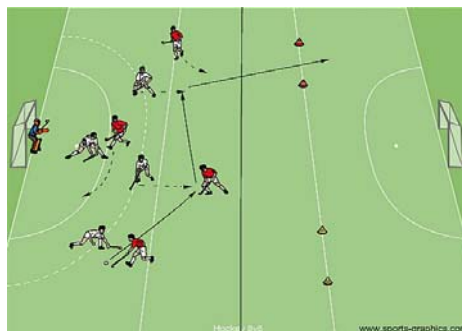


GAME: LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD

	Match	Result
1	CHI-GER	
2	KOR-HOL	
3	JPN-ESP	

3rd. GAME: SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING

Field	Match	Result
1	CHI-HOL	
2	KOR-ESP	
3	JPN-GER	

DURATION OF THE TRIATHLON-TOURNAMENT:
45 minutes

FINAL RESULT:

(sum of victories)

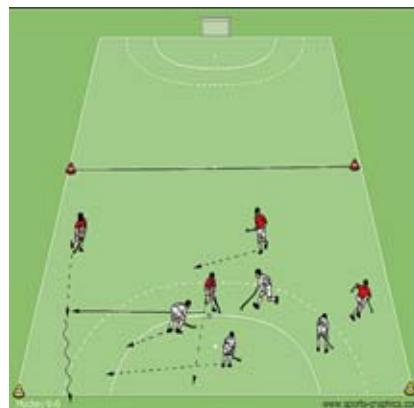
EUROPE against ASIA

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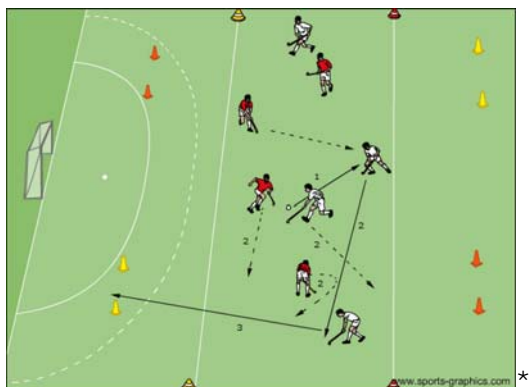
DRIBBLE ACROSS THE OPPOSING GOAL-LINE (45 m.)

* The game is played between the centre line and one end line of the 6-on-6 field.

- The whole width of the field forms the wide goals.
- Both teams try to control the ball across the opponent's end line.
- Bully to start the game.
- Self-passes and hit-ins at least 4.50m. from the end line.
- Duration of the game: 3 times 3 min.



LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD

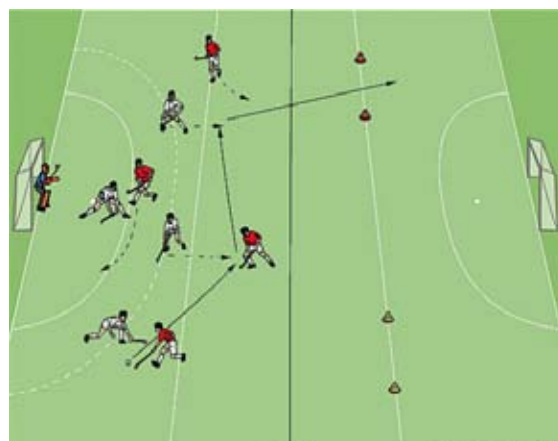


* The game is played on the regular hockey field between the centre line and a 22.90m. line.

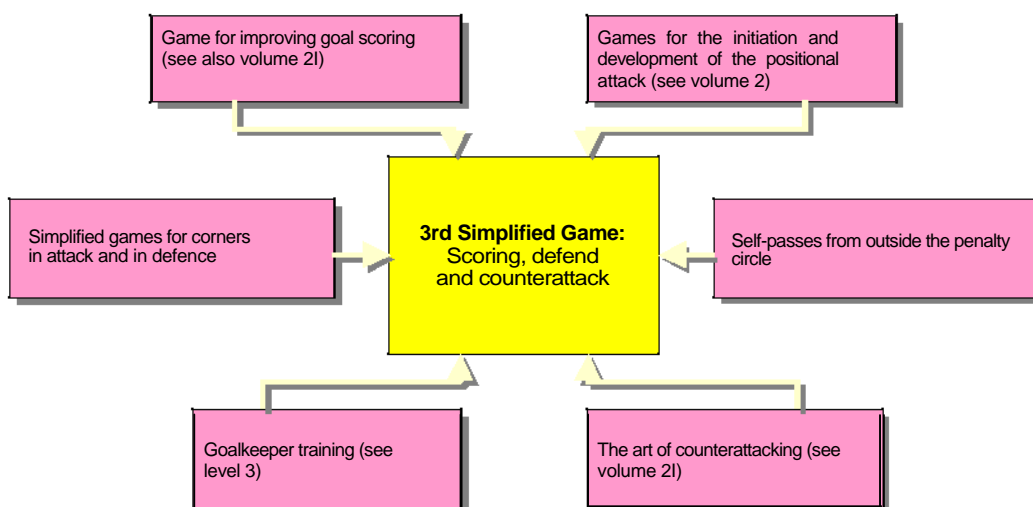
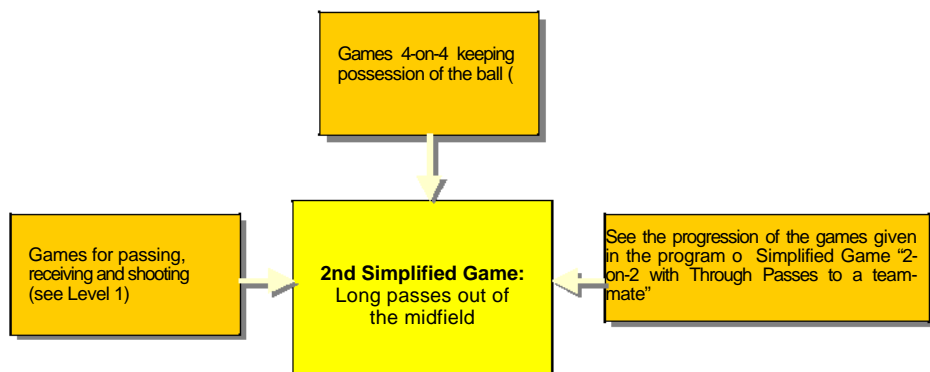
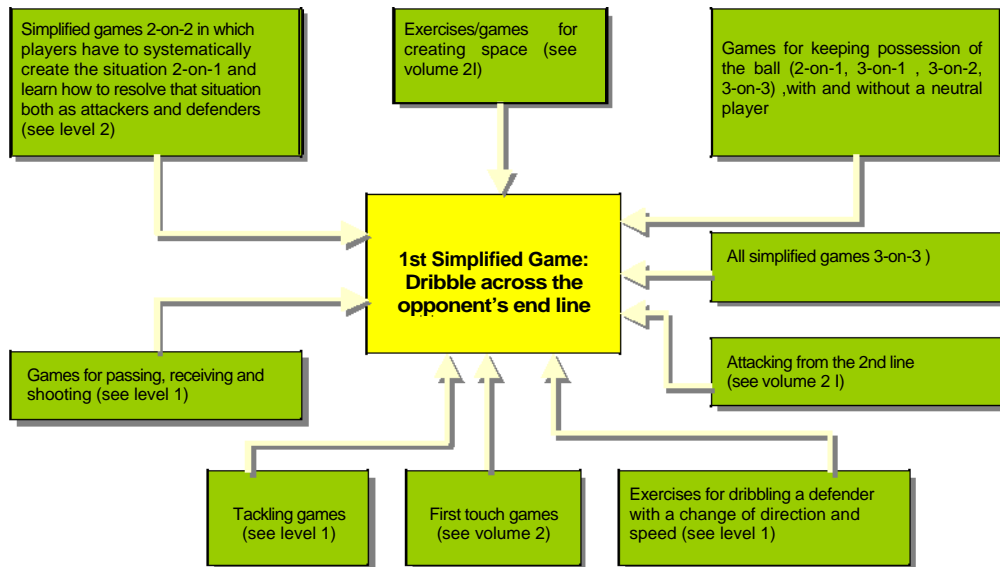
- Behind each end line at a distance of 8 m. two 3m wide goals are marked by cones.
- Without leaving the confines of the area, each team tries to pass the ball through one of the two goals 8 m. behind the opponent's end line.

SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING

- Bully in the centre of the 8-on-8 hockey field.
- One team attacks the goal.
- The other one defends it and counter-attacks the two cone goals placed 10 m. behind the 22.90 m. line.
- They have to score with a long pass through one of the two cone goals.
- For the other rules consult the 8-on-8 hockey rules.
- Duration of the game: 4 times 3 min. Every 3 min. attackers and defenders switch positions and functions.
- It's recommended to have a neutral goalkeeper in the goal.



CORRECTIVE PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF PLAY IN THE 4-ON-4



5-ON-5 HOCKEY

THE RULES OF 5-ON-5 HOCKEY

(recommended for players 10 years old)

1. – Each team is composed by a minimum of 5 players and a maximum of 7. Five of them (including the goalkeeper) have to be at the same time on the playing field. In case one team doesn't have a goalkeeper the player who fills his position must wear different colors and is not allowed to leave the shooting zone.
2. – The duration of the game is three periods of 10 minutes, separated by two rests of 3 minutes between the first and second and between the second and third period. Each period is started with a "bully". Each rest period lasts 5 minutes.
- 3.– The dimension of the playing field is 43x26m. (i.e. a 1/4 part of the full field). Instead of shooting circles shooting zones are established between each end-line and a 10m.-line drawn parallel to the end-line from sideline to sideline across the whole width of the field (see photos). The fifth parallel line is the center line.



- 4.– The size of the goals is the official one but the regular goals could be replaced by wooden boxes with the same width of 3,60 m. and a depth of only 0,46 m. which are often used for Mini-Hockey.
5. – A goal is scored when the ball was played in the shooting zone by an attacker and has passed completely the goal-line with a height inferior to 0.46m. (ie. it has to touch the wooden back-board).
6. –There are no corners (long corners and penalty corners).
7. In case a defender commits involuntary an infringement inside of his shooting zone a penalty attack is awarded. It has to be carried out with an individual dribbling from the center of the field from one of the attacking player against the goalkeeper. All other players have to wait in the opposite shooting zone for the start of the player in possession of the ball in order to interfere as attacker or defender.

***"Success is a ladder which you can't climb up
with your hands in your pockets."***

AMERICAN PROVERB



For each penalty-attack a different player has to be chosen. Only when all his team-mates on the field had already a try, the same player may attack for the second time. The referee controls the application of these norms.



Photo: A.Wälthi

8.– A penalty-stroke is awarded for a voluntary infringement of the rules by an defender inside his shooting zone. The low push (not higher than the wooden board) has to be executed from a spot 5m. in front of the goal. The rest o the players remains outside the shooting-zone.

9.- Free-hits, hit-ins from the side-line or restarts can only be carried out at a distance of more than 3m. from the shooting-zone. All other rules for restarts in front of the shooting zone can be consulted in the official rules of hockey.

10. --Instead of handing cards the referee recommends the coach to substitute the player who infringed the rules. This player is only allowed to play again in case the referee has informed him beforehand.

11. – Each team may ask the referee in each period of 30 minutes for a one time-out of 1 minute, except when a penalty stroke or penalty corner has been awarded.

12. – For the promotion of umpires it's recommended to appoint a referee more than 16 years of age.

13. – The coach is not allowed to enter the field for giving during the game instructions to his players.

14. – For the rest of rules which are not stated here, please consult the official hockey rules.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

” Each person has its own style of movement, and any changes made in the execution of a movement must be undertaken within the individual’s style”

L. Mourehouse /L.Gross

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6-ON-6 HOCKEY: THE RULES OF 6-ON-6 HOCKEY

(recommended for players 11 years old)

RULE 1:

The present regulation only refers to the particular rules of the 6-on-6 game. If for any circumstances in the game the rule is not specified here, the official rules of the game of hockey should be applied.

RULE 2: THE PLAYING FIELD

The competition is played on one half of the normal hockey field from one side line to the other and with goals and shooting circles of normal size.

Playing 6-on-6 Hockey permits to have 2 fields on one regular size ground.



***“If there were no coaches, each player would go out to play
as he understands the game;
then it would be impossible to make a team”.***

Pep' Guardiola

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RULE 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS

Each team is composed by a minimum of 6 players and a maximum of 9. Five of them (including the goalkeeper) have to be at the same time on the playing field. In case one team doesn't have a goalkeeper the player who fills his position must wear different colors and is not allowed to leave the shooting circle. Exceptionally the game can be started with only 5 players/team in case possibilities exist that after the initiation of the match, the missing players could be incorporated.

The 3 "reserve players" may substitute at any moment a player who is on the field. The official rules for substitution of a player have to put in practice. When during a match one team, because of any circumstances (for instance expulsions from the referee), should remain with less than 5 players, the referee concludes the match and declares the team with less than 5 players as 0:3 losers.

Photo: Alfredo Ferrer



RULE 4: PENALTY CORNER: During a penalty corner only 3 defenders and the goalkeeper defend their goal. They run out from the end line, whilst the other 2 players may tackle back, starting at the initiation of the penalty corner from behind the centre point of the field.

RULE 5: FREE-HITS: During free-hits which occur less than 4,55 m. from the shooting circle, all players, except the player who executes the restart of the game, have to be at a distance of more than 4.55m.

RULE 6: DURATION OF THE 6-ON-6 GAME: Two periods of 20 minutes each with an interval of 5 minutes. Each team has the right to ask the umpire in each half for one "time-out" of 1 minute, except when a penalty stroke or penalty corner has been awarded. In case more than one match is played on the same day, the playing time is reduced to 2 periods of 20 minutes.

RULE 7: REFEREE: There is only one referee who applies the above mentioned rules. For a better promotion of young umpires, it's recommended to utilize for the 6-on-6 game only one referee with less than 16 years of age, or in case both teams agree, also two umpires of the same age. Instead of handing cards the referee recommends the coach to substitute the player who infringed the rules. This player is only allowed to play again in case the referee has been informed beforehand.

COMMENTS:

The field's dimensions are adapted to the physiological characteristics of young hockey players. In fact, the measurements take into account all aspects of the game including these:

1. Physical Preparation

- * Most of the playing workout is aerobic.
- Frequent, short runs are characteristic, either with or without changes of direction and rhythm, and sudden stops.
- More demands are made on the young players' coordination capacities as he is more involved in the game.

2. Technical Preparation

- The players have frequent contacts with the ball, which benefits their developing basic skills.
- Because players are exposed to less complex game situations, their self-confidence grows, which results in their taking more initiative and using their innate capacity for imagination and creativity.
- This version of hockey includes frequent occurrences of the basic and standard game situations, such as shooting a goal from any angle or the systematic use of the 2-on-1 situation in attack.

3. Tactical Preparation

- In defence, because of the shorter distances between the players, it is easier for them to cover defence.
- In offence, players frequently change the front of the attack, use more wall or first-time passes, and attack more from the second line.
- The shorter distances allow players to gain valuable experiences in such standard situations as corners, push-ins, free hits, and penalty corners and penalty strokes.
- Communication skills and cooperation are acquired under ideal conditions

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The smaller size of the 6-on-6 Hockey field facilitates cooperation and communication among players.



Photo: A. Wälti

This chapter presents youth coaches with a rich and varied program for children 10 years and up; its application allows kids to play tailor-made competitions like the Hockey Triathlon 4-on-4, the game of Hockey 5-on-5 and finally 6-on-6 Hockey not only with pleasure and fun but also with success. With fewer players on a team, smaller playing areas, a variety of simplified games and competitions, all the boys and girls of this age group can feel capable of meeting the demands of a 6-on-6 game. Coaches make with time the experience that all the simplified games recommended at an early age and now for this age group reappear, one after another, in more complex situations in the 6-on-6 game. Playing 6-on-6 Hockey well is a result of having understood and more or less mastered not only the different simplified games but also the 4-on-4 Triathlon and the 5-on-5 Hockey.

“Traditional coaching had been entirely teacher-directed and largely technique orientated whilst today emphasis is directed on tactical problem solving through games play”

Lynne Spackmann

DEVELOPING YOUNG GOALKEEPERS

Level 3



“Tomorrow's success is founded on today's preparation”

William Osler

Because few coaches have played as goalkeepers, their knowledge of how to train them is somewhat limited.

Relatively few coaches give sufficient attention to the teaching and learning processes for this most important player of the team—even though everybody knows that winning or losing a match depends in many cases on the goalkeeper's performance. Whereas other team members can compensate for the errors of a field player, a mistake made by the goalkeeper usually results in a goal.

Although modern hockey demands good all-around skills from all players, the goalkeeper must be treated as the only *specialist* on the team. In contrast to other team members, the goalkeeper covers a very limited territory and is the only player allowed to play the ball with any part of the body. Due to the goalkeeper's specific function and importance as a key player in any hockey team, special attention and great importance should be given to his or her development.

PROFILE OF A GOALKEEPER

The great influence of a goalkeeper's performance on the result of the game often puts the player in the centre of decisive game situations and important discussions. After a fine performance everybody congratulates him, but if the performance wasn't satisfactory, the goalkeeper receives severe reprimands. That is why a goalkeeper must be a serene person! The player should be confident about his abilities and capacities, building constantly on this self-confidence through positive self-talk and frequent training.

A goalkeeper should express or radiate calmness and confidence during the game to other team members, thus positively influencing their performance level. On the other hand, the goalkeeper having a strong personality and self-confidence can negatively condition the opponents who, during the conclusion of their attacks, might focus too much of their attention on his play.

When the goalkeeper is insecure, shows nerves, or is slow in the decision-making process, this poor quality of play undoubtedly influences his own team negatively. The team's defenders, as well as its attackers, will likely risk less in offence and be afraid to attack with more than four players nearby.

Just these few comments explain why any average team with an excellent goalkeeper can win or at least tie the match against a much stronger team with a less skilful goalie. And to successfully fulfil his important tasks in the game, the goalkeeper must have certain psychophysical capacities that differ from those of the field players.

“The ability to relax under pressure is often also for the goalkeeper's performance in competition a vital factor.”

Accurate Decisions

To be able to benefit from the different qualities of speed, it's imperative that the goalkeeper effectively uses whatever information is available prior to the opponent's shot on goal. In other words, anticipating the eventual outcome from early components of the opponent's move is an integral part of a goalkeeper's successful performance.

He must have an excellent knowledge and understanding of what is going on in the game as the basis for his perceptions. What a goalkeeper can "read" or perceive determines how he should act. The more experience and knowledge the goalkeeper has gained, the more he is able to focus his visual attention on the most relevant sources of information. Expert keepers have developed a better visual search strategy than young ones have, who usually watch only the ball and are less aware of the position and movements of the players off the ball. Therefore, as a coach you play an important part in the learning process as you try to direct the learner's attention to relevant sources of information.



***“What is difficult will take time,
the impossible can happen overnight.”***

Considering that more than half of the job of a keeper is mental conditioning and judgement (which both come from experience), it's understandable that most of the errors among young players are caused less by their technical level of play than by weak or incorrect decision making.

Technically well-prepared goalkeepers who are physically fit still must be trained to become excellent decision makers who know what is best to do in a particular game situation. Their errors in making decisions are caused either by poor attention, poor perception, a lack of determination, or a lack of knowledge (from poor-quality coaching sessions). It's fundamental that young players learn to use their brains to quickly process all relevant information, with the aim to select the best motor response possible to execute—thanks to having already developed a high level of physical fitness.

For goalkeepers, tactical training has to be considered as important as technical preparation. The older the goalkeeper, the more that tactical training should replace technical work (in which no decision making is required initially).

Goalkeepers from 14 years and up should be systematically exposed to a great variety of problems that are included in simplified games specifically designed to improve their performance. Through these games they learn to choose the most effective response among several possibilities.

Courage

Another important aspect of the goalkeeper's performance, besides staying mentality (a characteristic based on self-confidence) and being aggressive as necessary at a given moment, is having courage combined with determination. Being courageous is imperative, especially in 1-on-1 situations, during shots executed from short distances and during penalty corners.

The goalkeeper's capacity to control the arousal level will minimize errors. Studies have demonstrated that performance deteriorates under high levels of arousal; this is especially true of cognitive performance, which includes problem solving and decision making. Every goalkeeper is exposed to high levels of stress some 15 to 20 times during a game; the player is aware that any small mistake or bad judgement can dramatically change the outcome of the competition. In other words, everybody expects him to be a perfect player, and the goalie has to live with this expectation.

To overcome this challenge the goalie should be a master of "the inner game of hockey," which involves positive self-talk (for example, "Today's my day!" "I'm the greatest!" "Nobody can score against me"). Nevertheless, when the ball is far away, it's advisable for the goalkeeper to execute in front of his goal some fundamental technical or warm-up drills that keep him physically and mentally ready for the next decisive action.

“The performance of a player is only limited by the rules of the game and his own capacity.”

QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL GOALKEEPER

Physical Capacities:

- Ability to diminish reaction time.
- Ability to execute quickly specific movements
- Quick power

Coordination Capacities:

- Balance
- Ability to combine various movements
- Good sense of direction
- Good rhythm
- Sense of space and time

Emotional Capacities:

- Concentration
- Aggressiveness (but respectful of rules)
- Courage
- Able to maintain calm and confidence in stressful situations
- Rationality
- Leadership

Senso-Perceptive Capacities

- Able to recognize (observe and analyze), interpret, and anticipate situations close to the goal with the ball in the center of the attention
- Good visual memory

"Fear is sand in the engine of player."



TIPS FOR TRAINING GOALKEEPERS

To optimize performance, it's effective to have all goalkeepers play a different position frequently, i.e. one outside of the goal area, during the training sessions. This will help them develop in the psychological and physical areas they need to perform well. Furthermore they experience the sort of tension that attackers feel and the difficulties they face when trying to overcome the last player of the opponent's defence. The experiences gained when playing as defender or attacker allow goalkeepers to perform with greater success. Goalkeepers who in their first six years have played from time to time Mini-Hockey (with two goals to be defended simultaneously), 6-on-6, and 8-on-8 Hockey before moving to the 11-on-11 competition have a higher level of perception and greater knowledge than traditionally-trained goalkeepers.

Furthermore, thanks to the logical progression of the competitions in which they play an ever more active role, they become mentally quicker and know how to anticipate the opponent's play much better than those who have only been exposed to a traditional training program based mainly on acquiring technical skills.

“Examples teach best.”

Ideally, a goalkeeper's specific training is directed and supervised by a specialist goalkeeper coach, usually a former, experienced goalkeeper. However, in most of these cases, the goalkeeper coach doesn't know how to link the coaching of the goalkeeper with that of the defenders—an important task now that goalkeepers are more than ever part of the whole defence.

When a specialist coach trains a pupil with a variety of exercises and games in which the young goalkeeper must solve the common problems which he faces in his competitions, the youngster acquires a broad knowledge and experience that allow him to select the most appropriate technique. The young player also learns to execute skills correctly with requisite speed, flexibility of the muscles, and mobility in the joints.

Furthermore such a young goalkeeper learns to command and lead team-mates with an authoritative voice. The clarity and brevity of his or her directions ("It's mine!" "Leave it!" "Out!") are imperative for creating the desired effect. Last, but not least, the aspiring goalie learns to encourage team-mates with positive comments.

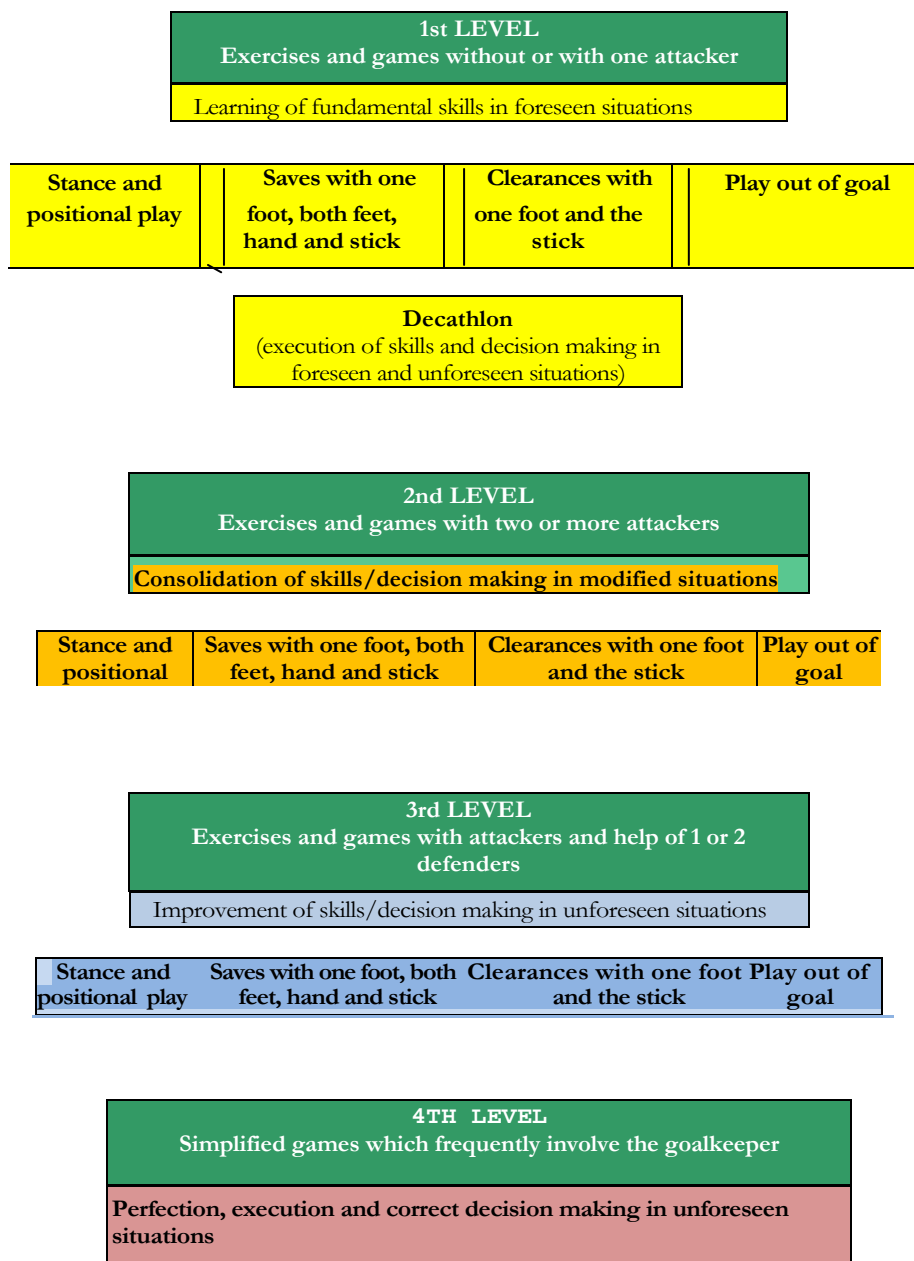
Unfortunately it's not unusual to see many young players, still limited in their performance outside of the goal, suddenly decide to become goalkeepers. Coaches should encourage players to become goalies only when they display a certain natural talent for this particular position. Only those young players succeed who bring to the position a certain basic level of most of the capacities that make a good goalkeeper.



***“The road to success has very few travellers
because many get lost trying to find short cuts.”***

DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR GOALKEEPERS

The development model for goalkeepers consists of four levels. The following diagram illustrates each level and its divisions.



Basic Stance

The basic stance is the ready position that goalkeepers assume before their interventions. The following tips will help increase the young goalkeeper's success. Goalkeepers should learn these principles:

- Always initiate the movement from "tiptoe" (on the balls of the feet) position.
- Maintain balance, ensuring it through the feet positioned shoulder-width apart. Raise the arms and hands about the waist. Grip the stick with the right hand a little bit high (slightly above its centre) to improve your range of action without losing strength, and let its flat side facing the ball.



- Keep the weight of the body equally distributed between both legs to avoid finding yourself surprised to be on the "wrong foot."
- Keep the knees forward of the toes.
- Bend the knees slightly to be ready to spring (the upper leg and tibia should form an angle of 110 to 120 degrees).
- Maintain good balance, with the trunk inclined slightly forward.
- Draw the attention mainly to the ball but also stay aware of the positions of team-mates and opponents.
- Relax when the ball is being played more than 40 m. Away from the goal, assuming the basic stance just in the moment of the goal shot.



POSITIONAL PLAY

One ability that is vital for goalkeepers to develop is to get positioned before a shot at goal is made in such a way that they can intercept the ball within a minimum range of movement. Finding the best possible position in relation to both the attacker with the ball and the goalposts helps goalies cut down the number of desperate saves and last-second moves. When good goalkeepers play, it seems as though the balls always come straight to them. Every one of their saves looks easy. Goalkeepers who frequently execute acrobatic dives are not the best ones because their positional play is often at fault. On the contrary, experienced keepers, conditioned by their fine positional play, hardly need to dive or leap.

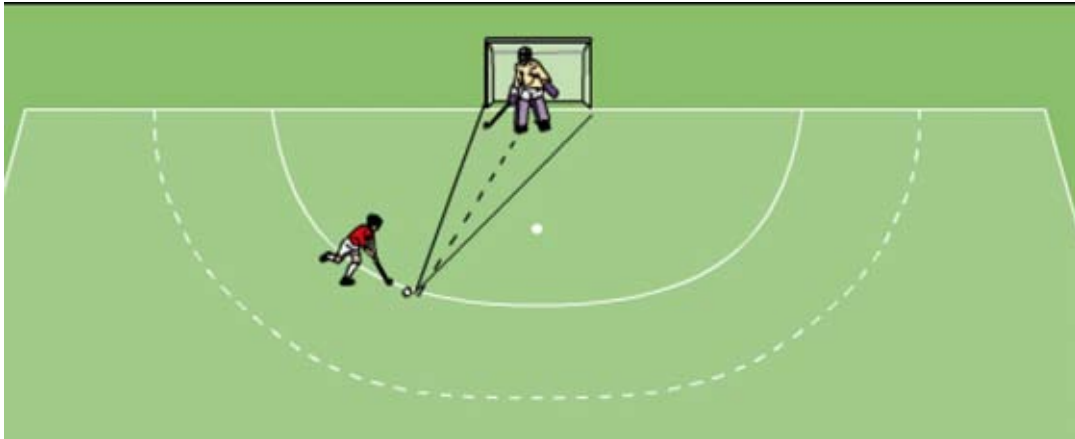
Many goalkeepers feel most comfortable standing on or very close to the goal line. However, there are increasing situations in today's games that oblige them to master the game off the line as well and sometimes to act as sweeper.

In general, a goalkeeper initiates an intervention from the line that divides the angle formed by the triangle of the ball and the two goalposts. When moving forward on this imaginary line toward the attacker in possession of the ball, the goalkeeper finally reaches that point at which he can cover the whole shooting angle without having to execute a save using a maximal range of movement or extension of the arms or legs. The closer he comes to the opponent who prepares the shot at goal, the less time and less angle are available for scoring. But the more the goalie moves away from the line bisecting that angle, the less his intervention is likely to succeed.

Exercises for Stance and Positional Play

1. This exercise helps inexperienced goalkeepers mentally visualize the triad between the three points formed by goalposts and the attacker with the ball. The attacker positions himself anywhere on the circle line. Two cords (long pieces of rope) should be tied to the goalposts, one at the right goalpost and the other at the left, and tied to his stick. Depending on how the player moves along the circle line, the goalkeeper modifies his position. He tries to always remain on the (imaginary) line bisecting the shooting angle, and must come far enough forward to be able to reach with his right foot, without difficulty, to the right rope or with his left foot to the left rope. At the same time, his

hands should reach out to control the space to both his sides. If he cannot reach both ropes with his feet, he knows that he is badly positioned, which would allow the attacker enough of a gap to score.



2. One player dribbles the ball along the circle line, frequently changing his direction and then suddenly decides to execute a shot on goal. The goalkeeper, meanwhile, assumes a ready position about 3 meters outside the goal and always positioned on the line that bisects the shooting angle, also moving according to the direction and speed of the attacker. The goalkeeper's coach should position himself behind the goal to carefully observe and analyze the positional play of the goalie and correct this playing position whenever necessary.

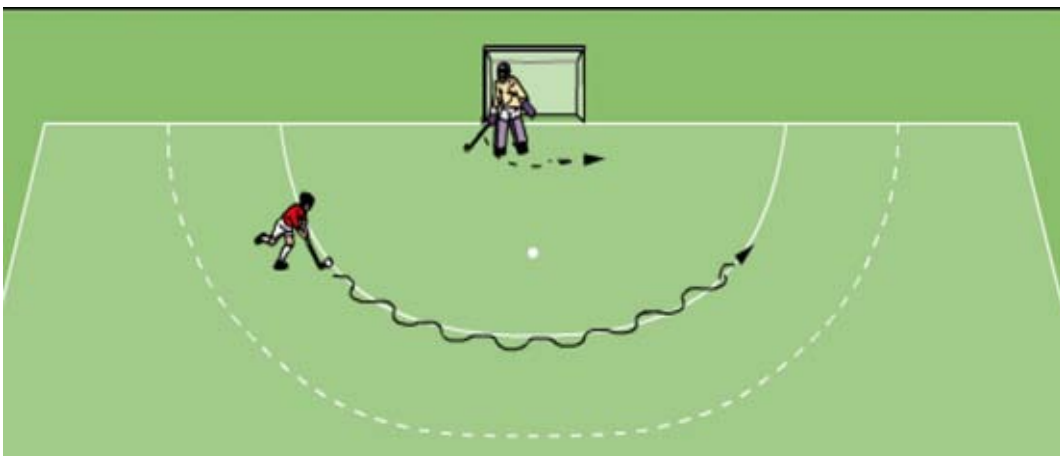
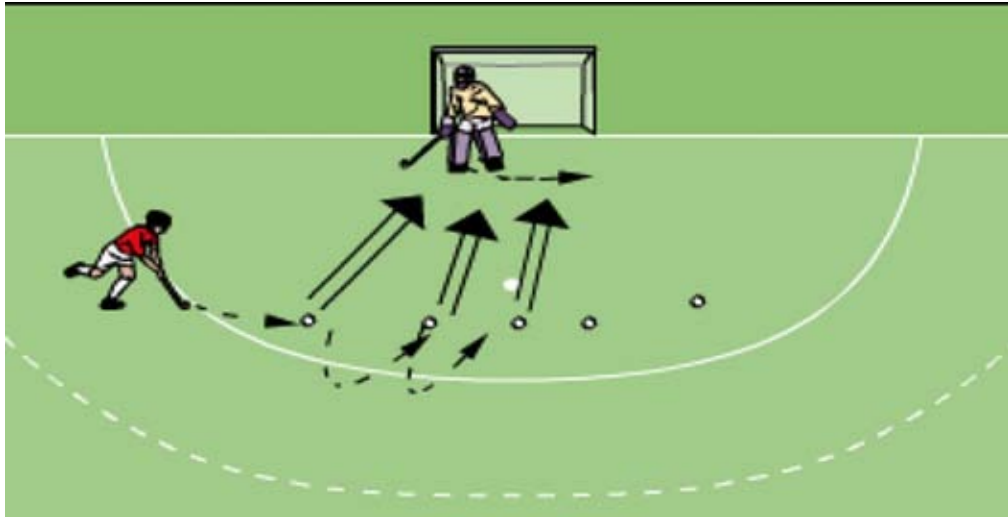


Photo: A. Wälti

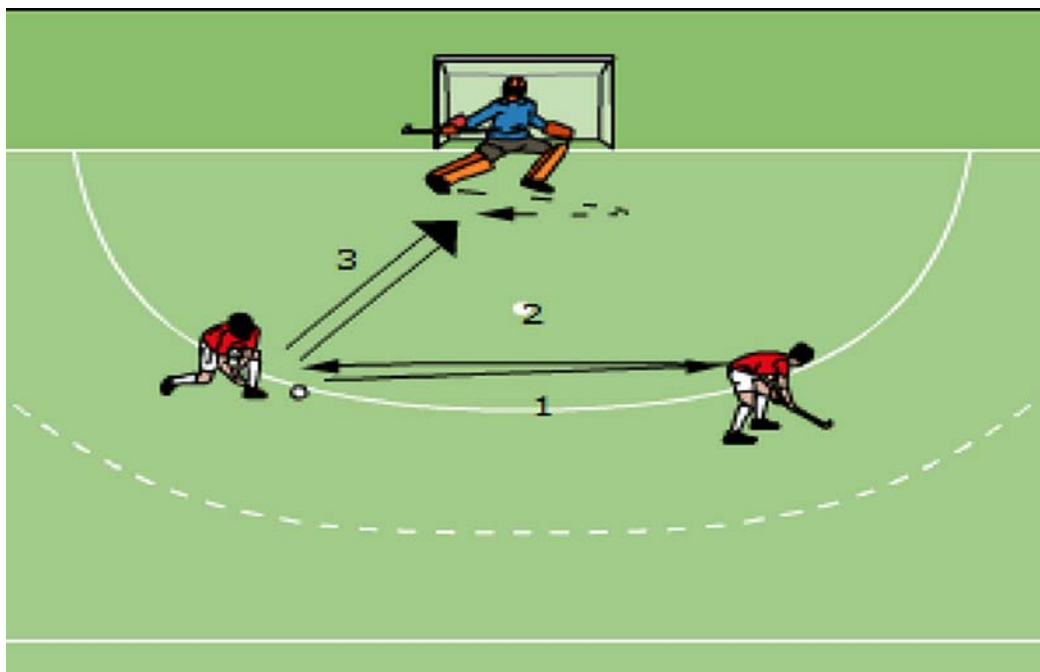


3. Set out five balls no further than 2 meters inside the shooting circle (see illustration). One player strikes them all, one after another, or in a not foreseen order into the goal. To allow the goalie sufficient time to choose an advantageous position for play and assume a correct basic position, the attacker, after every shot at goal, has to run out of the circle before being allowed to take on the next shot with the next ball or any of the 5 balls.

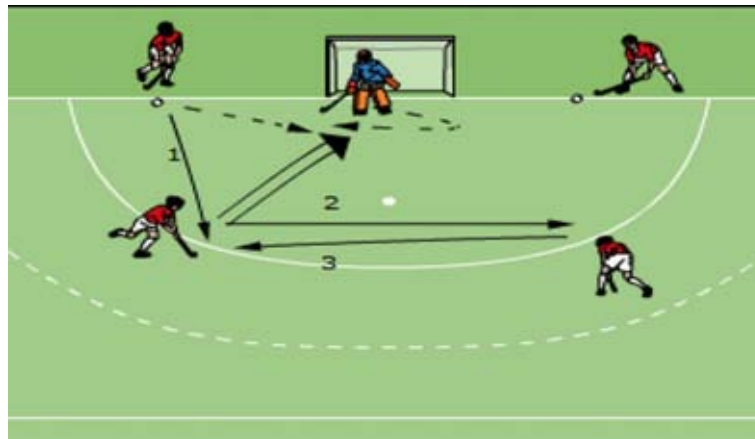


Variation:

- Assign the same exercise with a second attacker positioned close (about 5 to 6 meters) to the goalkeeper. His primary function is to pick-up the rebounds from the goalie's pads, stick, hand or from the posts, but from his position in front of the goal he may also deflect the shot at goal directly into the net.
4. Two attackers at the edge of the shooting circle pass the ball to each other across distances of between 8 and 12 meters. Meanwhile, the goalkeeper has to adapt his position in the goal to the changing position of the ball. One of the two attackers should try "all of a sudden" to surprise him with a shot before the "goalie" can assume an optimal position to save the ball.

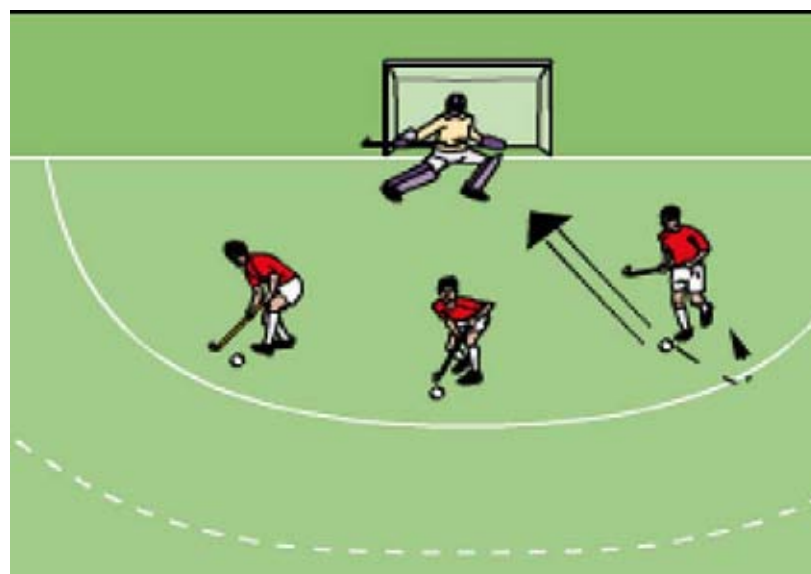


5. Four players practice with the goalkeeper. One attacker on either side of the goal passes the ball from the end line to one of his team-mates on the circle line. The player who receives the ball may score with a first-time shot or he may instead pass it back to the end line or to one side where his team-mate, always at least 8 meters from the passer, could receive the ball. The idea is for any attacker to surprise the goalkeeper with a shot. The aim of the goalkeeper in all phases of this exercise, however, is to demonstrate correct positional play, allowing him to narrow the angle for any shot at goal.

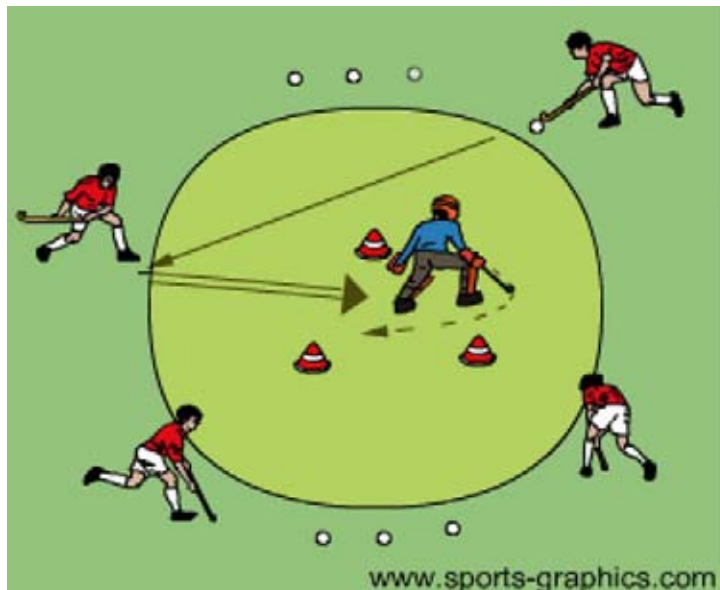


6. As coach, you should stay behind the goal to observe the play. Give a visual signal to one of the 3 players, situated in different attacking positions inside the shooting circle. Then this one tries to score quickly with a shot. Give the goalkeeper feedback on any problems in positional play that you observe from your position behind the goal. The goalie's aim is to always position himself, at the instant any shot is made at goal, on the line bisecting the shooting angle.

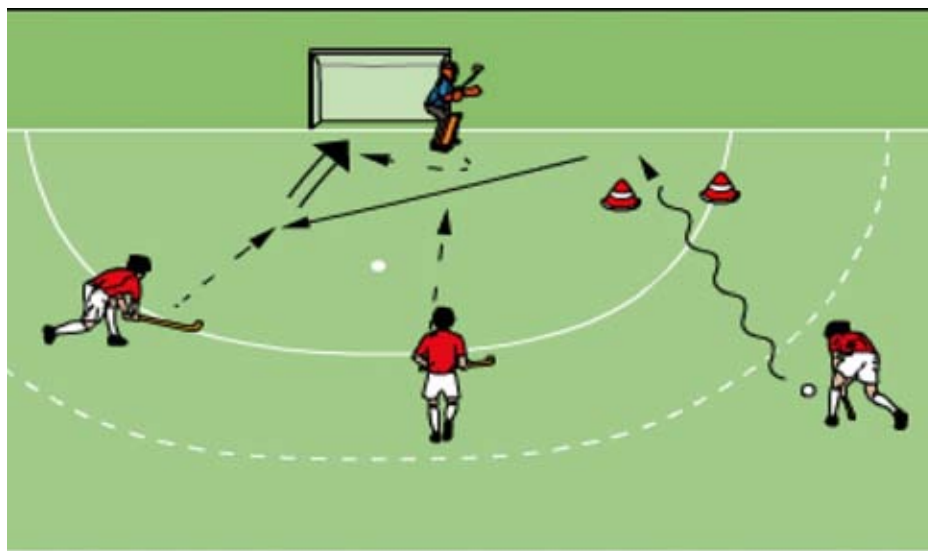
This task becomes easier when all attackers face the centreline. So after the coach calls a player's name, that attacker turns around and shoots so quickly at goal that the goalkeeper has hardly any time to position himself correctly in the goal area or to assume an optimal, basic ready position. As a goalie improves, you can reduce the goalkeeper's time further by calling out the attackers' names at shorter intervals.



7. Four players are situated around the circle with a diameter of 16-20 meters drawn with chalk on the hockey field. Their aim is to manage to pass the ball from outside the circle through any of the three 3.60 meter gates established in the centre of the circle in the form of a triangle (see illustration). A goalkeeper defends all three goals at the same time, moving from one goal cone to the other according to the position of the ball. Work with the goalie to always take small steps, while continuing to attentively watch the ball's trajectory; this technique allows the player to transfer his body weight easily from one leg to the other. The result should be an optimal positional play, preventing the six attackers from scoring goals. Clearly, the goalkeeper would not be able to adapt quickly enough to the demands of this game by using long steps or moves.



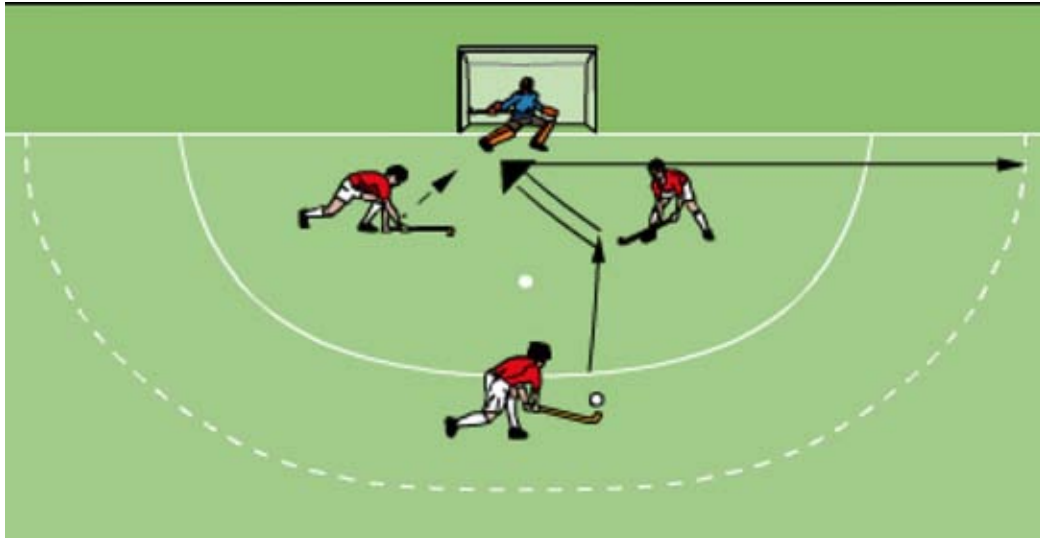
8. A right wing (or left wing) penetrates deeply into the opponent's half. After having dribbled the ball through a pair of cones (the "goal"), placed inside the shooting circle about 7 meters from the right (left) goal post and about 3 meters away from the end line, the wing may strike or pass the ball either to the centre forward or to the left wing (right wing) who positions himself in front of the second post. Whoever receives the pass tries to score with a first-time shot or deflection with the stick placed horizontally on the ground. In this exercise the goalkeeper must continually demonstrate an optimal level of positional play without coming fully out of the goal. When the goalie covers the angle of the right (left) wing's shot close to the nearby goalpost, his right (left) foot is already placed in such way that he can quickly cover the goal in case of a centre. The wing never lets the goalkeeper know whether he will try to score, execute a dummy goal-shot, or centre the ball. Only when the goalkeeper learns to quickly switch positions can he face both forward players and prevent a goal from being scored.



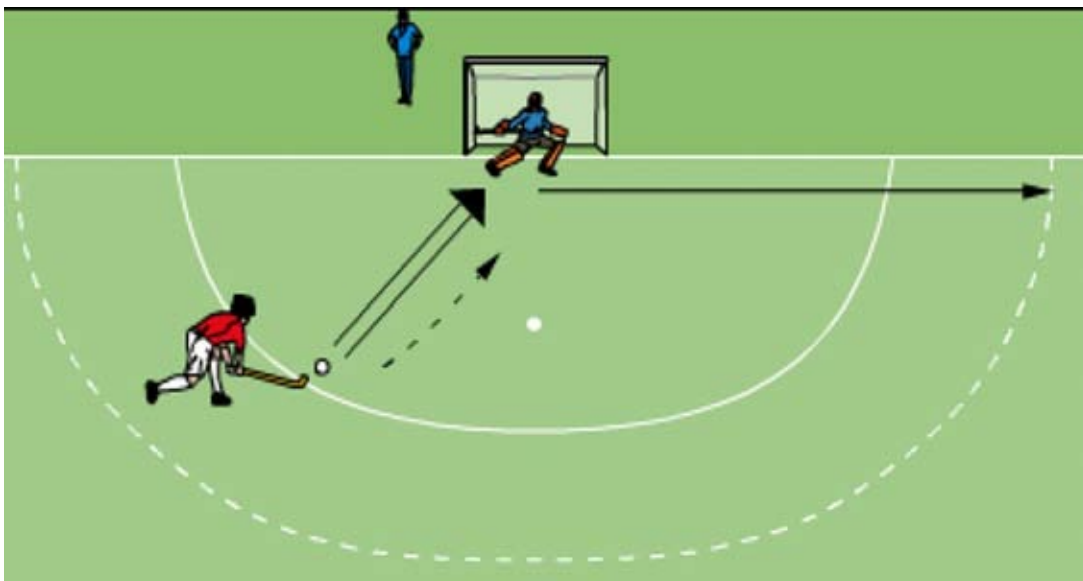
Exercises to Improve Reaction Speed

To improve the goalkeeper's speed of reaction, it's recommended to use also tennis balls, with these exercises.

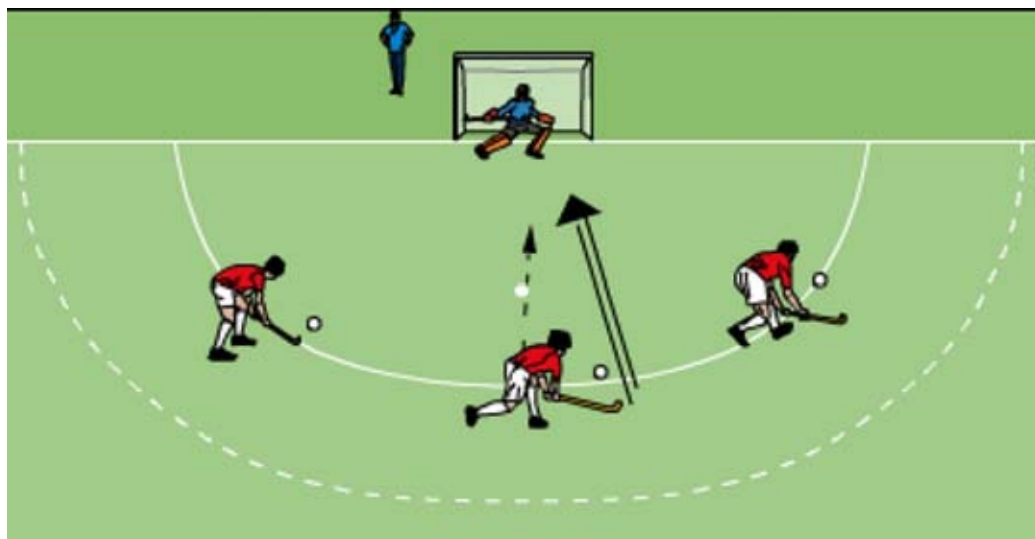
1. Two attackers stand level and at both sides of the penalty point. Their objective is to deflect shots that a third player executes from the edge of the circle towards the goal. To surprise the goalkeeper, the attacker in possession of the ball may also shoot directly—without having the team-mates deviate the ball.



2. The coach or a player shoots the ball at different speeds and heights into the goal, defended by a goalkeeper who closes his eyes. Only when the goalkeeper coach or attacker calls the goalie the latter opens his eyes in order to fix the ball, save it, and to avoid a rebound goal clears the ball out of the shooting circle.



3. From a position behind the goal, you, as coach, visually signal one of three attackers, all in possession of a ball, separated by a distance of at least 6 meters and all situated inside the shooting circle at different distances from the goal. While the player you have called executes the shot (preferably with the curve always on the ground to save time), the goalie assumes an optimal, correct ready position to prevent the ball from going into the goal. Give the goalie feedback as necessary.



4. Stand behind the goal, ready to visually signal two attackers. The two players, each with a ball and situated on the 22.90 meter line, dribble with the same speed toward the shooting circle. They should stay separated by at least 8 meters. When they come close to the circle line he lets them know through a visible signal (which should be invisible to the goalie) to carry out the shot at goal from the circle line. One attacker shoots, while the other one who simulated a shot without touching his ball, goes for the rebound.
5. Position the goalie on the ground just beside a post outside the goal. One attacker dribbles the ball from 6 meters outside the circle, aiming to score from inside the area. When the player starts the individual attack, the goalkeeper gets up from the ground to position himself well in the goal and assume a basic ready position; he tries to carry out the save. The attacker (who also can be another goalkeeper) has four attempts to score without ever entering more than 2 meters into the shooting circle. The goalkeeper should start twice from each goalpost.

„To play well you have to focus on your 'I' interior" and not so much on your 'I' exterior."

SAVES WITH ONE LEG, BOTH LEGS, HANDS OR STICK

Although the goalkeeper touches the ball less often in the game than his teammates, his preparation program should not last less time or should be less intensive than that of the other players of his team.

An important part of his multilateral preparation is dedicated to the technical training in which different techniques of saving the ball are acquired.

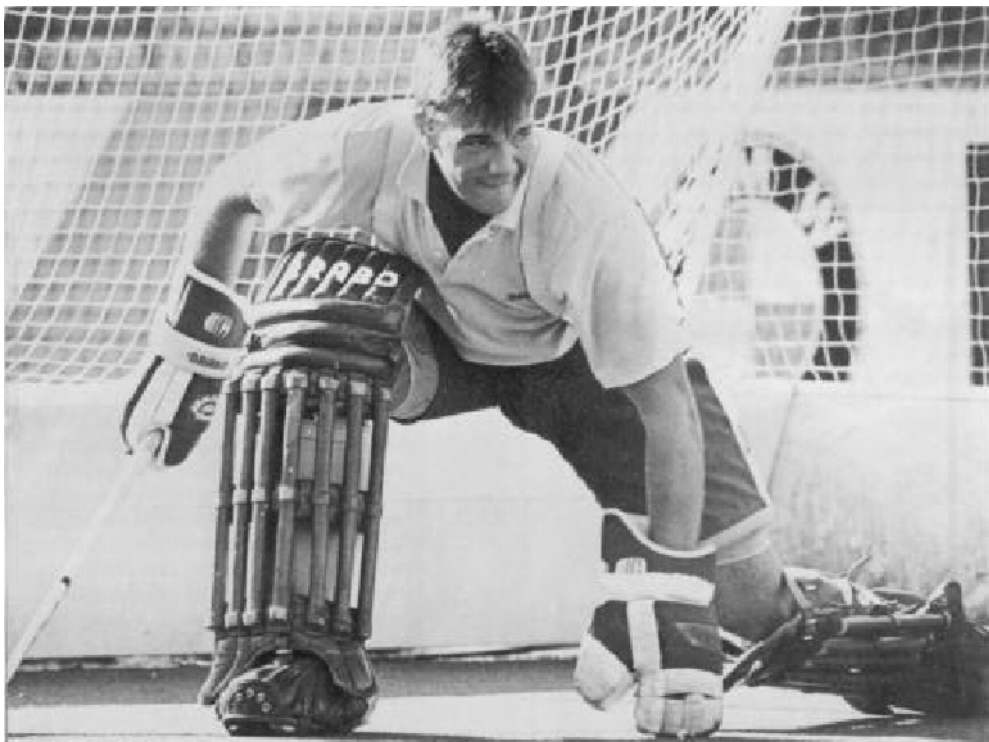
Stopping the Ball With one Leg:

One important aspect to consider in the training of a young hockey goalkeeper is the acquisition of the basic techniques for stopping the ball, with particular attention directed to the technique of the stop with one leg.

A correct stop with one leg has to be initiated always with a movement of the head towards the oncoming ball. Simultaneously the weight of the body is shifted through an active extension of the other supporting leg towards the ball with the playing leg put behind the ball before it passes the goalkeeper.

At the moment of the stop,

- the leg which intercepts the ball shouldn't be level with the supporting leg. A parallel position of both feet would result in a poor balance which may cause the goalkeeper too fall backwards. Falling backwards means that he wouldn't be able to make another immediate second save to stop a possible rebound coming off his pads.
- the leg which plays the ball should be moved towards the oncoming ball (instead of waiting for the ball to come towards the goalie).



- * the leg which plays the ball should be placed slightly more forward than the other supporting leg with his toes pointing towards the nearest flag of the 22.90m.-line. Putting the "playing foot" this way will cause that the ball to rebound towards the area in front of the goalie's feet and not towards one side. A lot of attention has to be given during the stop to prevent the opponent from picking up the saved ball. A save is considered perfect when the goalkeeper is able to initiate immediately an attack with a horizontal pass to one of his team-mates.
- the toes of the saving leg shouldn't point towards one goalpost, because this will result in the main surface of the pad not being directed towards the on-coming ball but towards the post. Injuries may occur through balls which hit the unprotected calf of the leg .
- the leg which saves the ball as well as the knee of the same leg and the head of the goalkeeper must form a vertical line. Using this technique may give the spectator the impression that the goalkeeper intends to kiss his knee or to eat the on-coming ball. With the weight of the body above the "playing leg", the goalkeeper can't fall backward.
- his stick should be positioned in a vertical position just besides the right pad in case the save is made with the right leg. This will increase the playing surface for stopping balls directed towards his right side and will allow him to reach further out until the right goal-post, especially when high shots have to be intercepted. Shots directed to the left corner of the goal, the left hand of the goalkeeper is in a low position just besides the left pad to interfere when ever necessary.

Once the goalkeeper has stopped the ball, he has to put the supporting leg quickly together with the playing leg in order to assume as quickly as possible the basic ready-position which permits him to stop in optimal conditions a possible rebound.

THE SAVE-CLEAR TECHNIQUE

Special attention should be directed to the technique of saving and clearing at the same time the on-coming ball with one leg. The save-clear is applied when the goalkeeper has to react to shots with opponents close to him. Due to the extremely short time available for saving and clearing the ball out of the reach of the attackers, he has to use a different technique to solve the problem.

The mastery of the technique of the stop with one leg is imperative for having success with a save-clear. Most important is that the goalkeeper steps towards the on-coming ball without loosing balance. To achieve it, he has to move the head together with the leg towards the ball. The speed developed by the "playing leg" and that of the on-coming ball determine the travelling distance of the clearance.

"A poor player is the one who has not managed in time to convert his faults into experience."



More important than the distance of the clearance is its direction. Although the goalkeeper's attention focuses mainly on the ball, before the save-clear is executed, he also has to perceive the positions and the movements of his own players for starting a new attack or those of the opponents close to him in order to be able to direct the ball towards zones not occupied by them (generally at the wings).

SERIES OF EXERCISES FOR TRAINING THE SAVE-CLEAR:

1. Who is the Quickest Goalkeeper?

Two goalkeepers, one behind the other, are practicing in their respective 3.60meter wide cone goal.. Both of them assume an optimal ready-position, looking at the coach in front of them. Once the coach steps forward in the direction to one cone, both GK react in the same direction.

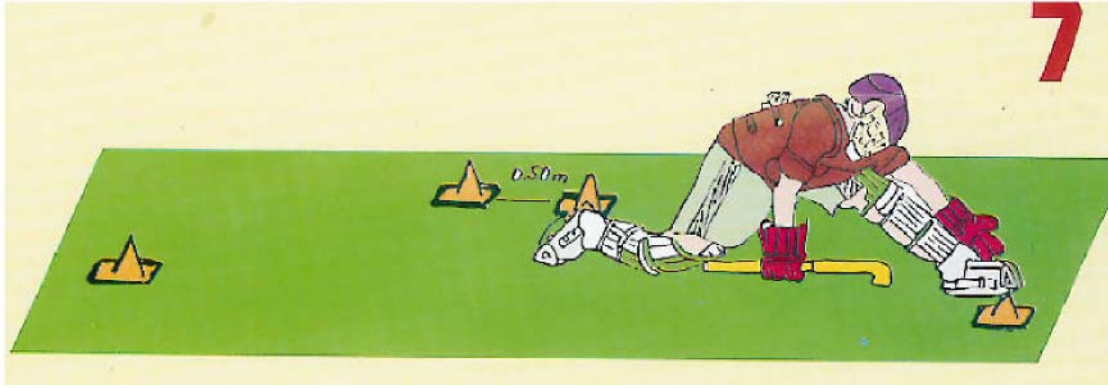
The goalkeeper who first manages to touch with his toes the indicated cone, wins a point. The winner is the goalkeeper who collects first 5 points. To reach and touch the cone only one step is permitted.

The coach evaluates the technique, especially the initiation of the save with a movement of the head towards the on-coming ball and the support given by the opposite leg which should be extended completely.

Furthermore, the coach should correct mistakes in the basic ready-position and in the speed of reaction and movements of the GK.

2. Extension to the Left and Right

The goalkeeper assumes a basic ready-position in a small cone goal 0.50meter wide. He simulates a save, moving with his left foot and left hand out of the small goal to touch a left cone placed slightly forward on his left, whilst his right leg remains on the same spot. After the return of his left foot into the cone goal, he reaches out to the opposite side with the right foot and his stick. Both have to touch the right cone in front of him on his right. In the meantime the trailing leg remains in the cone goal. The coach in front of him makes sure technique is carried out with perfection.



3. Save-Clear of Flat Shots

One attacker hits the ball from a distance of 12 meters into one corner of the goal. The goalkeeper positioned in the centre of the goal should save the ball with his pads, starting from an optimal ready-position and then clear it out of the circle.

Various balls should be directed into the same corner in order to work on the perfection of the technique of the save-clear with one explosive step towards the ball.

Care should be taken that after the save-clear with one leg, the goalkeeper doesn't lose balance and fall backward on the ground which would prevent him from saving a possible rebound.

STOPPING THE BALL WITH BOTH LEGS TOGETHER

Ideally the goalkeeper should always try to bring his whole body behind the ball. This isn't difficult where shots are not directed into the corners of the goal with the keeper has time to make use of the maximum surface of his pads, saving the ball with both legs together.



"In the past game play was delayed until enabling skills were competently performed and tactics were ignored until "mastery" of prescribed skills was achieved."

R.Thorne/D. Bunker

When stopping the ball, both legs, bent at the knees, are slightly inclined forward to better absorb the power of the shot and to control the rebound. Following the distance of the opponents in the moment of the shot, he inclines his pads more or less, looking forward in most of the cases to let the ball rebound about 0.50 meters which would allow him to clear the already-moving ball with more ease.

In the majority of the exercises proposed in this chapter, the capacity to cushion the oncoming ball with both legs (and also with one only) by means of the grade of inclination of the pads and then clear it out of the reach of the opponent can be developed. Also the test no.8 of the Goalkeeper Decathlon demands this capacity.

STOPPING THE BALL WITH ONE HAND OR STICK

Also the save with one hand or the stick are movements in which the whole body takes part. Before the goalkeeper catapults his hand or moves his stick into the trajectory of the ball to intercept it, his head must have had initiated the stop. In continuation the slightly bent leg which is on the side opposed to the oncoming ball, pushes the body out of the basic stance into a more extended position, bringing it as much as possible behind or at least close to the ball. For the practice of these particular techniques, the exercises for improving the speed of reaction are recommended.

SOME MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAINING OF THE DIFFERENT SAVING TECHNIQUES

Unfortunately, many goalkeepers are trained without the presence of teammates who might affect their play or even players who might be potential goal scorers. It's important to know that the performance of the goalkeeper and attackers improves little when stationary balls or balls in movement are simply shot at goal. To learn how to anticipate the best possible interventions, the goalie needs to be exposed to real game situations during training. It is the practice of game situations, in the presence of defenders and attackers and with the speed of competition, which best improves any goalkeeper's performance. The goalkeeper learns to read the game, decide what technique to use, and when to interfere.

Consequently, exercises and games whose objective is to improve the techniques of saves should not give the goalie in advance knowledge of when, from where, or how the shot will be taken. By simulating real game situations, the goalkeeper is forced at the instant of the opponent's attack to find the best possible solution. After making the decision, he or she then acts accordingly, without any loss of time.

During practice, the coach must carefully observe how well the young goalie executes different goalkeeping techniques and tactical plays, evaluating performance and also noting whether the goalie and the last defender demonstrate optimal communication and cooperation. To assure effective learning, the mistakes should be corrected *immediately* after their occurrences. During the process of the youngsters' learning from mistakes, the coach should remember also to praise the players!

“The best preparation for tomorrow is train well today “

William Ossler

EXERCISES/GAMES TO IMPROVE DIFFERENT SAVING TECHNIQUES

(see also the exercises to quicken up the reaction time)

1. Shot With Opponent (1-on-1)

See "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" game 14 in the chapter 3.

Variations:

- Use two defenders instead of one. The first closes down the attacker with the ball, and the second covers.
- Use a goalie and defender and two attackers. Play the game as 2 on 1, starting with a pass of one attacker from the circle line to the team-mate, who is situated on the end line. After the initial pass, the defender and the goalkeeper (both starting from the end line) try to prevent the attacker from scoring.

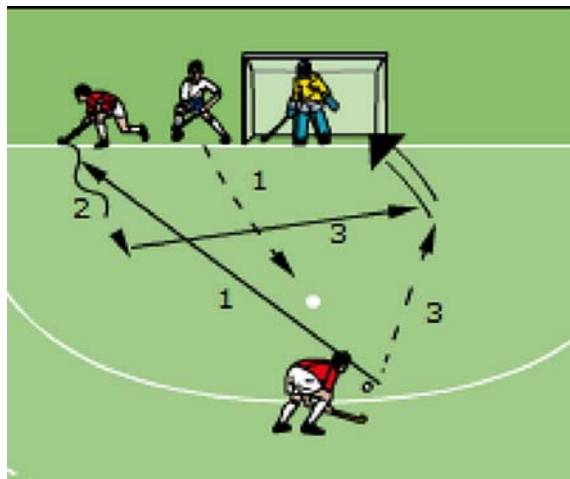
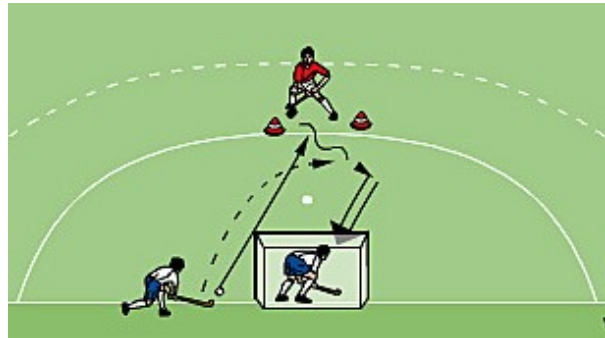
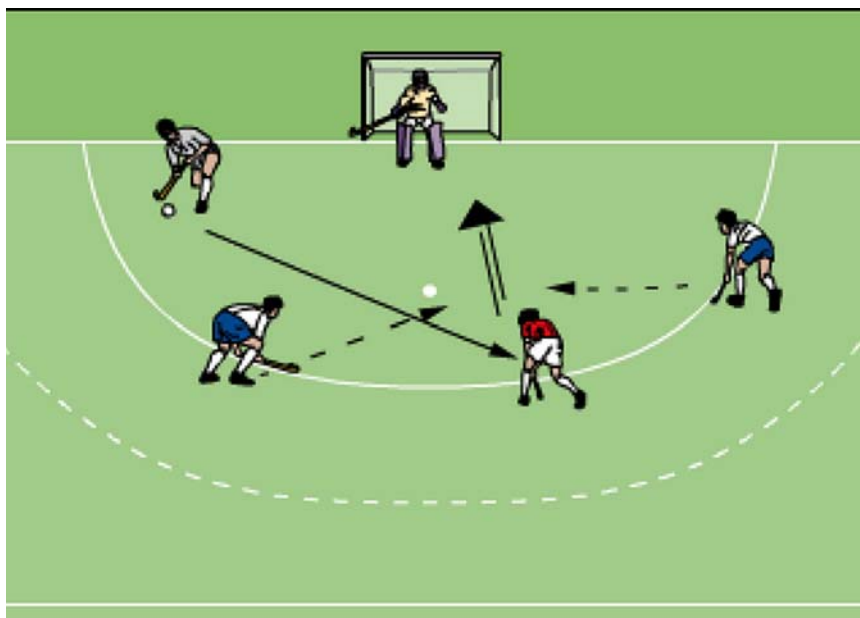


Photo: A. Wälti



2. Quick Shot (1-on-2)

Pass the ball as coach from inside the shooting circle to one of the three players who are expecting it in different positions at the edge of the circle. All three players should be at least 5 meters away from each other. The one who receives the ball played by the coach tries to score a goal while the remaining two do everything they can to prevent his scoring.

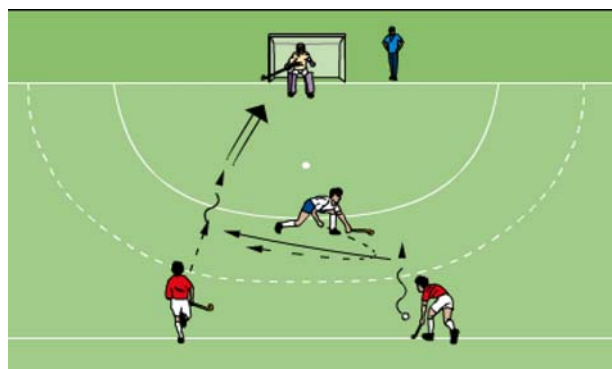


3. Goalkeeper Plus 2-on-1

Two attackers, situated on the 22.90 meter-line, try to overcome a defender and score in less than 8 seconds. The attack finishes with

- the ball being out of the field,
- an infringement by the attackers or the defenders (penalty stroke), or
- after 8 seconds.

The goalkeeper learns when to leave the goal line and when to remain in goal. As players improve, shorten the allotted time to 5 seconds.

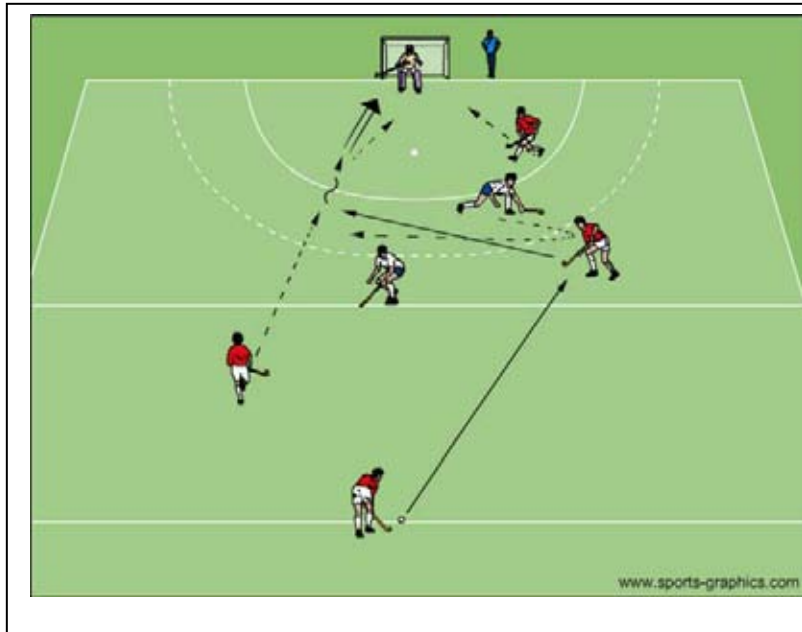


Variation:

- Three players start their attack from the 22.90 meter-line, with the two defenders expecting them at the edge of the circle. The goalkeeper, besides showing a correct stance and good positional play at the instant of the shot, must decide whether to stay in goal or to run out of it. Subsequently, he has to select and execute the most effective defensive action to avoid a goal being scored with the first or second shot (rebound).

“A player learns and grows by trial and error. The important thing is to learn from mistakes.”

Moorhouse/Gross



* This game involves four forwards against two defenders, as well as the goalie. The attack is initiated with a free hit on the centreline of the 6-side field or 8-a-side field. The 4 forwards must score within 10 seconds (later on you can reduce it to 8 seconds), trying to avoid playing all in line. Due to the numerical superiority of the attackers in relation to the defenders, the goalkeeper interferes frequently and, therefore, improves quickly.



Photo:A. Wälti

“Depending on how we behave, the field of life presents us with a harvest of flowers or thorns.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

CLEARANCES WITH A KICK OR THE STICK

The capacity to know how to clear best the ball, when to do it and where to kick it to demands a lot of experience which young goalkeepers only may acquire through frequent training and many competitions in small-sided games.

Most of the times the goalkeeper kicks loose balls with the inside of his foot out of his circle straight to a team-mate to initiate the attack. His percentage of failure can be reduced when

- he keeps his head over the ball,
- he uses his side foot,
- he doesn't lean back whilst clearing the ball,
- he follows through with the kicking leg and
- he finishes with the head over the knee of the kicking leg.

More mistakes will happen when the goalie doesn't have sufficient time to clear a saved ball, due to the presence of one or more "hungry" opponents. In a crowded area in front of his goal he can't risk stopping and then clearing the ball because of lack of time. In this situation he generally applies the save-clear.

But when the opponents, at the moment of the keeper's save, are more than 7 meters away, the goalie has sufficient time after the save to select between a clearance kick with the toes (the most powerful of all clearing techniques but with the danger of lifting the ball), with the inside of his left or right foot, or with a slap executed with his light stick of 17 or 18 ounces. The lack of time often doesn't allow the goalkeeper to clear the ball with both hands gripping the stick. Therefore attention has to be given to practise clearances with accuracy and power also with one hand on the stick, as was done in years gone by when the closeness of an attacker demanded this technique.





The distance of the clearance depends on the technique employed by the keeper, the speed power developed by him, on the speed of the on-coming ball (in case the ball is cleared without having saved it before) and also on his equipment (high density foam kickers allow long clearances).

Only after having processed all information available to him, the goalkeeper will decide which technique to apply to clear the ball far enough out of the reach of the nearest opponents.

Within a split second, the goalkeeper must perceive the spot from where the ball was shot, assess correctly its trajectory, its bounce and its speed and then determine whether to run out or not, when and where to run to meet the ball before the attacker can play it.

The goalkeeper's attention should mainly be focused on the ball, but also on the position and movements of his defenders in front of him in relation to those of the attackers. His position in the circle is always chosen according to the ball's trajectory, making sure that he only rushes out of goal when a high percentage of possibilities exist to clear the ball before anybody else can play it.

It is crucial for the goalkeeper's play outside the goal to "feel" the precise moment of rushing out of goal. Any mistake in assessing the ball's speed, height and trajectory and also in the running speed of the opponents may result in a goal .

The capacity to clear the ball with any foot or with the stick can be trained and improved by a frequent practice of true game situations like for instance some of the exercises presented on the previous pages and with the 1st, 8th and 9th test of the Goalkeeper Decathlon and the following four exercises:

1. Long Clearances

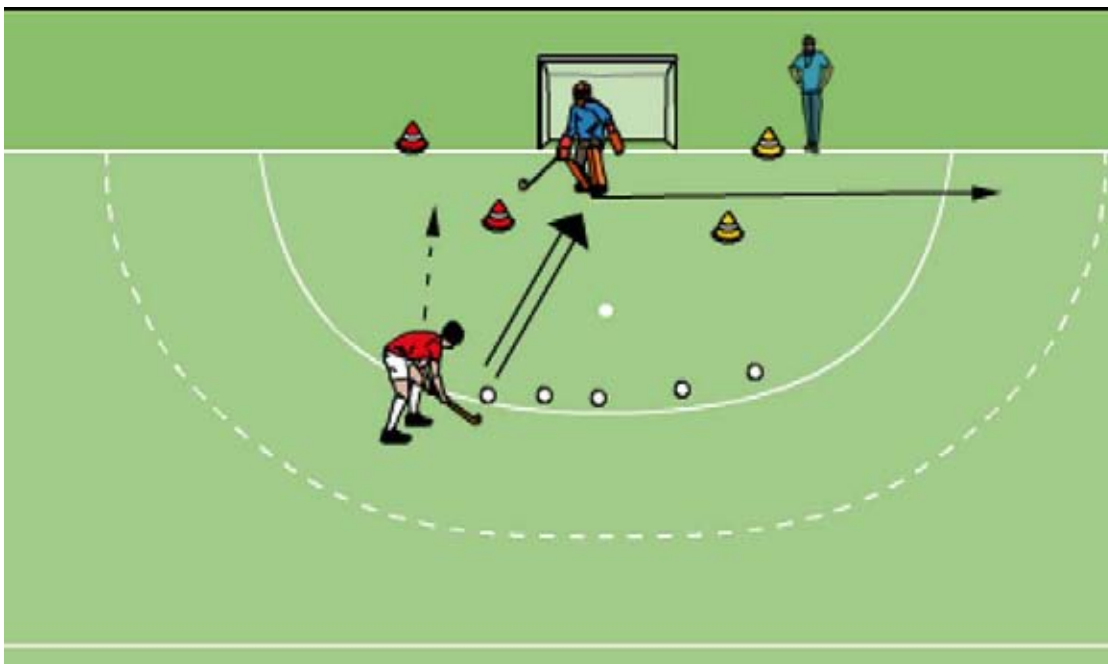
Balls are played with different speeds and heights from the edge of the circle towards the goalkeeper in the goal. Dependant on the speed and height of the shots at goal, the goalkeeper clears them either after a save or with a first-time-kick, executed as a volley shot or with the toe in order to achieve a clearance which goes as far as possible.

2. Clearance through an Unoccupied Cone Goal

After the save of the shot with one or both legs, the hand or the stick, the goalkeeper has to clear it through one of two cone goals established close to the edge of the circle on his right and left hand side. As the attacker tries to occupy one of these cone goals immediately after his shot on goal, the goalkeeper has to make up his mind to clear the ball always without risk through the less defended one.

Variation:

The goalkeeper has to clear the saved ball through one of the three cone goals established inside the circle. The two attackers, one at the edge of the circle and the other one level with the penalty stroke point try to prevent him to score through one of the three goals, using any clearance technique.



"Don't look for guilty ones, look for remedies."

Henry Ford

3. Accurate Clearances despite the Presence of 5 Attackers

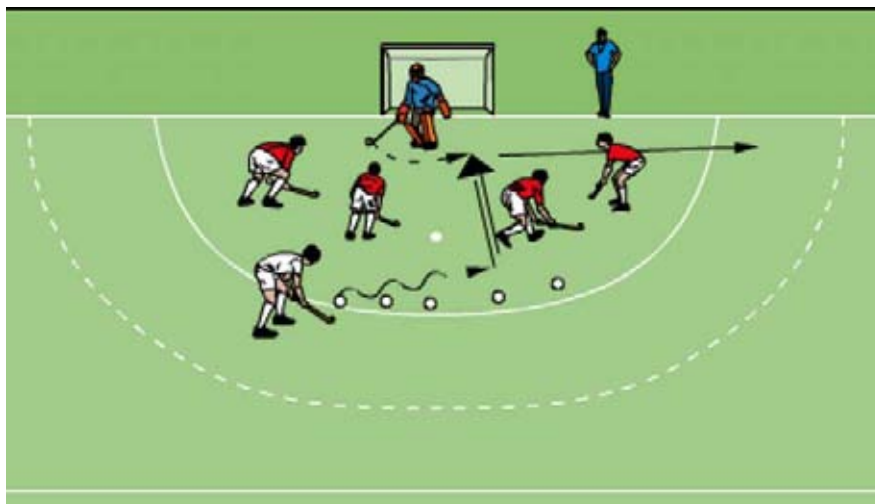
Four attackers position themselves in a half-circle around the penalty stroke point. A fifth one in possession of the ball dribbles it close to the circle line and hits it through a gap created by his 4 team mates towards the goal.

Whilst the goalkeeper tries to save and clear the ball out of the circle, all attackers try to take the rebound of the post, the goalkeeper's pads, body, hand or stick within 3 seconds after the save was made. None of them is allowed to deflect the initial shot at goal and can only take part after the shot at goal is made. To be able to interfere as quickly as possible with a rebound they are anticipating it with both hands separated on the stick and assuming a low ready-position.



Dependant on the distance of the nearest attacker in the moment of the save, the goalkeeper uses a save -clear or a well cushioned save with a successive clearance with his foot or stick.

Needless to say, it's important for him to clear the ball towards spaces which are not covered by the 5 attackers. For every clearance of the ball out of the circle and any infringement of an attacker the keeper gains a point.

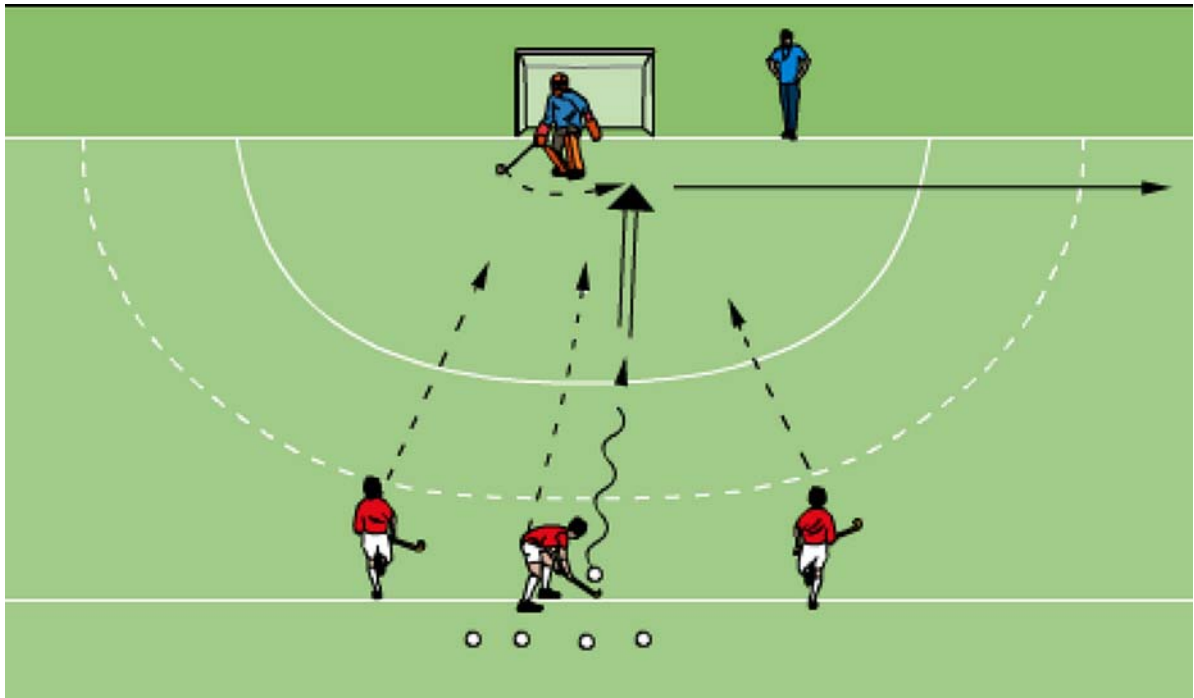


The attackers win a point for a direct goal, a rebound goal, a dangerous clearance of the ball by the goalkeeper and an intentional clearance of the ball over the goal line which the umpire generally penalizes with a penalty corner. For any infringement by the goalkeeper, the coach awards a penalty stroke to the attackers.

All 5 attackers have the right to hit the moving ball from the edge of the circle as many times that they can until they miss the goal. Then it's the turn of the next player until all five attackers have lost the right to score with a direct hit. At this moment the game finishes.

4. Clearances despite the Presence of 3 Attackers

Three players start their attack from the 22.90meter line. Once one of them penetrated with the ball not more than 2 meters into the circle, he has to shoot the moving ball into the goal. His two fellow attackers at his sides do everything to pick up the rebounded ball and score whilst the goalkeeper saves and clears the ball out of the circle, considering the positions of the attackers.



Variations:

- * Before the shot at goal is taken one defender (later two) has to be outplayed.
- Two defenders besides both goal posts assist the goalkeeper to clear the ball out of the circle (defensive rebound).

“The road of success is always in construction.”

Harald Robbins

THE GOALKEEPER'S PLAY OUT OF GOAL

The goalkeeper interferes often outside of his goal,

- * especially at centres,
- when one unmarked attacker manages to control the ball in the circle, without any defender being able to interfere before the shot at goal is taken,
- and when the ball close to his goal is loose after a rebound from the post, anybody's stick or the goalkeeper's body or after a deficiency in the control of the ball by one of his defenders or one of the opponents.

In all these cases, the goalkeeper's decision to rush out of goal or to remain close to the goal line has to be taken in a split second. Should even the slightest possibility exist that one of his fellow defenders could still prevent the attacker from taking a shot, the goalkeeper has to stay in goal. Once he has decided to run out, to confront the 1-on-1 situation with determination and aggressiveness, he should not change his decision half way.

In the "one on one"-situation the goalkeeper must be prepared to find the correct solution to the two possible actions of the attacker: dribbling or a shot at goal. Besides narrowing the shooting angle with his rush out, the goalkeeper has to hold back with patience in front of the attacker, forcing him into hurried actions or mistakes. Doing so he should keep upright as long as possible with his arms spread out to reduce the attacker's vision and distract him. With this behaviour he can easily adapt to the offensive actions of the attacker and through an execution of a dummy even obliges him to do what he wants him to do. When the attacker

tries to play the ball around him, the goalkeeper, after having assessed perfectly the parameters of time and space may execute with determination out of the standing position a sliding tackle to first block and then clear the ball or in case it runs out of his range of action, he has to continue in the upright position and covers the



shooting angle with an optimal positional play

When in a one-to-one situation a goalkeeper decides to run out of goal, he should accelerate as much as possible during the first meters, but then has to slow down when he meets or comes close to the attacker in order to shadow him. It's more successful to put the forward under pressure with a Y shape run than when running a T shape. The less time and space are available for the attacker in the one-to-one situation, the more chances the keeper has to win the duel.

But the further he runs out of goal, the more possibilities exist for the attacker to beat him, especially when he slides too early, allowing the attacker to round him or to flick the ball over his outstretched body.

Before the young goalkeeper is introduced to the art of playing on the ground, the standing skills must be fully learnt!

The advantages of a standing position are obvious:

- Good balance
- Easy to change direction and to adapt to new situations
- Better vision as a goalkeeper on the ground has difficulties to "read the game"
- Safety

An obstacle or difficulty is only an opportunity to improve and to progress."

ABOUT THE SLIDING TACKLE IN THE ONE-ONE-SITUATION

The sliding of the young goalkeeper in front of the attacker towards the right (left) is initiated by a flexion of the right (left) leg and a quick drop of the right (left) hip and the right (left) side of the trunk. Care should be taken that no "tunnel" is offered to the attacker below the armpit.

Young goalkeepers may begin on knees, roll down to side on hips (without rolling on to front) and form a barrier. Then they progress from a standing position.

When the right (left) leg and the right (left) body side are completely extended on the ground, his upper leg should describe a circular movement to sweep the ground in front of the pads in search for the ball. In this lying position his right arm with the stick (as well as his left arm) is completely extended and in contact with the ground. The left hand, generally, has the function to intercept flicks or shots directed over him and at the same time protect his throat.

Although the goalkeepers prefer to execute sliding tackles with the head pointing to the right, in training they should also practice the slide with the head pointing to the left side.

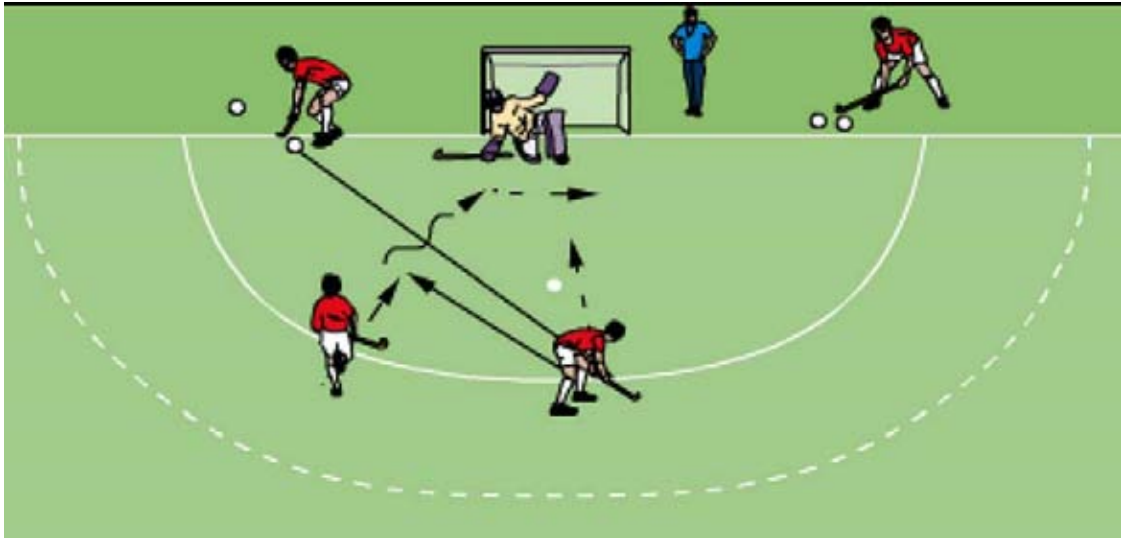
In a one-to-one situation the goalkeeper, whenever possible, should do everything to encourage the attacker to come to his right side which he can cover thanks to his stick with more ease than the left side. To extend his reach to a maximum, he therefore grips the stick as high as possible above its centre without losing too much strength.

Photo: A. Wälti



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Exercise which involves positional play and sliding tackling:



THE SLIDE DURING A PENALTY CORNER

Although coaches should encourage the keepers (and especially the young ones) to remain on their feet and only dive when necessary, the slide has some relevance in the penalty corner defence. When the goalie faces a striker who generally scores with flat hits, he may get down into a lying position some 4-5 meters in front of the goal mouth, forming with his upright (!) placed pads and body a solid barrier to block the shot (please consult the "Simplified games for the penalty corner in defence").

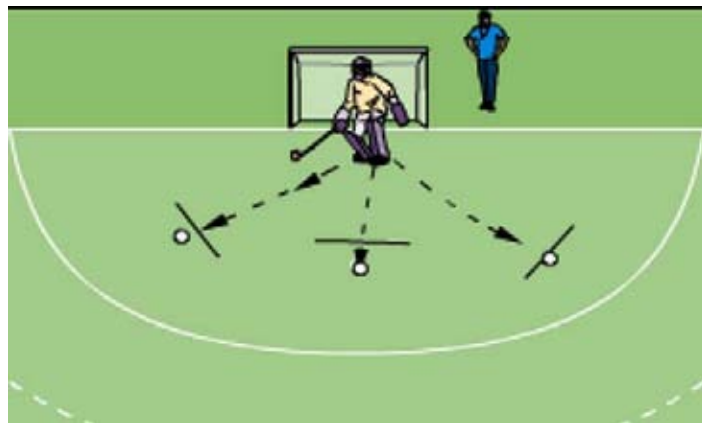


PROGRESSIVE SERIES OF EXERCISES/GAMES FOR THE PLAY OUT OF GOAL:

1. Running out, Lie down and Stretch out in front of the Ball

The goalkeeper rushes out with speed and aggressiveness. His aim is to lie down just in front of the stationary ball placed at a distance between 6 and 8 meters in front of the goal. From his position behind the goal, the coach evaluates the goalkeeper's technique of running out and getting down, especially

- his quick approach in a straight line until the stationary ball,
- his quick getting down (from a vertical into an horizontal position) without allowing the attacker to pass the ball below his body in the moment of lying down.
- the positioning of his arms in the moment of going down on the ground,
- the positioning of the outstretched body (90 degrees to the run of the ball) and of the part which should face the ball (stomach).



2. A Sliding Goalkeeper against a Passive Attacker

One of three attackers dribbles the ball deep into the circle, keeping it always close to his stick. He runs straight at the goalkeeper without the intention to beat him. The goalkeeper runs out of goal and slides in front of him.

After the slide, he has to clear the ball out of the attacker's reach with his stick or one foot. In this exercise the goalkeeper learns to go down quickly and assume a perfect sliding position in front of the attacker. Dependent on the quality of control of the ball by the opponent, the goalkeeper attacks the loose ball with his feet or the controlled ball with his outstretched body on the ground (stomach facing the ball).



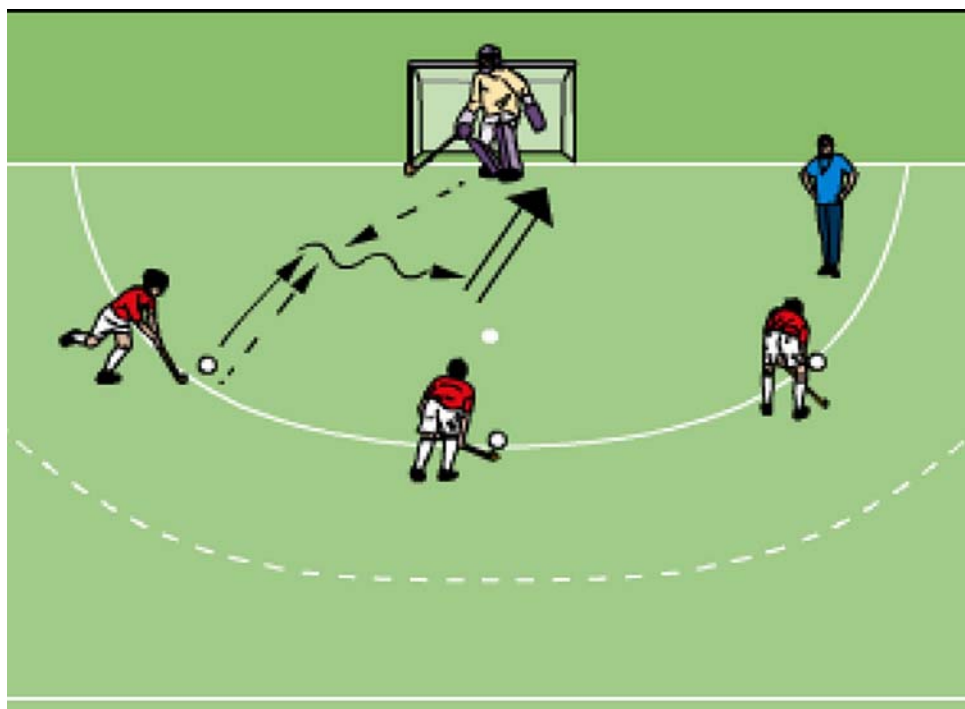
3. Challenge with the Stationary Ball.

After a visual signal of the coach, an attacker and a goalkeeper, with a ball placed half way between them, go for the ball with the intention to score or to clear it out of the circle.



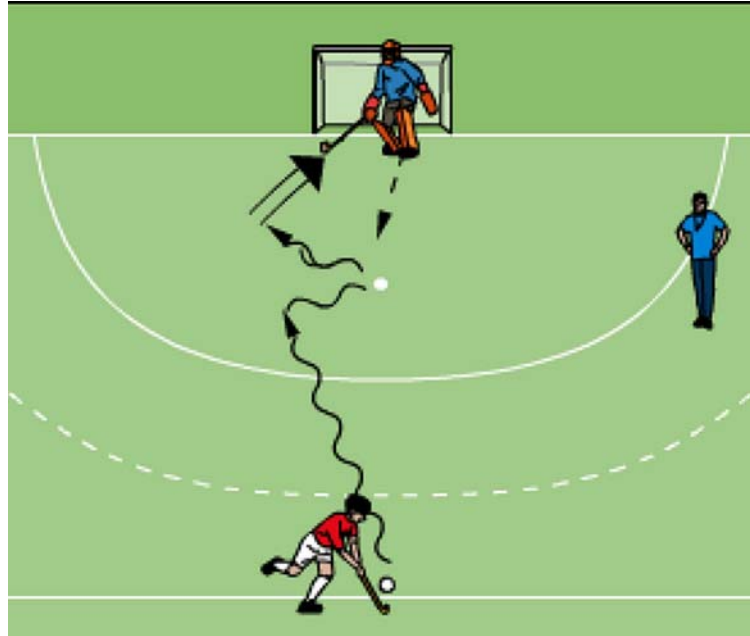
Variation with a moving ball:

The attacker pushes the ball from the edge of the circle toward the goalkeeper. Then the attacker tries to control it again before the goalkeeper can do so. After assessing the speed of the ball, his distance to the attacker, and the speed of his opponent, the goalkeeper decides what to do. Remaining in goal is certainly a mistake. That is why he should choose between running out to block the shot or the dribble of the attacker and trying to clear the loose ball before the opponent can. By practicing this situation frequently, the goalkeeper can gain valuable experience in coping with loose balls in the shooting circle.



4. Challenge in a Real 1-on-1 Situation

Place an attacker on the 22.90m.-line and the goalkeeper on the goal line. At a signal, the attacker has 5 seconds in which to try to beat the goalkeeper with a dribble or shot from any spot inside the circle.



Variations:

1. A wing passes the ball across the shooting circle to another attacker, situated on the edge of the circle. While the ball is on its way and the attacker is controlling the ball, the goalkeeper rushes out, trying to do whatever is possible to avoid a goal being scored from a shot or a successful dribble. The goal must be scored within 5 seconds of the initial pass to count as a point.
2. A midfielder passes the ball from different positions outside of the circle into a wide space between an attacker at the edge of the circle and the goalkeeper standing on the goal line. Both assess the situation with the intention to win the challenge.

***“So that a message is significant, it must not be complicated.
In fact, there are only 3 colours but
look what Miguel Angelo did with them.”***

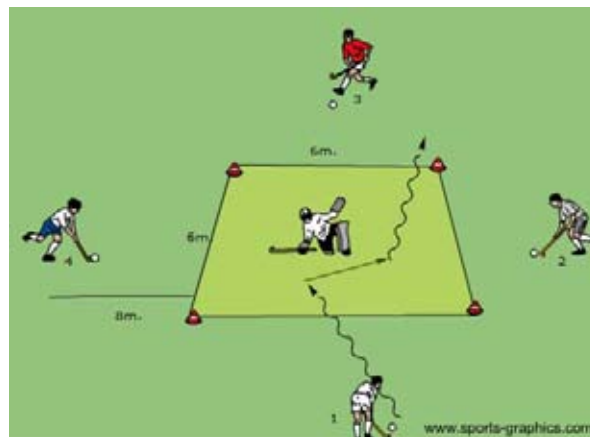
Zig Ziglar



” Training is a development through gradually increasing demands (Mourehouse/Gross) within the capacity level of the players involved. First the player may not be aware what he has done wrong and therefore relies on the coach’s feedback and questioning which should help him to grip the problem. After more attempts the players knows what he hasn’t done well after having made the error and finally his awareness is integrated with his mind and body before he acts and the errors are corrected before they are made.”

5. The Sweat Box

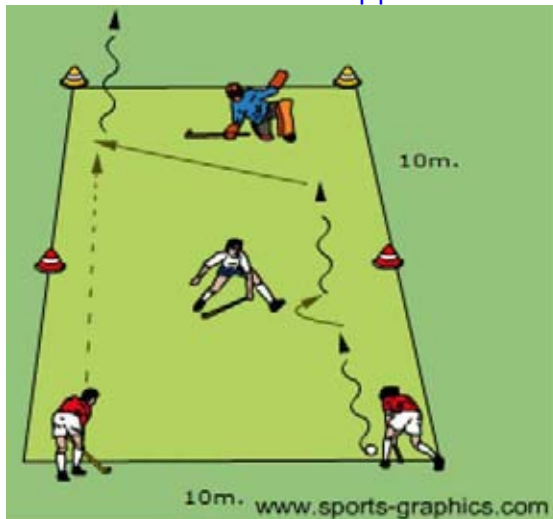
Use cones to mark off a square that measures 6 meters on each side, and call on four attackers plus one goalie. The goalie plays inside the square against an attacker who starts from a position 8 meters outside. To collect a point, the goalie must prevent the attacker from running—with the ball under control—across the square. If the attacker loses control of the ball or happens to play it across one of the sidelines, the goalie wins the match. After the first player has attacked, the second, third, and fourth launch their individual attacks after having given the goalie sufficient time to recover completely. The competition ends after 12 attacks, with every opponent having attacked three times. Generally the goalie should win more points than the attackers. The purpose of this exercise is that the goalie will learn from it to condition the opponent's play through the application of body feint. Convincing someone of a feint works only when the move is executed in time and when the attacker is about 3 meters in front of the goalie.



6. Twice 2 on 1

Designate the playing area with cones as shown in the illustration, and use two attackers, one defender, and one goalie. The attackers first face the defender at the 10-meter line. After having played out the first defender and controlled the ball in the first wide goal, the two attackers take on the second defender, who is the goalie. He defends the second goal, set 10 meters behind the first one, but should move out of goal only after the ball has been controlled in the first one. To beat the goalie and score a valid goal, one of the two attackers must control the ball on the second goal line.

7. Dribble across the Opponent's End Line



This is a variant of the 6th. Simplified Game for 4 on 4 (in chapter 9), so you should use its rules and set-up with the players. Consult the illustration here as well for setting up the field and play. In this variation one field player of each team becomes a goalie. The

goalies may play in any part of the field and may use their hands.

COMMON MISTAKES PLAYING OUT OF GOAL

Most young goalkeepers make the same common mistakes, and these are the most frequently encountered errors in playing outside of the goal area:

- Remaining on the goal line instead of running out aggressively to encounter the attacker in possession of the ball.
- Come out although a team-mate still can interfere before the shot at goal is to be taken.
- Not establishing good communication and cooperation with other defenders, resulting in a poor synchronization of actions between the goalkeeper and defenders.
- Approaching the attacker with too much speed, instead of slowing down as the goalie is about 4 meters from the attacker. When the goalie reaches an attacker who is still on the run, the attacker has no problem in beating or passing him or her with ease.
- Clearing the ball but without accuracy (perhaps even to an opponent) and without power (not sending it far away enough from the goal, so that the ball may return in a few seconds).
- Going down on the ground too frequently, almost by habit, instead of remaining upright and in a balanced position.



- Going down into a sitting position instead of down towards one side.
- Losing contact with the goal when rushing out to one side to an attacker who has a narrow shooting angle—instead of remaining in goal, covering the shooting angle, and preparing for a possible shot at goal after a back pass.

“Thinking intensively in the accomplishment of one aim is one of the most powerful weapons.”

GOALKEEPER DECATHLON

The great majority of coaches, especially those of young hockey players, find it difficult to combine their training of the field players with a simultaneous coaching of goalkeepers. This is where knowing the 10 tests of the Goalkeeper Decathlon comes in handy. The coach may encourage the goalkeepers to practice on their own for short periods of time, assigning them one or two tests while coaching the rest of the team. This way, the goalkeepers occupy their time efficiently until the coach can again involve them in the training and learning processes of the entire team.



The Decathlon can be used as a competition between any number of goalkeepers. If a club or a regional body decides to organize a decathlon for a specific age group, setting aside two days usually works well. Participation in this two-day competition (each of the days includes five tests against five different goalkeepers) generally motivates the contestants to improve in a great variety of abilities, such as positional play, techniques for saving shots, running out of goal, blocking shots while lying down, and different clearance techniques. A goalkeeper has the opportunity to analyze his level of playing and compare the performance with peers and opponents. In turn, the youngster may feel inspired or encouraged to improve by undertaking a series of corrective exercises for whatever deficiencies are observed in his plays.

The Decathlon helps to evaluate the level of performance, among any number of goalkeepers. Not only can you evaluate the mastery of the specific goalkeepers' skills, but you can closely scrutinize other necessary aspects of an optimal performance: attention; anticipation; optical-motor perception; vision; correct, split-second decision making; will power and pluck; physical capacities like for instance acceleration, speed of reaction, speed of movements, explosive strength and coordination. Thanks to the Goalkeeper Decathlon, you have an ideal and fair selection of evaluation criteria.

***"I'm able to control only that which I'm aware of.
Which I'm unaware of controls me. Awareness empowers me."***

John Whitmore

The 10 TESTS of the Goalkeeper Decathlon:

1. TWO TOUCHES

- Both goalkeepers defend their own goal 4 meters wide.
- After the opening kick from one goal line both goalkeeper may leave their goal line to put pressure on the opponent.
- Respond with no more than two touches (body or/and stick).
- Duration: 3 minutes each way.

The goalkeeper who kicks more goals, wins.



Coaching objectives:

- Kick the ball clear with either foot.
- Accuracy and power in kicking
- Anticipate opponent's moves
- Put an opponent in possession of the ball under pressure
- Reducing the opponent's shooting angle.

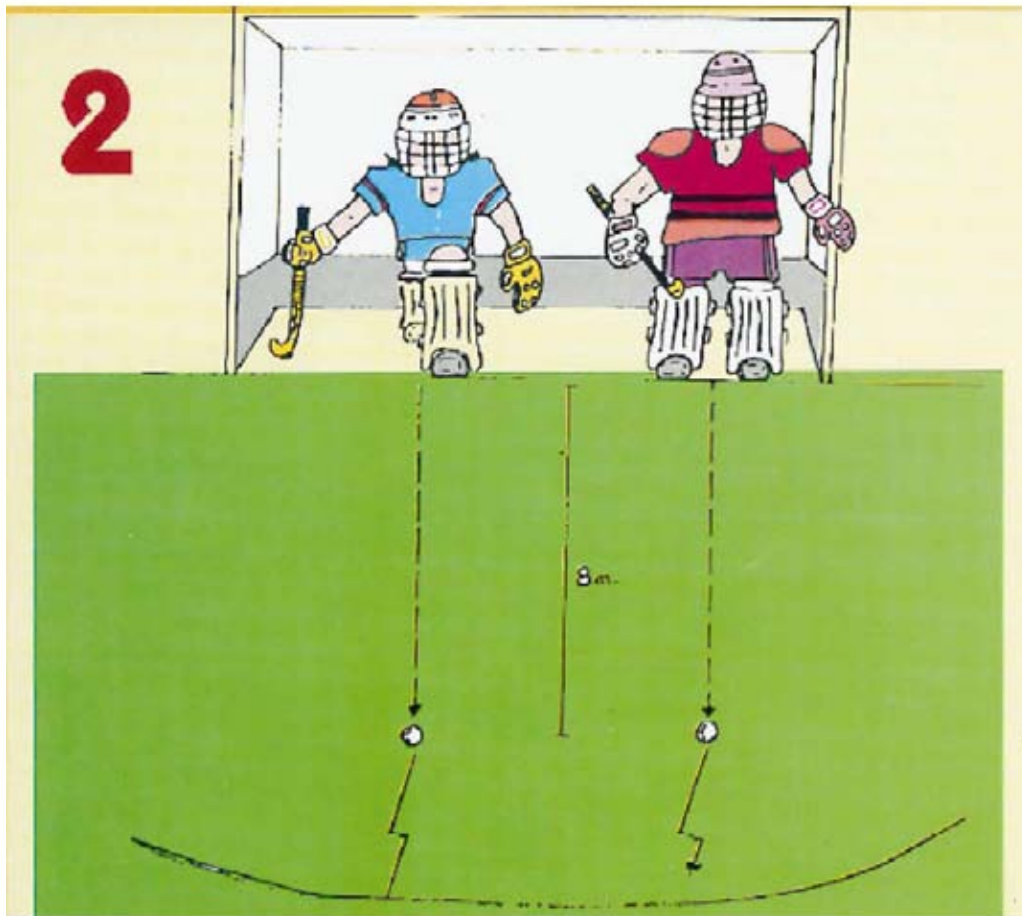
“The natural order accounts for a progressive development through time.”

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2. SPRINT TO CLEAR THE BALL

- Both goalkeeper on the same goal line, with two balls 8meters in front of them
- At a visual signal both goalkeeper run to their ball and kick it clear of the circle
- Repeat from a sitting and then from a lying position.

The best result out of the three clearances counts



Coaching objective:

- Improve coordination and acceleration.

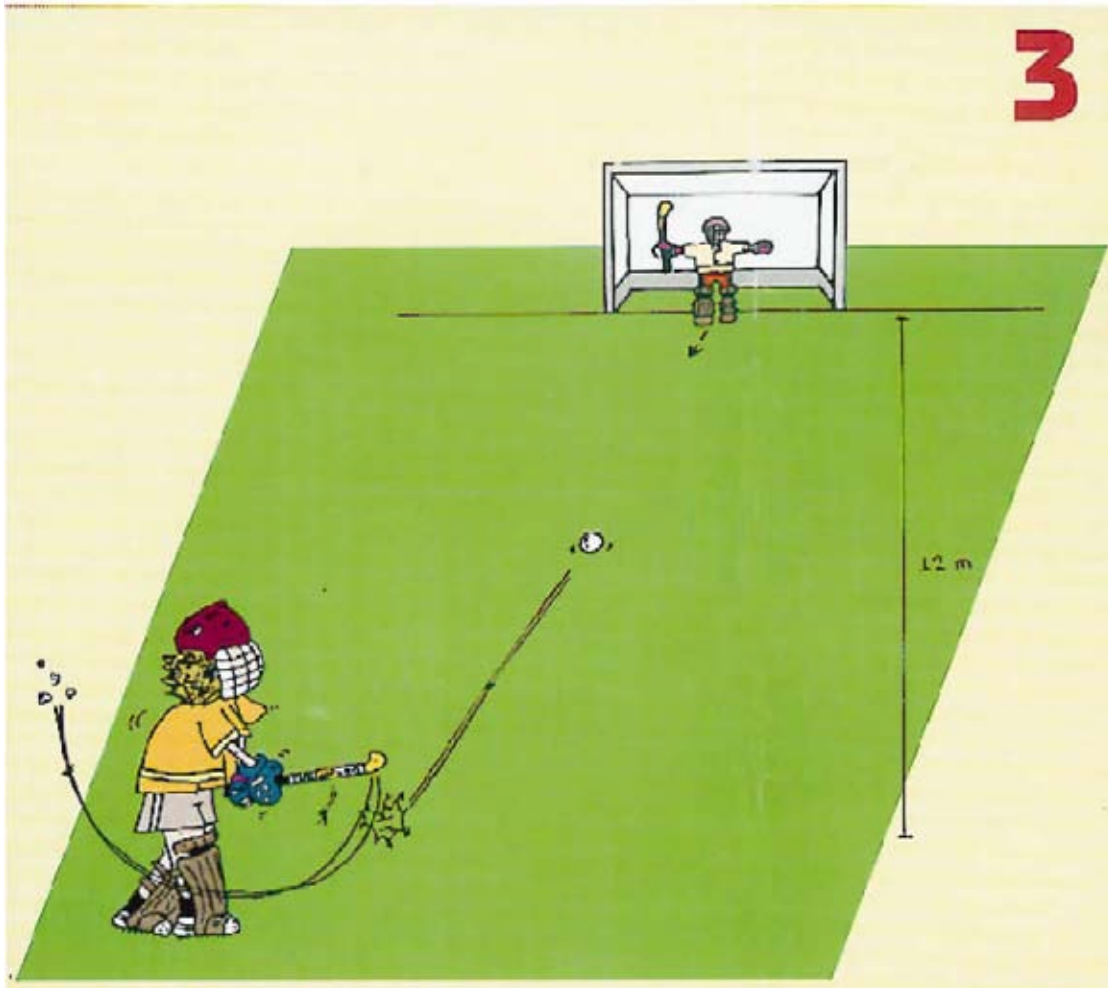
“Our best ideas come from others.”

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SAVING TENNIS BALLS

- * Shoot a tennis ball from 12 meters every 12 seconds.
- The defending goalkeeper may only move when the shot is made.

The goalkeeper who saves most shots out of 6 on target, wins.

**Coaching objectives:**

- Improve reflexes and quick movements
- Maintain concentration
- Assume a correct basic ready-position.

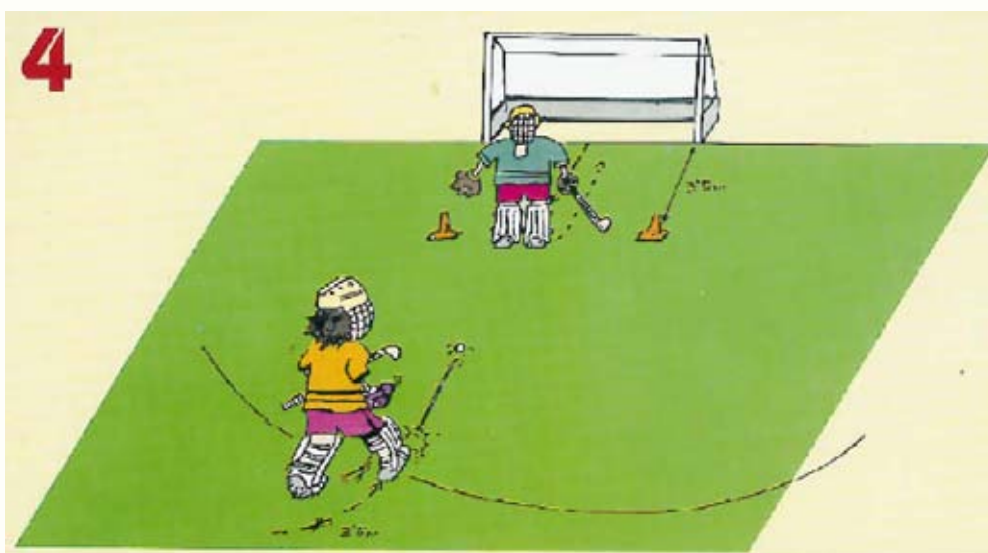
***“Before criticizing what has been done,
an opinion should be ready on what should be done.”***

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4. SAVE TWICE

- The attacking goalkeeper starts 3 meters outside the circle. The defending gk moves out of the goal as the attacking goalkeeper starts. Runs in front to defend a second goal formed by cones 3.5 meters in front of the official size goal.
- The attacking goalkeeper runs and kicks the first ball from the edge of the circle and the other sets off to defend the cone goal.
- After the first ball is saved or missed the goal, a second, carried in the attacker's hand, is lobbed over the defender's head into the official size goal.
- The goalkeeper runs backwards to make the second save.

The goalkeeper who concedes fewer goals, wins.



Coaching objectives:

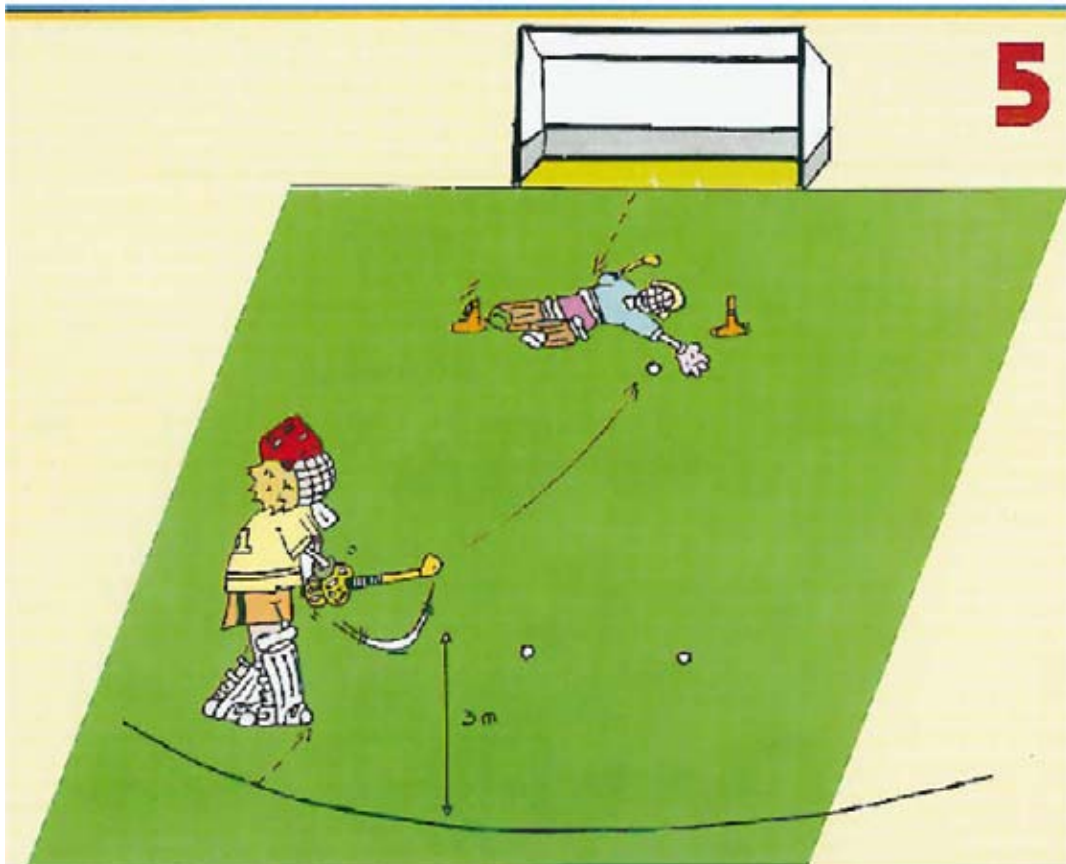
- Improvement of reaction and quick recovery
- Improvement of coordinative capacities

“The more obvious are the deficiencies in the performance of a player or a team, the closer is the solution.”

5. SAVING ON THE GROUND

- The attacking goalkeeper runs from the top of the circle to hit a stationary ball placed 3meters inside the D.
- At the same moment the goalkeeper starts from the goal line to defend a second goal made with cones 3.5meters in front of the first one.
- The goalkeeper saves on the ground in a lying position.

The goalkeeper who saves the most of three low shots on target, wins.



Coaching objectives:

- * To quickly adopt a correct position on the ground (the two pads must be on top of the other, the body completely stretched out, left hand free to stop the ball and stick in the right hand).

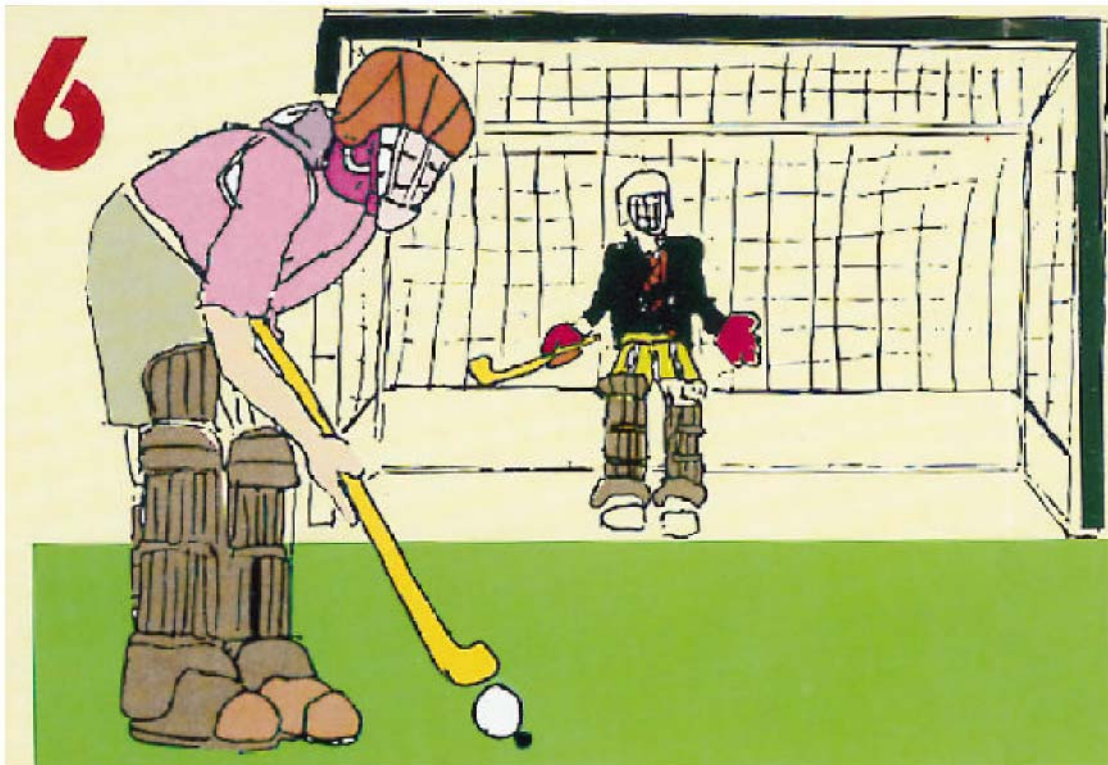
***“You are a lucky player
when nothing in your life has been too easy for you.”***

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6. PENALTY STROKE CHAMPION

- Each of the gk starts with 3 points.
- The oldest starts to defend the goal.
- When no goal is scored the goalkeepers switch round .
- The defending goalkeeper loses a point when a goal is scored.

The winner is the goalkeeper who reduces the opponent's score to zero.

**Coaching objectives:**

- Anticipate the direction of the ball
- Prepare mentally for each penalty stroke, concentrating only on the ball.

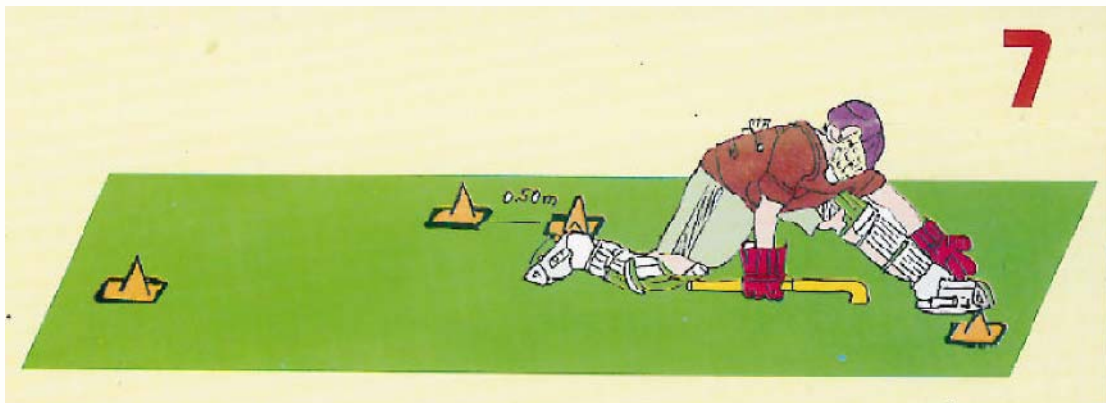
“Success operates on the self-service plan.”

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7. EXTENSION TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT

- Simulate a save, moving the right foot and the stick until both touch the right cone placed slightly forward.
- The left leg must remain in the central area (0.50 meters).
- Return the right foot into the central area.
- Now touch the left cone with the left foot and hand whilst the trailing leg remains in the central area.

The fastest to complete ten correct moves is the winner.



Coaching objectives:

- * Improve flexibility and speed.
- * Promote the correct technique of saving with one foot.

***“What is defeat? It’s nothing else than an experience,
the first step to something better.”***

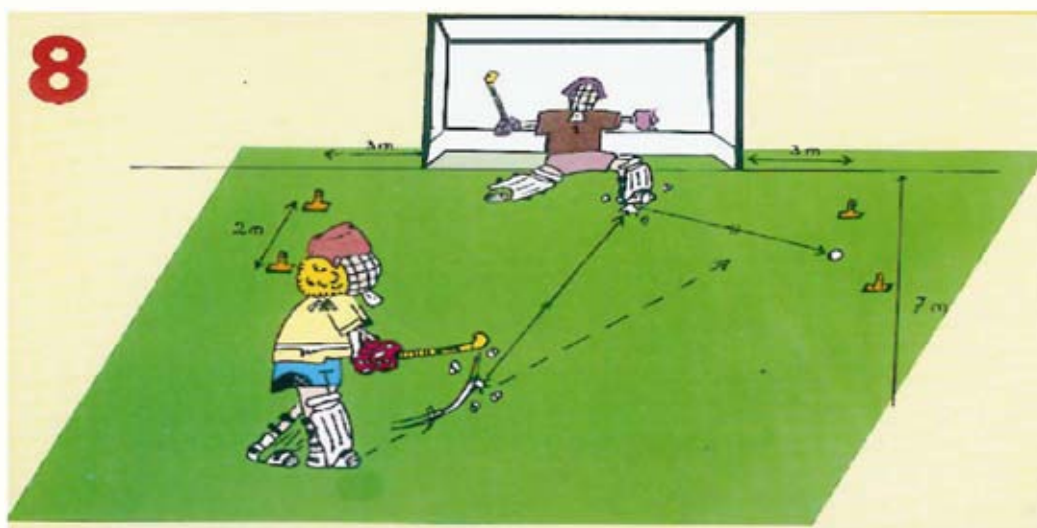
Wendell Philipps

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8. SAVE-CLEAR OR SAVE AND CLEAR

- The attacking goalkeeper pushes the ball from 7 meters at the goalkeeper's pads.
- The goalkeeper must save the ball and clear it with either foot or stick through either of the 2 meters wide cone goals, 3 meters away from each goal- post.
- The attacking goalkeeper may run forward to anticipate a successful clearance.

The winner is the goalkeeper who clears most of the five shots directed at his pads through one of the two cone goals.



Coaching objectives:

- Save the shot, control the ball and accurately clear it.
- Decide when to clear with stick or foot.
- Disguise the direction of the clearance.

“The winner becomes generally the one who has given his very best.”

Charles Buxton

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9. DEFENSE IN THE 1-ON-1 SITUATION

- The attacking goalkeeper starts from the edge of the circle to dribble the ball at the goal.
- At this moment the defending goalkeeper may come out of the goal in order to avoid being rounded by the attacker or to intercept his shot at goal.
- A goal has to be scored within 5 seconds.
- The attack ends when the ball leaves the circle, a goal is scored, the attacker commits an infringement or the time of 5 seconds is over.

The goalkeeper who concedes least goals in 5 attacks, wins.



Coaching objectives:

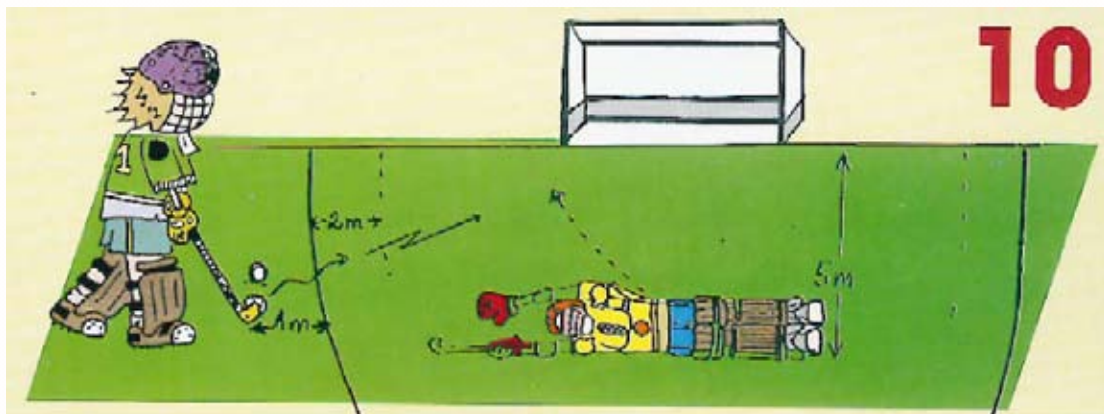
- * To improve positional play
- To condition through certain moves the attacker's play.
- To decide when to go on the ground or when to stay upright.

“A good way to generate enthusiasm in the players is to use a positive vocabulary and encouragements.”

10. SAVE WITH HANDICAP

- The defending goalkeeper in a lying position 5meters in front of the goal.
- The attacking goalkeeper in either the right or left wing position dribbles the ball from 1 metre outside the circle into the circle.
- Try to score from not more than 2metres inside the circle
- When the attack starts the goalkeeper gets up and move to cover the shot.
- Play stops after a goal or when the ball leaves the circle.
- Two attacks from each wing position (5meters inside the field).

The goalkeeper who concedes least goals in 4 attacks, wins.



Coaching objectives:

- Use of acrobatic skills.
- Demonstrate will power and no fear.
- Improve coordination.

The goalkeeper is considered the most important player on the team (any mistake this player makes could result in a goal against the team), and great importance and special attention should be given to his development. Because most goalkeeper errors are caused less by technique than by poor decision making, it's fundamental to train young goalkeepers not only in the technical but also the tactical aspects of play specific to the position. All young goalkeepers should be exposed regularly to a great variety of exercises and games in which they learn not only to save balls but also to consider both their opponents and team-mates in their play.

***“The player has to concentrate on his task on hand.
The sun rays only can produce fire when have been
concentrated in a focus.”***

Harold Robbins

The art of hitting the ball properly



"Mastering a skill is without importance when the player doesn't know when and where to use in".

The hit has to be considered as one of the fundamental techniques in hockey, being of equal importance for defenders, midfield players or forwards. The performance of many players, male and especially female ones, has often been unsatisfactory due to the low importance that they have shown towards continuous practice of the hit during the best ages for motor learning between 10 and 13 years. Because of its possibility to propel the ball over long distances in any direction, the hit is often of decisive importance in the creation of goal opportunities or even in the outcome of a match. Therefore, every player should concentrate on its practice. Since hockey is played on synthetic surfaces the game has developed with even more speed, not only in the tactical and physical aspects but also in the execution of the fundamental skills like, for instance, in the technique of the hit.

Today various techniques are used for hitting the ball. The selection of the most effective technique depends on the game situation. Whilst the classical "drive" has disappeared with the grass fields, in the late 80's other techniques arose, like the slap-shot, the sweep hit and the reverse stick hit.

Early in the 90's the two techniques of the "sweep hit" (with the curve always on the ground or with lifting the stick and a follow-through) became the most common used skills for passing the ball over long distances whilst when shooting the low reverse hit with the edge of the stick (invented by the Argentine player Ferrara in the late 80's) is more often seen than other scoring techniques.

A technique is only considered optimal when it ensures effectiveness. As this was not more the case on synthetic pitches with the classical hit called "drive", its technique was modified until the disadvantages (less power, less accuracy with the danger of the ball being lifted, less facilities for the receiver to control the pass) turned to become advantages.

Today every coach demands that his players master the most important technique for long passes -the sweep hit, because a ball hit with this technique

- has generally more accuracy because of a much wider impact zone (that is the zone of the label and not more the curved part of the stick which is touching the ground during the "drive"),
- assures its smooth running along the ground without any bounce, what results on synthetic pitches in a much higher success rate in the reception and the control of the ball,
- has more speed because of a longer swing-follow-through and a better acceleration of the curve without any temporary stoppage in the turning point,
- can hardly be anticipated by the opponent, because of the possibility of changing the direction of the hit in the very last moment.

All these characteristics are not only important when passing the ball but also have some significance in goal scoring. At the same time as the "sweep hit" other techniques of hitting the ball were developed. They all do have the same 4 advantages which were mentioned above. These techniques are:

"We should aim to avoid mistakes and the secret is to not be in hurry."

Marie Curie

- the "sweep hit" in which the player hides through quick wrists movements until the very last moment the direction of his pass. In this technique the curve is always on the ground. Top players use the technique frequently for passes up to 40m. With both hands together at the top of the handle, the player, whilst keeping the curve always on the ground and far away from the ball, sweeps it in a low body position (knees very bent). Because of the existence of a much wider impact zone in this technique (see photo page 311) the passer doesn't have to focus on the ball but furthermore has the possibility to read the game whilst he is executing a pass.
- the low reverse sweep hit (see sequence of photos) with the stick in the moment of impact in an almost horizontal position. The ball is hit or swept in a low body position with the inside edge. For better balance the right foot should be in front.

In the initial phase of this hit, the stick is lifted and brought very far backwards in order to develop maximum speed of the curve but in the second technique it always remains close to the ground for executing a more accurate but less powerful pass or centre (but not a shot at goal).

In both techniques the impact zone is close to the curve (label) and at the moment of impact, the stick is almost parallel with the ground.



DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNIQUE OF THE "SWEEP HIT":

Five phases of the hit have to be considered in its training and acquisition process:

- The position of the player in relation to the direction in which the ball is to be played.
- The grip
- The position of the player in relation to the ball.
- The rise of the stick until the beginning of the loop (the backswing)
- The downswing (the proper hit)

1. The position of the player in relation to the direction in which the ball is to be hit

The player should stand with legs comfortably apart, the left shoulder pointing in the direction in which the ball is to be hit. The weight is still placed equally on both feet which should not be placed too close together in order to assure readiness for any other action.

A front-on position would not allow the same solid platform as the side-on position does. Furthermore a front-on position would not allow a complete transfer of the weight of the body from the right towards the front foot. Therefore it's not possible to get any force into the hit. The lack of force is also conditioned by the shorter distance the curve travels in the back and downswing.

Last, but not least, a front-on position doesn't allow the left arm to be extended fully. And for this reason full power cannot be transferred to the ball.

The best position is the side-on position because it gives the player many possibilities for disguising the direction of the hit. Nevertheless, especially when there is not enough time to move into a side-on position, a hit has to be executed in a front-on position using a completely different technique as when using the "sweep hit" technique in a side-on position.

***"When you see a good player, intend to imitate him,
but when you see a rather poor one, examine yourself."***

Confucius

2.The grip

The flat side of the stick must point to the left side. The left hand grips the stick from the left and the right hand from the right. To impart a high level of power to the hit, both hands must be together on the stick one below the other, in contrast to most of the other techniques. Both hands should be so close to one another, that the index-finger of the upper or left hand should touch the little finger of the right or lower hand.

If the stick is gripped with the right hand at the top of the handle, neither right nor left arm can bend sufficiently to give optimal application of power and direction. The arm muscles are most efficient when the arms are half bent, when muscles are neither over-stretched or over-compressed.

With a normal grip, the right hand, being further from the body, does the main work as regards of power whilst the left is leading, mainly responsible for the direction.

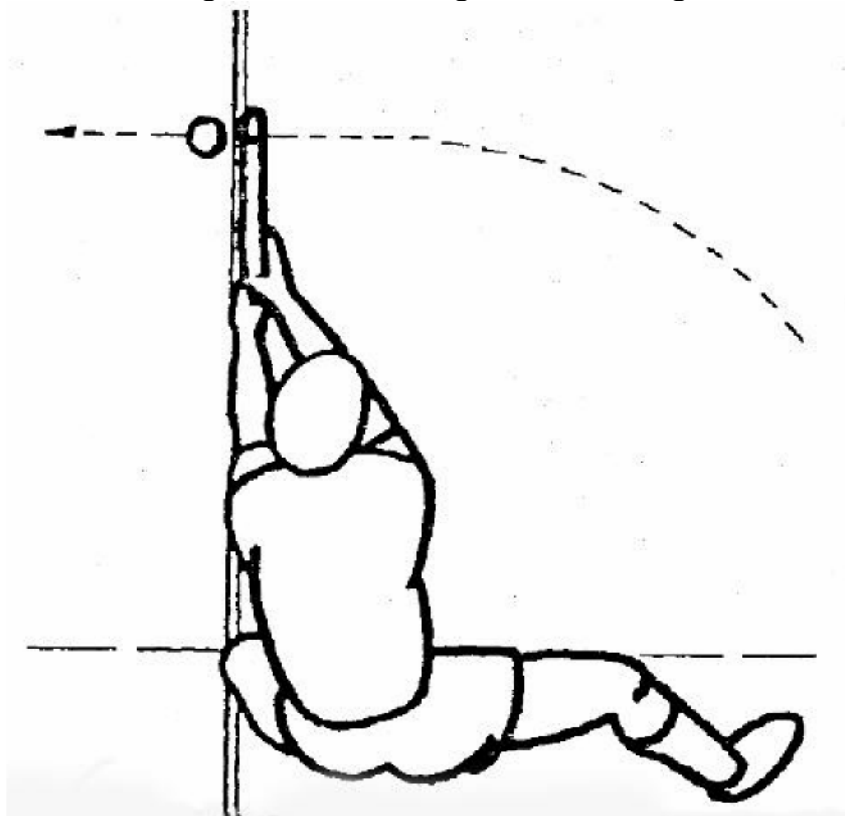
If the player places his right hand at the top of the handle, his right arm is too close to the body, and besides so fully bent that an optimal transfer of power is impossible. With such a grip a player is unable to hit the ball as hard as he could with the correct grip. Another disadvantage of having the right arm close to the body is that it has less freedom of movement. With the left hand in a lower position the directional control of the left arm is more difficult.



***“The performance of a player is only limited
by the rules of the game and his own capacity.”***

3. The position of the player in relation to the ball¹

When executing the technique of the "sweep hit", the zone of impact is the lowest part of the label (generally reserved for the brand name), situated at the upper part of the curve. For making use of this wider impact zone (compared to the use of a 10cm wide zone in the centre of the curve when the ball was hit with a "drive"), the player is demanded to angle the stick until it reaches at the moment of impact with the ball an angle of 10 to 20 degrees with the ground.



Due to this, the ball has to be placed further away from the body (as it was in the past) and always in front of the left foot. This also means that the player has to approach the ball with a wide step (more than shoulder-wide) which separates both feet by more than 1m. with the right foot far away from the right hip.

The correct angling of the stick with the artificial turf is not only achieved through a pronounced forward-inclination of the trunk but simultaneously with an obvious bending of both legs until about 90 degrees (see sequence of photos).

The descent of the centre of gravity not only takes place in the vertical dimension but at the same time also in the horizontal one when the player transfers all his weight from the right leg towards the front one.

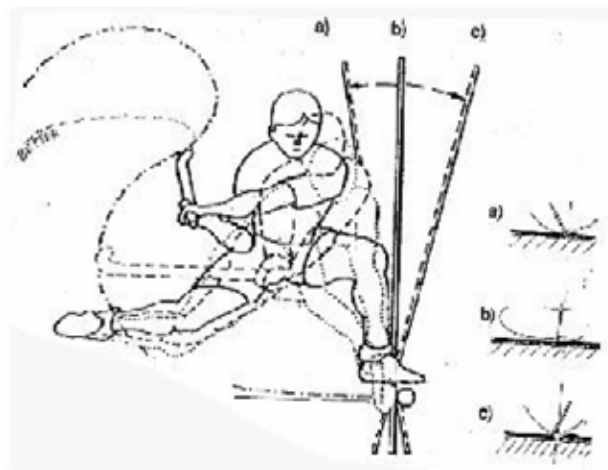
1 and 2: - see Lutz Nordmann: "Die Kunst der Flach-Schlag-Technik", in Deutsche Hockey Zeitung, no. 30/1995



4. The rise of the stick until the beginning of the loop and the downswing ²

Together with a wide stride of the left foot towards the ball a first descent of the centre of gravity takes place. Simultaneously with the stride, the curve of the stick, through a movement of the wrists, describes a tiny loop from inside to outside (a small semicircular movement) flowing straight into the downswing. The starting in and coming back movement follows more or less the same line. Through this kind of movement a pre-stretching of the muscles is assured which later on allows a more powerful muscle contraction. The smaller the loop is carried out the less time the player needs to hit the ball.

Main reason of the loop movement is to avoid any dead point or stop at the end of the backswing just before the downswing takes place. This phenomenon also happened in the execution of the "drive" technique. When the left foot steps down behind the ball, the stick is already in the beginning of the downswing or the end of the loop.



Executing the sweep hit the movement of the stick is never interrupted as now the backswing flows smoothly into the downswing without any reduction of speed. Whilst descending, the speed of the curve will be even further increased (also with help of the descend of the centre of gravity) until the stick glides for about 0.50 meter at a height of some few centimetres above the ground and always parallel to it towards the ball in front of the left foot. The stick should never approach the ball coming from above as in the "drive".

In the technique of the "sweep hit" the stick approaches the ball always from low and from behind! Care has to be taken that the impact zone above the curved part of the stick is guided towards the ball, at 90 degrees position with the ground, and also in the desired direction of the hit. Naturally the movement of the stick is accompanied first from a descent of the centre of gravity and finally in the last phase by a horizontal transfer of the weight of the body until it is shifted towards the front foot.



With a slight movement of the wrists immediately before the moment of impact with the centre of the ball, the player has the opportunity to modify the angle which the stick forms with the ground or also with the original planned direction of the hit. Instead of hitting the ball with the curve in a 90 degree position he may slightly incline the curve backward. This will enable him to hit the ball, for instance, above a sliding goalkeeper running out of his goal.

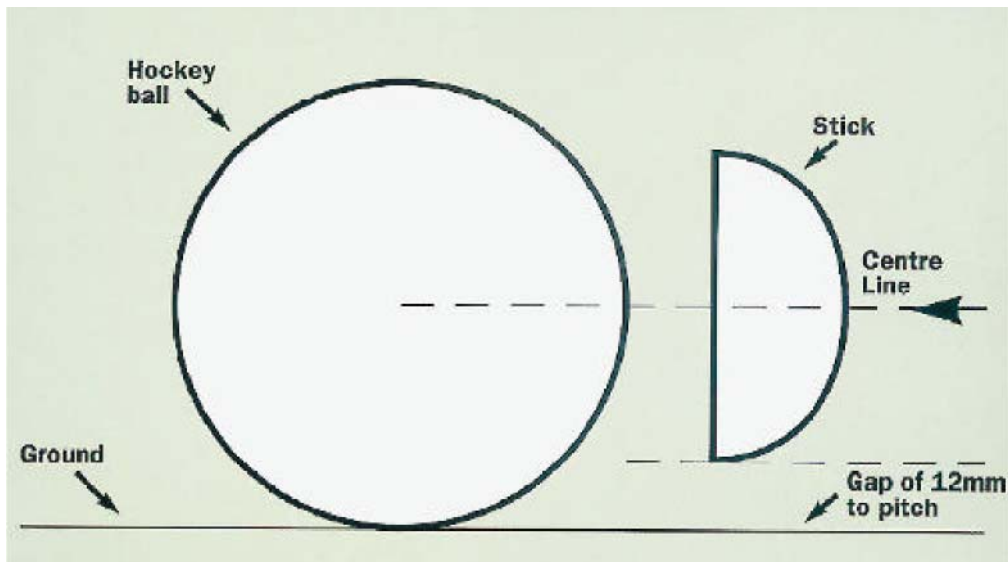
To disguise the direction of his hit in the very last second towards the left or right, the player has to hit on the right or left side of the centre of the ball. In the moment of impact both hands should be about 20 cm above the ground in front of the left tibia with the head almost above the hands. The bending angle of the advanced (left) leg is 90 degrees whilst the knee of the right leg, comfortably bent, is touching the ground.

After the impact stick-ball the player continues to descend his centre of gravity, but controls actively the forward and curved movement of the stick which must follow the ball direction. The player must have the sensation of having hit through the ball.

Executing the "sweep hit" is a skill in which the whole body (and here especially the trunk) and all joints are involved. A player who practises the hit must therefore learn to fit together perfectly all partial movements, respecting the parameters of time, strength, mobility and flexibility. Finally, the hit must become a fluent and harmonious skill.

General recommendations for training the "sweep hit":

- * It's advisable to train the "sweep hit" after the player has gained sufficient experience in the push and slap-shot.
- Firstly, no power should be employed when hitting. Instead "hitting through the ball" and "serve it smoothly" to the receiver should be the main objective.
- Practise with closed eyes will help to feel the movement and to train the tactile and kinetic sensory system. The player must learn to sense the quality of the hit immediately after its execution.
- Furthermore it's advisable to hit balls of different size and weight as well as hockey balls under pressure and fatigue.
- Once the players have learnt to consider the key elements of the technique in hitting a stationary ball, they should learn the "sweep hit" with the ball on the run. In order to ensure a proper impact, the player has to modify his position in relation to the ball. More difficult, however, is hitting the ball on the run when the right foot is in front at the moment of the hit. This technique is a must for every top player.



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- A lot of degradation is caused when the stick contacts with the ground and before and during the impact of the same with the ball. In order to avoid a loss of speed power and accuracy in the pass, the player's stick should skim the surface. Considering the diameter of the hockey ball (75mm) and the width of the upper part of the curve (51mm) there should ideally be a 12mm gap between the ground and the bottom of the stick at the moment of impact or hitting through the ball in the direction the player wants the ball to go².
- Finally, correct breathing during the execution of a hit is part of the correct technique. Breathe in on the back lift and out during the swing follow-through until the moment of impact. Co-ordinating the breathing properly adds considerable power and consistency to the "sweep hit".



*"The road to success has very few travellers
because so many get lost trying to find short cuts."*

EXERCISES AND GAMES FOR HITTING THE BALL

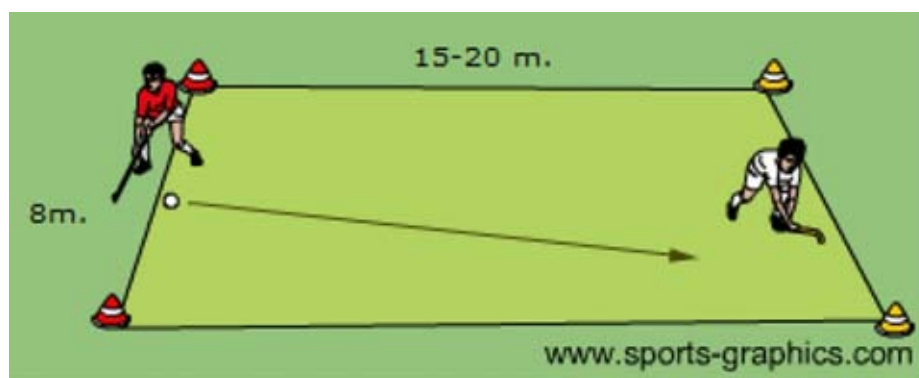
(DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES LISTED IN THE "PASSING, RECEIVING AND SHOOTING GAMES ")

1. One Against One

Two players, facing each other at a distance of 15 (20) meters, are competing inside a 8 meters wide area. Each player tries to hit the ball across the opponent's end line. The ball has to be returned with a hit from the point where it ran over one of the side lines or where it was controlled by the opponent. Scoring is as follows:

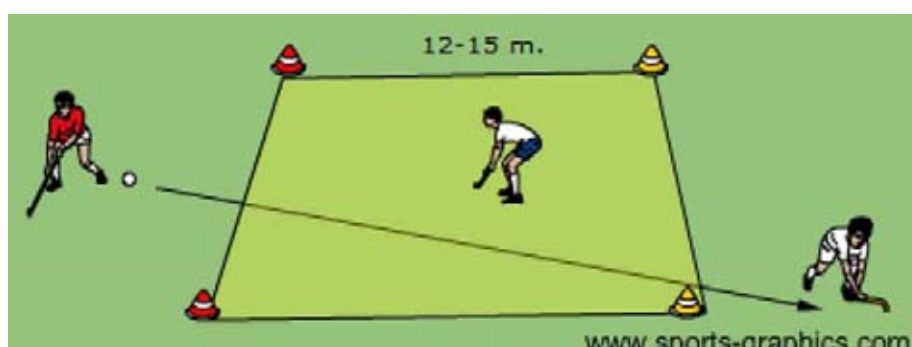
- +1 point = for every goal scored with a "sweep hit",
- 1 point = for every ball hit across one of the side lines,
- 1 point = for every slight elevation of the ball during the "sweep hit"
- 1 point = for any mistake in the reception and the control of the ball in front of the 8meter wide goal.

After a pre-established time the winner plays against the winner of the same competition played in an adjacent area.



2. Disguise Passes in a Two-on-One Situation

The same exercise as 1) with a defender situated in between the two hitters in a square with the dimensions of 12 x 12 meters and for less skilled players 15 x 15 meters. All "sweep hits" which cross the square defended by the opponent and which can be controlled by the receiver score one point for the two attackers. For every interception of the ball within his square the defender gets one point. The game is played until one team gains 10 points. The winner is the one of the 3 players who manages to win more points in the 3 competitions. Apart from practicing the correct technique of hitting the ball, the attackers learn to disguise the direction of their passes and to communicate before executing a hit.

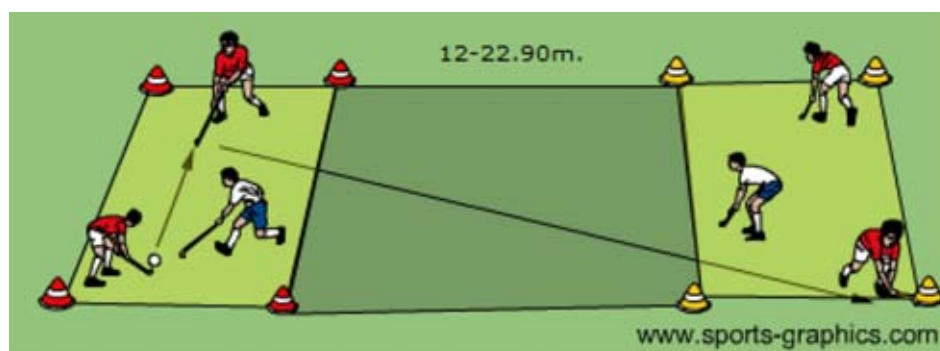


3. Twice "Two-on One"

Two players keep possession of the ball in a limited zone (with not more than 3 passes) against one defender until one of them has sufficient time and space to pass the ball with a hit through a central zone to one of two team-mates in another area at a distance of about 12- 22.90 meters, following the level and age of the players..

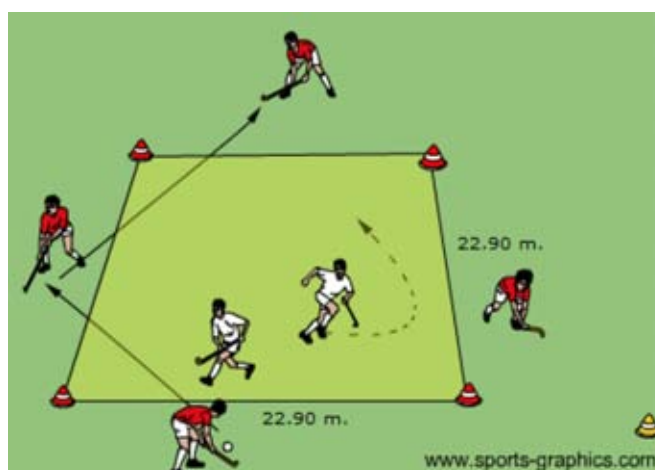
The first defender should do everything to prevent the ball being hit across the central zone, as does his fellow defender on the other side of the central zone. His objective is to read the intention of one attacker to pass the ball. He then tries to intercept the ball hit to the 3rd or 4th attacker in the opposite grid or at least disturb them during the reception and the control of the ball. No player is allowed to step into the central part of the field with dimensions in depth and width which, as said above, depend on the skill and fitness level of its participants.

When the ball doesn't reach a fellow-attacker in the opposite playing area, bounces on its way, runs out of the marked zone or the defender could touch it three times consecutively, a point is awarded to the team of two defenders. The game is played up to 10 points. In continuation, a rotation of the positions of the three teams made up of 2 players takes place. Every team has to defend once.



4. Four-on-Two Across Two Lines

Two defenders control a square 22.90m x 22.90m. Without leaving the zone assigned to them, they must try to prevent the 4 attackers from passing the ball from outside the square across two lines. The 4 attackers try to establish a record of consecutive passes without losing the control of the ball once. The passing and receiving is always executed outside of the square. Every 5 minutes the two defenders switch positions with 2 attackers until all players have played once in defence.

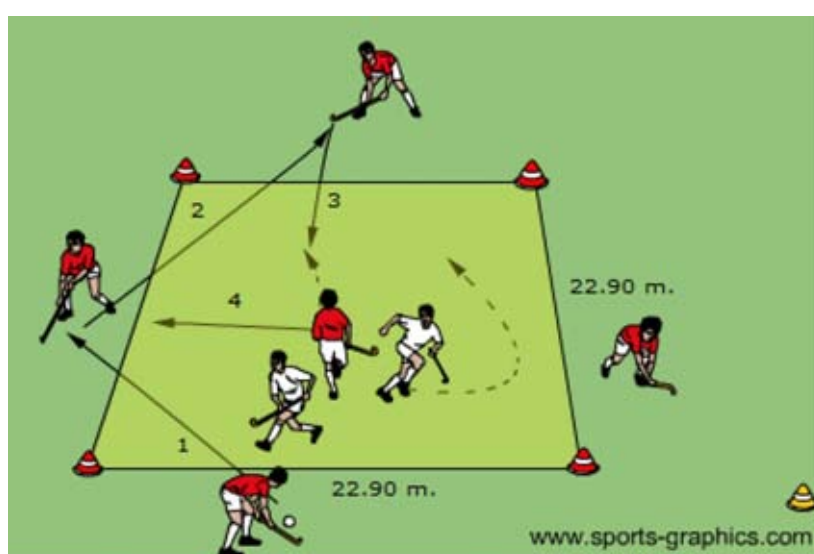


Variation:

A fifth attacker is now playing inside the square. He is continuously offering himself for passes from one of his 4 team-mates outside of the square. For each control of the ball and return-pass the team collects two points.

As in the previous game, each pass between the attackers which crosses it, despite the presence of 2 defenders, scores 1 point.

The coach may ask the players to use a pre-determined technique for passing the ball (for instance only with slaps-two hands are separated at the handle- or "sweep hits" with both hands close together and the curve always in contact with the ground).

**5. Games to Keep Possession of the Ball**

4-on-4 or 5-on-5 in quarter of the field or 6-on-6 or 7-on-7 in half of a regular hockey field. Only passes executed with a "sweep hit" over distances in excess of 10 meters count.

6. Hitting Game "Five-on Five" in Three Separated Areas

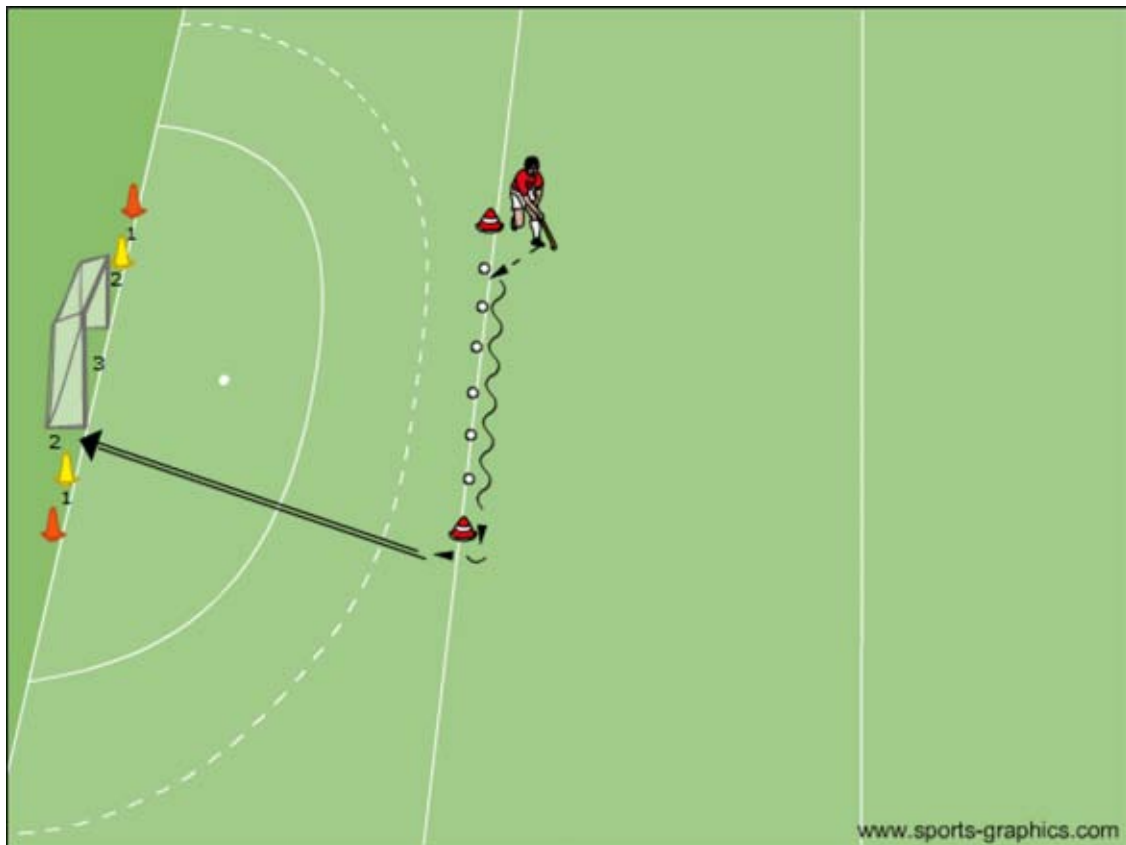
See the 3rd. Game "Twice "Two-on-one". This game is played with two more players (one attacker and one defender) situated in the field of the centre where they receive or intercept passes from the two fields on the side where two attackers play against one defender (and his substitute who waits outside the area)

All three adjacent areas, which none of the 3 or two players assigned to it may leave, have the same size (22.90meters x 22.90 meters). The 2 attackers, despite the presence of a defender, have to manage to pass the ball to their fellow-player who offers himself in the central zone where he is closely marked by another defender. In case a pass to him is not possible, the two attackers from the first area try to pass the ball directly to one of his two team mates in the third area, where another defender will do everything to avoid them succeeding. The number of passes from one area to another are counted. Once a defender wins the possession of the ball, he will be substituted by another fresh one who watched the practice.

A long pass through the middle field which is controlled in the opposite one scores two points, whilst any short pass from one field to the one aside scores only 1 point.

7. Scoring into Targets

Six balls are placed between two cones, separated by a distance of 10 meters, and 22.90 meters in front of a goal-line. The striker starts with any ball which he has to dribble in front of the balls to the cone furthest away, round it and then hit it on the move from the inside-right or inside-left position towards the target (six cones placed on the goal-line).



After his ball crosses the target line, the same player picks up a second ball, dribbles it past the cone furthest away and hits it toward the targets of 1, 2 or 3 points. He continues to do this until the 6th ball has been played.

A ball can be collected only from the line between the two cones., once the previous one has crossed the scoring line or stopped rolling. When reaching a score of 9 or more points, the time is stopped with a stopwatch. If the player fails to score 9 points with 6 balls a nil score is recorded.

“A crisis starts when the old one hasn’t died and the new wasn’t born yet.”

Berthold Brecht

Simplified Games for the Penalty Corner Training in Attack and Defence



“The development of the game is so fast these days that the coach who says it can’t be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it.”

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1ST PART:

SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR THE "DRAG OUT", THE RECEPTION AND THE BASIC VARIATIONS IN GOAL SCORING



1ST. EXERCISE: DRAG THE BALL OUT FROM THE ENDLINE

After a visual signal various players in possession of a ball "inject" it with the assigned technique from the goal line toward the 22.90 metre line. The winner is the player whose ball crosses the 22.90meter line first. To gain more experience, every player may also choose the technique which suits him best.

Coaching objectives:

1. To know how to execute the techniques of a drag.
2. To know how to execute the pass without prior body movements so that the opponent has difficulty anticipating the moment of its execution.
3. Make sure that the ball doesn't rise and that the player concentrates on the followthrough. This ensures the desired direction of the pass.
4. To assure speed of the drag.

"All behaviour of a player is consequence of his personal feeling."



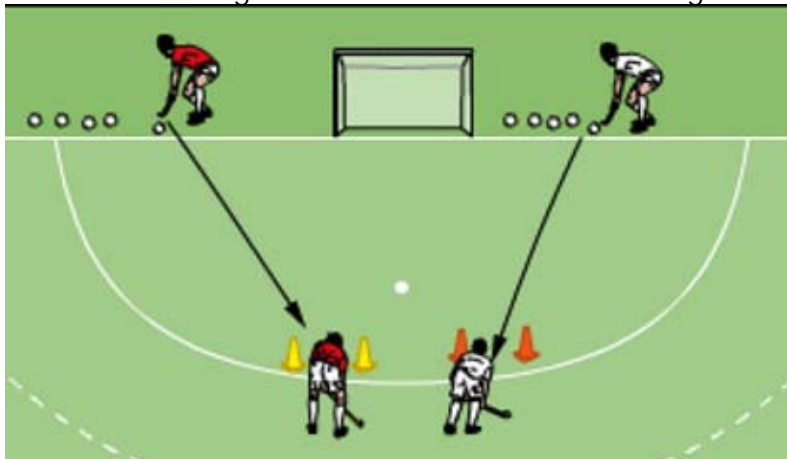
SOME HINTS FOR PASSING THE BALL WITH A DRAG-PUSH:

- Both hands grip the stick the same way as during the "Indian dribble".
- The flat side of the stick faces towards the ground forming an angle of about 30 degrees.
- The ball is placed close to the right foot on the end line with the upper part of the edge of the curve in contact with it. The rule demands that during the execution of the drag, one foot has to remain outside the field.
- The left shoulder and the left foot are pointing towards the receiver.
- Feet are placed wide apart (more than shoulder width). The left one points into the direction of the pass and the right foot forms a right angle with it.
- When dragging the ball along the ground from the right (behind) toward the left (in front), the ball always remains in contact with the edge of the curve of the stick until it is released as it comes level with the left foot.
- During the quick pull (drag) the player looks to the receiver and shifts the body weight from the centre towards the left foot.

2ND. EXERCISE: RECEIVING THE BALL OUTSIDE THE SHOOTING CIRCLE

Two teams compete in the same circle. One player of each team pushes the ball from the end line through his 1 metre wide cone goal, situated at the edge of the circle towards his receiver who stops the ball with a technique indicated by the coach. Every couple have 5 drag pushes.

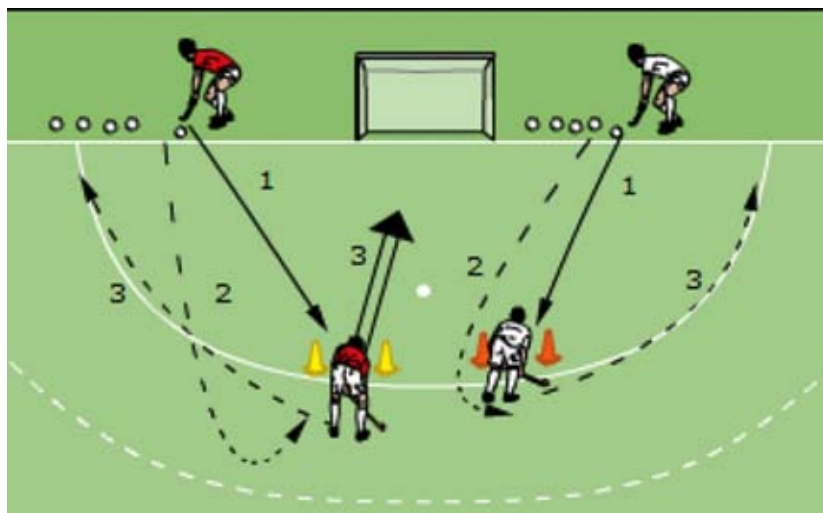
The winner is the couple whose receiver manages to trap more balls just outside the shooting circle. Balls which miss the cone goal don't count.



For the return match, both players change positions and functions and both teams switch places (go the other side of the goal).

Variations:

.After a drag push-simulation by the coach from inside the goal, both players pass their ball from the end line through their respective cone goal to their stick stoppers. Whilst the latter try to trap the ball outside the circle and pushes it half a meter into the circle, each “injector” o the ball follows it as quick as possible with the intention to strike it first from inside the circle against the boards of the full-size goal. Meanwhile the stick-stoppers run along the circle line to the end line from where they are supposed to start the next penalty corner. After 5 trials both teams practise the drag push from the other side of the goal until 10 penalty corners have been “injected” and received outside the circle.



Coaching objectives:

1. To select the most effective technique for playing in the ball with speed and accuracy.
2. To consider additional functions after having executed the pass from the end line.
3. To learn to receive the ball with the horizontally placed stick. The left hand should grip the stick below the right, the left fingers should point downward with the palm behind the stick (see also "More hints for trapping the ball with the stick").
3. To retain good balance so that the striker is not obstructed and any penalty corner variation is possible to put into practise



***“Enthusiasm is more powerful than money,
politics, fatigue and influence.”***

MORE HINTS FOR STOPPING THE BALL DURING THE PENALTY CORNER:

- Legs should be bent and for better balance one foot should be moved forward at the moment the ball is being trapped outside the circle. Generally the right leg is situated in front and near the circle, whilst the left foot is placed further backwards. The low body position permits a better view of the ball's trajectory and a possible bounce.
- It's important not to bent too much. Be relaxed and think positively.
- Watch the ball until it touches the stick.
- Have the body weight over the front foot when trapping the ball in a stationary position, and in front of both feet with the arms away from the trunk.
- Place the stick (with the curve generally on the left side) in a right angle to the trajectory of the oncoming ball in order to avoid a deflection towards one side.
- To be able to absorb the shock of the oncoming ball, bend the arms slightly and keep the wrists loose. Incline the surface of the stick slightly forward.
- Be prepared to adjust your position quickly, should the oncoming ball deviate from its course.
- After the stop, move the stick quickly towards the right side of the body, grip it again correctly with the right hand in the centre of the stick, which allows you to continue to take part in the penalty corner play (receive a pass or take a rebound with

3RD. EXERCISE: LOOKING FOR VARIATIONS

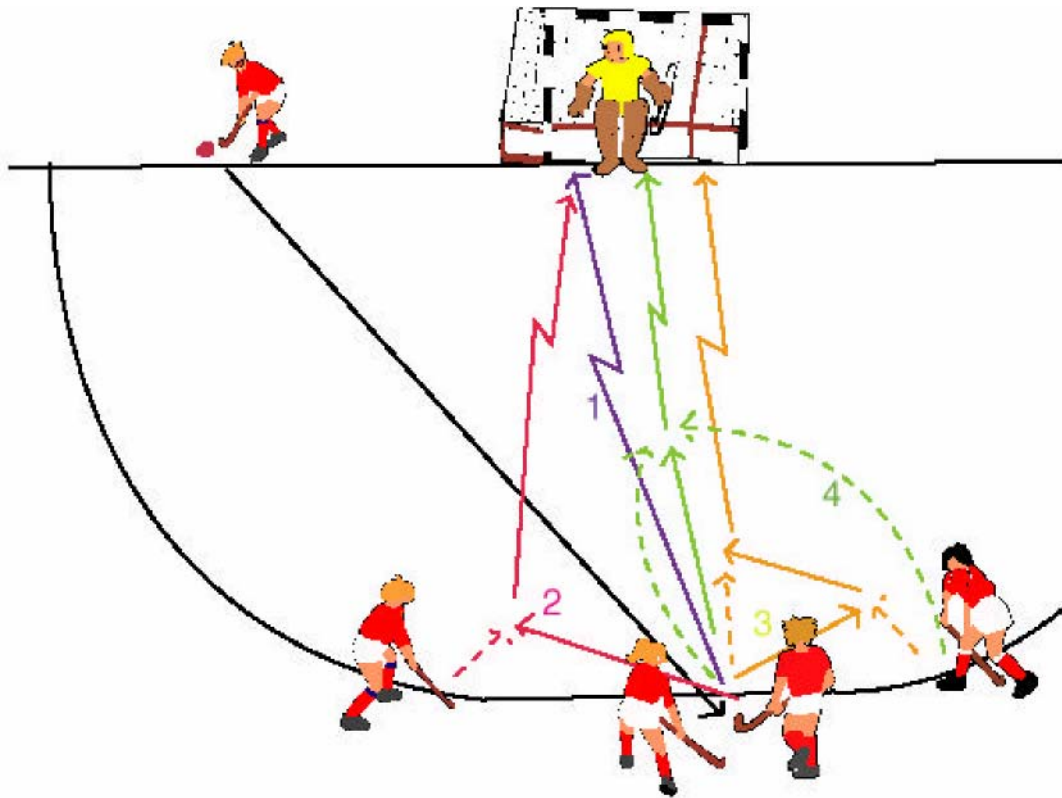


An attacking team with five players is positioned as shown in the diagram. The coach asks the players to demonstrate at least 4 variations of the penalty corner attack. For instance:

After trapping the ball with one touch outside the circle:

- * the stick stopper pushes the ball into the circle for the striker who scores,
- the stick stopper pushes the ball some 3-4m. to a third attacker on his left side. From inside the circle the 3rd.attacker scores.

- the striker pushes the ball from outside the circle into the circle towards the 4th attacker on his right side. The latter returns the ball with a triangular pass to the striker who scores,
- the striker pushes the ball to the 4th. attacker who had run at the moment of the push-out with high speed to the penalty stroke point. There he traps the ball which is hit or flicked quickly by the striker into the goal.



Coaching objectives:

- * Immediately after having stopped or/and passed the ball, move away to allow the specialist sufficient space for shooting, feinting or passing.
- Synchronise the action of the trap with that of the shot or pass.
- To learn 4 basic penalty corner variations.

“An individual who proceeds too soon may lose the pre-requisite self confidence that is essential for success at subsequent levels.”

Ric Purser

4TH. EXERCISE : QUICK SHOT

Two or three pairs of players are positioned outside the circle close to its edge. The right player of each pair, in a low position, holds his stick horizontally as though he has just trapped the ball. Together with the stick, he holds the ball in one hand. After the simulation of a drag- out from the end line by the coach, the stick-stopper releases the ball and the striker moves it into the circle to score with any technique. The pair that scores first with a shot against the boards, wins a point. After very 5 shots, the players of each pair swap their positions and functions.

Variations:

- Various teams formed by three players compete to establish the one who scores more goals with 5 attacks. A goalkeeper can be added.
- Various teams formed by three players compete to establish the one who scores in the shortest time.

Coaching objectives:

- To reduce as much as possible the time between the trap of the ball and the actual shot from inside the circle.
- To learn more about penalty corner shooting.



“It’s generally assumed that the more you know about something, the better you’ll be at it, but a certain innocence will help you to perform better.”

L.Moorhouse/L.Cross



*“It’s generally asumed that the more you know about something,
the better you will be at doin it.
But acertain innocence willhelp you to perform better.”*

L.Mourhouse /L.Cross

SOME HINTS FOR PENALTY CORNER SHOOTING:

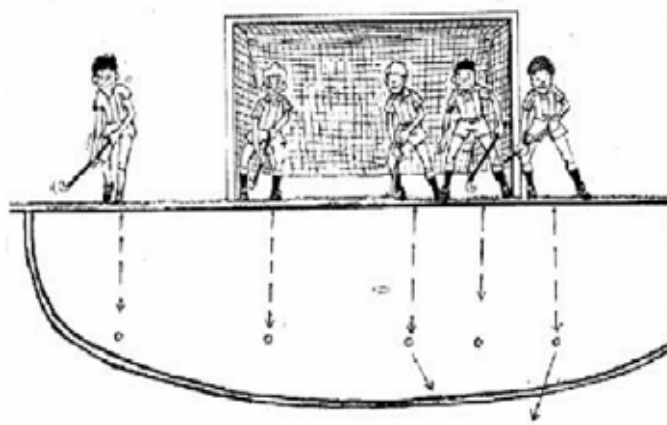
- 1. To be able to hit the ball with maximum speed. The weight of the stick as well as its stiffness has to be considered.
- 2. Decide the exact place from where to hit the ball towards the goal. Consider the running path of the defender and the habits of the goalkeeper.
- 3. Ask the player who traps the ball outside of the circle to use the trap-technique which suits you best for striking the ball with a flick or hit.
- 4. Watch the ball closely before and when you strike it. The quicker the strike at goal is executed, the less chances the defender has to block your shot. Consider also the way opponents are running out.
- 5. When running towards the ball which was played into the circle, the rhythm and the timing of the striker influence the power and the accuracy of the shot, as does the correct position of both feet, at the moment of the impact of the stick with the ball.
- 6. During the hit at goal lift the stick relatively slowly but increase the speed progressively in the swing follow-through, until the moment of impact. There should be no interruption of the pendulum in the turning point (see "The art of hitting the ball properly").
- 7. When maximum power is employed in all phases of the shot, the co-ordination level decreases. Don't try too hard. Be relaxed and have confidence in the important task.
- 8. Don't look up immediately after the impact stick with ball because that will result in less accuracy of the hit.
- 9. Choose the technique and direction of your shot after having carefully studied the habits of your opponents in penalty corner defence.
- 10. After the execution of the shot, anticipate a possible rebound. Therefore, the right hand must grip the stick in its centre.
- 11. Also, the best penalty corner specialist needs frequent practise. He must train with and without opponents and team mates until he has improved a few effective variations in attack.. Too many variations are detrimental to perfection.

"The way you think after a defeat will determine how much time will pass until you win the next game."

2ND. PART:EXERCISES AND SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR
THE PENALTY CORNER DEFENSE5TH. EXERCISE: CLEAR THE BALL QUICKLY OUT OF THE CIRCLE

When one player simulates a push-out, various players in different positions behind the end line and with the stick held only in the right hand, run with the intention of playing their respective ball out of the circle.

The balls are placed at a distance of 13m in front of each player. The one who first plays his ball out of the circle is the winner.

**Coaching objectives:**

- Running out from a position just in front of the ball but slightly on its left side will enable you to play the ball quickly and always with the front of the stick.
- Grip the stick always with the right hand at the top of the handle.
- To anticipate the moment of the push-out of the ball.
- The first 3 steps should be short ones without lifting the head to look to the ball. A wide stride and lifting the head too early will negatively influence the speed of your sprint.
- In order to achieve maximum possible reach, play the ball with the right arm completely stretched and the right foot in front. Take care that the curve of your stick, facing forward, is in a vertical position at the moment of playing the ball and not inclined backward.

6TH. EXERCISE: QUICK RUNNING OUT AND BLOCKING THE BALL

Before the 7th. game is practised and a competition is organized, all players should experience the following drill:

The right shoulder of two players are facing each other. One player is positioned on the end line and the other on the 22.90meter line. After a visual signal (for instance a simulation of a push-out), both players run as quickly as possible towards the ball, which is placed in the centre between them.

The winner is the player who touches the ball first (with preference only with the right hand as far up as possible on the handle of his stick). After touching the ball he moves it at least 2 meters out of range of the opponent.



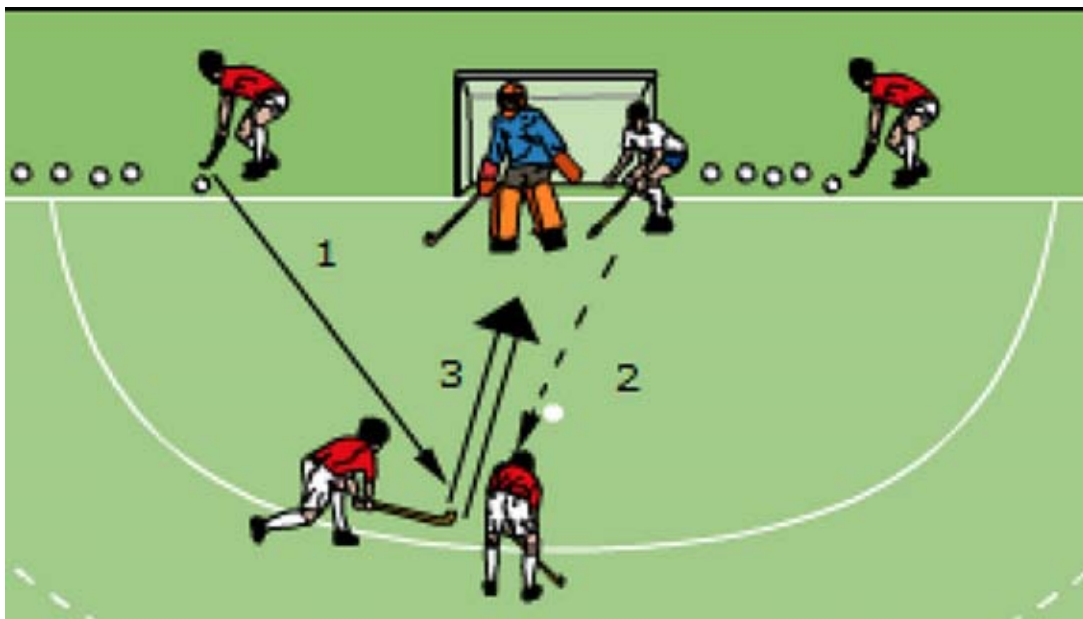
7TH. EXERCISE: BLOCKING THE SHOT ON GOAL

One attacker passes the ball with a drag push from the end line toward the edge of the circle where two team-mates expect the pass. One traps and the other strikes the ball at goal, despite the active defence of one opponent running out of the goal with the aim of blocking the shot.

After a goal is scored, or the ball has gone out of the circle, a second penalty corner is taken, but this time a 4th.attacker passes the ball in from the opposite side of the goal. Meanwhile, the first player running is substituted by another fresh team-mate. In order to perfect the drag, the trap and the strike at goal, no variations are allowed in the execution of the penalty corner.

For every goal, the attacker gains 2 points as do the defenders for a successful play with the ball out of the circle. But, should the attackers make a mistake and fail to score a goal, the defenders gain only one point. Any infringement of the rules by the defender is penalized with a penalty stroke. The team scoring 10 points first is the winner.

After the first competition both teams swap positions and functions. Finally, the coach may allow the attackers to vary their play instead of always hitting the ball directly towards the goal.



Coaching objectives:

- After having studied the habits of the opponent in pushing the ball out, try to anticipate its moment of execution.
- Don't look towards the ball during the first three steps.
- Be aggressive and confident as you are running out.
- Don't run in front of the goalkeeper. Let him see the trajectory of the ball all the time. That is why the first defender running out should always position himself on the left side of the goalkeeper, aiming to block the shot with the front of his stick only.
- Once the runner has managed to touch the ball, he should attempt to clear it out of the circle.
- After 2 or 3 successive interventions, vary your defence. For instance run out with less speed and anticipate a combination of the attackers
- To learn more about running out during the penalty corner defense.

HINTS FOR THE FIRST DEFENDER RUNNING OUT:

- Generally, the first defender positions himself on the left side of the goalkeeper. He grips the stick with the right hand at the top of the handle.
- In case of any infringement of the rules by the attackers at the circle's edge, the first defender should immediately take the free hit.
- The goalkeeper must inform the first attacker about his intentions. Should he decide to run out very far, two defenders should accompany him on either side with the intention of preventing a combination between the attackers, or to block a shot when the ball is passed from the end line towards an attacker in an inside-forward position.

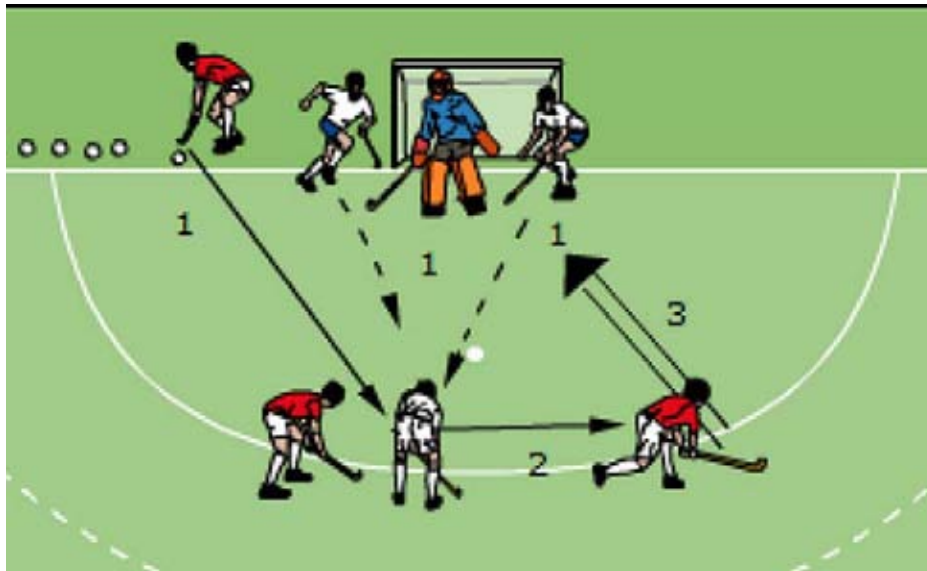
“Small details may dramatically change the outcome.”

8TH. EXERCISE: LOOKING OUT FOR UNDERSTANDING IN DEFENCE AND IN ATTACK

Two teams formed by 3 players compete in a simplified penalty corner game. One team attacks with 3 players (the stick stopper is the neutral player) and the other defends with a goalkeeper and two defenders rushing out.

To score, the attacking team must pass the ball after the stick stop at least once before it is directed towards the goal.

The defenders gain a point when the ball moves more than 3meter outside the circle, or if any of the defenders commit an infringement of the rules a penalty stroke is awarded.



After 5 penalty corners both teams change positions and functions. The game is over when both teams have defended and attacked 10 times. The team which scored the highest number of goals wins.

Variations:

- The teams are obliged to practise the drag-out from the side of the goal which the coach indicates.

* Practise the same game without any limitations to the attackers.

“Only a coach who has got enough brain can be simple.”

Coaching objectives:

- * To stimulate creativity and imagination in attack, the attackers should always look to surprise the opposing defence.
- In the presence of active defenders, the attackers should master 2 or 3 penalty corner variations.
- Gain experience concerning the effectiveness of determined penalty corner variations.
- To learn how to modify the attack considering the opponent's tactics in defence.
- To always look out for the rebound whether you are an attacker or a defender.
- To learn how to establish and improve understanding between the attacking players as well as between the defenders.
- To learn more about the functions of the second player running out.

**HINTS FOR THE SECOND DEFENDER:**

- The second defender runs out from the right goal-post with the main aim to anticipate and intercept with his front stick any pass between the opponents who are situated on the left side of the striker.
- At the same time he should also anticipate a possible return-pass to the player who pushed the ball in case he does it from the right side of the goal.
- Due to the danger of getting injured, tackling with the reversed stick should be avoided during the execution of the opponent's shot at goal.
- If the opponents hit the ball directly at the goal, the second defender should look out for a possible rebound of the ball from the goalkeeper's pads.

9TH.: PENALTY CORNER TRAINING "FIVE AGAINST FOUR"

This game is similar to the previous one but with an extra player in attack (on the right side of the stick stopper) and also in defence (on the left side of the goal). A neutral goalkeeper is also added.

Before a competition between both teams is organized, the coach practise with both teams the attack and defence, stopping the play various times at the moment the shot at goal is taken. In this way the coach verifies the positions of all defenders as well as those of the attackers. When all players involved have understood their specific task in attack as well as in defence, the competition may start.

After 5 penalty corners are completed, both teams change their positions and functions. The winning team is the one which scores more goals after having executed 10 penalty corners in attack and another 10 in defence. A penalty corner finishes with a goal, an infringement by an attacker or when the ball moves out of the 22.90meter zone.



Variation:

- The number of attackers is increased to six.
- The 6 defenders behind the centre line can now take part in the game.

Coaching objectives:

- * Allow the goalkeeper to gain valuable experience in the defense of penalty corners
- Improve the cooperation in defence, including the goalkeeper's play.

***“The secret of a good team is order and discipline.
One important function of the coach is to let each of his players
know what to do in which moment of the game.”***

SOME HINTS FOR THE GOALKEEPER'S PLAY:

- The goalkeeper is only allowed to play with full equipment, including helmet.
- The goalkeeper should generally move 3-4m out of his goal in order to reduce the shooting angle of the striker. He should be in a stationary upright position when the ball is trapped dead by the opponents.
- As well as the "flyer" (the first player running out), on his left side, the goalkeeper should anticipate the moment of the push-out with the aim to run out and assume in time an optimal ready- position to stop the shot.
- When the goalkeeper and his defenders have observed the opponents in their penalty corner routines in training or just before the match, they will find it easier to anticipate the exact moment of the push-out.
- If the goalkeeper assists the flyer before he runs towards the attackers, by putting one of his kickers behind the second foot of the flyer, this may help his team mate's acceleration but could result in poor concentration for the goalie's defensive task.
- Whenever the goalkeeper has not anticipated the hit, flick or pass of the striker, he should remain in an upright position.



- Should the goalkeeper decide not to come out of the goal, he should inform his team-mates of his intention.
- When the attackers decide to pass the ball, the goalkeeper has to adjust to the new position of the ball with small steps in order to be able to cover the shooting angle. The closer the goalkeeper is situated to the ball, the less angle the attackers have to score.
- The goalkeeper, after he has run out of the goal, should not let the forwards know his real intention. He should slightly incline his head and upper part of his body to the right side until his right knee almost touches the ground. In doing this, it looks as though he is going to lay down on his right side. Once the attackers have noticed his intention, they may decide to flick the ball. At this moment the goalkeeper returns to an upright position in order to save the flick or he lays completely down on his side in case the attackers hit the ball.

- To flop onto the ground from a standing position, this must occur quickly. First bend at the right knee, taking the body weight to the right side and then stretch out the upper part of your body, so that there is no gap under the right arm or stick, which is held firmly, half-way up the shaft. When lying down on the right side, with the pads one on top of the other and as the chest facing the ball, there should remain no gaps for the ball to travel underneath the goalkeeper into the goal. The legs are the first part of the body to go to the ground.
- The goalkeeper has to wait in a standing position until the ball is definitely going to be hit. Only at the moment of impact between the stick and the ball and after having processed all other relevant information he starts to assume a lying position. Both pads are together and should present a large barrier when the ball arrives onto them.
- The left hand should be used to stop and protect helmet and especially the throat. The small area not covered on the left side of the goalkeeper (who lies horizontally on the ground) is looked after a defender who moves slightly out of the goal.
- Frequent training of the penalty corner defence with tennis balls, mini hockey balls or official balls will build up the goalkeeper's confidence.

SOME HINTS FOR THE DEFENDERS BEHIND THE CENTRE LINE:

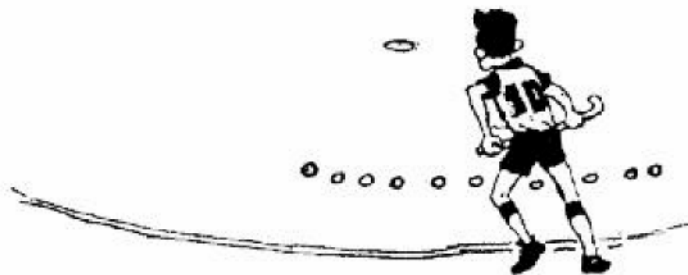
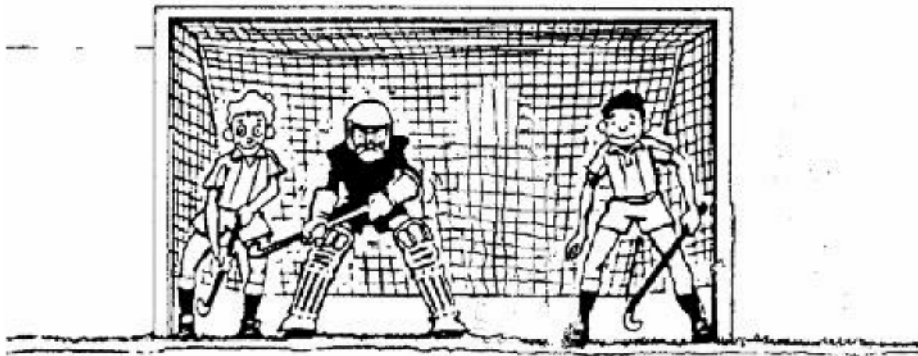
- Two of the six defenders should run as quickly as possible into the shooting circle to assist their 5 team mates in case an attacker doesn't hit the ball directly at goal or one of the fellow-defenders commits an infringement outside of the circle. In this latter case there being a free hit for the attacking team the presence of two or even more defenders is crucial for winning back possession of the ball.
- * The remaining four defenders must prepare for a possible counter-attack, anticipating a successful penalty corner defence with a following quick through pass. Two of them should remain close to the centre-line. There, they "serve as bridge" for the remaining two defenders who offer themselves in the depth of the field. Besides ensuring depth in their possible attacking action, they also should make sure of their possible counter-attack.

"To determine the player's performance, his level should not be compared with that of others, instead it should always be related to his own capabilities."

10TH. EXERCISE: IMPROVE THE DEFENCE ON THE GOAL-LINE

From a distance of 12m one attacker hits 10 tennis balls one after another to the goal which is defended by two opponents, one close to the right and the other close to the left goal post.

After every hit, the attacker has to leave the circle before he runs in again to strike the next ball. The two defenders who manage to save the maximum number of the 10 balls directed at the goal mouth are the winners.



Variations:

- Only one opponent in goal has to defend it.
- A goalkeeper is added in order to develop understanding between him and the two defenders.
- Instead of tennis balls, 10 mini hockey balls are hit at the goal which is defended by goalkeeper and two defenders.



Coaching objectives:

- The defender, situated very close to the left goal-post, must anticipate a save only with the front of his stick. Because of his position, he should not attempt to save the ball with the reverse stick (which would demand more time).
- The defender situated close to the right goal-post should come half a meter inside. This position will allow him to concentrate only on a front stick save, because all balls directed to his left side have to be saved by the goalkeeper.
- At the moment the ball is hit or flicked at goal, both defenders must step in front of the goal line, which they are not allowed to touch with their heels.
- In order to assure good balance, legs should be shoulder-wide apart and bent.
- The stick is held close to the defender's feet and on the ground with the curve facing the oncoming ball. This way, a minimum number of movements are necessary to trap the ball with the front of the stick.
- Should the ball rebound from the goalkeeper's pads, the defender closest to the ball has to get it before the arrival of any attacker. The ball should be cleared with a forehand slap with the player facing the centre-line or even the goal, thus protecting the ball with his body. When the ball is cleared, the stick has to remain on the ground in order to assure that the ball runs along the ground, a quick execution of the slap and accuracy in directing the ball to a team-mate or toward a zone, which is not controlled by opponents.



"It's a mistake to try to transfer without much thought the experiences gained in the teaching of adults towards the training of children."

8-on-8 Hockey

Level 4



Foto: Alfredo Ferrer (Terrassa)

"When intelligence, skill, and will work together, we can expect a masterpiece".

Having an integrated approach to learning, with practice in many simplified games and their variations or corrective activities, children are encouraged in the early levels of their development in hockey to continually interconnect their technical execution, tactical and overall knowledge, and other important capacities (e.g., vision, coordination, anticipation, determination, and physical qualities), all necessary elements for playing the game well.

This new model of development, unlike more traditional coaching, avoids the mistake of compartmentalizing the teaching of hockey in discrete disciplines (that is, techniques, tactics, physical fitness, or mental preparation). Instead, in this Hockey Development Model, children always experience and enjoy the game as a dynamic whole.



The step-by-step approach is one of the keys of success in this model, which uses the brain's innate ability to form memory-building connections. In the first three levels basic game situations are broken down into series of small steps. These levels gradually and methodically lead to the final goal of youth hockey: to enjoy and successfully play the 8-on-8 game, an ideal bridge leading the young athletes within two years' practice to first hockey game.

“Enthusiasm can convert even the toughest training into an enjoyable session.”

SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR 4-ON-4

These games are a logical continuation of the simplified games in earlier chapters for fewer players. They build on the skills the young players have already learned, and in turn prepare them realistically for 8-on-8 Hockey and, eventually, for the full game.

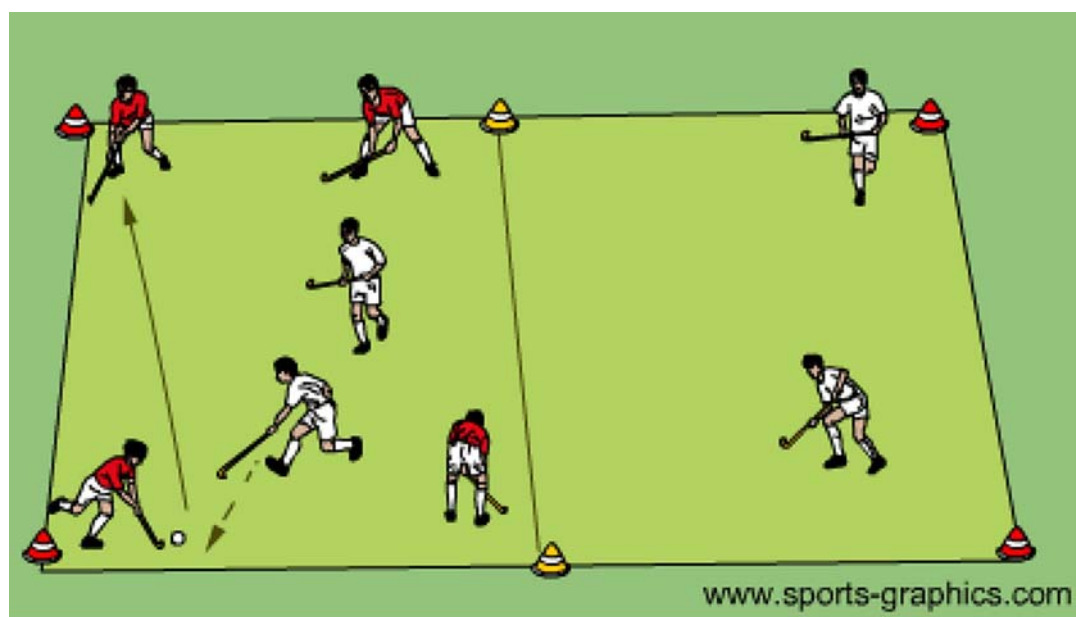
1 st. Simplified Game

4-ON-2 IN ADJACENT SQUARES

Set up the two 15-meter squares, as in the illustration, and form two teams of four players each. The team with the youngest players places its four players in one area, but the second team distributes its players between both areas: two in the first and two in the adjacent square. The four players of the first team try to keep possession of the ball as long as possible. Their objective is also to prevent the ball's running across the sides of the square or losing it to the two defenders, who are trying meanwhile to gain possession of the ball. If the second team's members do get possession, the defenders must pass the ball quickly to their team-mates in the field aside. Immediately after the pass, they join their team-mates in the adjacent square, followed by two former attackers who now defend in that new area. To be able to play a pressing defense against the four attackers, it is advisable that after every change of possession of the ball, the two freshest or closest defenders run quickly into the other area.

When the ball played by any of the four attackers leaves the playing area, a push-in is awarded to the two defenders to one of their team-mates in the adjacent square, with the defender at a distance of at least 5 meters.

The attackers aim is to keep the ball in their possession for 15 (later for 20) seconds (also see the 9th Simplified Game "Keep Possession of the Ball in the 2-on-1-situation" in chapter 4).



"An important fountain for the coach is the creativity of his players."

Variations:

- *Count only those passes that cover more than 5 meters.
- *The attackers try to keep the ball in their possession for 10 (later for 15) seconds (also see the 9th.Simplified Game "Keep Possession of the Ball in the 2-on-1 Situation").
- *After a successful pass is executed, the player must immediately run at least 5 meters in any direction.

Coaching Objectives:

- * Maintain a high level of concentration for at least two sets.
- * Avoid a 1-on-1 situation, instead looking out systematically for the "2-on-1."
- * Avoid entering into the range of action of any defender when you have the ball, and try to pass it as soon as you have committed the defender. Use direct or wall passes as often as possible.
- * As an attacker, learn to time dummies precisely to gain space, time, and self-confidence, especially when you are drawn into a corner of the field where fewer passing options exist.
- * Avoid indicating the direction of the intended pass to your opponents.
- * Learn to run away from the defenders and make yourself available for a pass in a zone that is not controlled by the defence and that is not too close to the ball carrier. Receiving the ball in a position far away from the defence allows you more time and space to control it and play it again.
- * Consider the movements of your team-mates and make yourself available in a zone not already occupied by one of them..
- * Pass the ball with speed and accuracy.
- *Learn to lift the ball over the outstretched stick of a defender when the latter one tackles with the whole stick placed horizontally on the ground. Avoid indicating the direction of the intended pass to your opponents.
- * Bend your legs and keep your centre of gravity as low as possible to the ground when defending.
- * Invite the ball carrier, through a body movement, to play the ball in the direction you want him or her to pass.
- * Be aggressive when you defend, prepared to go full out to reduce the time and space at the disposal of the attackers.
- * Consider the position of your defender team-mates before you go for the ball. The defence is generally more effective against attackers situated in a corner of the field.

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Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:**Where the two team-mates of the two defenders should ideally position themselves in the grid aside? Explain why!***It would be ideal when the 2 team-mates offer themselves for a pass as far away as possible from the center line which separates the 2 grids. Doing so they will have sufficient time to receive and control the ball (as the defenders are far away) as well as to decide upon the next move***What are the characteristics of a good pass?***A good pass always reaches a team-mate who is not immediately put under pressure by a defender.**A good pass is not executed too early or too late and allows a team-mate to play the ball in more favourable conditions.**A good pass has sufficient speed and has been disguised for not allowing the defenders to read the intention of the passer.**A good pass is generally played along the ground where it can be controlled easier and quicker than an aerial pass.***Why aerial passes should be avoided when maintaining the possession of the ball?***Passes along the ground can be controlled with more ease and also quicker.***Tell me when in this particular game arises the ideal moment to pass the ball?***When being put by an opponent under full pressure, the attacker should better pass the ball. That means that the pass is born by a necessity.***Explain what is the task of a player who passed the ball with success!***Immediately after his successful pass he should move out of his position and offer himself again in an area not controlled by any opponent.***When the team's objective is to maintain the possession of the ball should you pass the ball into the run of your team-mate or directly into his front-stick?***To facilitate the team-mate's reception the ball should be passed directly into his front-stick.****“Intelligent coaches will hold back their knowledge to get the best out of others”*****John Whitmore**

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When do you have to play the oncoming ball directly (with one touch) and when you decide to control it?

In case an opponent presses me in the moment of receiving the ball, I play a first touch pass, and deny controlling it as this involves risks of losing its possession.

In case an attacker loses the possession of the ball, what we expect him to do?

The attacker (as well as all his team-mates) should switch immediately to defensive functions without creating a pause between attack and defence.

To maintain the possession of the ball when the attackers should pass the ball and when they should dribble it?

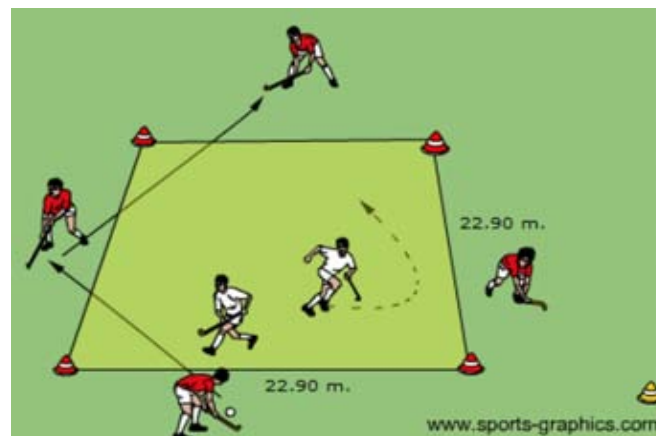
In the moment a defender presses the ball carrier the latter has to pass it to a better-positioned teammate who has no defender close to him. In case the ball carrier has no option to pass the ball at all he keeps it and dribble it toward an unoccupied zone from where he may contact with any of the other 3 teammates.

What are the tasks of the two defenders to get the ball away from the 4 attackers?

Once the ball is in a corner of the playing field one defender approaches the ball carrier in a diagonal line. This particular line of approach obliges the ball carrier to pass the ball into the open space what the covering defender anticipated. He is then able to press the receiving player whilst controlling the ball.

Corrective Games:

Four players place themselves around an 12-meter (22.90 meter) square without being allowed to enter it. They should pass the ball to each other in such a way that it always runs along the ground and crosses two sides of the square before being received and controlled. Two defenders inside the square try their best to prevent the four external players from executing the passes during 2 minutes of play. After 2 minutes, the two defenders switch roles and positions with two of the attackers. The game is over when every player has defended for 2 minutes.

**Variations:**

- Only first-time passes (no control of the ball is allowed before it is passes) across two of the lines count.
- With more advanced players the coach may oblige the players to use only one determined technique for passing (slaps or sweep slaps with both hands together on the handle or with the hands separated). See also "The Technique of Passing the Ball" in "Passing, Receiving and Shooting Games"-Level I (chapter 3).

- The team of 4 attackers tries to play as many passes as possible. To help to motivate all players involved, call out every pass loudly. Each team tries to complete first 15, and later 21 passes, to win the first set. The winning team is the one that attains the established number of passes in two sets.
- A fifth attacker is introduced, positioned inside the square to receive a pass from one of the four team-mate players outside the square. They may choose between a pass across two lines to another external player (to score 1 point) or to the fifth player inside the square. Every control of the ball by the fifth player with a subsequent pass to a team-mate outside the square counts 3 points.



Photo: Alfredo Ferrer

“Techniques and tactics are like two wheels of a vehicle which move simultaneously.”

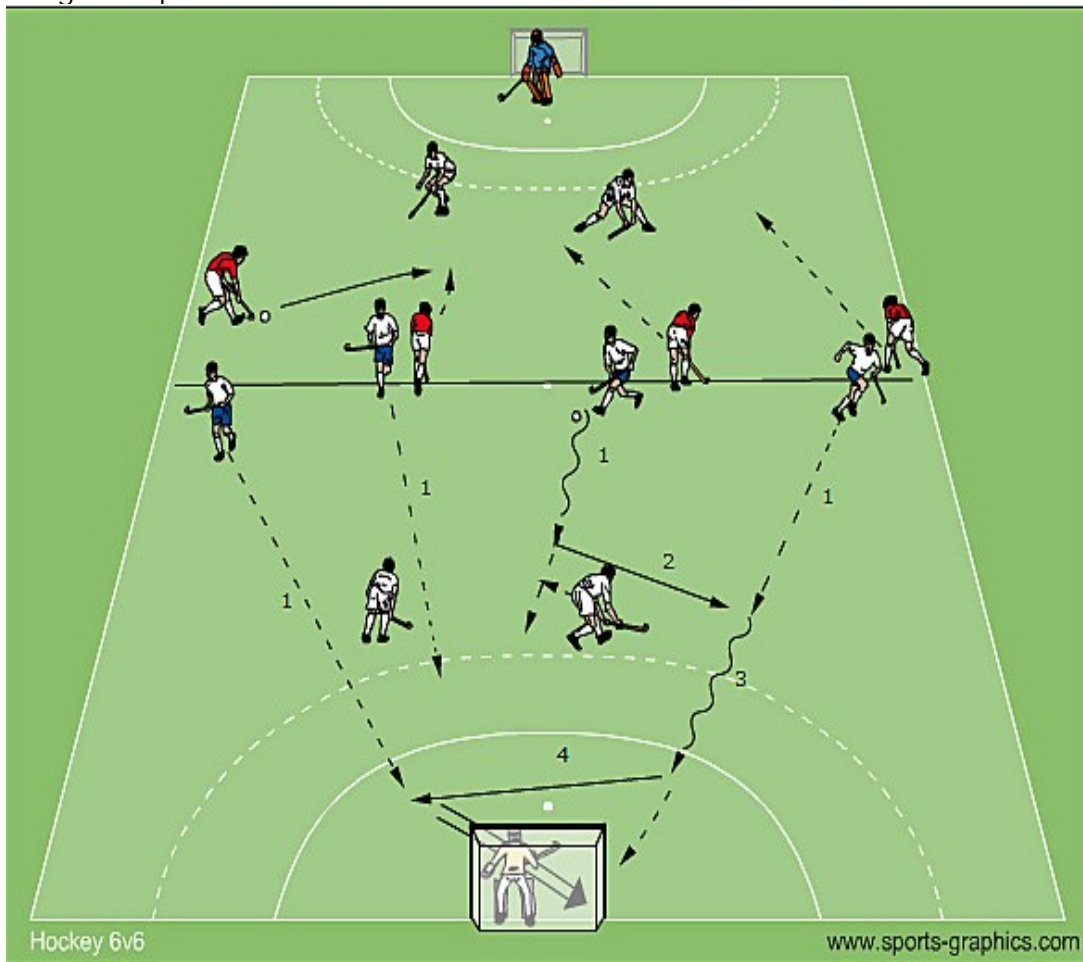
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2nd. Simplified Game

FAST ATTACK 4-ON-2 WITH THREE TEAMS

The game is played with three teams, each having four players, on a 6-a-side or 8-a-side hockey field. To start play, give a visible signal to two of the teams, both on the centerline and in possession of a ball. They attack their respective goals in opposite directions. Two players of the third team defend each of these goals (see illustration). The team that manages to score first wins. When the two defenders and neutral goalkeeper gain possession, they must clear the ball across the centreline. After five attacks and a complete rest in between them, the three teams rotate until each team has defended 5 times and attacked 10 times.

After each attack the coach invites the players with his questions to find the most effective attacking moves to overcome the three opponents, the two defenders and the goalkeeper.



Variations:

- Instead of starting from the circle line, the defenders come in from 10 meters behind any sideline, or even start being on the same centreline in order to pursue and stop them from scoring.
- The attack begins from a limited area (15 by 15 meters marked close to the centreline, sideline, or both), positioned in the left or right wing.

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Coaching Objectives:

- Use long, direct passes in preference to horizontal passes.
- Attack in a diamond formation, that gives width and depth.
- Try as often as possible to make a first-time play.
- Gain experience in goal scoring.
- As defenders, learn to delay and channel the attack.
- As defender, learn to approach the attacker in a correct way.

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:**Tell me in which way you execute your passes the ball during a fast break?**

Preferably through or diagonal passes should be played into the run of team-mate who collects the ball in a zone, which at that moment has not been controlled by any opponent. Square passes as well as long runs with the ball gives the opponent the possibility to regroup.

Instead of receiving the ball, look and then pass the ball should be passed as often as possible with one touch. i.e. combining the reception of the ball with a direct pass.

How the ball should be collected in a fast attack?

Neither the ball nor the attacker should be stationary. Receiving the ball on the run without stopping it at all is a must. The technique of reception and control of the ball should be executed in such a way that no time is lost to start with the next attacking move.

How a shot at goal should be taken to conclude a fast attack?

Most of the shots at goal are direct ones (first touch) without a previous control of the ball.

What are the tasks of the two defenders who play in a numerical inferiority (2-on-4-situation)?

Before they face the ball carrier and instil him to pass the ball they should quickly retreat to delay the fast attack, trying to accompany the ball carrier s long as possible and then force him to pass the ball toward to a wing, which finally should be channelled away from the goal.

Corrective Games:

Consult the dribbling games and program of simplified games for 2 on 2 (chapter 4) or for 3 on 3 (chapter 5) for some good choices of remedial games.

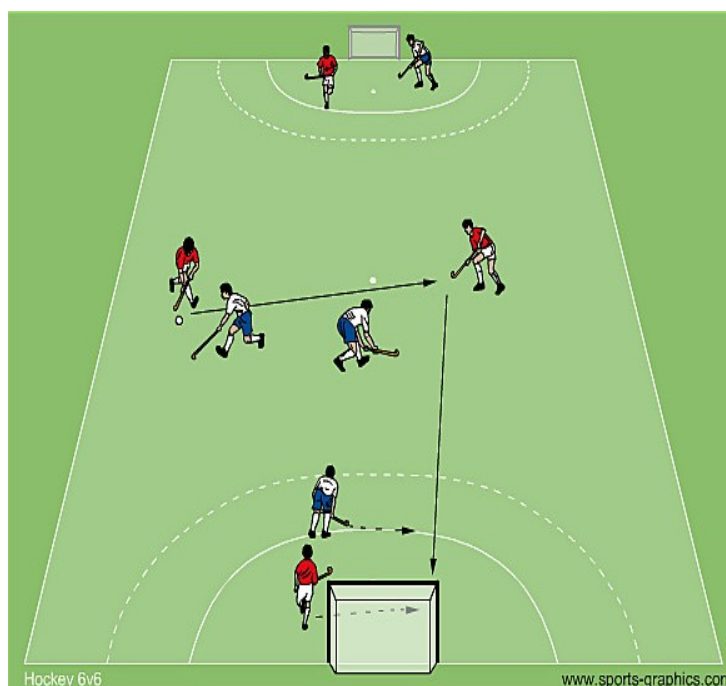
“To get an appropriate training effect you must take training harder than the game. Training often has to be designed to be physically, mentally and tactically more complex and difficult than match play. Training should take place at the edge of our capacity.”

Ric Charlesworth

3rd.Simplified Game THROUGH PASSES TO A "SHADOWED" FORWARD

Review the rules for the 8th.Simplified Game in chapter 5. This game is played on a 6-on-6 hockey field by two teams. Each team has two midfield players (who play between the two extended shooting circles), one forward (always situated in the opposing circle), and a fourth player who defends (intercepts any potential pass to the front runner) while remaining exclusively on the circle line.

The two midfield players in possession of the ball try to pass to their forward, sending the ball into the opposing circle once the forward becomes available for a through pass behind the defender. After controlling the ball, the front runner attempts to score, first without and then against a neutral goalkeeper. During the first practices of the simplified game none of the players may leave his assigned zone. Every 5 minutes the midfield players of each team change positions and functions with their team's forward and defender.



Variations:

- Once the ball has entered the shooting circle, any midfield player or the defender may run into the area to support the "outlet" player or to defend. Any attacker may score now.
- To learn the attack from the second line, participants apply the rule that only the midfield players may score after having served the ball to the front runner.
- Advanced players should practice the through pass to a forward, who is closely marked by a defender inside the circle. Also have the players review the 7th.and 8th.Simplified Games for teams of two players (chapter 4) to improve their ability at playing through passes and to work on the reception and control of the ball while being marked. Use also the Mini-Hockey field.

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Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Which requisites are necessary to play a successful through pass to a front runner ?

Before a through pass is delivered the ball carrier has to perceive and analyze the game situation in order to identify the availability of a zone in which the ball can be delivered. Then the passer should agree visually with the potential receiver (eye contact) to find out whether he is ready to communicate with him. Finally with a cue (head- or hand movement), which the opponent is not aware of, the potential receiver should indicate to the passer where he wants him to serve the ball with a correct direction and sufficient speed.

The midfield player with the ball has the choice between 3 different attacking moves. Which one he chooses in which situation?

His 1st option is a through pass to an unmarked front-runner and in case this is not possible, he looks for a 2nd. option which is a pass to a better positioned teammate in the same zone and as 3rd. option he carries the ball out of the range of action of the defender, shielding it with his body to gain some time or receive different passing angles.

Which position a front runner should assume when receiving long passes out of the midfield?

A side-on position allows him to see the passer as well as the defender (and the goal) behind him. Furthermore the side-on position allows him to continue his attacking move much quicker (may be a shot at goal) without being obliged to lose time for his turn

When an ideal opportunity arises in a game to play a through pass?

This happens immediately after having recovered the ball from the opponent. A through pass is then more successful as most of the opponents are still having an offensive attitude and therefore none of our attackers is marked .

Which are the tasks of the two defending midfield players?

They should both restrict so much the space and the time of the two attacking midfield players that they are unable to communicate with their front runner and serve him with accuracy a through pass.



Photo: A. Wälti

Coaching Objectives:

In attack these are the main objectives:

- Maintain a high level of concentration during two periods of 5 minutes.
- Show strong communication and cooperation skills. The player who wishes to receive the ball should establish a visual agreement with the ball carrier, always signaling him where to pass the ball.
- Look up while dribbling the ball; after having analyzed the situation, using knowledge of the hockey game, select the most efficient pass.
- Give preference to a through pass over a square pass or dribble.
- Determine what to do next before receiving the ball to be able to continue the play as fluently as possible.
- Switch quickly from attack to defense when the ball is lost.
- Once the forward receives the through pass, his reception technique should consider the next move and the presence of a defender (see the last variation) to be able to score in less time.

In defence these are the main objectives:

- Quickly switch from defence to attack when the ball is won.
- Make the through pass difficult for the attackers by systematically reducing their space and time.
- Cooperate in defence, always considering the positions defence team-mates before executing a tackle.
- Read the play of the attackers to anticipate their intentions in time.

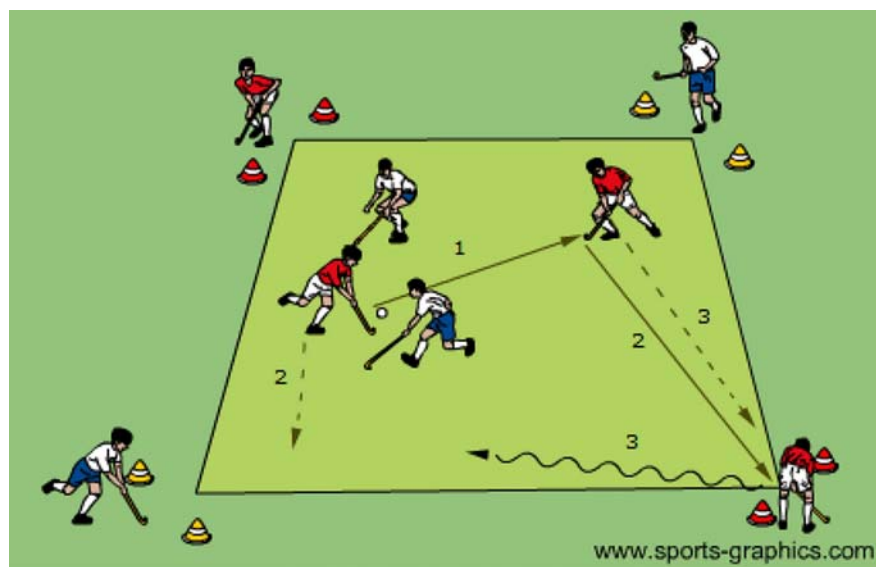
Corrective Games: Use the 8th. Simplified Game for 3-on-3 (see chapter 5).

“When the development of a player has been too quick, he may suffer a set back, but when it turned out to be too slow, set back may be him.”

4th.Simplified Game RESCUE PRISONERS

Mark off a square playing area that is 22.90 meters on each side, using a cone goal in each corner. Two players of one team compete against two players of the other team in this area. The teams' third and fourth players stand in diagonally opposite corners of the playing area (see illustration). The aim of the two attackers is to play 10 consecutive passes without letting the ball go out of the area's limits. The ball carrier may pass the ball to his team-mate who tries to receive in the centre of the square or to one of his two team-mates ("prisoners") in the diagonally opposed corners ("prisons"). When the prisoner receives the ball at his respective prison goal, he is released from standing stationary, moves out of the "prison," and dribbles or passes the ball to any other team-mate. The former passer then assumes the position in "prison."

Meanwhile, the two defenders in the centre do their best to prevent the team in possession of the ball from successfully passing. Every pass should be counted loudly enough to inform both the coach and opponents about the actual standing of the game. When the ball leaves the assigned playing area, a push-in is awarded, with the defenders at a distance of at least 3 meters. The team that manages to play 10 consecutive passes three times or that keeps the ball in its possession longer is considered the winner.



Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

What are the characteristics of a good pass?

- A good pass always reaches a team-mate who is not immediately put under pressure by a defender.
- A good pass is not executed too early or too late and allows a teammate to play the ball in more favourable conditions.
- A good pass has sufficient speed and has been disguised for not allowing the defenders to read the intention of the passer.
- A good pass is generally played along the ground where it can be controlled easier and quicker than an aerial pass.

What are the main tasks of the player in possession of the ball?

He has to play in an upright position which allows him to perceive and read the game situation in every second, telling him when and where to pass the ball or when and where to dribble it in an unoccupied

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zone of the grid. When he decides to pass the ball he should not indicate neither its moment nor its direction through any movement the opponent may anticipate.. After a successful pass he should move immediately into an unoccupied zone, communicating constantly with his two team-mates.

Why aerial passes should be avoided when the objective is to maintain the possession of the ball?

Passes played along the ground are quicker and easier to control than aerial passes.

Tell me when arises the ideal moment to pass the ball in this game?

When an opponent under full pressure puts the attacker with the ball, he latter should better pass the ball That means that the pass is born by a necessity.

Explain what is the task of a player who passed the ball with success!

Immediately after his successful pass he should move out of his position and offer himself again in an area not controlled by any opponent.

When the team's objective is to maintain the possession of the ball should you pass the ball into the run of your team-mate or directly into his front-stick?

To facilitate the team-mate's reception the ball should be passed directly into his feet.

When do you have to play the oncoming ball directly (with one touch) and when you decide to control it?

In case an opponent presses me in the moment of receiving the ball, I play a first touch pass, and deny controlling it as this involves risks of losing its possession.

In case an attacker loses the possession of the ball, what we expect him to do?

The attacker (as well as all his team-mates) should switch immediately to defensive functions without creating a pause between attack and defence.

When the attacker decides to maintain the possession of the ball or when he prefers to pass it?

In case there is no passing option he maintains the possession of the ball and dribbles it but when he is pressed by one or two defenders he should deliver the ball to a better positioned team-mate.

Variations:

Use these variations of the game in the following order of progress:

1. Draw a centreline to split the square in two areas. Now only the passes which travel from one area to the others count without prohibiting to pass the ball within the same area (but without getting a point as reward).
2. Only long passes which travel more than 10 meters count.
3. For improving first time play, only direct passes count.
4. A player can be released from "prison" only when the pass to him is precise (that is, through the goal cones in his corner).
5. Instead of remaining in the small "prisons," each of the four receivers chooses a position just behind one of the square's four sidelines from which to receive a pass from team-mates.

"From a practical point of view every training hour doesn't have 60 minutes. An hour consists of so many minutes you are able to profit from."

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6. Only one receiver has to stay outside the square, being always available to receive a pass anywhere outside the field (that is, 3-on-3 plus one outlet player).
7. All four prisoners must constantly run, using different speeds and going in any direction around the playing field to be in a position for receiving the pass.
8. For improving the play with the reverse stick, only reverse stick passes count.
9. To improve receiving and control of high ball, the prisoners are released only after an aerial pass.
10. Practice these variations with 5, 6, 7, and then 8 players on each team; increase the dimensions of the playing area as the numbers of players increases.

Coaching Objectives:

- Make it simple and look for a high percentage of success in your passes; avoid getting into a 1-on-1 situation and keep the ball out of the range of action of any defender.
- Be aware of all options before passing the ball. Be able to select the most effective move which is usually a pass to the player furthest away from the defenders.
- Develop accuracy and speed with any pass, also trying to disguise its direction.
- Also see the objectives of the 1st. Simplified Game in this chapter and of the next Simplified Game "Executing Consecutive Passes".



Photo: A. Wälti

“Mastering a skill doesn’t mean that the player knows to use it in precise moment during the game.”

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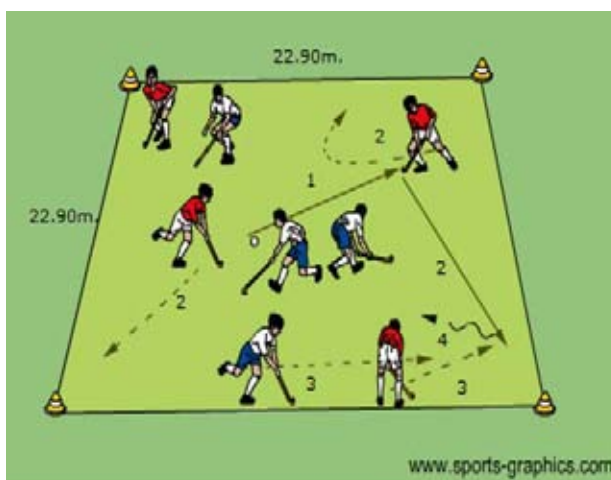
5th. Simplified Game

EXECUTING CONSECUTIVE PASSES

Two teams of four players compete in half of the area between the centreline and one 22.90 meter line of the 8-on-8 hockey field), trying to play with one ball possession as many passes as possible with a distance of at least 10 meters. The official hockey rules apply. After one team manages to pass the ball no change of positions and functions take place in order to allow the attackers but also the defender to gain important experience. During the interval after at least 6 trials of both teams doing the same functions the players are asked to discuss their performance levels. To win the game a team has to manage to play in 6 or 7 trials more long passes than the opponents.

Variations:

- Play the game in a smaller or wider area. In case the game is played in the complete zone between the centre line and one 22.90 meter line only passes with hits count.
- After the execution of a pass the same player has to move into another part of the area at least 10 meters away from the former location.
- See all variations in the Simplified Game "Rescue Prisoners".



Coaching Objectives:

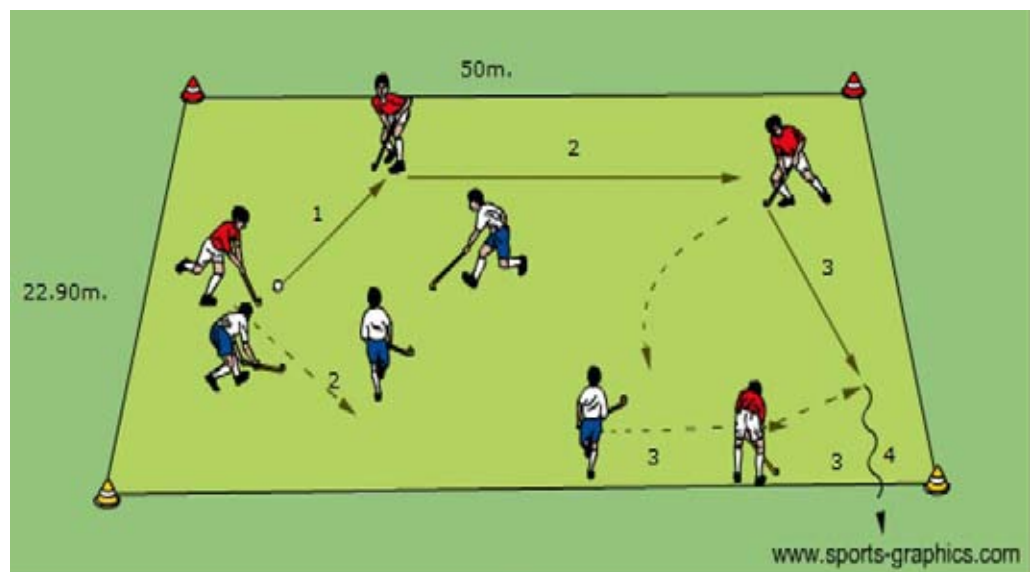
- See the objectives in the simplified game "Rescue Prisoners", and avoid a concentration of players close to the ball in order to make the defence more difficult.
- Read the game correctly to be able to select the most effective passing option.
- Learn to keep possession of the ball in critical situations, such as when opponents apply a pressing defence or when the ball carrier is drawn into a corner of the field.
- Know when to pass and when not to pass (to dribble instead).
- Learn to shield the ball with the body.
- Add width and depth to the attack in order to stretch the opponent's defense; the attackers without the ball should constantly be ready to receive in those zones of the playing area less under the control of the defenders.
- Before the execution of any pass, ensure that some visual agreement occurs between ball carrier and receiver.
- Play as a team and reduce individual play (especially 1-on-1) as much as possible.
- As defenders, place more players close to the ball than the attackers do; read the game to anticipate the next moves from the attacking side and to condition their play.

6th.Simplified Game

DRIBBLING ACROSS THE OPPONENT'S END LINE

Two teams of four players each compete between the centreline and the 22.90 meter- line in the whole width of the hockey field, aiming to dribble the ball under control across the opposing end line (that is, 22.90 meters away). The game starts with a bully in the centre of this playing area. All other rules are the same as the official ones.

Duration of the game: three periods of 3 minutes each, with intervals of 2 minutes in which both teams should rest and elaborate the tactics for the next 3 minutes' play.



Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

What the 4 attackers have to do to control the ball on the opposing goal line defended by 4 opponents?

When 4 attackers play together they should do that in a rombus formation. Two are assuring width, one on the right and the other one on the left side while the other two assure depth upfield and depth downfield. Maintaining this shape whilst constantly switching positions will make the defence of the 4 opponets very difficult. The attackers should always look out for creating 2-on-1-situations and avoid 1-on-1-situations which may give the opponents the opportunity to counterattack.

Which pass is for the ball carrier the most efficient one ?

To encourage the ball carrier to look out for through passes, one of his teammates should offer himself behind the defense where he receives the ball and score. In this simplified game there is no off-side as is the case in the 7-a-side soccer game where off-side only starts from a 13-meter –line.

How a front-runner should receive the ball?

He should assume preferably a side-on position which allows him a quick continuation of the attack. Besides this position allows him much better vision or scoring at the end of the playing field.

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When we have to accelerate and when we have to slow down our attack?

A change of pace is always indicated when playing in a numerical superiority (for instance 4-on-3) or when a gap appears in front of the ball carrier.

Slowing down the attack is a necessity when one team-mate is in an offside position, when none of the team-mates had offered him in an optimal position or when most of the attackers are exhausted.

Where, generally, on the field there is some space to be exploit?

Generally there is some space available on the opposite side where the ball is played. This space should be used systematically with long, flat and speedy passes into the run of a team-mate.

What should we do that the pressing defence of the opponent doesn't work?

The ball carrier should anticipate the press of the opposing team and pass the ball backward to a retreated team-mate who then clears the ball up field to an unmarked front-runner or midfielder player.

What are the key points for executing successfully a throw-in?

No risks should be taken with a throw-in. It's execution should happen quickly and before the opponent has time to mark all of our players. When playing a 7-a-side game the attackers and defenders should not that the offside rule is out of force what could be considered as an advantage for the attacking team.

What a player has to consider when executing a free hit?

He should execute it as quickly as possible (especially when one team-mate is unmarked) to surprise the opponent's defence or he does it very slowly to study carefully all possible passing options.

In which way a defender should mark his personal opponent without the ball?

He should always position himself between the opponent and the goal but slightly more inside and closer to the goal than his opponent. From this position he should perceive the ball and (!) his opponent at the same time.

When a defender should mark the opponent and when he should mark the space?

The way of marking depends on the distance between the defender and the attacker. When the ball is close, let's say less than 15 meters, the defender should mark his opponent very closely, being more inside and closer to the goal than the attacker. In case the ball is further away the marking is less tight. This allows the defender to intercept passes in the space as well as passes directed into the feet of the opponent.

How a defender should position him in relation to a ball-carrying attacker?

He should never face him in a frontal position as this gives the attacker the opportunity to beat him on either side. He better meets him in a side-on position, which allows him to accompany the attacker as well as to channel him into the desired direction (for instance toward a side line or toward a team-mate who covers him).

Which other considerations should the defender take into account when he faces 1-on-1-situations?

He should always initiate his tackle from a tiptoe position (on the balls of the feet), keep the weight of his body equally distributed between both legs, to maintain balance he should not separate both legs more than shoulder-wide and put one foot in front of the other. He should bend the knees slightly to be ready to tackle at every second when the ball may be too far away from the stick of the attacker. When executing the tackle it must be a very quick and surprising one without putting all the weight of the body to the front leg as this prevents him from executing in case of a miss a second tackle. Whilst observing carefully the ball (not the stick of the opponent), he should have in his vision the other opponents and also his team-mates close to the ball. In case his tackle was successful he should switch as quickly as possible from a defensive pattern to offence.

Which tasks have a defender who is close to a 1-on-1-situation?

Without losing attention to his personal opponent, he should anticipate a possible failure of his team-mate and cover the space at his shoulders to be explored by the attacker.

"It's a widely accepted fact that improvement in performance is partially related to the quality of the feedback given to the players after having completed a determined play."

D. Millmann

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Variations:

- Before competing in the above described game, youngsters should practice the following variation of it: each team has five attacks, starting always from their proper end line. When they touch the ball for the first time, their opponents initiate the defence from the opposite end line. The attack finishes with either a goal or a loss of the possession of the ball to the defenders. The defenders may not counterattack after having defended with success, however. The team that scores more goals in 10 attacks is the winner.
- More advanced players should practice in a smaller playing area (easier to defend) or in a much bigger area (to make the defence very difficult).
- This variant might be called “Make It and Take It.” After scoring, the attackers *continue* to attack. They immediately turn around to attack the opposite goal, which should be defended by the same opponents. The team that manages to score more goals in 5 minutes of play is the winner.
- Instead of attacking two wide goal areas, the attackers now try to score in either of 6-meter-wide goals), situated in the wing positions on the two end lines.
- Each team is in possession of one ball. To score the team must control one ball on the opposing end line and also be in possession of the other one.
- The game is played by three teams on two subjacent areas, that means between both 22.90 meter lines. In the first area the first game 4-on-4 is played as described in the original version. Once the team which starts from the first 22.90 meter line, manages to controls the ball on the centre line ,defended by a second team of 4 , these defenders have to retreat and position themselves on the opposite 22.90 meter line. Meanwhile the attackers continue to attack in the same direction, facing behind the centre line a third team of 4 players which comes in to defend the second 22.90 meter line.

Wins the team, which is able to score in both goals (centre line and 2nd. 22.90 meter line) and on its way back score again against the last defenders on the centre line and subsequently against the first defenders who now defend the first 22.90 meter line.

“Traditional coaching had been entirely teacher-directed and largely technique orientated, whilst today emphasis is directed on tactical problem solving through games play.”

Lynne Spackmann

Coaching Objectives:

In attacking these are the main objectives:

- Play with a "rhombus formation" and ensure width and depth in the attack.
- Lift the head while dribbling the ball to collect information that will allow you to pass the ball to the best-situated team-mate.
- Know when to change the rhythm of the attack; learn to accelerate at the correct moment.
- Learn to be available as receiver in a part of the playing area that is not controlled by the defenders; this zone is usually further away from the ball, at the opposite side of the field from where the ball is.
- Select the most effective passing option; don't risk long passes when the likelihood of success is poor.
- Know what the correct option is for beating a pressing defence.
- Know how to execute free hits and the push-in successfully.
- Avoid getting into a 1-on-1 situation, which has little likelihood of success; instead aim to create 2-on-1 situations through systematic support of the ball carrier.

In defending these are the objectives:

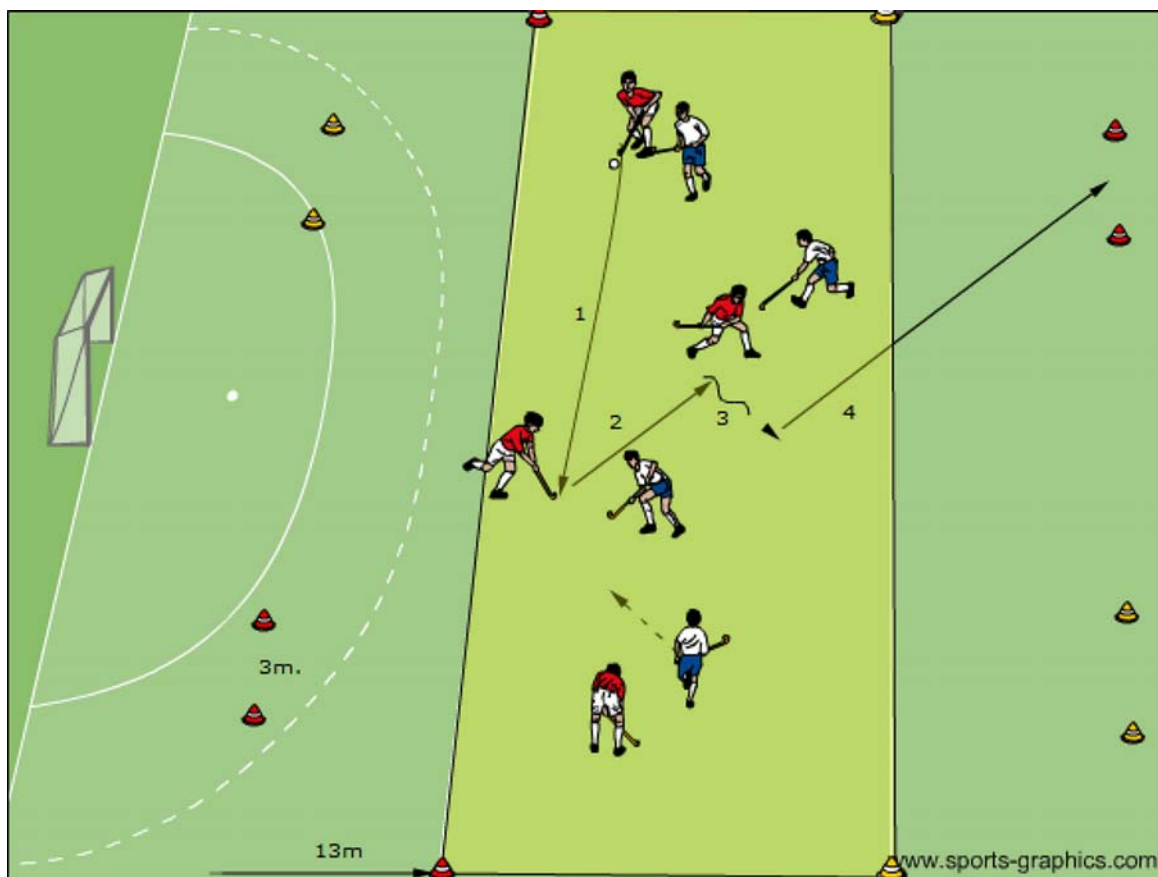
- Position yourself between the opponent and the proper goal, staying closer to the centre of the field than is the opponent.
- Scan the game situation, observing in particular the ball but remembering to keep both the opponents and your team-mates in your field of vision.
- Ensure width and depth in your defence.
- Anticipate the ball carrier's intentions.
- Follow the game situation and practice a combined marking (marking closely in your assigned zone), a zonal-marking, or a player-to-player marking with constant communication among all four defenders.
- Use a side position to tackle an attacker in full control of the ball.
- Maintain a high level of concentration during the game.

"With hockey happens the same as with music: to survive you have to be always up-to-date. You can't sing everlastingly the same songs. It's essential to renew your repertoire."

7th.Simplified Game

LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD

Two teams of four players only compete between the two 22.90 meter line of the a 8-on-8 hockey field. The game lasts for three periods of 5 minutes each. Start with a ball toss in the centre of the field. Each team then tries to gain possession of the ball and pass it, pressured by the defence of the opponents, through one of the two goal areas (marked by cones set 3-meters apart) established on the end line on both sides of the goal (in case a 8-on-8 field is used) or on the full field some 13 meters behind the opponent's end line (22.90 meter line). No player may leave the assigned playing area. It helps the flow of play to place some reserve balls on each end line in order to restart the game without delay after any long pass. While the attacking team does its best to create sufficient space and gain some time to prepare a long, precise pass, the opponents defend aggressively. Defenders try to always outnumber the attackers in the zone where the ball is being played. The young players will quickly learn that immediately after a successful tackle, there is an ideal opportunity to counterattack with a long pass.



“Man must live in the middle of risk and safety. Risk leads to self destruction, safety leads to stagnation. Between both lies survival and progress.”

Gunnar Breivik

Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

When arises an opportunity to play a through pass?

Generally spoken always immediately after having conquered the ball from an opponent. An intelligent defender, before executing his tackle, has already analysed what happens in front of him.

In case his tackle was successful he immediately plays a through pass to a front runners or midfield players which are now marked with less attention as their defenders had to support their attack.

Speak about the reception and the control of the ball!

Before a ball is received the player should know what to do with it. Instead of controlling it in a stationary position the ball should remain on the move, being orientated in a determined direction in which the game is going to continue (orientated control).

What are the characteristics of a successful through pass?

First that the pass reaches its target (a team-mate). This demands apart of a perfect timing, accuracy, and speed and as less height as possible in order to facilitate the control of the ball.

Variations:

Have players try the variations in the progressive order listed here:

1. A neutral player supports whatever team is in possession of the ball.
2. At least three passes should be played in the centre of the field before a long pass can be executed.
3. A fifth attacker offers himself behind either of the two goal areas to receive the through pass and then finish the attack with a shot into the goal.
4. Instead of introducing an attacker as in the previous variation, a defender now stays close to the cone goals, trying to intercept the long pass to either of the goals.
5. Play the same game (variation 4) on a smaller field.
6. Two attackers, watched by one defender between them, are positioned behind each of the two cone goal. Their aim is to collect a long pass out of the midfield through one of the two pairs of cones, despite the defender's efforts to the contrary.
7. Remove the goals (cones) but station the two attackers more or less at the same place, about 13 meters behind the 22.90 meter line when you play on the full field or on the end line when you play on the 8-on-8 hockey field. After receiving the long through pass, the attackers must score, despite the active presence of one defender and a goalkeeper.
8. Play as in Variation 7, but include a second defender. Through his presence both defenders can now mark closely.
9. Play as in Variation 8, but add a third defender who acts as a free player (sweeper) behind his two defenders, giving them cover.
10. Allow any midfield player to leave his assigned area after any successful reception and control of a through pass by one of the front runners.

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11. See variation 10. Only midfield players may score. This obliges them to support their front runners immediately after the through pass is made.
12. Allow any player during the development of the game to interchange his position and function with any other team-mate.
13. Play the variation 12 with 5 midfield players in each team. This way each team is composed by 11 players: a goalkeeper, a sweeper, two close marking defenders, 5 midfield players and 2 front runners.

Coaching Objectives:

- Fulfil the coaching objectives of the previous simplified games.
- Aim to execute a long pass immediately after the recovery of the ball from the opponent.
- Learn to disguise the direction of your pass.
- Analyze the game situation before receiving the ball to find out whether a long pass is possible. * Always look out for the long pass, but when its execution doesn't seem likely to lead to success, forget about it and instead choose a play that ensures your team's keeping possession of the ball.
- As defenders, try to reduce the space and time at the disposal of the ball carrier and his supporting players; after having recovered the ball, switch quickly to attack.

Corrective Games:

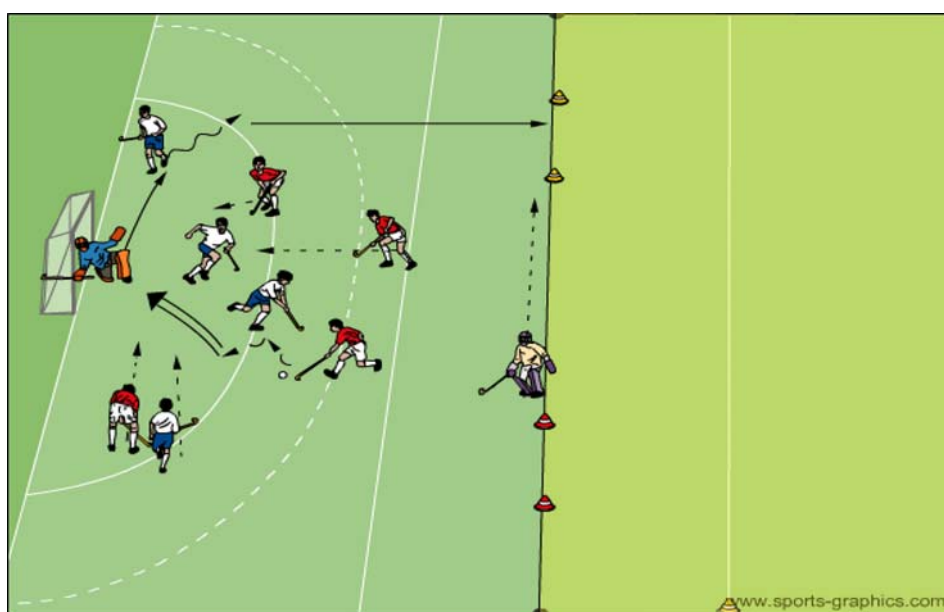
- Use the 2th, 5th, and 7th. Simplified Game for teams made up by 2 players, the 5th, 8th, and 10th. Simplified Game for teams made up by 3 players and the 3rd. Simplified Game for teams made up by 4 players.

“An obstacle or a difficulty is only an opportunity to improve and to progress.”

8th Simplified Game

SCORE, DEFEND, AND COUNTERATTACK

Form two teams of four players each who will compete in one half of the 6-on-6 or 8-on-8 hockey field. Use an official goal and add two 3-meter-wide goals marked by cones on the centreline or 13 meters behind the 22.90 meter line. It's also a good idea to add one neutral goalkeeper on each team. Start the game with a bully in the centre of the 22.90 meter line. Both teams toss a coin to decide which will first attack the official goal and which will instead try to score by a pass from any distance through one of the two cone goals. For any infringement of the rules consult the 7-on-7 or 8-on-8 game rules, depending on the ages of the players. Duration of the game: four periods of 5 minutes each; at each interval the teams change sides and goals.



Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

Which factors influence your decision whether to execute a shot at goal or a pass to a team-mate?

There are many points to consider for instance the distance between the player with the ball and the goal, the shooting angle, the position, the number and the behaviour of the teammates close to the goal, the position of the goalkeeper in and out of his goal and finally also the number, position and behaviour of the defenders close to the goal.

When a shot at goal is taken, what are the tasks of the other attackers and defenders close to that goal?

Everyone should anticipate a possible rebound and try to position himself in such a way that they are able to score or to clear the ball out of the penalty circle. Coming too close to the ball is a frequent mistake carried out by the attackers whilst defenders should look to clear the ball always toward any of the sidelines.

Because of lack of time or too many players around the oncoming ball rebounds should be taken first time.

Why always the defending teams achieve better scores than the attacking ones?

This has something to do with a quick transition after losing possession of the ball. Generally attackers need more time to switch to defence than defenders do it to go in attack.

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An attacker has hardly time and space to conclude his attack with a shot at goal because a defender put a lot of pressure on him. What he should do to get an advantage against his defender?

When he carries out a shooting feint or any fake with his body he generally gains some time for concluding his attack.

Which hints you would give your attackers when a corner is awarded to them?

The ball should be directed to zones, which the goalkeeper and the defender have difficulties to control. The attackers should move in circles to get away from their markers and suddenly when the ball arrives go to meet it with speed, aggressiveness and courage.

Which hints you would give to your defenders to avoid success for the attackers in a corner?

Never hide behind an opponent. Position yourself on the same level with the attacker but closer to the goal (goal side).

Always keep an eye on him but also on the ball. Position yourself to see both at the same time.

Never wait for the ball to come to you. Better meet him as early as you are sure about its speed and trajectory. Anticipate or overtake your opponent. Don't forget to communicate with the other defenders .

Give me 3 basic rules for the push-in!

1. As quicker the push-in is taken, the less time the opponent has to build up his defence.

2. With a push-in in our own half we never take risks. Therefore it is advisable to pass the ball backward.

Which hints you would give to your defenders when the umpires award a free-hit close to your goal?

Immediately after one umpire awarded the free-hit ask one defenders to position himself behind the ball. This way the attackers can't surprise us and we will gain some time to organize our defence, marking the team-mates of the player who takes the shot. Watch always the ball and never turn away from it.

What a player has to consider when executing a free hit?

He should execute it as quickly as possible (especially when one team-mate is unmarked) to surprise the opponent's defence or he does it very slowly to study carefully all possible passing options. Dependant on the distance toward the goal a shot at goal is taken or a pass to an unmarked player in a better position should be executed

Coaching Objectives:

- * Strive for the objectives of the previous simplified games for four-player teams.
- Know how to play effectively in the opposing shooting area.
- Watch systematically for the goalkeeper's rebound.
- Know how to execute long corners, penalty corners, free hits and push-ins well.
- Gain experience in building up the defensive wall.
- Gain experience in the shooting circle..
- Know how to defend without giving away a penalty corner.

Corrective Games:

Review any of the previous simplified games as well as the "Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities" (chapter 3).

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9th Simplified game:

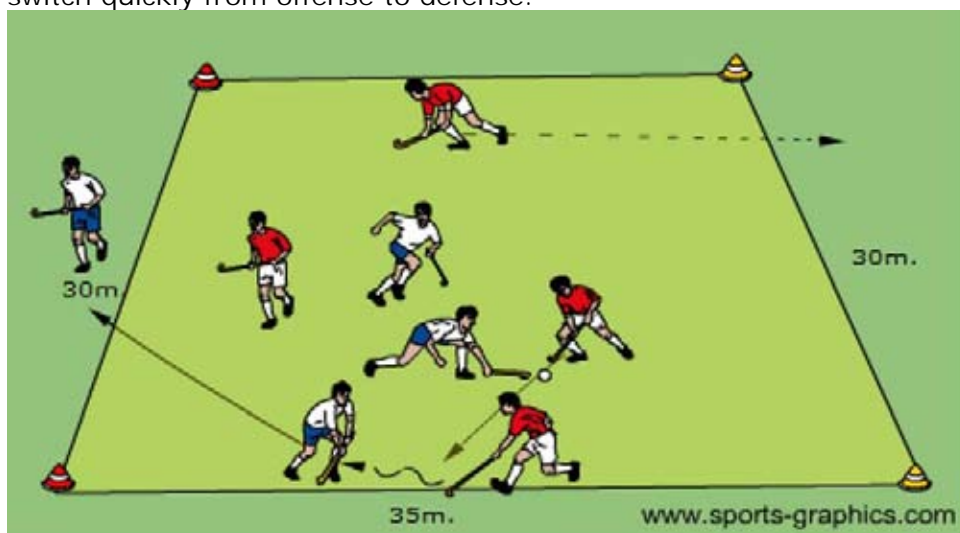
DEFENDING IN INFERIORITY (3 versus 4)

The game is played on a field 30m x 35 m. A team of 4 players attacks a 30m-wide cone goal, defended by 3 opponents only as their 4th. defender remains during the attack of 4 against 3 players outside of the field behind his team's cone goal. He may only step into the field when his 3 team-mates managed to recover and then pass the ball back to him.

Simultaneously with the back pass to him one of the former 4 attackers runs behind his goal-line until his team, now in inferiority, is gaining again the possession of the ball.

Players are obliged to rotate as defenders.

Due to these specific rules the defending team is never counter-attacking, thus allowing the new defenders time to organize their defense without being forced to switch quickly from offense to defense.



Possible questions for the players to develop their understanding and game intelligence:

When a defender should never try to tackle the ball carrier?

In case the ball is with carried by one attacker in a more or less central position then a tackle has few chances to be successful as the ball carrier has a wide variety of options for his next attacking move.

When arises the ideal moment for the 3 defenders to start their collective defence?

When the ball is passed to a wing the defender closest to him should quickly approach him not in a frontal but in a side-on position to offer or force the ball carrier to penetrate into the space close to the side-line where his attacking options and his time are limited.

What are the functions of the other two defenders when a wing is tackled by their team-mate?

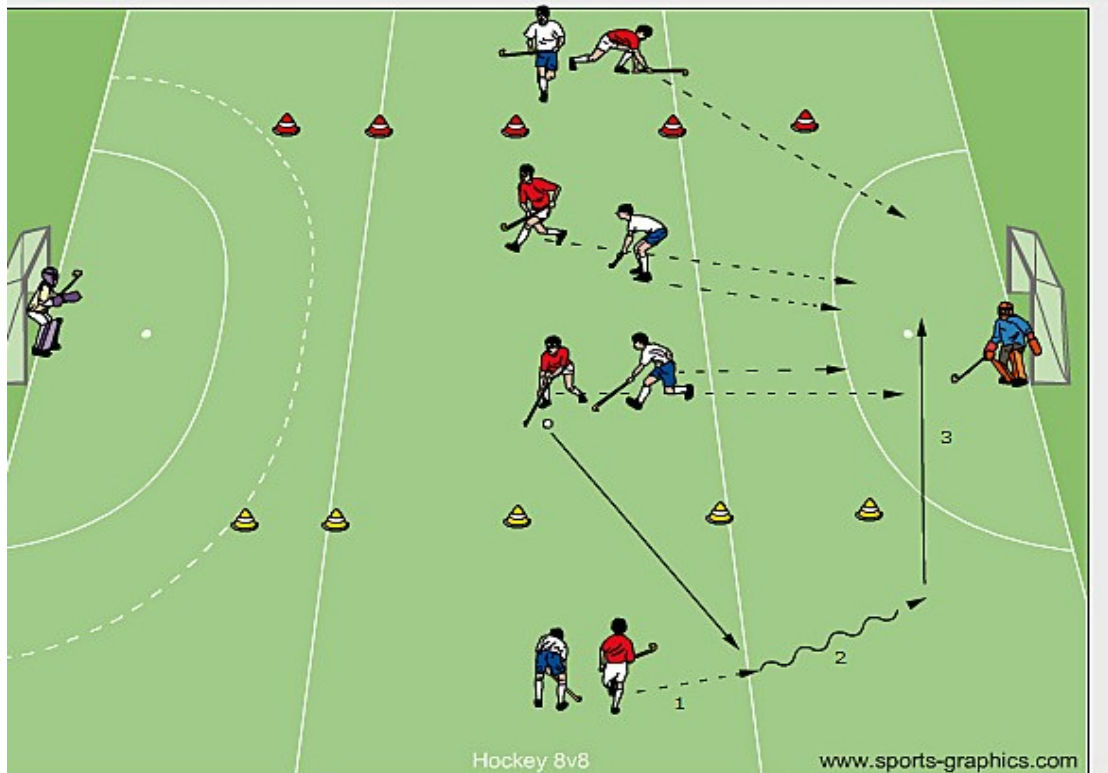
The second defender occupies a position close to the tackling defender but a little bit retreated compared to the first defender in order to cover him in case of a successful penetration of the wing. With his other eye he anticipates a possible square pass to the fellow attacker closest to him whilst the third defender level with the second only tries to intercept a pass directed to the third attacker. The fourth attacker furthest away from the ball carrier is the one to whom the defense dedicates less attention.

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10th. Simplified game

4-ON-2 WITH CENTERS AND DEFLECTIONS

Use the rules of the 11th. Simplified Game for 3 on 3 (see chapter 5) with two exceptions:



The game is now played by teams of four players and only one ball is used for both teams. Two players on each team start as wings, and two start in the centre of the field. The team that gains possession of the ball after the initial bully passes the ball to one of its two wings, who is marked by the opposing wing. Once a wing manages to control the ball within his limited zone with three consecutive touches, he may advance without opposition! After he arrives level with the circle, he centres the ball to one of his two team-mates in the central stripe. These team-mates should be supporting him during his dribbling, with the aim to then score with a deflection. They are opposed, however, by two defenders playing in the central stripe. Initially there are no goalkeepers. After 10 attacks the four players of each team rotate, until everybody has played in the three possible positions.

"The art of handling the different players of your team is nothing else than knowing to associate their ideas."

Variations:

Have players practice these variations in the order of progression given here:

1. The game is first played without defenders. Both teams attack, every one in possession of one ball (as described in the 1st. Simplified Game for 3-on-3 in chapter 5).
2. When the attackers manage to score frequently with a deflection, the game is made more complex and is played with one ball only. One of the two centre players of the opposing team is allowed to defend as a field player, while the other one remains on the centreline.
3. Follow variation 2, except that the only defender has to play as goalkeeper; the goalie can defend only with both feet on the goal line.
4. There are no limitations for the two opposing defenders in the centre stripe, once they realize that their team is not going to attack. In general, one of them runs quickly into the goal to serve as goalkeeper, while the second one tries to intercept the centre.
5. Play the rules of the original game (described above).
6. Play the original game with two neutral goalkeepers (see illustration).
7. The wings may choose between a center and a shot toward the goal, which is defended by a goalkeeper.
8. The wing who is not in possession of the ball may join his two attackers in the central stripe and participate in the goal scoring (making it 3-on-2).
9. Play as a free game except that a goal may be scored only with a deflection.

Coaching Objectives:

Use the same objectives as for the 1th Simplified Game for 3-on-3 (chapter 5).

Corrective Games:

Use the 1th Simplified Game for 3-on-3.

“It’s difficult to understand something which you haven’t experienced.”

SIMPLIFIED GAMES 5-ON-5

The following simplified games allow coaches to present their players with problems that are common in the 8-on-8 and 11-on-11 games.

1st Through 8th Simplified Games

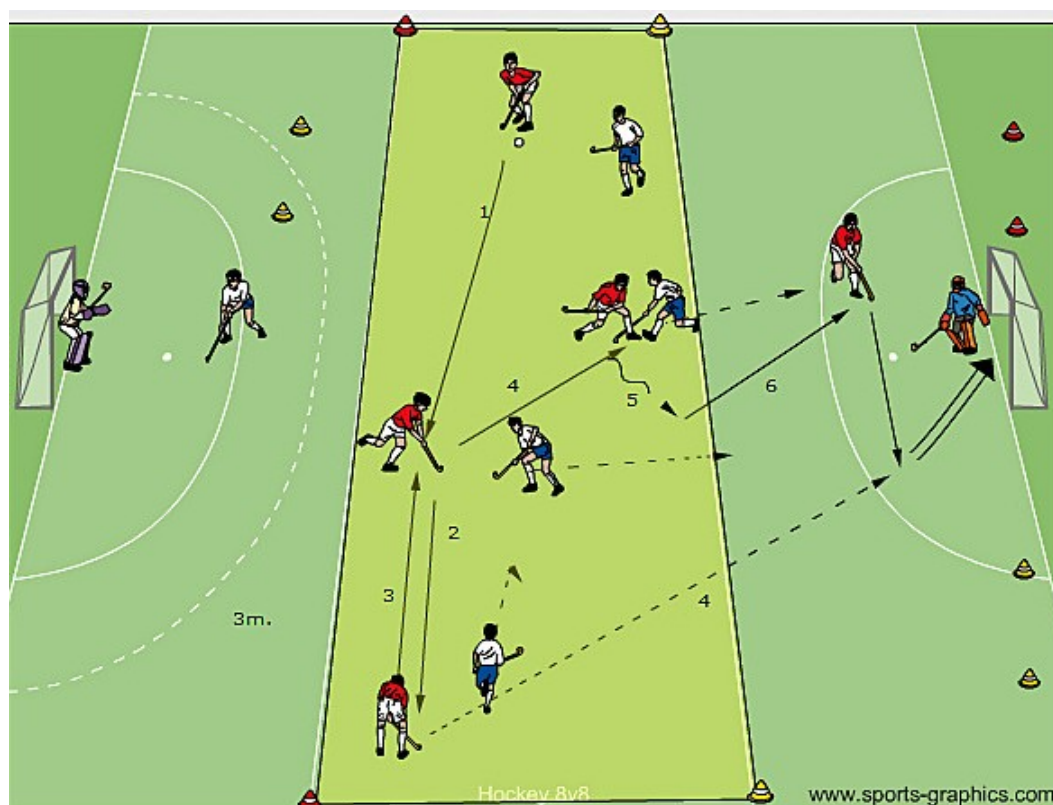
Please review the first eight simplified games for 4-on-4. All these games should be practiced with the same rules (including the same field dimensions and duration of the matches); simply add one more player on each team.

The training objectives and corrective exercises also remain the same for these more difficult and complex games as the ones given in the earlier simplified games for playing 4-on-4. Focus on the defensive experiences to be learnt from the first 8 simplified games before you progress to the practise of the simplified games 5-on-5!

9th. Simplified Game

5 - O N - 5 W I T H F A S T A T T A C K S

The 8-on-8 hockey field has three equal zones (22.90 meters by 50 meters). The game is initiated in the central zone or area. There, four players from each team try to keep possession of the ball for four and later five consecutive passes. After a team manages this or an even higher number of passes, its players must pass the ball to their front runner, close to the opposing goal. Players (attackers as well as defenders) may not leave the midfield before the ball has been played into the attacking zone. After the reception and control of the long pass, the player stationed in the end zone must wait for the support of team-mates (who run out of the midfield after executing the through pass), as he is not allowed to score. The conclusion of the attack is hindered by a neutral goalkeeper and by the opposing midfielders, who should run out of the midfield immediately after the long pass. The team that scores more goals after 10 bullies in the center of the midfield is the winner.



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Variation:

The game is played without an “outlet” player. All five players on a team remain in the midfield. A team may leave the midfield and attack the goal only after having achieved three (later make it five) consecutive passes. All other rules are the same.

Coaching Objectives:

These are the same as for the 8th Simplified Game 3-on-3 and the 3rd Simplified Game 4 on 4 (earlier in this chapter).

Corrective Games:

These are very similar to the 8th Simplified Game 3-on-3 (see chapter 5) and the 3rd Simplified Game 4-on-4 (earlier in this chapter).



“The road to success is covered with many obstacles, defeats and disappointments.”

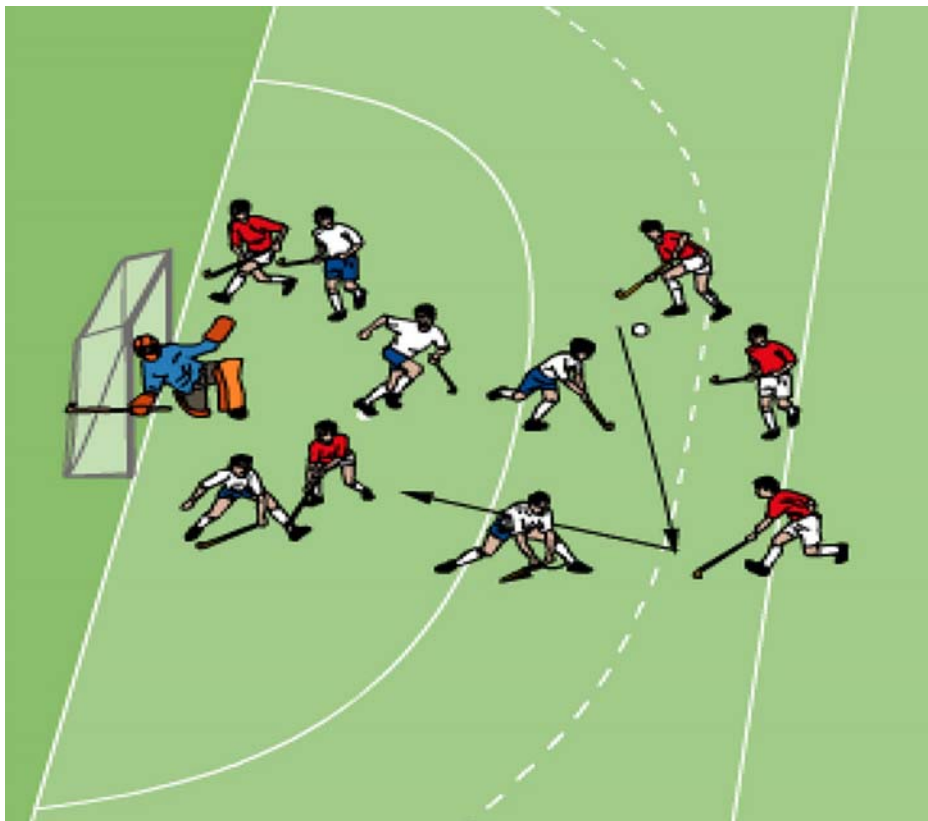
10th Simplified Game

THROUGH PASS TO AN ATTACKER IN THE CIRCLE.

Three defenders play inside the D with two team-mates defending in front of it against three attackers. The three attackers have the objective to serve the ball from outside the shooting circle to one of the two front runners who do everything to make themselves available for a precise through pass inside the D and then score with a deflection or after having controlled the ball.

When one of the 5 defenders conquer the ball, he has to clear it across the 22.90 meter line.

Duration of the game: 4 times 5 minutes with interchange of functions and positions between the two teams.



“Minds are like parachutes, they only function when open.”

LEVEL-4 COMPETITIONS: THE COMPLETE HOCKEY TEST

We recommend that you use the Complete Hockey Test twice in the season, at its beginning and end, to get a comparison between the players' performance levels early and late in the season—and through this comparison a true result about their grade of improvement.

This is a simple test among different groups of six players. It assesses in a global context not only the players' technical, tactical, and physical capacities, but it also evaluates other essential aspects of the performance in hockey, such as effective strategies for perceiving well, anticipating, understanding or communicating with teammates, decision making, and stress management.

TEST	CONTENT OF THE TEST	CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PLAYER
1	2 vs.2 with counter-attack	1/6 vs.2/5, 3/4 vs.1/6, 2/5 vs.3/4
2	1 st test of the Decathlon	1 vs.6, 2 vs.5, 3 vs.4
3	2 nd test of the Decathlon	1vs.5, 2 vs.4, 3 vs.6
4	2vs.2 with 4 intersecting goals	1/4 vs.2/6, 3/5 vs.1/4, 2/6 vs.3/5
5	3 rd test of the Decathlon	1 vs.4, 2 vs.3, 5 vs.6
6	4 th test of the Decathlon	1 vs.3, 2 vs.6, 4 vs.5
7	2vs.2 on two wide goals	1/5 vs.2/6, 3/4 vs.2/6,1/5 vs.4/4
8	5 th test of the Decathlon	1 vs. 2, 3 vs.5, 4 vs.6
9	6 th . test of the Decathlon	1 vs.6, 2 vs.5, 3 vs.4
10	3vs3 with 4 intersecting goals	1/2/3 vs. 4/5/6
11	7 th . test of the Decathlon	1 vs. 5, 2 vs. 4, 3 vs.6
12	8 th . test of the Decathlon	1 vs. 4, 2 vs.3, 5 vs.6
13	3vs.3 with counter-attack	1/2/4 vs .3/5/6
14	9 th . test of the Decathlon	1 vs.3, 2 vs.6, 4 vs.5
15	10 th test of the Decathlon	1 vs.2, 3 vs.5, 4 vs.6
16	3vs.3 with two wide goals	1/3/6 vs. 2/4/5

Scoring for the Decathlon: For each decathlon test won, the player gets 1 point.

Scoring for the 2-on-2 Triathlon Tests: For each of the three simplified games that a team wins, each player of that team gets 2 points.

Scoring for the 3-on-3 Triathlon Tests: For each of the three simplified games that a team wins, each player of that team gets 3 points.

Final Scoring: The player who wins the most points in the 16 tests is considered to be the all-around winning player of the six participants. If two players have the same score in the final classification, Event 10 of the decathlon serves as the tiebreaker.

The two players classified best of one group may challenge other winning players of two other groups, as may the third- and fourth-best or the fifth- and sixth- best. (The top two players of groups A, B, and C play a new tournament, as do the third- and fourth-ranked players of each group and the fifth- and sixth- ranked players).



“Your best performance will come about if you approach the assignment with childlike openness.”

L.Moorhouse/L.Cross

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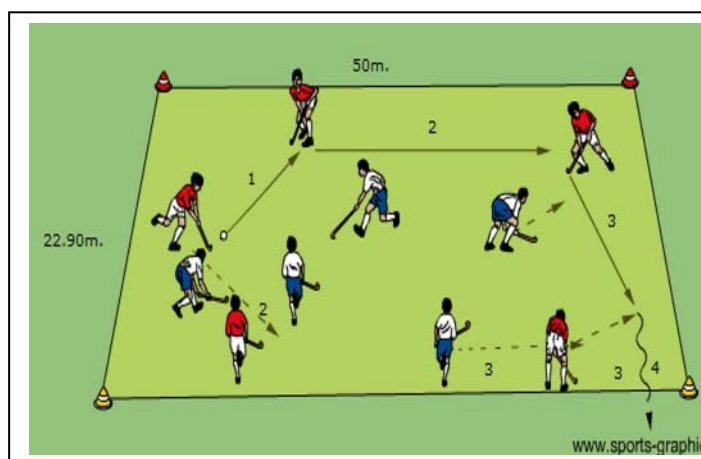
Three or four times during a season you can replace a training session with the 5-on-5 Triathlon to give the 12- and 13-year-old players an opportunity to compete, under stressful conditions, in the most common situations of the 8-on-8 Hockey game.



5-ON-5 TRIATHLON

1st. GAME: CONTROL THE BALL ACROSS THE OPPOSING END LINE

- * The game is played in the centre part of the 8-on-8 field and starts with a bully.

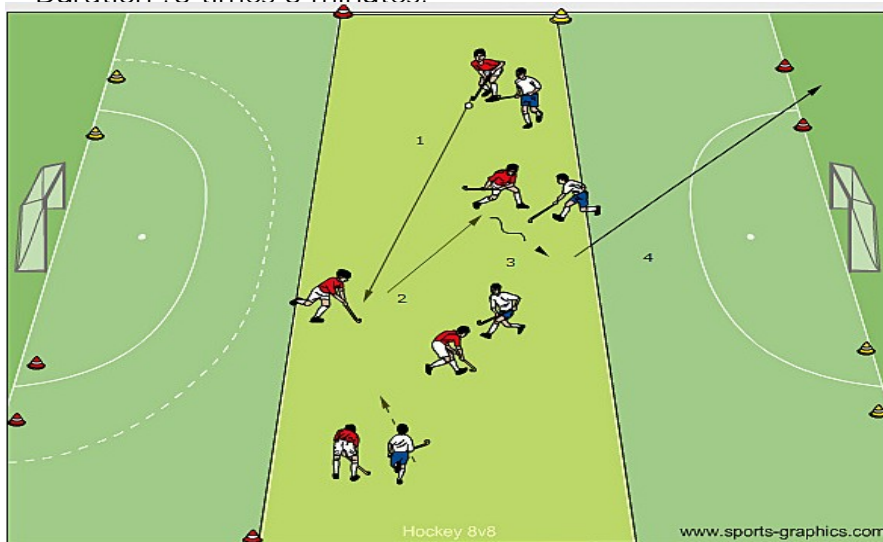


- Objective of both teams is to dribble the ball across the opposing end-line of 50m.
- Duration of the simplified game: three periods of three minutes each.

2nd.GAME: LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD

* Without leaving the midfield of the 8-on-8 hockey field, each team tries to pass the ball through one of the two cone goals (3 meters wide) situated close to both goal-posts on the opponent's end line (simulating the position of forwards who expect through passes).

- To save time, several reserve balls should be made available.
- Duration : 3 times 3 minutes.

**3rd. GAME: SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING**

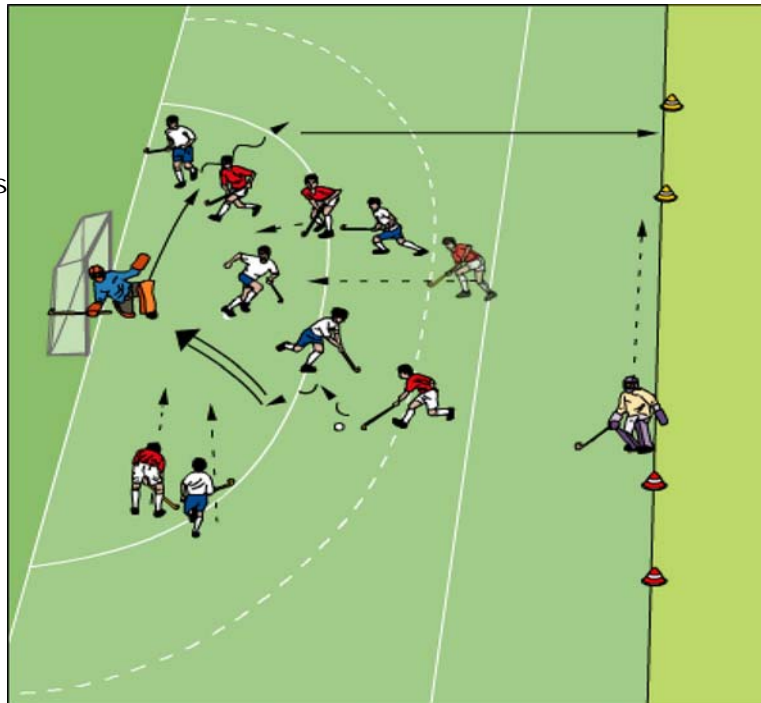
* Bully in the centre of the field.

* One team attacks the goal.

* The other defends it and counterattacks with a pass through one of the 2 cone goals established 7m. behind a 22.90 meter line.

* Duration: 4 times 3 minutes. Every 3 minutes both teams switch positions and functions.

* It's recommended to use goalkeepers.



“Coaches still concern more about the contents of the training sessions than about their teaching style.”

5-ON-5 TRIATHLON

COMPETITION BETWEEN TEAMS FORMED BY 5 PLAYERS

EUROPE AGAINST OCEANIA

Teams	FRANCE	SCOTLAND	POLAND
Names of players			
Teams			
Names of players			
	AUSTRALIA	NEW ZEALAND	FIDJI

1st GAME: ACROSS THE OPPOSING GOAL LINE (3x3 min.)

Field	Match	Result
1	POL-AUS	
2	FRA-NZ	
3	SCO-FDJ	

2nd GAME: LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD (4x3 min.)

Field	Match	Result
1	POL-NZ	
2	FRA-FDJ	
3	SCO-AUS	

3rd GAME: SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING (4x3 min.)

Field	Match	Result
1	POL-FDJ	
2	FRA-AUS	
3	SCO-NZ	

FINAL RESULT:
(sum of victories)

EUROPE against OCEANIA

:
— —

Technical Delegate:

Note: It's not permitted to change the composition of any team during the competition.

8-ON-8 HOCKEY

Eight-on-8 hockey is considered an ideal bridge which guides the 12 and 13 year old players from the popular 6-on-6 game toward the full game.



RULES OF 8-ON-8 HOCKEY

The present rules only determine the specific ones for the 8-on-8 competition. Therefore any circumstance not covered in the following regulations has to be ruled by consulting the official rules of the game.

1. Number of players/team:

8-on-8 Hockey is considered the ideal competition for players 12 and 13 years old. It forms a solid bridge toward the 11-a-side game.

A team is formed by 10 players only. Eight of them are simultaneously involved in the game. All 10 players have to take part in the competition.

“The life of a man (coach) without revising his daily work constantly, is not worth living.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

2. Playing field:

8-on-8 Hockey is played on three quarters of the official hockey field, between one end line and the furthest 22.90m-line, using the normal size goals. One of them is placed at the middle of the furthest 22.90m-line and the other remains on the original spot.

The shooting circles are from normal size.



3. Penalty corner:

During the penalty corner four defenders including the goalkeeper start from behind their end line. The other 4 defenders may take part in the penalty corner running from the center point of the field in the moment the ball is pushed out by the attacking side.

4. Duration of the game:

The competition last 2 halves of 35 minutes with 5 minutes rest.

5. Umpiring:

In order to promote umpiring, the 8-on-8 competition should be controlled by two umpires between 16 and 18 years of age.

***“Children learn 10% from they read,
20% from what they hear,
50% from what they see and hear and
90% from what they do”***

John Whitmore

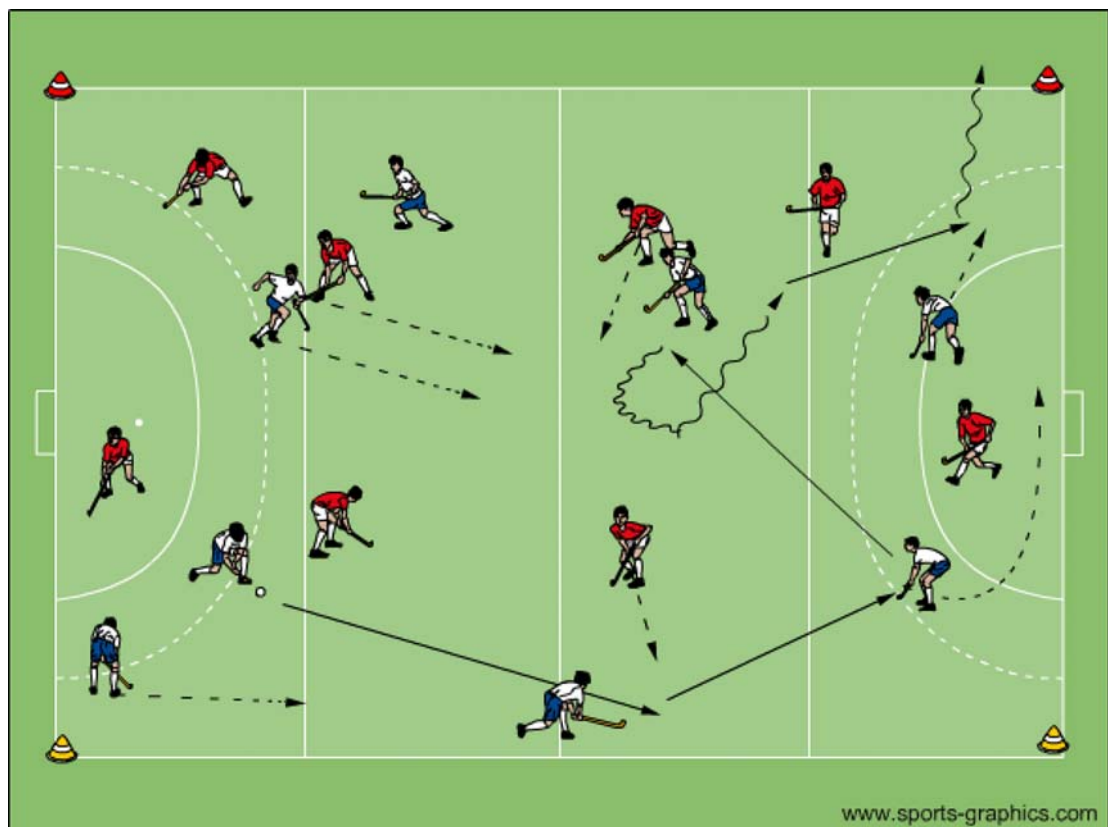
A POPULAR "CORRECTIVE GAME" FOR 8-A-SIDE HOCKEY

The game is played on the official field across its width from one side line to the other. A team scores when one of their 8 players can manage to control the ball on the opposing side line.

The goalkeepers may can play with their equipment all over the field and have the right to play the ball with any part of the body.

Coaching objectives:

- * Assure through intelligent play without the ball and through long and precise passes width in your attacking moves.
- After a reception and control of the ball in a less defended part of the field look out for a quick penetration or 2-on-1 situations.
- Make sure to have depth in attack as well as in defence.
- Apply a pressing defence in parts of the field where the ball is played.



“The more you increase speed, the more it becomes difficult to assure accuracy.”

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WHY 8-ON-8 HOCKEY BETTER MATCHES 12- AND 13-YEAR-OLD PLAYERS THAN THE OFFICIAL 11-ON-11 COMPETITION?

1. Each player touches the ball more often and is therefore more involved in the game. This more intensive participation not only enhances technical and tactical learning but also allows the youth coach to collect more precise information about the performance of each player as well as of his whole team as a unit.
2. Although the parameters of space and time are almost exactly the same as in the 11-a-side game (213 square meters per player in 8-on-8 and 207 square meters per player in the full game), the 8-on-8 game assures better learning (and facilitates a smooth transition to regular play) because there are only 16 players in the field. With fewer players on the field, the basic game situations appear more frequently, but they confront the young players with less complex problems than in the full game. The players therefore can feel more capable, which results in self-confidence and, at the same time, greater motivation to learn even more.
3. Playing on a smaller size field (especially because of less depth of the field) allows any youngsters to reach any player on the field with a pass (something that is impossible to find with their playing on the full field, especially for the girls). This aspect stimulates their visual perception.



4. The 8-on-8 competition therefore helps young players to develop correct habits later using in the 11-on-11 game. There is no question that it's much easier to integrate a player successfully into the full game after he has been exposed to two years of the simpler problems in the 8-on-8 game.

5. All young goalkeepers between 12 and 14 years prefer to play 8-on-8 Hockey instead of the full game. Why? Like their team-mates they, too, have the opportunity to play the ball more often because fewer players are involved in the game and because the ball approaches the vicinity of the goals more often. Therefore, they gain more experiences in less time.

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6. With the ball more often played close to the goal, the forwards, defenders and also the goalkeepers gain more valuable experiences in the most decisive parts of the field—where any mistake or successful action can modify the result of the game. In 8-on-8 Hockey they have more opportunities to learn to deal with stressful situations as all situations like for instance shots on goal or going for the offensive and defensive rebounds appear more frequently as in the full game.

7. With only eight players on a team, the game has fewer interruptions with the ball in play more time. Due to the shorter distances in 8 on 8, there are less stimuli for anaerobic resistance, which at this stage of the development of the player has to be considered positive.



8. 8-a-side Hockey is played tactically the same way as the full game. Generally a team is formed by 3 attackers, 3 midfield players, one defender and a goalkeeper. Missing one line in midfield stimulates the frequent exchange between defenders and forwards who have less ground to cover to help in defense or to support the attack. That is why 8-on-8 Hockey develops more versatile players who are capable of playing well in different positions.

***“Training is a process of development
through gradually increasing demands.”***

L. Moorehouse

9. The job of the youth coach, who generally is not very experienced, is much easier. He learns under simpler conditions (fewer players but more ball contacts, less complex game situations) to analyze the players' performance and the team as a whole, as well as how to facilitate programming the contents for the next training sessions. The greater facility in analysis makes it easier to find appropriate solutions to problems.
10. What is valid for the coach is valid also for the referee. Putting a logical progression of youth competitions into practice will also, without doubt, benefit the level of umpiring in the long term. Like the coach and his or her young players, young referees also grow slowly—by facing increasingly difficult and complex problems—into the full game, ensuring that they feel capable at each stage of their referee development.
11. Spectators, especially parents, really enjoy watching an 8-on-8 game more than the traditional one because it's easier to follow. Because there are more goal opportunities for both teams, it's more exciting.



Last but not least, the parents see their daughters and sons in possession of the ball more frequently; they see more successful interventions than in the full game—and more possibilities of scoring.

“Coaching is a tool for optimizing people’s potential and performances. Commanding, demanding, instructing can’t produce sustainable optimum performance.”

John Whitmore

UNDERSTANDING 8-ON-8 HOCKEY

To a casual observer, hockey can sometimes appear complex. In fact, it is an exceedingly simple game once the basic concepts, skills, and rules have been learned and understood.

The “invasion” game has two distinct phases:

1. The attacking phase—when one's own team has the ball
2. The defending phase—when the opposition has the ball

The objectives (individual and team) for each phase are as follows:

1. Attacking phase

- Keep possession.
- Get the ball forward and penetrate the opposing defense at the earliest opportunity.
- Create shooting and goal-scoring opportunities.
- Score goals.

2. Defending phase

- Regain possession of the ball at the earliest opportunity.
- Prevent the ball's being played or carried forward, that is, penetrating one's own defence.
- Deny the opposition shooting and goal-scoring opportunities.

Avoid conceding goals (prevent goals from being scored).

The following capacities are required to achieve the objectives in the attacking phase:

- Control of the ball and composure while on the ball.
- Ability to run with the ball.
- Ability to dribble the ball and dodge.
- Ability to pass the ball.
- Ability to receive and then control the oncoming ball.
- Ability to create and convert goal-scoring opportunities

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In the defending phase:

- Ability to mark.
- Ability to delay, channel, and close down opponents.
- Ability to intercept and tackle.
- Ability to prevent and deny shooting or goal-scoring opportunities.
- Effective goal-keeping.

**Each phase has its own required style of play:**

1. The attacking phase is fluid, expansive, and creative.
2. The defending phase is disciplined, organized, and secure.

Similarly, these two phases determine the principles of play for the game.

1. In attack, go for possession, speed, support, penetration, concentration, width, and mobility.
2. In defence, go for depth, delay, balance, concentration, organization, security, and speed.

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SUMMARY

To perform effectively in 8-on-8 hockey players must understand the objectives, styles, and principles of play required of them during the distinct phases of the game and in the different areas of the pitch. Most importantly, effective team play depends on individual players striving to master the basic techniques and skills and perform them well.

A solid bridge between learning more complex situations and applying them in a competitive game is presented in this chapter. Here a great variety of simplified games and their corrective exercises mainly help to fine-tune the technical aspects, but in addition the chapter constructs a link with understanding particular situations and with applications in an official competition (8-on-8 hockey). Training and competition are always viewed as a unit, one being tightly linked to the other. Game-orientated practice, found in this chapter, stimulates young players through the possibilities of discovering more than do instruction and training sessions (as are so frequently observed in other approaches to youth hockey) whose contents are isolated from the competition and are mainly predictable situations.

Photo: F. Ferrer



“Who is the most useless player in our team? The one who is not able to command nor knows to obey”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Part

3

TAKING HOCKEY INTO THE FUTURE



“The talent develops in a repetitive confrontation of many players in a small limited field, whilst the regular hockey field creates fatigue and limits the fantasy, creativity and burst of speed of the young players”

Dante Panzieri

Requirements needed for the development of more creative hockey players

Since we were born, we've been given the potential of being creative. We only differ in how well we exhibit this creativity and in the areas in which each person is able to become creative.

Most of us have been more creative as an infant than as an adolescent or adult, because there are more opportunities and possibilities to play at the pre-school stage than later on in school.

Therefore, in general, the development of the capacity to be creative and to become even more creative is not obstructed in kids up to 6 years old. This is considered as being normal.

Nevertheless, when the child starts school, the evolutionary process can cease. This is due, in many cases, to the negative effect of the teaching methods with intentional orientation and very strict norms. Suddenly, the available time to play is reduced and school frequently suffocates this development which was occurring naturally.

When playing hockey children face the same problems in developing their creativity because of traditional coaching practices. Many of the methods that for decades have been essential components of the learning-teaching process in the hockey world, are now-a-days obstacles that inhibit the expression of the creative potential within each child.

To overcome these important deficiencies, the following conditions have to be created to again see the growth and maturity of more creative players in our hockey fields.

1. DECLARE THE WAR AGAINST THE 11 VS. 11 GAME

The "11:11" game has for many years choked, like a cancer tumor, the vigorous development of young hockey players. As stated 30 years ago in India it should be replaced by another type of competition, which should be tailor-made for children less than 13 years old.

Games like Mini Hockey (3 vs.3 on 4 goals) for 8-9 years old, 5-a-side Hockey with 10 years , 6-a-side Hockey or Indoor Hockey (11 -12 years old) and 8-a-side Hockey (for 13 years old played on $\frac{3}{4}$ parts of the regular field), offer the adequate frame (space and amount of players) for the children to express their creativity and inspiration in a more healthy environment that does not contain the demands and the stress of the 11-a-side game with their adult- orientated rules (see the chapter which refers to the advantages of Mini Hockey, 5-a-side, 6-a-side and 8-a-side Hockey in comparison to the traditional game 11:11).

Frequently, the game 11 vs.11 is still used now-a- days as the preferred practice method for preparing the weekend match. It should be replaced by more attractive and from the learning point of view, more efficient simplified games which use fewer players.

In the "big game" on a regular field, the young player is generally condemned to become passive, participating very seldom in plays where he can exhibit his creative skills.

2. MORE GAMES AND LESS ANALYTICAL EXERCISES. PRACTISING SHOULD HAPPEN IN A GAME CONTEXT.

Statements like: " You only learn to play hockey by playing it" must be re-discovered and have to be considered in the planning of all training sessions in which drills are still dominant and excessive.

Children should be exposed to more game plays (global method) and less practice with the analytical method. The practice should happen in the game!



3. LET THE KIDS PLAY, WITHOUT CORRECTING THEM CONSTANTLY.

When playing it is not necessary for the young hockey player to know exactly the specific learning purposes. Knowing the learning aims is always important for the coach but not for the player.

The player should frequently have the possibility to "play", or "play just for fun, without necessarily having any specific learning as a main objective".

We should not forget that one essential part of the game is its unpredictability. This explains why the game is so fascinating for kids. As Buytendik said: "Each game starts with a movement, which consequence is not completely predictable and which therefore has an element of surprise".

We should give children the opportunity to explore and to discover through "playing", to infect them with the creativity shown by their teammates and opponents and without having the coach interceding frequently. By correcting from the start we expose the young player to an intensive pressure. Being stressed is a contradiction to the development of creativity.

Friedrich Schiller states perfectly, with the following words, the vital meaning of playing games for the human being: "The human feels and behaves like a human only when he plays"

"Creativity is to meet yourself, to experiment and explore new things, to transform, to remodel, to have fun, to travel into a world of dreams and to do new things with joy and pleasure, using your fantasy and imagination."

4. HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF PLAYING IN ALL POSITIONS AND IN REDUCED SPACES.

Young hockey players up to 13 years “should have the opportunity to play in different positions in order to discover the roles and functions which these positions characterize”.

To experiment by playing in different positions stimulates the creativity. For example, the 8-9 years old players should perform the many (16) variations of the Mini Hockey game (3 vs. 3 on 4 goals) instead of playing 5 or 6-a-side Hockey or 11:11. If those between 10 and 12 years olds participate in the 5 and 6-a-side game instead of competing in the 11 a-side match and if the players of 13 years would play tournaments of 8-a-side Hockey instead of championships in 11vs.11, then the problem would be solved since a competition with less players in a reduced space stimulates the creativity. On the other hand, the full game in a regular hockey field only tires the young player physically and intellectually, limiting his creative play.

5. ONLY THOSE WHO ENJOY THE GAME CAN BE CREATIVE INDIVIDUALS.

Each training session should include a great variety of games (and not only “hockey-specific ones”). When the children play, they should have fun and be keen on the game. If the young player does not identify himself with the proposed game that the coach has designed, the creative capability will remain asleep. The more the players are enjoying the game and the ball, the more it stimulates the development of a creative way of interpreting the game by the young hockey player.

Bohm and Peat (1988) maintain in “Science, Order and Creativity”, page 255-256, that “the establishment of objectives and patterns of behavior as well as the obsession of efficiency produce a rigid knowledge which blocks the free flow of thinking and movements, both necessary to lead to a creative behavior of the player”



Photo: A. Wälti

6. GIVE THE PLAYERS THE POSSIBILITY TO CREATE THEIR OWN GAMES AND RULES.

The coach should not only make sure that the objectives of a simplified game are mastered by most of his players, in accordance to his plan, but should frequently encourage the children to create different games through modifying the rules proposed by the teacher. Frequent rule changes, introduced by surprise during the practise of the game, force the players who want to win to adapt to the rule changes, using their creativity.

Several variations of Mini Hockey with 4 goals, played in a reduced space, are particularly effective in stimulating creativity in young players.

Also during the training session, from time to time, the coach should give his players (perhaps for 10 minutes) a space to play freely, to do what suit them best. This could be done in any part of the training session. Once the young players are familiar with the "generosity" of the coach, not only their imagination and fantasy will grow, but also their sense of responsibility, personal initiative and their daring to improvise and to be creative. This may also increase the possibility of creating a leader within the group of players.

7. DARE TO TAKE RISKS AND TO IMPROVISE, WITHOUT FEARING THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES



The young players must grow "with the ball and the stick". That means in the same way they are progressing physically and mentally in each stage of their development, also the difficulty and complexity of the game has to "grow".

The young players, especially those of 7 to 12 years, should not be pressured by their coach to quickly pass the ball in order to allow a better team-play and winning. They should frequently have the opportunity to "be in love with the ball", to dare to improvise their play and take risks, without fearing the possible consequences of having committed a mistake or to have lost the possession of the ball. Unfortunately this no longer exists, because winning has become too important, even at the lowest levels!

Young players who "treat the ball as their best friend" and often do their own things are frequently more creative than those who are coach-orientated and accept what the coach demands. To progress in their development of being more and more creative in the hockey game, children should exhibit a certain degree of independence from their coaches!

This is why young players should practice and play as often as possible without the presence of their coach (i.e. in past time they did in the street, in the park, in the court yard etc.) because his absence allows them to feel more comfortable to explore their innate potential without the fear of getting criticized when making mistakes.

8. GIVE MORE IMPORTANCE TO TRAIN THE RIGHT HEMISPHERE OF THE BRAIN

Once young children enter school the left hemisphere of their brain, where logical thinking, calculation with numbers and the verbal expression are located, is mainly getting stimulated. Pupils are expected to solve the tasks (generally "closed", perfectly defined tasks) along the lines indicated by the teacher without being allowed to contribute something of their own to the solution of the task or to be creative.

Nevertheless the development of the creative potential needs a systematic stimulation of the right hemisphere of the brain. That is why in school, like in hockey training, more than ever "open" tasks are needed! These "open tasks" require young people to be creative to find the best solution to the given problem.

As long as the left hemisphere of the brain prevails in the scholastic classroom as well as in hockey training, less creative hockey players will arise.

Learning in hockey, must be extended, offering more frequently the possibility to think and to learn incidentally and in divergent ways. The coach does not have to impose everything! It is not a doctor-patient relationship with set prescriptions.

Instead of the coach being the main character in the teaching and learning process, he should often transfer responsibility to his young pupils and ask them, through systematic questioning, to solve most of the situations that he presents. A true master in teaching never gives the answers to the problems, but helps his pupils to find and discover them on their own, guiding them to correct results. The game of hockey itself must become the teacher and not the coach". Johann Wolfgang von Goethe says it with other words: "Our youth prefers to get stimulated rather than instructed".

The excessive instructions given by the coach as well as the acquisition of automated and coach-directed hockey moves is not helping to develop the creativity of young hockey players.

"Only those who attempt what they can't do, will grow"

Ralph Emerson

9. MORE CREATIVE COACHES = MORE CREATIVE PLAYERS

In order to see more creative players (with the capacity to be innovative and to do things in a completely different way from the norm) in the future on our hockey fields, our coaches will have to rethink, among other things, about:

- While practicing or competing, coaches should not always punish the mistakes of their players, as this will inhibit the players from taking risks and thereby stop their creativity, fantasy and imagination from flowing.
- In the training sessions more space or time should be offered to allow players to experiment new moves that occur to them spontaneously. A more informal environment - as seen when hockey is played on the beach or in a park- helps to develop more creative players.

Any flash of creative behavior in a player should be recognized by the coach who should do everything to encourage his players to be different and to look out for original solutions to the problems inherent in the hockey game.

The coach should look for ways that allow for the accumulation of new experiences in young players so that these are not gained exclusively with the use of the analytical method, but whenever possible he should find a way to do it in a more attractive way through the application of the ' global' method.

The questions that normally a coach raises to help his players to find the solution, should from time to time be raised by the players themselves.

10. THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYER IS AN ENEMY OF HIS CREATIVITY

Nowadays most of our young talent grows in an atmosphere which is noticeably hostile towards creativity. Their familiar and scholastic surroundings, especially between the ages of 7 and 14 years, are characterized generally by a "intentional direction" of learning (with strict norms), which is limiting personal initiative, independence, originality and the value of trying to do things in different ways.

"The creativity of his players is the source from which a coach should drink daily."

In most hockey fields, the young players are dominated by instructors, who allow relatively little freedom of movement and decision-making to the young players whose opinions are practically not taken into account. For the coach it is important to always have everything under his control. When a player departs from his norms, he is often chastised and told to respect the coach's directions.

Often instructions are given to the players about what to do and how to solve the problem or where he has to position himself best on the field. If during a competition, the coach does not direct his players, many parents may think that the coach is not motivated nor is qualified for his work.

In hockey training as well in school too much instruction from outside does not favor the personal initiative of the players. Many coaches think for their players, instead of stimulating them to think for themselves.

Compliance has to have high-priority! If a player begins to show signals of autonomy and self awareness, he will receive a call from the coach to get in line. This way, over the years, the young hockey player gets used to following the coaches' instructions and plays according to the information received but without putting in his own thoughts and his personal flair.

When these young players arrive at the age of 14-15 years, it is obvious that they are going to face serious problems if they are requested to make their own decisions, because for many years they have been trained to execute only what the adults have told them. It is logical that suddenly it is very difficult for them to become more of a composer and creator instead of a simple executor, who for years have not been allowed to play in a creative way. Such players are not capable of enriching the hockey world and their teams' performance with their creativity, fantasy and imagination.

Instead of presenting as happened in the past fishes to young and old players we should teach them how to fish!

“As today many private or governmental institutions or organizations are busy in occupying the free time of our children, the kids lose fantasy, imagination and creativity to do their own things, to do what their desires, expectations and needs demand.”

TAKING THE GAME OUT OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Neil Postman, a professor of sociology at the University of New York, states in his well known book *The Extinction of Childhood* (1992) that modern society often does not allow children to distinguish their mode of living from that of adults. "They are eating the same food, they are watching the same television program, commit crimes like adults, take alcohol at an early age as well as drugs, etc." He further states, "The world of labour is also getting out of control. Girls between 12 and 17 years of age are, today, among the world's best-paid models, and there are children that, at the age of 18, are already multimillionaires (e.g., actors or pop stars). It is impossible that these children are behaving and will behave in the future as normal children would. . . ."

According to Postman, it's very dangerous when society does not notice much difference between the world of children and that of adults. He believes that children must discover the mysteries of life slowly and step by step, always in accordance with their mental stage and their present capacities.

The environment that children move and play in today has suffered an enormous transformation from nature to "urban jungle." This development has denied children the chance to learn from and follow nature. Instead they are more often forced to move "against their own nature" (e.g., to cross the road only when there is a zebra path or play computer games instead of outdoor games in fresh air). Since children have lost the natural setting, which influenced the education and development of their parents and grandparents, they should be given modern surroundings for learning and gaining experience on their own that can replace the former ones. This is why having organized sports in schools and clubs is so important for the quality of life of our youth!

Our world of hockey reflects the current situation. Instead of children being able to practice their particular games, as in the past, in the streets or other natural settings, the increasing urbanization of the landscape does not allow the most of them to make use of the natural surroundings that their grandparents had for play.

Besides having to play the game on artificial grass fields far away from their homes, in our advanced society young boys and girls—in many clubs and schools—must maintain rigid training methods and competitions. These old-fashioned methods in no way respect the laws of nature or the children's actual mental and physical capacities.



Everywhere children are obliged to train and compete like adults, forced to adapt to rules originally intended for adults. The rush to introduce talented youth to the adult game has frequently resulted in their acquiring bad habits that later limit their performance on our senior teams.

Children should take part in games that are specially designed for their age, rather than being rushed into the complex adult game.

We know that when an institution organizes a competition, it determines to a high degree the objectives, contents, and methods of the children's training and learning process. That means that if the structure of the competition is wrong, the way the coach trains them must also be incorrect.

Experience shows that coaches of young players are seen positively by the parents and club officials only when the kids demonstrate success or winning. But to achieve this kind of success in the traditional competition, the coaches must train them in a very similar way to the adults, with more or less the same contents and methods.

Beginners in such a system are obliged to compete every weekend in a match where success is conditioned mainly by one specific skill (the long pass) and often by destructive or negative tactics. This forces the coaches, in the limited available practice time (generally 3 hours a week), to concentrate almost exclusively on match-winning aspects. They are afraid to "waste time" in developing the children at the initial stage through a wide range of physical activities and problem-solving situations. But it is only in this systematic way that a sound level of coordination and conditioning capacities can be acquired. And these, as we all well know, are indispensable for the further improvement of young players' performance.

Although all sport scientists agree on this developmental model, few sports federations are making use of the important recommendations these professionals make. Instead of copying nature and patiently developing all the necessary capacities, through training and competitions tailored to the children's capacities, many coaches of young players still force them to play like clones of an adult.

Modifying Postman's words slightly we might affirm the statement, "Once we give the children access to the forbidden fruit of adult information [competition], we expel them from the garden of infancy." It does seem as though, in many parts of the world, there are too many teachers and coaches of young hockey players still living in the Middle Ages. Why call it that? In the Middle Ages society knew only infants and adults. By six or seven years of age, a person was already considered adult because he participated in adult activities: the child worked, ate, dressed, and behaved as an adult.

For how long can we allow the ignorance of these coaches and administrators to continue to obstruct the natural development of the next generation of hockey players?

"Nothing is permanent except change."

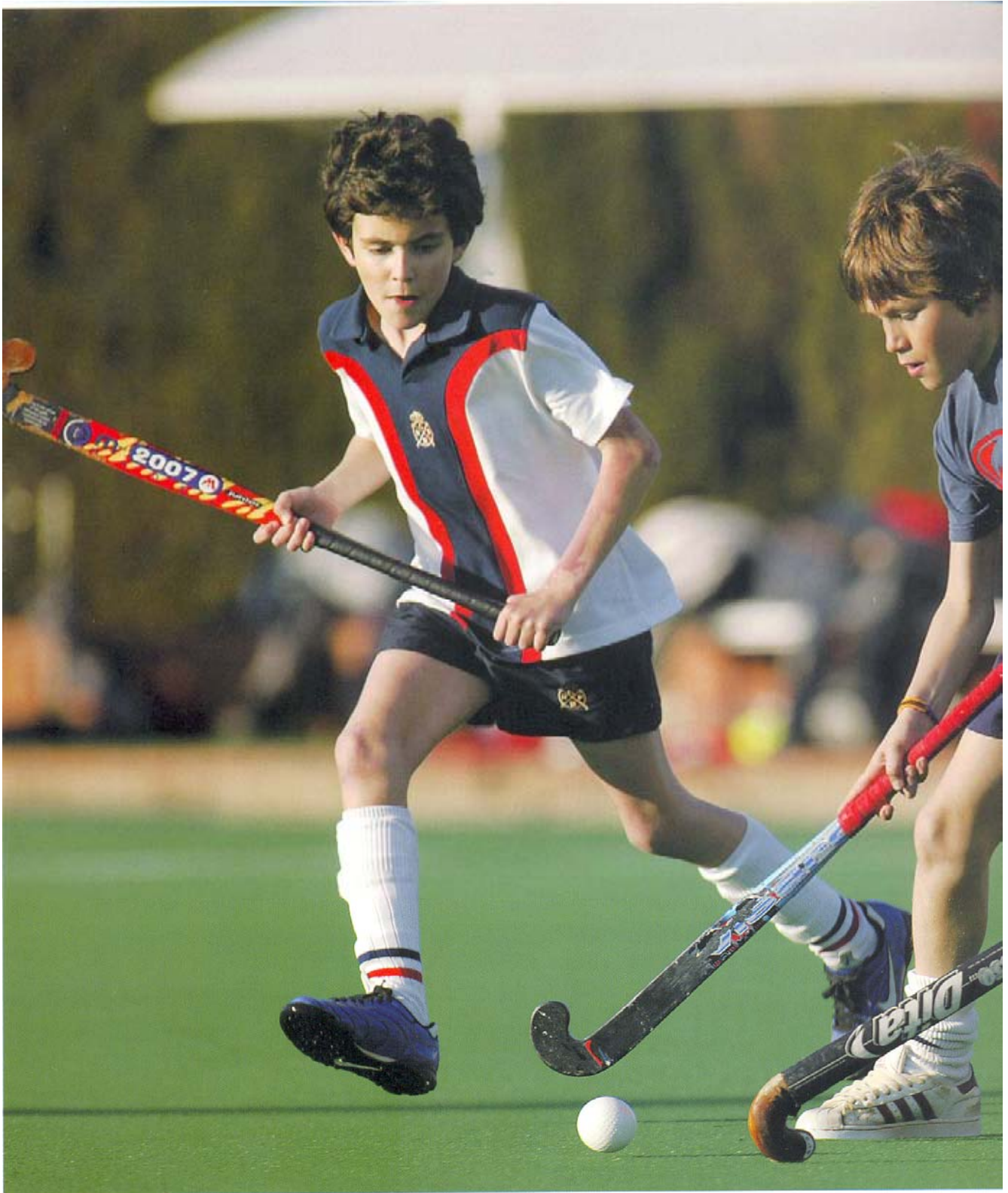
Heraclites

TEN RULES FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

1	Be prepared to give up your prior way of thinking.
2	When you teach, always question what and how you teach and what you have done up to now.
3	To overcome certain weaknesses and deficiencies of a player or a team, it is not enough to detect and diagnose the problems: you must seek their roots and apply the corresponding remedies.
4	To prepare a fine performance in the next match, consider and perfect every small component of the performance; small details may change the circumstances dramatically.
5	Progress step by step.
6	A 100% solution is difficult to find.
7	The difference between a good performance and an excellent one is putting in some more effort.
8	The best preparation for tomorrow is doing an optimal job today; the final victory results from a series of small, daily successes.
9	As none of us knows so much as all of us, working in a team ensures better results.
10	The process of continuous improvement never finishes.

You have a step-by-step program here, designed precisely to match young players and to nurture their motivation to grow and develop in the game. Through this developmental model, you can help them flourish, year by year, as better and better players on the way to the wonderful adult game. You can foster their love of sport and good hockey playing.

***“When an institution doesn’t support research and investigation,
how can we expect that our game grows and progresses?
Innovation consists
of 10% of inspiration and 90% of exertion and efforts.”***



"The best advice I can give to young players is to make use of every minute and don't to hide in a box that others have constructed for them."

Michael Jordan

SUMMARY

THE KEY TO BETTER HOCKEY is a teaching and learning scheme or a DEVELOPMENT MODEL which intends to guide and help the teachers and coaches to plan their training sessions for players between 7 and 14 years. It suggests a gradual series of activities which always take into account the pupils physical and mental state and which aims to promote an progressive development, over the years, of correct technical, tactical and physical capacities of the young hockey player. The activities suggested in the 5 levels of this model:

1. Break with the routine of normal training.
2. Represent a reciprocal and continuous process between acquiring abilities and capacities and using them correctly in a more or less complex game: if any important part of the capacity to play well is neglected in the teaching and learning process, this will have a negative effect on the player's performance.
3. Are similar to what the game demands from a player.
4. Are based on a systematic reappearance each time of more complex basic game situations, set out to achieve preconceived objectives.
5. Are easy to understand, to apply and to assimilate.
6. Have flexible rules which could be easily adapted to existing conditions in schools and clubs.
7. Progress from easy to difficult and from simple to complex.
8. Allow everyone to take part intensively in the teaching and learning process, without neglecting his right to develop also his capacity of imagination, creativity and fantasy.
9. Apart from being varied, attractive and rich of fun, they teach and reinforce the basic principles of the game.
10. Gradually improve technical, tactical and psycho-physical capacities.
11. Consolidate the capacity of play in stress situations (playing well despite being under pressure or tired).
12. Thanks to their simplification and reappearance in different contexts allow the player to gain confidence and experience without constantly receiving coaches' instructions.
13. Trains and stimulates the young hockey player with the coach only interfering if the player is not capable of finding his solution to the presented problem.
14. Foster the competitive spirit of the young player.
15. Consider the young athletes as a thinking player and not as a man who executes skills.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**1974****2004**

It was his determination and belief that changed the style of coaching bringing in methods, tactics and strategies that were unheard of. And all this was way back in the late sixties!! His perception, knowledge of the game, imparting skills and overall structuring of how coaching is done in sport is a revelation. What he came out with more than 3 decades ago, is still being used as the base of any coaching manual- material that people scoffed at during that time.

I have been fortunate enough to interact with Horst on various occasions and I must honestly say that with every meeting one's knowledge was enhanced.

The true success to any National team is the feeder route. This phenomenon is well known to all, but few have ventured into development of youth in the manner that Horst has done with the introduction of his Hockey Development Model in Spain in the early 80's. His brain put Spain on the winning track for one Olympic Gold and two Olympic Silver Medals between 1980 and 1996. His vision and capacity to anticipate the future of hockey makes him all over the great and highly respected man he is.

His books and other periodicals need no endorsement because anyone who has read his literature knows that Horst gives you something more - I for one will always be grateful to the master for sharing his knowledge, without which I would never have ventured into coaching.

With every passing year the master gets better - like mature good wine and I wish him every success in his future endeavours.

Cedric D'Souza

**Indian Hockey National Coach –Olympic Games 1996
and Coaching Director of Indian Hockey Federation**

RESUME OF HORST WEIN

- Master degree in Physical Education from "Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln
- Lecturer for Physical Education at "Universität Münster", "Techn. Universität München" and at the "Instituto Nacional de Educación Física" in Barcelona
- Technical Director of Royal Spanish Hockey Federation between 1973-84 and Coach of the national team which won the 2nd. European Cup Tournament for Nations and in the XXII Olympic Games an Olympic Silver Medal.
- First coach of the western world to be invited by the Soviet Union to train their top athletes
- Master Coach of the International Hockey Federation (FIH)
- Director in the Sports Department of the Organizing Committee of the XX Olympiad in München and assistant in the organisation of the Asian Games in Teheran

- Regular cooperation with the International Olympic Committee "Olympic Solidarity"
- Lecturer of the "Centre of research and development" (CEDIF) of the Royal Spanish Football Federation and of the Andalusian Football Federation since 1995

- Adviser in recycling the knowledge of the football (soccer) coaches of

UNITED NATIONS-Program of Development and Peace for South-American Football Schools
 "Inter" Milan (Italy),
 Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México ("Pumas"),
 Youth Football Federation of Uruguay (Comisión Nacional de Baby Fútbol),
 Cruz Azul de México, Club de América (México),
 Club Atlético Peñarol de Montevideo, Club de Fútbol Nacional de Montevideo (Uruguay),
 Villareal, Real Sociedad de San Sebastián, FC Alavés (España)
 "Universidad de Fútbol" Pachuca and FC Pachuca (México),
 Universidad Católica de Chile, INAF- Instituto Nacional de Fútbol (INAF) de Chile,
 Santa Fe de Bogotá, Deportivo Cali, Escuela Nacional de Deporte (Colombia),
 FC Sunderland, Arsenal London and Leeds United (England)
 US Youth Soccer Association, Louisiana Soccer Association (USA)
 Necaxa (México), Rayados de Monterrey, FC Laguna Torreón (México),
 Universitario de Deportes de Lima, Alianza Lima and Sporting Cristal (Perú)
 Escuela Superior de Entrenadores de Fútbol (Eseful) in Lima (Perú)
 Head Coach of NIKE Football Club (UK),
 Scottish Football Association, Federación Costarricense de Fútbol
 Federación Salvadoreña de Fútbol, National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA)
 Federación Nacional Autónoma de Fútbol de Honduras, Unión Centroamericana de Fútbol,
 Football Association of Zambia, Federación de Fútbol del Norte de Maruecos
 Schalke 04, Bayer 04 Leverkusen, Mainz 05, St.Pauli Hamburg, MSV Duisburg (Germany),
 International Educational Management Systems (Finland),
 Northern Ireland Institute of Coaching, (NIIC),
 Federación Mexicana de Fútbol (Escuela Nacional de Directores Técnicos-ENDIT),
 Federación Peruana de Fútbol, Danish Football Union, Football Association of Finland,
 Federación Colombiana de Fútbol,
 Deutscher Fussball Bund (DFB), TSG 1898 Hoffenheim (Germany)

-Coaching assignments in 5 Olympic sports in 53 countries

-Author of 34 sport text books, one Multimedia Football Coaching Courses, one Hockey CD, 3 videos, one DVD about developing game intelligence in youth football and numerous articles in magazines and web pages, some published in Spanish, Korean, Greek, German, English, Dutch, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Danish and Russian.

e-mail: horstwein@eresmas.net Tel.: 34- 93-6746246

e-mail: horstwein@erresmas.net Tel: 0034-93-6746246

*After having passed the ball to you,
now it's your turn to score!*



*“Last night a storm destroyed the roof of my home.
Now I can see the moon more clearly.”*

Japanese philosopher Haiko

*The storm of ideas included in this e-book may have
destroyed your coaching building, but hopefully has
helped you to see now the process of
teaching and learning hockey more clearly.*

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