

National  
Coaching  
Certification  
Program



Programme  
national de  
certification des  
entraîneurs

# Competitive Coach Introduction Women's Field Manual

Coaching  
Association  
of Canada



Association  
canadienne  
des entraîneurs

Association  
canadienne  
de crosse
















Canadian  
Lacrosse  
Association



The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.

## Partners in Coach Education

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Julie Long

It is with the tireless efforts of these individuals that the CLA can develop its coaching material.

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## THE NATIONAL COACHING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (NCCP)

The National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) is developed and implemented through the combined efforts of the federal/provincial/territorial Governments; the national/provincial/territorial sport governing bodies and the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC).

Coaching Courses are administered and delivered through a partnership of the Coaching Association of Canada and each governing sport body.

The NCCP is broken down into the following Coaching and Instructional levels:

- **Community Coaching (For coaches of entry level and house league players)**
  - Community Coach - Initiation
  - Community Coach - Development
- **Competitive Coaching (For coaches in competitive leagues)**
  - Competitive Coach - Introduction
  - Competitive Coach - Development
  - Competitive Coach - High Performance
- **Instruction (For sports where instructors are used)**
  - Instruction Beginners
  - Instruction Intermediate Performers
  - Instruction Advanced Performers

Each Stream is composed of instructional material called contexts which is divided into two categories:

- Multi-sport Training Courses, which is information from the sport sciences that is common to all sports and is delivered by facilitators trained by the CAC
- Technical Training Courses, which is the body of knowledge specific to each sport and is developed and delivered by each sport body.

## CERTIFICATION

The certification part of the NCCP is a formal evaluation jointly administered by the CAC and the Governing Sport Bodies.

To qualify for certification, coaches must complete all courses and requirements in both the Multisport and Technical sectors of each Stream.

This Resource Manual has been produced with the cooperation and financial assistance of the Coaching Association of Canada and the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch, the Secretary of State for Amateur Sport, and the member associations of the Canadian Lacrosse Association. The following people were the major technical group responsible for the writing, editing, technical assistance, trailing, and contributors:

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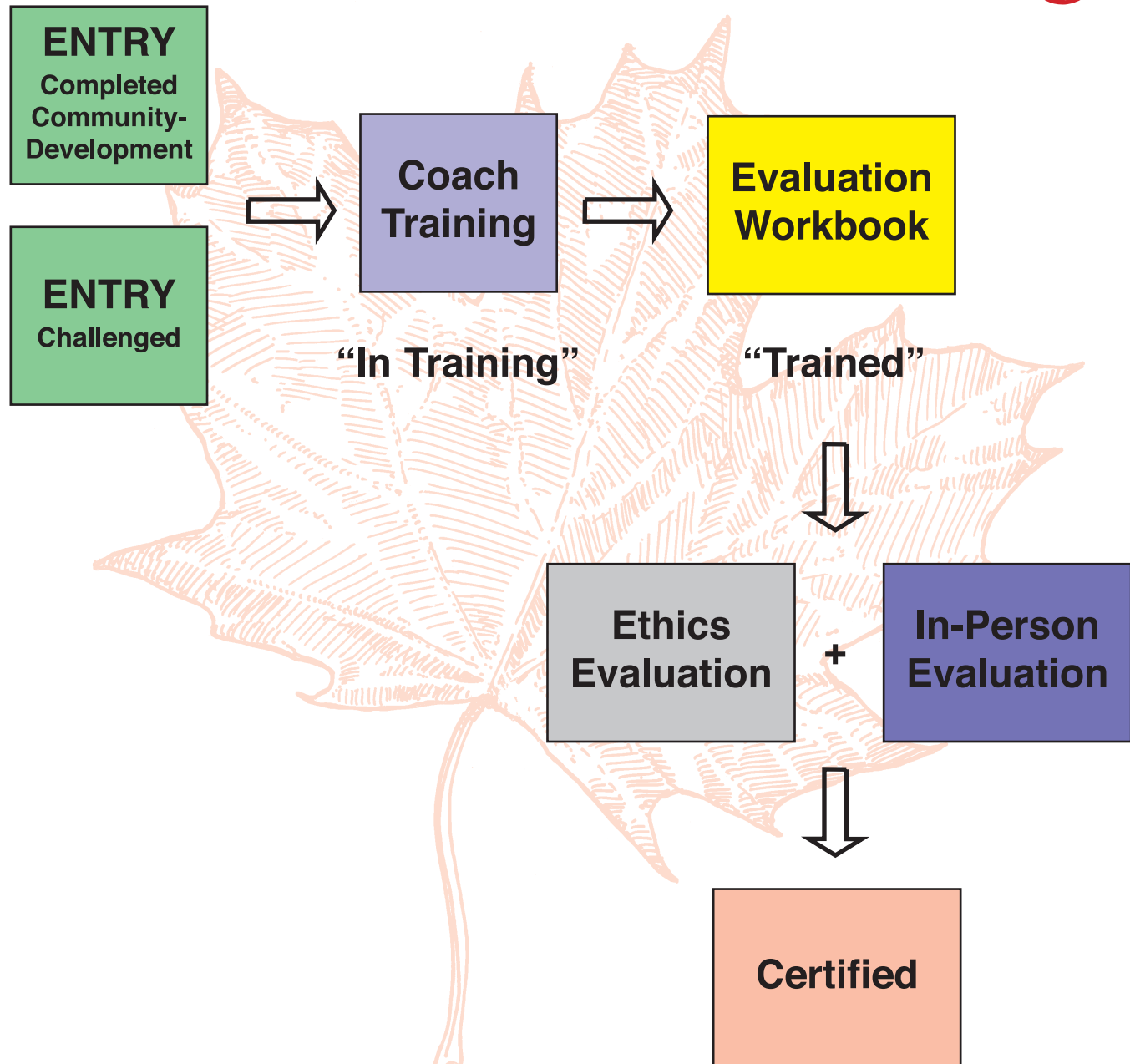
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Canadian Lacrosse Association

# Coach Pathway Competitive-Introduction



National  
Coaching  
Certification  
Program

Programme  
national de  
certification des  
entraîneurs



Association  
canadienne  
des entraîneurs

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## THE CLA LACROSSE COACHING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The **Canadian Lacrosse Association's (CLA)**, under the guidance of the **CBET** committee of the **Coaching Association of Canada**, has combined its **Coaching Development Program** with the **Streams** and **Multi-Sport Contexts** of the **NCCP**. This integrated approach will offer lacrosse coaches several advantages:

- The theory of how to coach is made relevant by integrating it with the actual teaching of lacrosse. Therefore, the support information from the sport sciences is easier to understand because it is learned as it is being used.
- Coaches will take only one course to coach their teams.
- The Facilitators will be familiar with the needs of lacrosse coaches and the information will be relevant.

### THE STRUCTURE

The **LCDP** is committed to the Athlete Centered style of coaching and is based on the **“Four Phases of Training”** (by Istvan Balyi, B.C. Coach, Spring 95 to Spring 96). The premise is that all athletes go through four phases of development on their way to reaching their full potential. If any one of the phases or part of a phase is omitted, the degree of player success will be compromised.

Note: The Phases of Training are referred to as Phases of Learning in the Lacrosse Program. For example, if a coach concentrates on trying to win games at all costs with a novice aged team instead of teaching the fundamentals, his/her players will not be able to compete effectively when they are midget ages and these deficiencies will interfere with their ability to perform at the level necessary to win when at the junior or higher divisions. The premise is that in order for athletes to develop to their full potential:

- They must be adequately trained at each phase of their development.
- The coaching must be dedicated to meeting the needs of the player and not the needs of the coaches and administrators.
- The program must allow ample time for the players and coaches to develop and must allow ample time to practice.

**In the LCDP, the Phases of Athlete Development are combined with the Streams and Multi-Sport Contexts of the NCCP.**

**Community Coach - Initiation: The FUNdamental Phase of Player Development**

This is the introductory level for lacrosse and is the first phase of development for 5 to 8 year olds. The course content gives coaches the background to teach young players in a fun and exciting environment. At this level coaches will learn:

- Basic skills & basic team fundamentals;
- Identify correct equipment;
- Basic rules of lacrosse;
- Teaching through the use of minor games;
- The principles of fair play & ethics;
- The principles of running a practice; and
- Safety and liability

**Community Coach - Development: The Learning To Play Phase of Player Development**

This is the starting level for coaches of all older beginners in both recreational and competitive leagues, and the next step for young players who have completed the Fundamental Phase of Learning. Community Coach - Development also contains elements of the Fundamental Phase of Development as all players must go through this phase with every new skill and concept learned. At this level the coach will learn:

- Basic skills and identifying correct measures;
- Basic team strategies;
- Teaching through the use of games and self discovery;
- Principles of fair play and ethics;
- Principles of running productive practices; and
- Rules of lacrosse

**Competition - Introduction: The Learning to Compete Phase of Player Development.**

Coaches in competitive leagues will need the knowledge and coaching techniques of the Learning to Compete Phase of Development. It is during this phase of development that players learn the elements of team offense, team defense, special team play as well as the effort required to compete on a more focused level. Coaches are introduced to knowledge and coaching techniques that will help them motivate players to increased levels of concentration, intensity, and commitment; and that will help them prepare their players mentally and technically for a higher level of play.

**Competition - Development: The Learning to Win Phase of Player Development**

This phase of player development will be designed to meet the needs of Intermediate, Junior, and Senior Coaches. Along with the advanced skills and the information on tactics and strategies, coaches will receive specialized training in the areas of mental and physical preparation. The basic difference between the second, third, and fourth phases of athlete development is the commitment coaches and players make to the game. Therefore, learning to win is the process of increasing the levels of concentration, the intensity of the activity, and the attention to detail.

**Competition - High Performance: Learning to be Number One**

Not yet developed.

**COMMUNITY COACH EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION****Lacrosse Community Coach - Initiation**

Self-Evaluation only will be conducted at this Level by completing the assigned tasks contained in this manual.

**Lacrosse Community Coach - Development**

Formal evaluation will be conducted at this Level and when successful, will result in coaches being Community Coach Certified.

## THE GAME

## Module

# 1

**GOAL:** To enhance the coach's understanding of the development of Women's Field Lacrosse in Canada, the evolution of the rules, and the opportunities available to players to continue to play at the highest competitive levels.

**OBJECTIVES:** The competent Competitive Intro coach will be able to:

- Use the history and rules of Lacrosse to promote a positive view of the game
- Interpret, teach and uphold the rules of play
- Be knowledgeable about opportunities for players to explore to continue their participation at higher levels.

### INTRODUCTION:

*Over time, as women's lacrosse coaches have become more strategic and its players have become faster and stronger, the game itself has undergone changes. At the heart of these changes has been the intent of keeping the game safe, free-flowing and exciting.*

*It is important for coaches to understand the evolution of the game and its rules to understand their strategic implications.*

*Above all, it is important to remember that playing within the rules will permit us to maintain the tradition and "spirit" of the game as our athletes become more talented and skilled.*

### Canadian Women's Field Lacrosse ...

*... is an attractive sport for highly athletic and competitive girls and women, looking to compete at higher and more challenging levels*

*... requires off-season conditioning and training to compete at a high level*

*... is played within the community level, at an intra- and inter-club format where house leagues and club leagues exist*

*... is played within the education system, at the secondary school and university level*

*... players can play in the United States at the NCAA level, where scholarship assistance can provide playing opportunities at a highly competitive level*

*... offers players opportunities for International competition at the Under 19 and Senior levels*

## Training to Compete

Describe the difference between the game, the players and coaches where the players are:

|  | Learning to Play | Learning to Compete |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Game</b><br>Consider:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- what the players would be doing</li> <li>- how they would be reacting</li> <li>- the differences in the nature of the game itself.</li> </ul> |                  |                     |
| <b>Players</b><br>Consider :<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mental, physical and emotional characteristics of the elite athlete</li> </ul>  |                  |                     |
| <b>Coaches</b><br>Consider coaching:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- style</li> <li>- duties</li> <li>- responsibilities</li> </ul>  |                  |                     |

### Introduction to Competition as defined by NCCP states that the focus is to:

1. intervene in a program where performance is a goal
2. provide support to athletes in areas such as technical, physical, tactical & mental preparation
3. work towards improving athletes' competitive abilities
4. work to develop athletes over the long term.

## The Rules

### AN EVOLUTION

The intent of the rules of Women's Field Lacrosse is to ensure fair play, keep the game safe and protect players from potential injury. Over the years, the game has undergone some significant changes, all which have continued to make the game exciting.

### Hard boundaries (2002)

---

#### Previously:

*"The playing area has no measured boundaries. The agreed boundaries shall be approximately 4m inside any natural or artificial objects, i.e. trees, bushes, athletic track, stands, etc."*

#### Reason for Change:

- Although the original rule gave the game one of its most unique characteristics, making it most closely resemble the original form of the game, the reality is that more and more fields are contained within multipurpose track and field complexes (limited field space), where a defined a playing space is required.
- Boundaries make the game more "spectator friendly" as most fans understand the hard boundary concept better than the "no defined boundary".
- Results in more consistency from umpires in making correct out of bounds decisions.
- Eliminates numerous out of bounds whistles because the players try harder to keep the ball in play.

#### Implications

##### of Hard Boundaries:

- Rewards good defense.
- Emphasis must be put on accurate passing and catching, as errors will result in a loss of possession.

### Restraining Line (2002)

---

#### Previously: No restrictions

#### Reason:

- To get the midfield play back. Without the restraining lines, the game was becoming a foot race rather than a game of quick passes down the field.
- For safety reasons - to relieve congestion and make the area in front of goal safer

#### Implications:

- Both umpires and spectators can see what is happening in the marking area.
- More midfield strategy and accurate connections are necessary.
- Makes play from the top of the fan easier to set up as there is no pressure from behind

## Carding System (2002)

### Reason:

To make the carding system more progressive. Two carding systems operate independent of one another.

1. Cards for delay of game and persistent minor fouls
  - a) green to captain = minor foul
  - b) green / yellow to player = major foul (player may remain in the game)
  - c) green / red to play = major foul (team plays short for 5 min and a sub or the player who received the cards may return after suspension)
2. Personal / misconduct fouls / safety / major fouls
  - a) yellow card to player = major foul (player must leave the field for 2 min, a sub may take her place)
  - b) yellow / red card to play = major foul (team must play short to 5 min; carded player may never return to the game.)
  - c) Straight red card = major foul (team must play short for 10 min; carded player may never return to the game.)

### Implications:

Coaches must be prepared with a plan of attack for man-up/ man-down situations.

| CARD SYSTEM                                      |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| GREEN<br>INTENTIONAL DELAY OF GAME               |   |  |
| 1st Green  | WHY:<br>- Team warning<br>- Delay of game             | WHAT:<br>- Minor foul<br>- Given to captain<br>- No suspension                   |
| Green/Yellow                                     | WHY:<br>- Next offender                               | WHAT:<br>- Major foul<br>- Player may remain in game                             |
| Green/Red  | WHY:<br>- Next offender                               | WHAT:<br>- 5 minute suspension<br>- Player down<br>- May return to play          |
| YELLOW / YELLOW-RED / RED<br>PERSONAL MISCONDUCT |   |  |
| 1st Yellow                                       | WHY:<br>- Serious personal foul                       | WHAT:<br>- 2 minute suspension<br>- Substitution allowed<br>- May return to game |
| 2nd Yellow                                       | WHY:<br>- 2 <sup>nd</sup> serious foul by same player | WHAT:<br>- Player ejected<br>- Player down – 5 min                               |
| Red  | WHY:<br>- Flagrant foul<br>- Gross misconduct         | WHAT:<br>- Player ejected<br>- Player down – 10 min                              |

### Take Note:

The umpire may, without any previous warning, suspend from further participation in the game, a player, coach or other team/bench personnel guilty of flagrant or repeated violations of the rule, dissent, misconduct or abusive language. The suspended player, coach or other team/bench may be requested to leave the field and/or the entire playing area. All cards issued to the bench are charged to the head coach.

**Centre Draw (1991, 2002)**

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**Previously:**

The umpire called “Play” and used an arm signal (no whistle)

**Reason:**

- The word “play” was eliminated and a whistle was added to start play because players had trouble hearing the umpires in noisy stadiums / high winds etc.
- The whistle is most easily distinguished
- The warning for illegal draw was removed as it was used to run down time on the clock.

**Implications:**

- Centres watch the official for the whistle in an attempt to execute a clean draw every time
- An illegal draw now immediately results in a throw or possession.

**Substitution on the Fly (1998)**

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**Previously:**

A team was allowed only 2 substitutions each half and only on a whistle (unlimited after a goal was scored).

**Reason:**

Substitution on the fly allows the game to be more free flowing without unnecessary stoppages.

**Implications:**

- Well timed ‘on the fly’ subs can help a team gain advantage in field position or make better use of specialized players.
- Can add to the excitement of the game.

**Goal Circle - Crossover on the Shot (1998)**

---

**Previously:**

Players were not allowed to cross over the cylinder of the goal line with feet or stick at any point during or after the shot.

**Reason:**

Beautiful goals were being disallowed with the crossover rule being a full cylinder (top to bottom).

**Implications:**

- As long as the shooter receives the ball outside the cylinder of the goal circle, her stick may follow through over the goal circle line, providing her foot/feet did not touch the line
- The stick(s) of the defender(s) immediately marking the shooter may also cross over the goal circle line to block or check the shooter's stick on the shot.

---

**Flag (1991, 1993)**

---

**Reason:**

The thrown flag was changed to “held flag” to eliminate the attack’s second opportunity to score a goal if the first shot missed. Goalkeepers were that may have made a beautiful save on a well-executed shot had to then defend another shot at from a free position.

**Implications:**

- If the attack inside the 15m fan is fouled by the defense while the act of going to goal to shoot, the flag is raised to give the shooter the opportunity to complete the shot. The flag remains raised until the attack momentum stops or is stopped by the defense.
- If the attack player shoots but her shot is not directly / immediately effected by the defensive foul(s), the flag is lowered and play continues.
- If the attack player is unable to compete the scoring play with a shot, or the shot is immediately and directly effected by the foul, a free position is awarded to the attacking team.

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**Marking Area & 3 Seconds (1989)**

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**Reason:**

The marking area lines were added to help umpires and players in setting up free positions within 15m of goal. Since women do not wear any required protective eye or head equipment, the obstruction of free space to goal rule and the three seconds rule were also added to prevent players from setting up blockades in front of goal, which deny the attack to shoot safely. Marking area lines are important lines in making both of these calls, and now these lines have meaning with regard to the restraining line rule

**Teaching the Rules**

As players become more experienced in the game, having a solid understanding the rules becomes increasingly important.

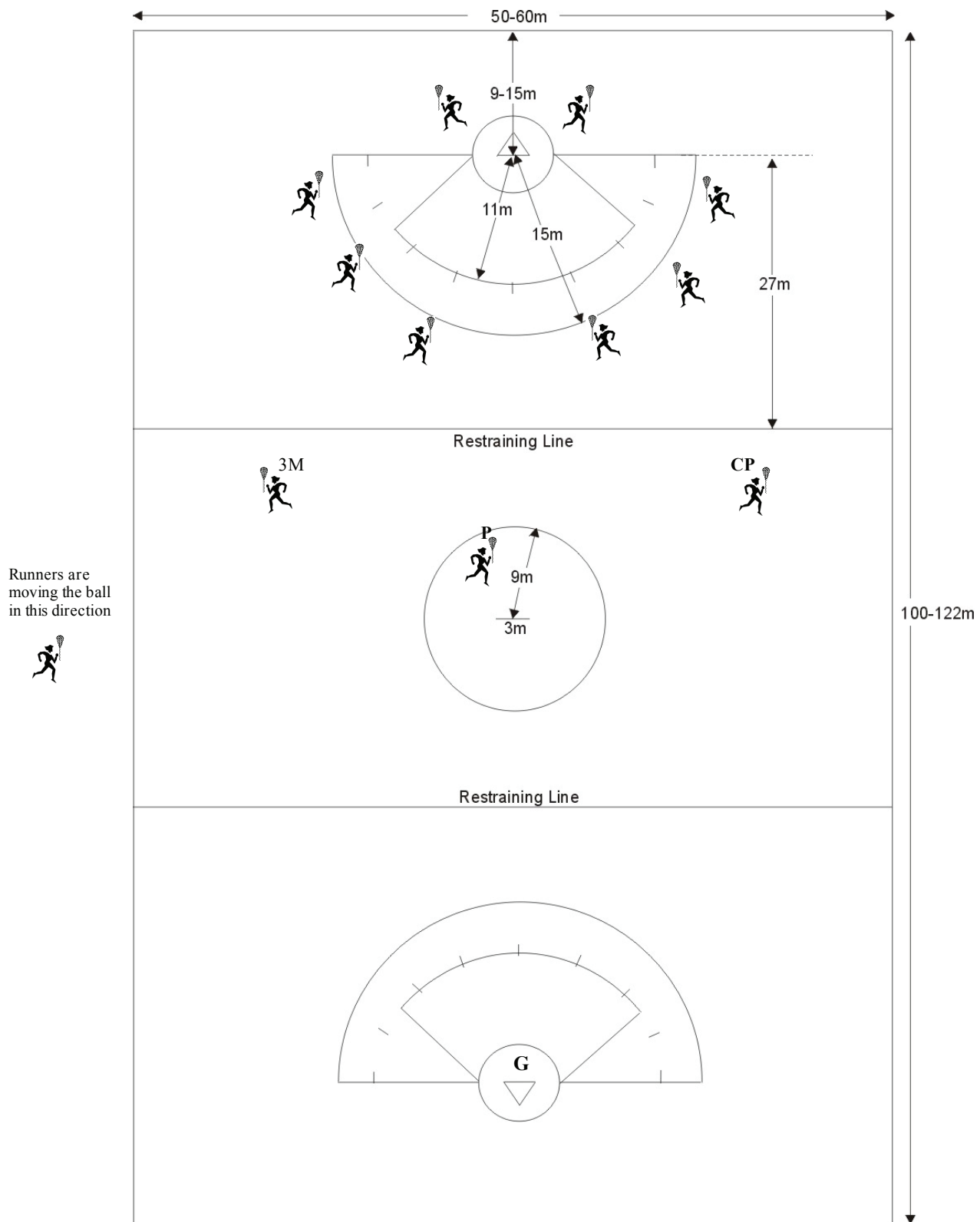
During the course of your practice sessions, when situations arise where a foul has been committed, stop play and have your players state the foul, and how the situation could be avoided.

Lacrosse is a thinking game.

Those players who can think one step ahead of the play at all times will have a tremendous advantage over their opponents. Work with your players to create an environment where they are responsible for their own decisions.

Encouraging older players to take a local umpire course is a good step towards helping them increase their understanding of the rules.

## The Field and Player Positions



## Avenues to Pursue in Women's Field Lacrosse

Young girls who play hockey or soccer have role models playing at the highest levels to watch and admire -- the Olympic Games and in some cases, in semi-professional leagues. Often times it's a dream of following in their footsteps that draw players to a sport, and gives them the motivation to work hard at mastering their skills.

Although the lure of Olympic Games or playing professionally is not currently part of the future of a Women's Field Lacrosse player, there are a number of great opportunities for girls to pursue to continue playing the game at higher levels.

## INTERNATIONAL

### 1. National Team Programs

The Canadian Lacrosse Association currently sanctions the participation of Canadian teams at IFWLA World Championships at the U-19 and Senior levels. Each event is held every four years, with the championships alternating every two years.

For the most current information on National Teams, see the National Team website:  
[www.teamcanadawomenslacrosse.com](http://www.teamcanadawomenslacrosse.com)

## UNIVERSITY

### 2. NCAA - Athletic Scholarships

Over the years, many Canadian student/athletes have had successful playing careers within the NCAA at some of the following institutions:

| Division I      |                  | Division II | Division III |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Canisius        | Old Dominion     | Gannon      | Hamilton     |
| Columbia        | Penn State       | Limestone   | Shippensburg |
| Cornell         | Robert Morris    | Mercyhurst  |              |
| James Madison   | Stanford         | New Haven   |              |
| Longwood Univ.  | Temple Univ      | Pfeiffer    |              |
| Niagara         | Univ. of Vermont |             |              |
| Ohio State      | William & Mary   |             |              |
| Ohio University |                  |             |              |

### IFWLA U-19 World Championships

Held for the first time in 1995, the U-19 World Championships are open to players aged 19 and under as of September 1st of the year of competition. The Canadian U-19 program generally operates on a two-year cycle leading up to the championships. Players are identified at regional ID camps, and brought together centrally for ongoing development, training and competition.

### IFWLA World Cup

Held for the first time in 1982, the World Cup competition showcases the highest calibre of competition. Dominated by the Americans and Australians who have won every Championship, a total of 10 countries have competed over the years: Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, England, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Scotland, United States, Wales.

### 3. Canadian Universities

Women's Field Lacrosse is a sanctioned varsity sport within the Ontario University Athletics ([www.oua.org](http://www.oua.org)). One Quebec team plays in this league.

## OTHER

For Canada to remain competitive at the International level, will require the continual transition of retired players into leadership roles, ie., coaches, umpires, bringing back with them the knowledge and experience gained during their competitive years in the game.

### 4. Coaching Opportunities

In most cases, a team that competes at a competitive level (league, university) must have a certified coach on the bench. Encourage your older players to become certified and provide them with opportunities to gain experience coaching within your community.

### 5. Umpiring Opportunities

As previously mentioned, encouraging older and graduating players to take a local umpire course is a good step towards strengthening teams and programs.

## Canadian Universities & Websites

### Ontario

Brock University  
(St. Catharines)

<http://www.brocku.ca/athletics>

McMaster University  
(Hamilton)

<http://www.athrec.mcmaster.ca/>

Queens University  
(Kingston)

<http://www.goldengael.com>

University of Guelph  
(Guelph)

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/athletics>

University of Toronto  
(Toronto)

<http://www.varsityblues.ca>

University of Western  
Ontario  
(London)

<http://www.uwo.ca/mustangs>

Wilfred Laurier  
(Waterloo)

<http://www.laurierathletics.com>

### Quebec

McGill University  
(Quebec)

<http://www.athletics.mcgill.ca>

## Pursuing NCAA Opportunities

### Financial Possibilities

- Athletic Scholarships
- Academic Scholarships
- Tuition Waivers
- Financial Aid - through individual Colleges
  - Ontario (O.S.A.P.)
- Self-Help School - work study program that gives the student-athlete a job to pay off tuition

### N.C.A.A. Divisions

- Division 1
  - Offer full athletic scholarships
  - 318 schools of which 77\* offer women's field lacrosse
- Division II
  - Offer partial athletic scholarships
  - 264 schools of which 32\* offer women's lacrosse
- Division III
  - Do not offer athletic scholarships
  - 395 schools of which 149\* offer women's lacrosse

\*The number of schools offering women's lacrosse programs is continuing to grow.

### Websites to Visit:

#### N.C.A.A.:

[www.ncaasports.org](http://www.ncaasports.org)  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org),

#### College Lacrosse:

[www.womenslacrosse.com](http://www.womenslacrosse.com)  
[www.iwlca.org](http://www.iwlca.org)

#### Camps:

US Lacrosse published an edition each spring with a complete listing of camps. You can become a member of US Lacrosse for between \$18US and \$50US (depending on your age and type of membership) and receive Lacrosse Magazine regularly.  
[www.lacrosse.org](http://www.lacrosse.org)

## GETTING STARTED

### Grade 7/8:

1. Play as much lacrosse as possible
2. Strive to play at higher levels
3. Attend lacrosse camps run by US College coaches

### Grade 9/10:

1. Learn requirements to become academically eligible
  - determine the 13 core courses required
  - determine what marks are required in those courses
2. Learn to calculate your G.P.A.

| Average | G. P. A. |
|---------|----------|
| 90-100  | = 4.3    |
| 85-89   | = 4.0    |
| 80-84   | = 3.7    |
| 77-79   | = 3.3    |
| 73-76   | = 3.0    |
| 70-72   | = 2.7    |

| Average | G. P. A. |
|---------|----------|
| 67-69   | = 2.3    |
| 63-66   | = 2.0    |
| 60-62   | = 1.7    |
| 57-59   | = 1.3    |
| 53-56   | = 1.0    |
| 50-52   | = .07    |

3. Play as much lacrosse as possible
4. Strive to play at higher levels
5. Attend lacrosse camps run by US College coaches
6. Get all your questions answered
  - talk to players who have been through the experience
  - talk to coaches about your thoughts
  - talk to teachers and guidance counselors at school that will be willing to help you through the process
7. Play as much lacrosse as possible, strive to play at higher levels, and attend camps run by US College coaches.

**Grade 11/12:**

1. Get an updated list of schools that offer lacrosse, and identify potential choices.

This can be obtained at [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).
2. Use the National Directory of College Athletics - Coaches or guidance counselors may have this book. It lists all the college/university addresses and the current coaches names or obtain the list from [www.ncaasports.org](http://www.ncaasports.org).
3. Put together an initial Package to send to coaches.
4. Mail package to universities that you are interested in. Address then specifically to the coaches attention.
5. Give 2-3 weeks for a reply. If no reply, follow up with a phone call. NO REPLY DOES NOT MEAN THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED.
6. Complete forms and respond promptly to all correspondence from coaches. Follow up with a phone call.
7. Review academic and lacrosse information for each school.
8. Play as much lacrosse as possible; strive to play at higher levels; and attend camps run by US college coaches.

**YOUR PLAYER PACKAGE**

Should include the following:

- Covering Letter - use the coaches name
- Athletic Profile - see attached form
- 3 reference letters - coach, teacher, etc.
- Transcript of Marks - get this from the Guidance Department
- Copies of Newspaper Articles - highlight parts about you
- Player Evaluations
- Statistics Record - Highlight your name and statistics
- Fitness Testing Scores
- Your Schedule of where you can be seen playing
- Video Tape showing your game play
- Picture of yourself

**YOU MUST BE  
PERSISTENT IN  
PURSUING A  
COLLEGE LACROSSE  
OPPORTUNITY.  
KEEP IN CONTINUAL  
CONTACT WITH  
COACHES.  
TAKE THE INITIATIVE.  
DON'T WAIT FOR  
THEM TO CALL YOU**

9. Register with the N.C.A.A. Clearinghouse (only necessary for Division I and II)
  - Call to get a registration package 319-337-1492
  - Complete forms and return with the required fee (approx \$30US).
10. Start to narrow down list of potential schools based on your needs. For example: Course of study, admission requirements, location, size of school, etc.
11. S.A.T's
  - Get Study Guide from a local bookstore.
  - Prepare for the tests using this study guide.
  - Get the guidance department to help you sign up on one of the set testing dates
  - Research scores required by a) the N.C.A.A. Clearinghouse, b) the school you're interested in
  - Test day - is a 3 hour test on English and Math
12. NCAA coaches cannot contact players by phone until the summer before Grade 12.
13. Visit schools you are interest in:
  - Official Visits: A campus visit/recruiting trip arranged by the coach. These are paid for by the school. You are allowed 5 official visits to different schools.
  - Unofficial Visits: These are more likely to occur and are not paid for. You may do as many of these as you like.
14. Early Signing: Occurs by mid-November  
Regular Signing: Occurs from December to August
15. Letter of Intent: Is a contract that you will sign when you have decided on a school.
16. Continue to play lacrosse at as high a level as possible.

**What to discuss with college coaches:**

1. Admission requirements
2. Number of returning players
3. How many openings for freshmen
4. What positions are open
5. Where do you see me playing
6. Turnover of players (ie., number of graduating players over the years)
7. Finances:
  - What sorts of financial packages are put together for players?
  - What athletic scholarship funding is available.
8. How long has the coach and assistants been at the school
  - How long do they play to stay
  - What has their record been
9. Does the coach actively recruit
10. What are the educational and athletic facilities like
11. What is the program you are interested in like

| PLAYER PROFILE OF:   |  |
|--|--|
| Name   | Phone:   |
| Address:   | Fax:   |
| Postal Code:   | Email:   |
| Date of Birth  | Age:   |
| Height:  | Weight:  |
| Shoots:  | Dominant Hand:   |
| <u>Experience:</u><br>Club/High School Level _____ years                                   | Coaches Name:<br>Phone:<br>Fax:<br>Email:              |
| Provincial Level _____ years   | Coaches Name:<br>Phone:<br>Fax:<br>Email:              |
| <u>Awards and Recognition Received:</u>  |  |
| <u>Educational Information:</u><br>Current High School Average _____ %<br>SAT Score: _____ | Programs interested in pursuing at University/College: |

## THE COACH

# Module 2

**GOAL:** To develop the competitive coach as an athlete-centred leader and educator.

**OBJECTIVES:** The competent Competitive Intro coach will be able to:

- Provide an environment for learning that is based on the qualities of learning, and that leads towards self-direction.
- Provide leadership that will involve the players in team policy, program direction and player development. Empower your players!
- Develop the personal leadership and emotional intelligence of the players so they will be able to function as team players both on and off the field.

### INTRODUCTION:

*If you can describe your team as a mature, pleasant, confident, motivated and intelligent players who are a pleasure to coach, who get along in a positive and constructive manner, who care about each other, who respect and are respected, who make good decisions on the field, who are not afraid to try new things and who possess an above average self-esteem, then you have developed a team of players who have what you would call character, and what the researchers call emotional intelligence. How did you do this? What did you do to develop this emotional literacy of your players?*

### Module 2, The Coach

is about coaching, learning and leading

*The Coach...*

**Educator**

**Administrator**

**Manager**

**LEADER!**

### **WELCOME TO THE LEARNING TO COMPETE PHASE OF ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT**

In Module 2, you will be shown how to use the self-directed approach to coaching. To discover which of your coaching behaviours lead to the development of the positive characteristics that not only make good players and people, but also good leaders.

## SECTION 1: THE COACH AS AN EDUCATOR - LEARNING

### What constitutes the intuitive change that is Learning?

- Experience;
- Knowing;
- Habit;
- Wisdom
- Competence
- Confidence; and
- Esteem

### **LEARNING IS ...**

*the intuitive change that occurs when people are engaged in activities that:*

- *present challenges or problems*
- *stimulate ideas*
- *develop skills*
- *increase knowledge*

<sup>1</sup> Vaill P. Learning as a Way of Being, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1996

### How do we know that Learning has occurred?

- The conscious effort of memorizing, drilling and controlling has moved to the unconscious state of knowing.
- Conscious effort has moved to unconscious effort (habit).
- Confidence replaces hesitation.
- Attention has moved from the worry about outcomes to concentration on process.

### To make Learning happen we must be:

- Encouraged to create and explore.
- Excited! not bored or frustrated.
- In control and not pressured.
- Involved in activities that are valued.
- Engaged in solving real problems.

### Learning happens while we are:

- Working
- Doing
- Playing
- Thinking

These qualities of learning (adapted from Peter Vaill <sup>1</sup>) are present whenever we are in control of what we are doing, i.e. doing what you want to do, when you want to do it and how you want to do it, and occurs when we are self-directed.

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<sup>1</sup> Vaill P. Learning as a Way of Being, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1996.

**LEARNING – PLAYING – COACHING**

**TASK 1**

When does learning happen on your team? Consider “play” in its truest form. What, where and when are these components of play incorporated into your practice plan?

| PLAY is ...                    | Components of your practice plan |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| SPONTANEOUS<br>INCONSEQUENTIAL |                                  |
| EXPLORATORY                    |                                  |
| CHALLENGING<br>ADAPTIVE        |                                  |
| REPETITIVE                     |                                  |
| PLAY INVOLVES<br>EMOTION       |                                  |

## Coaching Players to Learn

### Learning at the FUNdamental Phase of Development.

Fun games and guided discovery are used to give new players the freedom to learn while practising their fundamentals.

### Learning at the Learning to Play Phase of Development.

Greater independence and control is given to the players to ensure that their learning continues. Players are made aware of their learning. They are asked to think about what they like best about the sport, what they do best, what they would like to do better, how to make things better. In other words they are invited to participate in the planning of their sport. This is one way to make “the game for the kids”.

### Learning at the Learning to Compete Phase of Development

Once players are at the Learning to Compete phase of player development, other forces come into play that will affect performance.

**Competing means that players have goals, some of which may be difficult to achieve because of the increased number of choices players have to make.**

Unlike in earlier years when the goal was to play and when choosing to play was easy, choosing to do the work or to make the sacrifices required to refine skills and change or create complex habits is more difficult at the competitive level.

To give the commitment to learn how to compete, the players must feel that they will get something out of their effort. They must feel that it is their sport. This is achieved by teaching the players how to be self-directed so that they can have some ownership and the power of some control. The best players already have self-directed skills.

## APPLICATION

*To ensure that all players understand their responsibilities in a self-directed environment the players may have to be guided through the steps of:*

- Deciding on **what** they need or want to learn
- Setting and refining their own learning **goals**,
- Identifying and finding **resources** and **models** for learning,
- Choosing and using **strategies** for learning, and
- **Doing** their own evaluation

## Self-Directed Coaching Tips

### 1. Stimulate involvement:

The coach is a facilitator and mentor

- Prompt and motivate the players to use a self-directed approach such as helping the players identify problems that require solutions,
- Get players to provide evidence to support their ideas or to move in a specific direction, i.e. “why do you want to .....?”
- Allow players to have a voice in the direction of the team when planning the season,
- Take time to ensure that all players know how to make decisions, solve problems, plan learning activities etc. Don't just leave the players to fend for themselves.

### 2. Identify player-specific needs:

There is never enough time to teach everything, and it may be difficult for the coach to regularly know what the player's greatest needs or deficits are. Therefore:

- Ask the players: “What are you struggling with the most in your game right now?” or “What is the single most important thing we need to work on?” The coach may then elect to quickly direct teach 1 or 2 things to show the players how to tackle the problem, but then the players should be given the opportunity to explore and solve other problems in a similar fashion.
- Ask the players to share ideas that they have been working on in their own time and then allow them time to show others. Discuss where players can get their ideas, i.e. the internet or senior games. Set up circuits made up of the players ideas and allow them to choose which station they want to participate in.
- Formally negotiate with the players to work on specific weaknesses on their own time. They are to evaluate their performance and report back to the coach.

### **THE SELF-DIRECTED APPROACH IS:**

- Coaching the players how to identify what they need to learn rather than telling them.
- Showing players how to learn, and how to use drills and minor games to organize their own practice activities instead of always telling and showing them what to do.
- Guiding players through the progressions of developing learning skills as well as of the progressions of skill development.
- Allowing players to practice alone or in groups without interference from the coach.

#### **TASK 2**

*Using the explanation of the self-directed approach to coaching, identify situations where you have used the self-directed rather than the directed approach in your own coaching.*

#### **TASK 3**

*How is the language of instruction different in the self-directed approach? Give examples. Instead of telling or asking why, I will:*

#### **TASK 4**

*Give examples of how you could start using the self-directed approach to coaching before, during and after a game.*

### **3. Evaluate and encourage the players to evaluate their own performance.**

- Having the players report outcomes or explain what they have accomplished leads them to critically reflect on their performance and leads them to integrate the results.
- Coaches must carefully observe their players so they can fairly evaluate and give formative feedback

### **4. Use direct coaching methods with purpose and for effect.**

- Role-modeling. When questions are identified, particularly ones that neither the coach nor player knows the answer to, the coach may agree to find the answer and report back to the player.
- When using direct teaching methods coaches can make their information and drills relevant by:
  1. Building on prior knowledge: retention is better if incorporated in what is already known.
  2. Making the learning activity relevant.
  3. Providing opportunities for discussion, answering questions, teaching peers, and critiquing.
  4. Blending teaching strategies rather than exclusively using one method or another.
  5. Direct teaching is most effective when a concept is first introduced and when the players ask their coaches for help. Coaches can use a drill or demo to communicate the answer, or use a didactic (questioning) approach to lead the players to the answer.

## **SUMMARY**

Coaches who changed to a self-directed approach to coaching found that the more responsibility the players accepted, the less control the coaches had of what was being learned. The coaches felt a loss of power to exert their will, a loss of control of team direction and a loss of knowledge of team accomplishment. In other words they lost the ability to be accountable. However, as the coaches worked to facilitate what the players were trying to achieve and to mentor those that had difficulties, coaches eventually found different ways to control, evaluate and lead the team.

## **SECTION 2:**

### **The COACH as an ADMINISTRATOR, MANAGER and LEADER**

The Coach's role is to provide leadership through the leading of their players, the managing of their teams and the administration of their policies. These are three distinct and separate skills that we develop as a result of inherited abilities and experience. Coaches usually find that they have greater ability in one area than in the others and it is this natural ability that influences the approach that a coach will initially use. The purpose of Module 2 is to help coaches identify their natural strengths and to ensure that their style of coaching will eventually be the most effective way to interact with their players.

#### **The Duties and Styles of Coaching Defined**

##### **ADMINISTRATORS :**

- carry out policies formulated by others,
- do not make or change policy,
- use their power of control to carry out policy.

Coaches who use an administrative style of coaching are autocratic in their approach. They set the structure, policies, systems and standards of the team and direct the players in what to do. There is very little feedback from the players and the players are expected to find out how to do things on their own. The players are given the opportunity to comply or, if they can't or won't, they sit on the bench or leave.

##### **MANAGERS:**

- are concerned with efficiency and whether things are being done right,
- can influence policy but don't make it,
- choose and make decisions about systems of operation that will achieve the expected outcomes.
- use their organizational skills to ensure that systems are working,

##### **TASK 5**

*There are administrative duties that the coach must perform or ensure that they are done. Identify the policies of the administrative bodies from the CLA to the local associations that coaches and players must adhere to.*

##### **TASK 6**

*At the Learning to Compete Phase of player development many of the managerial duties of the coach can be passed on to the players. Describe the role the players can play in accepting team responsibilities, participating in the planning of practices, changing lines and establishing systems of play?*

Coaches who use a managerial style of coaching are very good at:

- delegating responsibilities,
- planning and organizing practices,
- recruiting players to improve team performance,
- devising strategies and tactics for winning games,
- establishing systems for organizing the bench and changing lines,
- organizing systems for the special teams and the transition parts of the game.

### **LEADERS:**

Coaches who use a leadership style of coaching facilitate and mentor rather than direct and control. They share their knowledge of how to learn, they evaluate with the players, they involve the players in making team decisions, and they show their players how to direct their own learning.

### **Coaches who Lead:**

- Build and share the direction and vision for the team,
- Motivate and inspire,
- Are concerned with effectiveness,
- Encourage people to live up to their potential,
- Clarify roles and objectives
- Promote two-way communication,
- Support new ideas and new direction.
- Are innovative and creative,
- Problem solvers
- Coordinate, consult and guide,
- Are open and frank,
- Promote team building, networking and manage conflict
- Are interested in ideas rather than policies,
- Delegate responsibilities and monitor,
- Encourage planned risk taking,
- Use policies and controls to guide rather than to dictate,
- Lead and pull rather than direct and push
- Facilitate and mentor
- Acknowledge and reward.

### **TASK 7**

- *Cross off the functions of leadership that will not apply to your level of coaching.*
- *Check off the functions that are already part of your approach to coaching*
- *Prioritize the remainder of the list*

## SECTION 3:

### LEARNING TO COACH by LEARNING TO LEAD

The most effective leaders and our best coaches share the same skills. This is not a coincidence. It has long been accepted that coaches are leaders and current literature on leadership often describes leadership behaviour as coaching rather than as directing, managing or controlling. Unfortunately, too many coaches don't recognize their leadership role or even if they do, tend to direct and manage rather than facilitate and mentor. There are valid reasons for these tendencies. Apart from the influence of our information giving education and coaching backgrounds, many coaches get involved in coaching to "give back to the sport" and to share their knowledge. They see themselves as information givers and coaches of lacrosse rather than as developers and coaches of players. Accepting their roles as leaders will help coaches break away from their programming.

*"DIRECTING implies pushing people to do things. LEADING involves acting in a manner in which people willingly follow. The leader provides the proper conditions; the people manage themselves."*

*"Leaders practice self-management and self-control."*

### How can coaches create new habits and include the qualities of leadership in all aspects of their coaching?

#### Step 1: Understand what leadership is.

*(Paraphrased from Inside Guide, Spring 1990, p. 66,67 <sup>2</sup>)*

*Once the manager and the leader have agreed upon what is to be done, "the manager should be free to a large degree to manage him or herself."*

*"Optimal motivation occurs when managers think, act, and behave as if they were really presidents...". "They (managers) truly believe they are responsible for their own results." Manager who manage themselves "are a pleasure to work with."*

### Leadership is teaching players how to lead by teaching self-management skills.

The implication from the above definition is that leadership and coaching are processes of helping players manage or direct themselves. Self-direction, therefore, becomes the tool for not only becoming a good leader but also for developing successful players. The process is both simple and complex.

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<sup>2</sup> McConkey, Dale D. Are You an Administrator, a Manager, or a Leader? Business Horizons. Foundation for the School of Business at Indiana University, September/October 1989.

The simplicity is in our approach: in the beginning it is to let the players play and discover. The complexity comes from our habit to direct and the need for players to “do as they are told”. It means that coaches must concurrently redefine their own leadership skills and then pass these skills on to their players.

## Step 2: Learn what leaders do.

There are many sources that coaches can use to guide them through the process of learning how to lead. It is recommended that they refer to the leadership section of their local bookstores and libraries. One method of learning how to lead is to follow the example of effective leaders.

The following habits of highly effective people as described by Stephen Covey in THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE<sup>3</sup> will help coaches in both their personal life and in their endeavour to be a coach.

At the **Community Coach** level...

coaches carried out Covey's 7 Habits when they:

- Adopted philosophies and behavior patterns that followed the NCCP model.
- Set goals and objectives.
- Used Practice Plans and planned their season
- Observed and taught ethical practices and principles of FairPlay (Valuing)
- Sought knowledge and developed appropriate teaching methods. (Interacting)
- Involved the players in using minor games to teach.
- Evaluated the season. (Reflecting)

At the **Competitive Introduction** level...

coaches will not only have to learn how to apply these habits at the competitive phase but because of the definition of leadership, will have to develop the habits of the players as well.

### SITUATIONAL CHALLENGE

~  
*“Think of examples of behaviour, skills or game plans that didn't meet your expectations. Was the failure a result of incomplete learning by the players, negative attitude by the players or lack of effort on their part? Think of examples of who the players blame and start to formulate plans to stimulate their acceptance of responsibility.”*

### SITUATIONAL CHALLENGE

~  
*“You are tasked to select players for a competitive team, start to formulate the characteristics and attributes of the athletes you are looking for. Your “Seasonal Planner” should reflect your approach to the training however remember, you must also formulate into your plan how you intend to stimulate the athletes desire for setting personal self-improvement goals.”*

<sup>3</sup> Covey, Stephen R. THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Inc., 1989.

**Habit 1: Be Proactive.**

(Leadership)

Being proactive means taking responsibility for your actions. In coaching, this means that you will not blame players or events if the players do not meet expectations. If there is something the players cannot do or are not doing, it is because you have failed. The problem can be in the way you teach, motivate, communicate or lead.

**Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind**

(Creating your vision)

Base goals and mission statements on what you want to accomplish with your players. Determine what the players need to know to be successful, and then determine what you need to learn in order to achieve the player outcomes.

**Habit 3: Put First Things First**

(Planning)

It will take several years to develop sound coaching and playing habits. Plan a series of steps that will lead to the final outcomes and set short-term objectives and goals for each practice, week, month and season.

**Habit 4: Think Win-Win**

(Valuing)

All relationships in Lacrosse, from coach/player to Association-to-Association must be based on the principles of the Spirit of Sport, FairPlay, two-way communication and the Four-Way Test. (See section on ethical decision-making in this module).

## Habit 5: Seek First to Understand and Then Try to be Understood

(Gaining and using knowledge, problem solving)

Coaches must understand the material, themselves and their players before they can effectively achieve coaching competency. However, this does not mean coaches have to attend more courses before they can start coaching. Learning and understanding can only be gained by doing. The suggestion is that coaches start with enough knowledge to establish a goal, develop a plan of “Putting First Things First”, and then to implement the plan. If the players don't understand, then coaches must seek more knowledge whether if be self, technical or interpersonal, and then try again.

At first, the players may not understand the attempts to involve them, after all, they have been programmed to believe that coaching is telling and playing is following the system. Therefore players must be given the opportunity and direction to learn the self-directed process.

### **Sharing Resources:**

*To be fully responsible and to effectively plan, players must eventually know how to find and use coaching resources. How will you teach players to use the coaching resources that you use?*

## Habit 6: Synergize

(Intervention/self-direction)

Synergy is the energy that comes from working with your players to solve problems, set goals and organize practices. It is the increased accomplishment that comes from two people working together, i.e. two logs together burn hotter than each log separately. It is the emotion that comes from self-determination and empowerment.

### **Empowerment is the:**

- feeling that the players are in charge of their own destinies,
- confidence to be counted upon at all times
- freedom to learn and to achieve results,
- feeling that a player is supported.
- mentoring and facilitating that leads.

### **Empowerment results in:**

- The team building that involves the building of trust, respect, integrity and ownership.
  - Self-esteem – self-worth, self-respect, confidence
  - Self-efficacy – the belief that a person can achieve ones goals.
- It is the combination of self-esteem, skills and resources

### **Consider?**

- When is it appropriate for coaches to intervene, to reset direction, to take control? Is there a situation when empowerment won't work?
- How is the way coaches communicate with their players different when they are using coach directed rather than self-directed techniques?
- When does intervention turn into interference?

## **Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw** (Reflection)

Sharpening the saw refers to the physical and emotional well being of the coach. It means that coaches must take time for reflection. Not only to protect their health but to ensure that they don't get off track, start missing key elements in their coaching or get too narrow in their perspective. The tendency is to push players through a non-stop approach to sport without considering the needs of the players.

Players are constantly reflecting on their performance and on how they fit in, but they are not always sharpening the saw. Much of the self-talk, which is a reflection of what the player believes or wants to believe, is negative. Coaches can help their players ensure that self-talk is honest, informative and focused on the processes of learning and improving.

### **TASK 8:**

*Describe coaching behaviours that will lead to empowering the players during practices and games.*

### **TASK 9:**

*Your players are cooling down after a game that they have lost. Develop a dialogue that will lead them away from negative self-talk about performance and onto a path of honest and informative appraisal that can be used to plan the next stage of their development. It is not whether they won or lost the game that will build character, but rather the consequences of having played (what they do with the resulting information).*

## Ethical Decision Making

As a coach, you will deal with a wide range of issues. Depending on the type of issue with which you are faced, you may experience a variety of emotions/feelings and thoughts. Sometimes, you may feel that an action/behaviour is wrong. At other times, you may suspect or even know that a behaviour is illegal. In other instances, you may feel unsure about a situation and a decision, since there seems to be a number of alternatives that could be acceptable. If you ask yourself this type of question, the issue most likely has ethical implications.

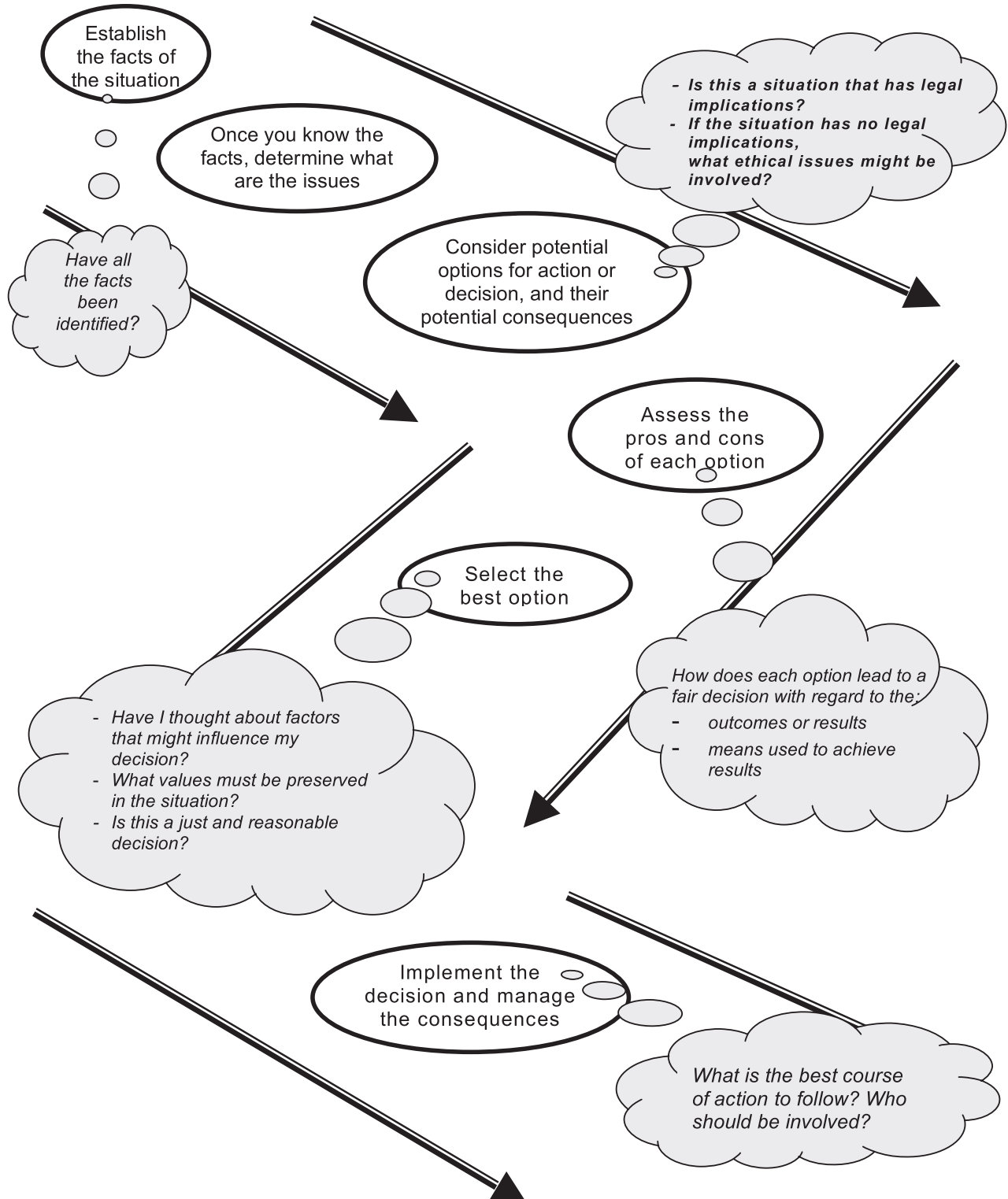
Ethical issues arise when our values and the corresponding ethical principles are compromised in some way. When this happens, the decisions are often sensitive and difficult to make. In these situations, the quality of the decisions made by the coach depends on a number of factors including:

- An understanding of the facts of the situation
- an awareness of his/her own values, and of the various factors that can influence his/her decision
- the use of appropriate benchmarks to analyze the situation and understand what is involved
- the ability to apply a rigorous decision-making framework to the situation at hand

The ethical decision-making process will enable you to make thoughtful and responsible decisions in situations presenting ethical or moral dilemmas. To this end, a series of steps will be proposed, each emphasizing certain questions. These steps are summarized in the diagram on the following page. If you follow this path and answer the questions to the best of your knowledge, you will:

- (1) ensure you have a thorough process to enable you to make sensitive decisions;
- (2) have solid arguments to justify your decisions from an ethical point of view; and
- (3) feel confident to fully assume the consequences of your decisions, knowing that *"it was the right thing to do under the circumstances"*.

## Analysis and Decision-Making Process for Situations That Have Ethical Implications



**Step One – Establish the Facts of the Situation**

When faced with any situation or problem in coaching, your first task is always to establish exactly what has happened (or is happening) and who is involved in the situation before trying to figure out what you will do about it. At this stage, ask yourself the following questions:

- What has happened or what is happening? When and where did certain events occur? Get the facts from all the parties involved, and look at the situation from both sides if there is disagreement or conflict.
- Who is (or might be) involved in or concerned by the situation?
- What do the parties involved have to say about the situation (i.e. what are all sides of the story)?

**Step Two – Determine the Issues of the situation****A. Does the situation have legal implications?**

See flow chart on the following page for determining what constitutes legal implications and the appropriate actions to take.

**B. Does the situation have ethical implications?**

When the coach encounters a situation that does not violate any law, but nonetheless raises moral questions, he/she must make decisions about how best to respond. Under these circumstances, ethical principles are often called upon. Ethical conduct can be described as a behaviour that meets accepted standards or principles of moral, professional or just conduct. Unethical behaviour is the contrary, i.e. actions or decisions that are immoral, unprofessional or unjust. Once you have determined that the situation is not of a legal nature, it is important to determine whether it presents an ethical issue.

Given the facts that have been identified, is there a reasonable doubt that the situation might impact on, or be related to, one or more of the following:

- Safety of one or more individuals
- Short or long term well-being or health of one or more individuals
- Respect for established principles, rules (rules of the team, the game, etc.), or policies of an organization
- Obligations, loyalties, word given, prior commitments made, responsibilities of the person(s) concerned
- Appropriate use of power by the individuals in a position of authority
- Objectives and goals sought by the group or by an individual
- Behaviours or practices that are generally considered acceptable, or that are expected under the circumstances at hand (standard of behaviour)
- Fairness and equity; using acceptable means; respect of others
- Confidentiality of information and privacy; appropriate use of information

## Determining if a Situation is Legal



### Determine the Facts of the Situation

**Based on the facts, determine if the situation is legal. It will automatically be so if it relates to one or more of the elements below:**

- **Actions that are criminal or quasi-criminal** - These are wide-ranging and could include theft, assault, sexual assault, other sexual offenses, possession of narcotics, underage drinking, driving without a license or insurance, forgery, fraud, vandalism, etc.
- **Actions that breach a contract** - These could include someone acting outside the scope of their delegated authority, violating agreed-upon rules relating to the use of a facility or equipments, or failing to meet other contractual obligations.
- **Actions or information indicating there are reasonable grounds to believe that a child may be in need of protection.**
- **Actions that are discriminatory** - Actions of a government, organization or individual that are contrary to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Canadian Human Rights Act, or any provincial human rights legislation.
- **Actions that constitute harassment** - Harassment is a form of discrimination and is contrary to human rights laws: in its extreme form, harassment may be a criminal offense.
- **Actions, even those that are not intentional, that could constitute negligence, as legally defined.**

YES  
↓

Actions to take  
Inform appropriate authority:

- Police
- Child protection service
- Employer
- Other

NO  
↓

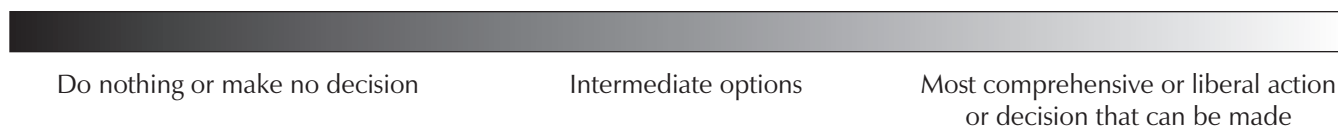
Use the ethical decision-  
making process

### Step Three – Identify possible decisions

Having determined that the situation does have some ethical implications and identified some potential ethical issues (based on the statements listed in the previous step), you should now identify *options for decision or for action*, and *assess potential consequences in each case*. This reflection represents an important step in the ethical decision-making process because it shows that you care about what might happen to others.

Start by asking yourself: **“What could I do in this situation?”** In the process of answering this question, think about a variety of options. The first one to consider should be “not making any decision” or “taking no action”. This would be the least demanding option, and it could be thought of as representing one end of a continuum of possibilities. As a second step, consider the other “extreme” of the continuum, and think of the most comprehensive or liberal action you might take in the situation. Then, identify several intermediate options. Do not rule out any option at this stage, even though at the outset it may appear an unlikely choice.

#### Continuum of Options for Decision or for Action



Once several options for decision have been identified, think about **“What might happen if ...”**. This will enable you to assess potential consequences that may result from each option. In many ethical situations where a “Yes – No” decision must be made, the following questions are likely to arise:

- What might happen if the coach *chose not to make any decision* or *took no action*?
- What might happen if the coach’s position were *favorable* to the situation, question, or issue at hand?
- What might happen if the coach’s position were *not favorable* to the situation, question, or issue at hand?

### **Step Four – Identify the pros and cons of each potential decision**

As part of a thoughtful decision-making process, you should now assess the pros and cons of each option for decision. Criteria can be classified into two categories based on whether they relate primarily to the outcome (or result) of the decision, or the **means** (or process) used to reach a decision.

#### **Criteria that relate primarily to the outcome (or result)**

- The option promotes the achievement of a positive outcome for the majority of the individuals concerned.
- The option minimizes the negative implications that may follow.
- Potentially negative implications affect the fewest people possible.
- The option does not represent a risk for the physical, intellectual, emotional or social development of a person.
- The option does not represent an obstacle to the achievement of a person's or a group's goals
- The option seeks to protect the interests of others who might be in a vulnerable position.

#### **Criteria that relate primarily to the means (or process)**

- The option is fair and respects the rights of everyone regardless of athletic potential, sex, race, language, age, religion, etc.
- The option takes into account and is consistent with all established rules and principles.
- The option is consistent with successful decisions or actions taken in the past in similar situations.
- The option respects the authority of people in a position of responsibility.
- The option is based on credible information.

### **Step Five – Select the best option for the decision**

At this stage, it is important to bring together key elements of the previous steps and reflect on how to make “the best possible decision under the circumstances”. In Step 4, we used certain criteria to assess the merit of a variety of options for decision or for action. Based on these criteria, a solution that is “just and reasonable” can therefore be defined as one that:

1. Results in a positive outcome for the majority of the individuals concerned.
2. Minimizes the negative implications for all parties involved.
3. Appears to be the “right thing to do” with regard to your coaching duties and responsibilities.

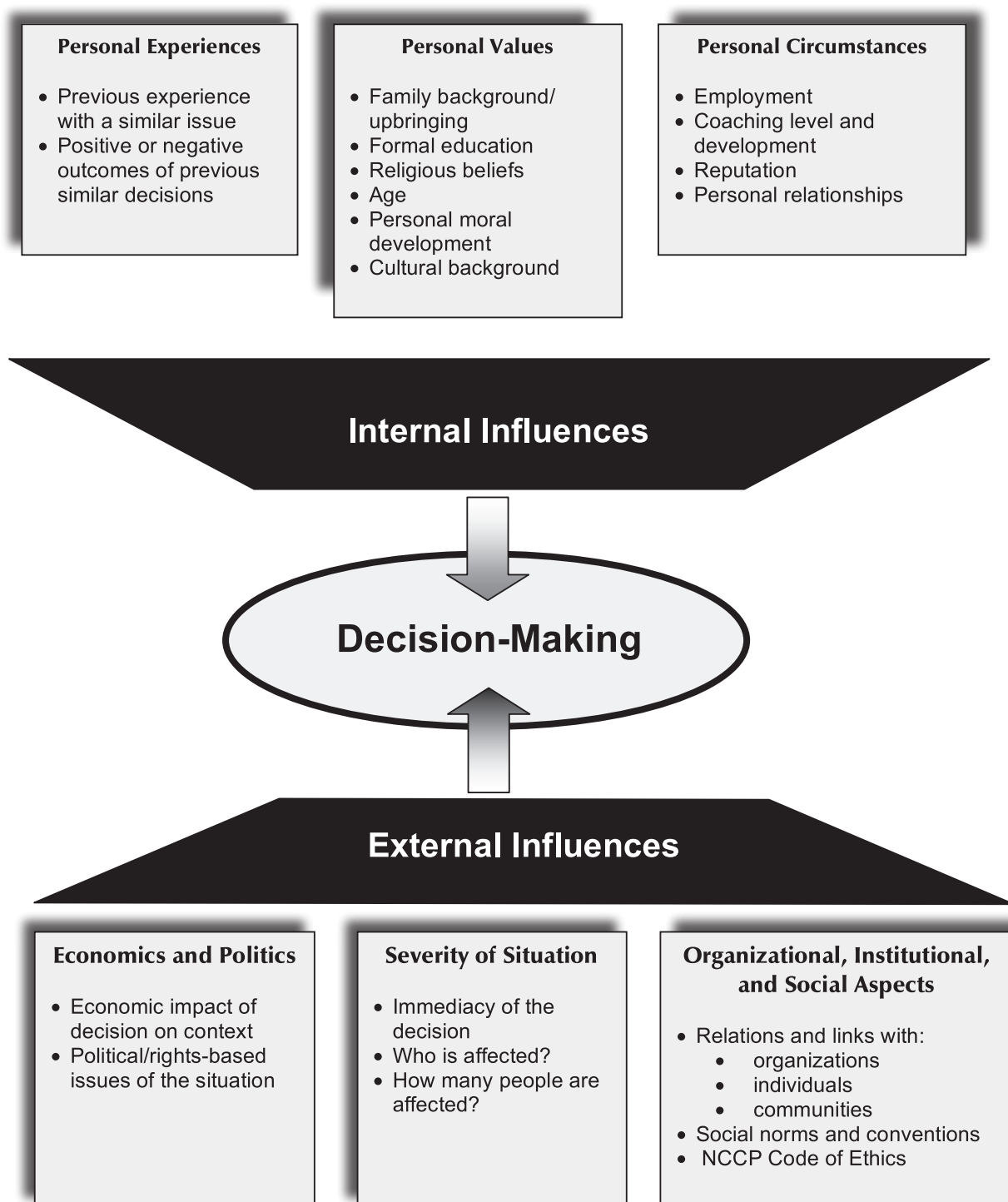
4. Is being made using a fair and equitable process.
5. Is consistent with certain expected standards of behaviour, such as those outlined in the NCCP Code of Ethics.

However, despite the availability of such criteria, not all ethical decisions are clear-cut. In some instances, a coach may experience some difficulty in making a decision because there appears to be **more than one reasonable solution**. Sometimes, making a decision will even involve sacrificing one value for another. To rank options that seem reasonable with a view to “making the best possible decision”, we will now consider the following aspects:

1. What factors could possibly influence decision-making?
2. How can one prioritize principles or values in which he/she strongly believes, but that seem in conflict in the situation at hand? In other words, what do you do when you are confronted with an *ethical dilemma*?

## What Influences How You View a Situation and the Decisions You Make?

*This figure has been adapted from Malloy, Ross, and Zackus, 2000*



### **Moral Dilemmas and Ethical Decision-Making**

As mentioned previously, certain ethical situations may generate strong feelings or doubts because there seems to be more than one reasonable solution. Sometimes, making a decision even involves sacrificing one value for another. When there are two potentially right solutions, such situations are referred to as **ethical dilemmas – a conflict between values we wish to maintain.**

**The challenge in ethical decision-making is to determine which value you will maintain in your course of action.**

Here are some examples of possible conflicts between values, or ethical dilemmas:

- Team Rules vs Parental Rights and Authority
- Team Rules vs Winning the Competition
- Duty to Do No Harm Principle vs Athlete's Will/Right to Play

To help you prioritize principles and values when faced with an ethical dilemma ask the following questions?

### **Prioritizing Principles and Values When Faced With an Ethical Dilemma**

Sometimes, it is relatively easy to determine which value should take priority (e.g., safety of athletes in your care) but in others, it is not as clear (e.g., amount of playing time for each athlete). When someone is faced with an ethical or moral dilemma and is forced to choose between two values, it is normally his/her most deeply held beliefs that will dictate the course of action. Having thoroughly determined the pros and cons of the various options for decision using the criteria proposed in Step 4, and having reflected on some factors that may influence your decision-making, you can resolve an ethical dilemma by asking yourself the following questions:

- Which criteria (or value) do you consider the most important from those listed in Step 4?
- What does the NCCP Code of Ethics suggest in this type of situation?
- Is there another value in which you strongly believe, and that you would seek to maintain at all costs? If so, which is it?

### Do No Harm Principle

Even though it is a sensitive issue to suggest a ranking of your values, the NCCP nonetheless considers that, above all, it is the duty of all coaches to ensure the decisions they make and the actions they take will result in no harm, physical or other, to the athletes.

Having gone through all the previous steps, you may still want to validate one more time that your decision is really “just and reasonable”, by asking yourself the following questions:

- Would you make this decision in all similar cases?
- If you feel that you cannot apply your decision to all similar cases, what might be a reasonable and justifiable exception? If so, in which circumstances? Do such circumstances apply in the present situation? What leads you to believe that an exception might be justified in this case, but not in other situations?
- Is the decision consistent with previous decisions that have been made in similar situations in the past, and that have resulted in a positive outcome?

Going through this last series of questions should enable you to be confident that you have made the best possible decision under the circumstances, and give you additional arguments to fully assume the consequences that may unfold when the decision is announced or implemented.

### Step Six – Design an action plan to implement the decision

Putting your decision or plan of action into effect requires that you consider a number of things, particularly if it involves dealing with individuals or groups of people. Consider the following questions as you establish an action plan:

- Choose your path. Exactly what is it that you are going to do? Plan carefully the steps you are going to take.
- Think about what may happen. Consider the likely outcomes of the decision and how will these consequences be managed?
- Identify who needs to know. Consider carefully who needs to be informed of, or involved in, the implementation of the action plan or decision.
- Determine if you can deal on your own with the person involved. Is it appropriate to seek an **informal resolution** in

this situation? In issues not involving a contravention of the law, it is often best to try and deal with the issue informally and directly with the individual involved. We often refer to this as adopting the *conservative approach*. It has the advantage of conferring responsibility for actions upon the party involved and allows them to resolve the situation while maintaining their own sense of dignity and self-respect. It also establishes a degree of trust between parties involved. Approach the individual, and inform him/her of your observations or what has been shared with you. Give him/her a chance to respond, and a chance to do the good or right thing.

- **Warn, don't threaten.** This is an important concept when dealing with a situation at an informal level. This entails informing the individual of the logical consequences of what can happen if a situation is not resolved, rather than threatening the person with an "end of run" right out of the gate! This is plan B. Keep plan B in your back pocket.
- **Think about what you might do next if the informal resolution doesn't work.** In the event an informal resolution does not work, carefully consider what to do next. Inform the individual that you now have to follow up with "plan B". Consider who should be contacted, and what level of authority you should now involve in this situation.

## MODULE WRAP-UP

All higher level teams, Provincial Teams, University and National teams struggle when the players and/or coaches do not possess the personal leadership and self-management skills required to win.

- Listen to the interviews with coaches and players of winning and losing teams and you will hear how they have either put it together or are still learning various facets of how to compete or how to win.
- Listen to how professional coaches describe how mature the young superstar is, or as is more often the case, why the younger players are sent to the minors. What is it that they are struggling to learn? Is it not to strengthen weaknesses either technical or psychological? i.e. being able to make the right decisions, execute skills under pressure and react to adversity in a positive way? Or perhaps it is the learning how to learn the personal leadership and self-management skills that should have taken place while learning to compete.
- Today's players need to be involved in the part of coaching that affects them. Players that are empowered will believe in the systems and can apply themselves with the commitment and loyalty that is required to make a system work. At the professional level it is the players that must find a way to win, to find a way to stay on top.

*What few can accomplish today  
will be the standards of tomorrow.*

*What part are you going to play  
in preparing tomorrow's athletes?*

## APPENDIX A

### NCCP Code of Ethics

#### What is a Code of Ethics?

A code of ethics defines what is considered good and right behaviour. It reflects the values held by a group, and outlines the expected conduct of members while they perform their duties. It can also be used as a benchmark to assess whether certain behaviours are acceptable.

#### Why a Code of Ethics in Coaching?

Core coaching values have been formalized and expressed as a series of principles in the NCCP Code of Ethics. These principles can be thought of as a set of duties and responsibilities regarding participation in sport, coaching athletes or teams, and administering sports.

The NCCP Code of Ethics can help coaches to evaluate issues arising within sport because it represents a reference for what constitutes “the right thing to do”.

#### Principles of the NCCP Code of Ethics

The NCCP Code of Ethics is a simplified version of the Code of Ethics of the Canadian Professional Coaches Association (CPCA). However, both codes deal with the same fundamental principles and beliefs:

1. Respect for Athletes
2. Coaching Responsibly
3. Maintaining Integrity in Relations with Others
4. Honouring Sport

The following pages provide a description of each principle and outline implications for coaches.

The Fair Play principles, which follow the NCCP Code of Ethics, relate to the principle of “Honouring Sport”.

## NCCP Code of Ethics

### 1. Respect for Athletes

The principle of respect for athletes challenges coaches to act in a manner respectful of the dignity of those involved in sport. This principle is based on the basic assumption that each person has value and is worthy of respect. Acting with *respect for participants* means that coaches:

- Do not make some participants feel more or less worthy as persons than others, on the basis of gender, race, place of origin, athletic potential, colour, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, socio-economic status, marital status, age, or any other conditions.
- Have a responsibility to respect and promote the rights of all participants. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for **confidentiality** (right to privacy), **informed participation** and **shared decision-making** (right to self-determination – athletes' rights), and **fair and reasonable treatment** (right to procedural fairness). Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are vulnerable or in dependent positions, and therefore less able to protect their own rights.
- Interact with others in a manner that enables all participants in sport to maintain their dignity.
- Build mutual support among fellow coaches, officials, athletes, and their family members.

### 2. Coaching Responsibly

The principle of coaching responsibly carries the expectation that the activities of coaches will benefit society in general, and athletes in particular, and will do no harm. Fundamental to the implementation of this principle is the notion of competence, which implies that coaches should be well-prepared and possess up-to-date knowledge of their discipline so that they will be able to maximize benefits and minimize risks to athletes.

In addition, coaching responsibly implies that coaches:

- Act in the best interest of the participant/athlete's development as a whole person.
- Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach.
- Are aware of their personal values and how these affect their behaviour.
- Acknowledge the limitations of their knowledge and competence in their sport.
- Accept the responsibility to work with other coaches and professionals in sport in the best interests of the athletes.

### 3. Integrity in Relationships

Behaving with integrity means that coaches are expected to be honest, sincere, and honourable in their relationships with others. Acting on these values is possible when coaches have a high degree of self-awareness and the ability to reflect critically on how their views and opinions influence how they interact with others.

In coaching, critical reflection questions existing assumptions about the values and practices that govern coaches' actions. The essential component of critical reflection is an attitude based on (i) open-mindedness, i.e. an active predisposition to hear more than one side of an issue; (ii) active inquiry, i.e. asking why things are done the way they are; and (iii) sincerity, i.e. coaches being genuine in their coaching relationships.

### 4. Honouring Sport

The principle of *honouring sport* challenges coaches to recognize and promote the value of sport for individuals and teams, and for society in general. *Honouring sport* implies that coaches:

- Act on and promote clearly articulated values related to coaching and sport.
- Encourage and model honourable intentions and actions.

## Fair Play Principles

In addition to a Code of Ethics, coaches and athletes should abide by the principles of Fair Play. Applying Fair Play principles implies that all those involved in sport recognize the importance of fairness, a respectful attitude, and appropriate conduct when engaged in sporting activities, and agree to model and promote them.

The following are examples of Fair Play behaviours for coaches, athletes, officials, and parents:

- Follow all of the rules, and never seek to deliberately break a rule.
- Aim to compete fairly, using talent and ability to win; refuse to win by illegal means or by cheating.
- Respect the official(s), and accept their decisions without doubting their integrity.
- Recognize good performances by the opponent.
- Maintain dignity in all circumstances, and demonstrate self-control. In defeat, recognize with dignity the superiority of the opponent. In victory, act modestly, and do not ridicule the opponent.
- For the officials – know all the rules well, and apply them with impartiality at all times.

*Note: The Fair Play Principles, the NCCP Code of Ethics, and the sample codes of conduct for parents and athletes can all serve as starting points to help in the creation of a team code of conduct that is designed and agreed upon by the athletes, parents and other coaches of your team.*

## THE PLAYER

# Module 3

**GOAL:** To help coaches understand the developmental, emotional and technical needs of players who are learning to compete.

**OBJECTIVES:** The competent Competitive Intro coach will:

- Know the developmental stage and characteristics of the age group they coach;
- Know how coaching behaviour effects the emotional development of the players;
- Evaluate the personal characteristics and mental skills of their players;
- Evaluate individual and team skills relative to the stages of learning;
- Use the evaluation results to identify practice content for technical, emotional and cognitive development;
- Learn the ways player evaluation can be used in managing and coaching the team.

### INTRODUCTION:

*Learning how to compete can be a very emotional, frustrating and challenging time for both players and coaches. Being organized, consistent, patient and fair will help coaches get through the season, but what really makes the difference is understanding the players.*

*At stake is the emotional development of the players, which among other things, involves the self-esteem, confidence, self-awareness, self-efficacy and emotional control players need in order to compete effectively.*

*In the **Learning to Play** phase of player development, we learned that players learn best when they are playing on their own terms (see Module 2) and when they are challenged.*

*In the **Learning to Compete** Phase nothing has changed except that the games have become more competitive and the need for self-control and self-direction more prevalent.*

## Knowing the Players

Learning how to compete comes at a very awkward time in the life of a developing athlete the teen years. Adolescence is a time of emotional upheaval, erratic growth, a need for self-determination and rebellion. The result produces the most difficult age group to parent, teach or coach. A common expression heard in a home of teenagers is: “You don’t understand”. It is true, adults probably don’t understand teens as well as they should, but they probably understand them better than teens understand themselves. Young teenagers are looking for independence while still needing the security of home, which frustrates them and makes them even more rebellious. They want the freedom to make choices but don’t know how to accept the responsibility that goes with it or to take the guidance, particularly from parents, to make good decisions.

Surprisingly, the coach has the easiest time of all the caregivers in a teen’s life. Sport can be the ideal environment for the developing teen because it gives teens the opportunity to explore and discover their abilities, and to create an identity while under the protective umbrella of the coach. Because sport is a chosen activity and because it is socially acceptable to “do as the coach says”, half the problems faced by parents and educators are eliminated because the coach initially has the cooperation of the players. The operative word is “initially”, which means that coaches will be given a chance to prove themselves. Failure to support the emotional, psychological and technical needs will turn the teen off and the coaches’ problems will begin.

Does this mean that coaches need psychology degrees? It would help, but won’t be necessary. Learning how to use the self-directed approach to coaching will not only satisfy the players’ need for self-determination, but the players will have the opportunity to learn how to be self-directed, which in effect is learning how to:

- control their emotions,
- relate to each other and adults, i.e. social skills,
- set and achieve goals,
- prepare themselves to compete
- learn.

*Sport can be the ideal environment for the developing teen because it gives teens the opportunity to explore and discover their abilities, and to create an identity while under the protective umbrella of the coach.*

## Growth And Development

### Development Models and Training to Compete

The 13 to 16 age group is an excellent time to implement the Learning to Compete Phase of player development. At thirteen, the players are in their last year of pre-adolescence, which is a period of disorganization where the players have been deliberately tearing down their connection to childhood in order to start the rebuilding into adulthood. This is what the hostility towards parents and the rejection of family ties are all about. At the other end of the age group, the sixteen-year-olds are physically and mentally ready to apply what they have learned over the last three years as they prepare for their final year of learning how to compete. Their success will be determined by their parents and coaches and when the parents failed, just their coaches.

The early teens need the security and support of the family, and are seeking the independence to explore and learn how to do things on their own. "Doing things on their own" is the key. Only by finding out what they can do without the help of an adult can players find out who they are. This is why teens reject advice and have to make their own mistakes, and what they mean when they exclaim: "You don't understand."

The Learning to Compete Phase of player development, with its emphasis on teaching coaches how to teach players to be self directed, is a perfect match for the early teens with their very strong need for independence and to "learn on their own".

### Thirteen

#### Emotional Development

The thirteen-year-olds tend to be withdrawn, moody and very sensitive, partially because of the tearing down they endured during pre-adolescents, partially because of the physiological changes that have already started and partially because they have just destroyed their identity.

**TASK 1: Develop a profile of the age group coached using the Age related Growth and Development characteristics.**

**Age category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**General:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

**Psycho/Emotional:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Physical:** \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **THIRTEEN:**

*A year of transition between playing for fun and needing more challenge.*

## Cognitive Development

Thirteen is transition year of confusion and lost confidence, and trying to learn as they play is no longer meeting the needs of the more intense competition.

Coaches can help the thirteen-year-olds by:

- being very positive;
- by placing special emphasis on the fundamentals;
- by using a disciplined approach to the game; and
- resorting to the more direct methods of teaching to establish a logical process of how to set goals and a plan to achieve them.

By offering a structure and getting the players to focus on what they know best, coaches will establish a base from which the young teen can reach out from and explore. Do not wait until the players “get it” or fully understand before moving to self-direction.

- Explain what is happening but keep explanations brief.
- Move players into activity quickly.
- Start all new activities with the coach directed mode.
- Follow up every activity with lead questions to move players into their own decision making about what to do next and how to make improvements.
- Finish each activity with questions that lead to self-evaluation.

THEN

- Move to group goal setting.
- Have the players contribute to the plan for achieving the goals.

## Physical Development

A team of thirteen-year-olds will have a mix of players from three different stages of development, early, late and normal maturation levels.

- Flexibility, coordination and balance training are extremely important for players of all stages.
- Intensity and duration of strength, speed and endurance training must be matched to the individuals and the stages they are going through. Do not expect the same performance from all players or even the same player within the same season. If performance is down, suspect a growth and development change.

*By first showing the players how to set their own goals and then allowing them to plan and evaluate their practising, coaches will lead players to the independent state of being able to “learn on their own”.*

The key factors in coaching thirteen-year-olds and the early teens will be the growth and development differences of the players. All players will be able to participate in the full spectrum of practices and games, but coaches must be extremely flexible regarding the mental, physical, social and emotional expectations of the individual. Thirteen-year-olds are usually grouped with the fourteen-year-olds, which will compound the problem, so listening, observing and counseling will be valuable skills for coaches to develop.

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## SUMMARY

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### Fourteen

#### Cognitive and Emotional Development

They tend to be more sociable and their ties with the team become more important. Their capacity for logical and rational thinking, self-evaluation and self-acceptance allows them to make productive use of the self-directed learning skills they started the previous year. They are now in a position to provide positive leadership for the team, particularly for the younger players. Coaches can enhance development by:

- giving more leadership responsibilities as the players are looking for deeper involvement in the things they enjoy;
- giving more independence and freedom to make individual decisions;
- mentoring the empathy players need to understand and lead the more immature players on the team; and
- teaching the values, ethics and respect required by the Spirit of Sport and the Fair Play policies,. i.e. making use of the teachable moments of practices and games.

#### Physical Development

Fourteen is the year of the most rapid growth. Strength is developing and will respond to training, although heavy resistance training is not recommended until growth spurts are over.

With new size and strength, coordination and balance training will lead to new and more complex ways to use the skills. The players are ready to test their new bodies along with their developing mental abilities.

Fourteen-year-olds play with increased exuberance and enthusiasm which matches perfectly with what they need to learn to compete: higher energy levels, more intensity, ability to evaluate strengths and weakness, patience to refine skills and playing to ones strengths.

**FOURTEEN:**  
*At fourteen the players are more settled, communicative and confident.*

## Fifteen

Everything seems to be happening at once.

- A very strong need to be completely independent, not just from family but from all adults.
- Increased levels of self-awareness, which makes them sensitive to criticism and comparisons.
- More critical of authority figures.
- More sensitive to feelings, including those of others, which can be used in a negative as well as positive way.
- Still developing physically and mentally, which means they will be looking for physical and mental challenges.
- Confidence is developing: continues to test and challenge the limits.

With so many psychological and physical changes taking place and with the mental and emotional faculties consequently compromised, it is very difficult for the fifteen-year-olds to make rational decisions. The mistakes the mid-teens make are embarrassing and are sometimes covered through rationalizations, the transferring of blame and strange behaviour.

Coaches can help their players through this difficult stage by:

- being consistent and fair;
- holding their players accountable for their actions;
- criticizing behaviour but not the person;
- controlling anger when challenged; and
- challenging negative attitudes, values and behaviour when it occurs.

Officials must also be on guard as they represent the authority the teens are rebelling against. The officials are going to be tested every time they step on the floor. They must be fair, consistent and clever. Both the officials and the coaches have a responsibility for keeping the players on track particularly when players start trying to camouflage their infractions, i.e. make deliberate infractions look accidental.

## Sixteen

Unlike at fifteen when the players felt they had to go out of their way to prove their independence, they are now more relaxed and self-assured, and have achieved a sense of equality with parents and other adults.

### **FIFTEEN:**

*Fifteen is another year of transition, this time between early and late adolescence.*

### **SIXTEEN:**

*The sixteen-year-olds have finally achieved their psychological independence.*

Of particular note is the self-confidence the players now have that allows them to carry on meaningful conversations with adults. If coaches have been using the self-directed approach to coaching for the last four years, the players will be able to discuss and carry out meaningful goals. For the first time, they will be able to monitor their own behaviour and participate in the planning of meaningful practices.

At sixteen, motivation becomes a positive tool. The players have finally developed a sense of who they are and where they want to go in sport. If the coaching has been positive and complete through each stage of their development, and if the elements of Fair Play and the Spirit of Sport have prevailed, the sixteen-year-olds will be ready to take their lacrosse to new heights. Their final year of midget will be a true test of their character and of the competence of their coaching. If on the other hand, the negative aspects of sport have not been dealt with, the sixteen-year-old is quite capable of taking control and leading the team in a negative direction. This is why negative issues that arise in previous stages should never be ignored.

### **Seventeen - Nineteen**

There are seventeen-year-olds who have the maturity to compete at professional and international levels, and there are nineteen-year-olds who are still rebellious and struggling with effective self-management. Some teams may have seventeen year olds who are just starting lacrosse and who will be trying to learn how to play while competing playing along side players who are at the Learning How to Win Phase of their development. It is critical that coaches give all their players the opportunity to practise at their specific phase of development.

### **Player Growth and Development**

Unfortunately, seventeen is also another year of upheaval and the final break from family. Conflicts with adults come from a know-it-all attitude that comes from a false confidence based on mastery of early teen experiences. They are often surprised when they are held accountable for their actions and learn that adulthood doesn't mean doing what you want when you want. It is at this time that players will value their self-directed training. Even though their lives may not be as smooth and as easy as they wish, at least on the lacrosse floor they will understand how to handle adversity. Coaches have to be aware that problems on the floor may originate outside of lacrosse.

**SEVENTEEN - NINETEEN:**  
*Individual differences within the late teens are as great as in any other time.*

**NOTE:**  
*Older athletes go through all phases of development much faster than children and after a short period of introduction will be able to learn to play and compete at the same time. However, it does not mean that any of the progressions should be left out.*

The key at this stage is guided self-direction. The players know what to do, they just need the encouragement and support to follow through.

- Make the team responsible for team rules regarding practices, playing style, work ethic etc.
- Give players the opportunity to provide leadership in settling team problems, determining team direction and organizing practices.

### **Mental Development**

Whether the players are just learning the game, learning how to compete or learning how to win, they are ready to develop the mental skills of the Learning to Win Phase of Development.

To help them achieve their goals, regardless of level, coaches must continue to train their players' abilities to:

- increase concentration for more effective learning and performance;
- control emotions;
- stay relaxed while playing;
- use visualization; and
- use self-talk in a positive way.

### **Physical Development**

The players are now ready for strength development and should be encouraged to put together training programs that fit their personal and sport needs.

## Emotional Development

Coaches should know that when they are dealing with self-esteem, learning, behaviour and attitude, and when they help players cope with the changes of adolescence, they are attending to the emotional development of their players.

Scientists who study this aspect of human behaviour are calling it Emotional Intelligence, which they say is as or perhaps even more important in determining the success of an individual than I.Q.

### Emotional Intelligence:

- starts developing as soon as the infant is aware of their environment and continues naturally until the mid to late teens and even beyond but with more effort. (The latter point refers to the mythical expression: “you can’t teach old dogs new tricks”.)
- is more important than I.Q. in businesses that deal with people in management positions and in sport. The elite players who can’t teach or don’t succeed in coaching often have low emotional intelligence. On the other hand, people with high emotional intelligence are very good with children and make fine coaches, but may have had difficulties in school. When they say that our best coaches should be placed with our entry level or with young players, they really mean that we should be using coaches with the highest E.Q. and not necessarily those with the greatest skills in lacrosse or the highest I.Q.
- is altered and increases as we learn to: have feelings for and understand others; control and express emotions; handle adversity; motivate ourselves and others; apply effort; communicate with and teach others. The development of emotional intelligence is what we normally refer to as maturity.
- is the key component in achieving the deep level of concentration called the “zone”<sup>1</sup>. When players are emotionally involved in learning they find it very easy to increase concentration and are more inclined to accept new challenges. By keeping the activities challenging players are lead to new levels of emotion which enables higher levels of achievement and deeper levels of concentration.

*Emotional Intelligence (E.I.) is responsible for self-esteem, motivation, empathy, self-belief, confidence, emotional control. It influences how we learn, how we adapt to change, get along with others*

### Coaches teach players how to enter the zone of concentration when they help players:

- channel emotions toward a productive end,
- control impulse and put off gratification,
- regulate moods to facilitate rather than impede thinking,
- motivate players to persist and try, try again in the face of setbacks,
- use the mental skills to improve performance and to enter the zone.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Goleman p.93

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<sup>2</sup> Goleman p 95.

**Application:**

What is the significance of emotional intelligence (E.I) in coaching? Part of emotional intelligence is inherited with the rest coming from the type of nurturing that is provided by significant others. This means that what we are born with can go either way, which means lower where love, empathy and understanding are withheld and higher when we help children become aware of their emotions and guide them through their frustrations.

The significance for coaches is that the level of emotional intelligence that players achieve in their developmental years will reflect on their performance when they are adults.

**Example:**

A problem coaches have a higher levels of sport are players who retaliate and take needless fouls even at crucial times in important games. Why? When under pressure people tend to react from habit. When are habits formed? Were young players praised for lashing out or were they taught to channel their anger?

When children are helped to understand why they can't always do or have the things they want, they begin to learn how to delay gratification. It is this ability that leads to the understanding of setting long term goals and of working to improve skills instead of cheating and bending the rules to get instant success.

## Evaluating the Players

### How Good Are Your Players?

- *What are their strengths and weaknesses?*
- *What are the team strengths the team can take advantage of?*
- *What are the individual strengths the team can take advantage of?*
- *What personal characteristics do the players bring to the team?*
- *Who are your leaders?*
- *Are your leaders leading in a positive or a negative direction?*

### How, why and when do we evaluate?

When the players were learning to play lacrosse it was important for the coaches and the players to evaluate player skill level so that meaningful practices could be planned. Evaluation of skills must continue in the competitive stages, only now team plays and concepts become equally important. For evaluation to be meaningful at the competitive level, players and coaches must identify how well skills are performed, plays are executed and concepts understood. In other words, what is the stage of development that has been achieved.

### LEVELS OF LEARNING

Everyone goes through levels or stages of learning with everything they do, which means that everyone starts at the initiation stage and progresses through stages of acquisition and consolidation. Most of the competitive coach's time will be spent at these BEGINNER and INTERMEDIATE stages of skill development. However, many players will take themselves to the ADVANCED stages of refinement and creativity with their individual skills and the team skills they have been performing for three or four years, particularly if coaches have exposed them to the elements of self-direction, i.e. free time to experiment and learn.

| LEARNING LEVELS OF WOMEN’S FIELD LACROSSE PLAYERS |  |                                 |  |                               |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1   | 2  | 3                               | 4  | 5                             |
| Beginner-Intermediate                             |  | Intermediate -Advanced          |  | Advanced                      |
| Beginners of all ages                             |  | Experienced players of all ages |  | Elite players (National Team) |
| STAGES OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT                       | <b>PERCEIVING</b><br>Movements are those in which players become aware of and come to understand the fundamental positions, stances, and patterns of their sport.        |                                 | <b>ADAPTING</b><br>Movements are those in which players modify selected movement to perform them under different conditions and in different locations.  |                               |
|   |  |                                 | <b>REFINING</b><br>Movements are smooth and efficient, and are consistent under more complex conditions.   |                               |
|   | <b>PATTERNING</b><br>Movements are those in which players execute the components of movement in the correct order – but usually in an awkward and unsynchronized manner. |                                 | <b>VARYING</b><br>Movements are those in which players invent personal responses to competitive situations. At this level, these responses are limited to different ways of performing specific movements and the result of the immediate situation. |                               |
|   |  |                                 | <b>COMPOSING/CREATING</b><br>Movements are personal interpretations of movement or personal combinations of movement into unique motor patterns. Composing movements are the ultimate movement of sport. The creations of the superstars of sport.   |                               |
| Ref: Women’s Field Community Coach Manual         |  |                                 |  |                               |

Players are developing the feel and learning the patterns of the drills and minor games. They are learning to copy established procedures and techniques.

Players model the coach at this level, so a coach's ability to properly demonstrate skills, drills and positioning will have a direct effect on how quickly players will progress! Coaches must use a variety of drills in working on skills; emphasize proper repetition of skills; and use corrective measures to help players move to these levels.

Players and coaches work to move practiced skills and plays into the competitive game.

Players are learning to adapt what is practiced to the game environment while overcoming distractions of the game.

Players advance to these levels through experience of playing. Coaches must provide opportunities to play at higher levels of competition to allow for this improvement.

Performance is more or less consistent and automatic, consequently, attention can be given to refining movement to meet the needs of competition.

Creating and practicing their own variations of skills and plays is the final step and should not be discouraged as this is the natural progression of how we learn and is what keeps players interested and motivated.

Note: Players go through these stages at different rates depending on their rate of learning, their experience and the complexity of the skill or concept. Players progress at different rates with different skills depending on whether the player finds the skill simple or complex. Subjective evaluation should be ongoing to ensure that players are not bored or moved on before they are ready.

### **An Evaluation Question**

A common experience for coaches is to find that after spending a season of drilling and instructing, only a few of the skills and plays they have been working on ever make it into the competitive situation.

The Reason: Due to incomplete learning, the pressure to perform and the speed of competition, players don't have the time or the confidence to implement skills and concepts that are not automatic.

The Solution: Using your knowledge from Module 2 on Learning and the application of the principles of practice, design a learning environment to move one of the skills or team plays from the Intermediate to Advanced Level.

## Evaluating the Technical Skills

Evaluation of players can take place by observation during games, practices or formal drills. Drills can be used to test the:

- Performance of individual skills at the competitive level.
- Speed and accuracy at which individual skills and team plays can be executed.
- Game sense.
- Concept of using space and maintaining team positioning
- Understanding of team concepts.
- Ability to assimilate new information.
- Personal and psychological characteristics and qualities.

## Evaluating Strength, Endurance and Flexibility

(See Module 6)

The second factor that affects performance is fitness. Strength and flexibility have as much effect on the execution of skills as does technique and therefore should be evaluated prior to the season to develop a baseline. Endurance should be developed starting in the preseason but need not be evaluated until the season begins to act as a marker.

## Evaluating the Mental Skills

(See Module 5)

Mental skills are developed as a part of learning how to learn, which happens intuitively as we strive to achieve our goals. By evaluating mental skills, players will become aware of how they use their mental skills and coaches will know which skills players are or are not using. This information can be used for selection purposes, and more importantly for skill, (technical and mental), development and performance.

Mental skills can be evaluated while the players are:

- learning, refining, adapting skills,
- before, during and after competition,
- during non sport activities

## APPLICATION

While evaluating drills such as the motion offence, transition drills and team drills, use the following to establish the level of learning.

| Level of Learning    | How is it best performed?   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Beginner:</b>     | Standing or walking, or while being prompted.   |
| <b>Intermediate:</b> | On the move. Players can execute plays on their own and in a timely fashion in scrimmages.  |
| <b>Advanced:</b>     | In a game situation. Players can adapt their skills to the needs of the games being played. |

Degrees: Mental Skills are evaluated according to how automatic they are. The range is:

- complete ignorance of their existence,
- conscious control in non pressure environments,
- conscious control in competition
- conscious activation with intuitive application.

## WORKSHEET: A Player's Season Goal-Setting

As coaches, we view mental preparation as a big part of our job to assist you in becoming better athletes, and field lacrosse players specifically. We believe that the ability to evaluate your own progress, strengths and weaknesses, is a key ingredient to improving your play.

We will attempt to build upon the foundations that you lay out for yourself. We look forward to helping you achieve your goals this season.

Set 3 Goals for you to achieve over the course of the season:

1. a personal field lacrosse goal
2. a training goal
3. and one goal you wish to achieve by being part of this program.

### GOAL-SETTING IS:

*Setting a standard for something which you want to achieve or work towards over a very specific time frame.*

Be **S.M.A.R.T.** in setting goals.

**S = specific goal**

**M = measurable**

**A = attainable**

**R = realistic**

**T = target date**

| Goal | Timeline | List 3 steps to achieve this goal |
|------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1    |          |                                   |
| 2    |          |                                   |
| 3    |          |                                   |

**WORKSHEET: A Player's Weekend Goal-Setting**

Think about and set one personal goal that you will be working towards in your play. This is an individual goal that will contribute to the overall success of the team.

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Think about the steps involved in reaching this goal, and how will you go about reaching it?

**Steps in achieving goal:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

At the end of the weekend, take some time to discuss & reflect on this goal and your overall play this weekend.

**Player's reflection:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Coach's comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**GOAL-SETTING IS:**

*Setting a standard for something which you want to achieve or work towards over a very specific time frame.*

Be **S.M.A.R.T.** in setting goals.

**S = specific goal**

**M = measurable**

**A = attainable**

**R = realistic**

**T = target date**

**WORKSHEET: Player Evaluation Chart**

It doesn't take long for coaches to become aware of the differences between the skill level and personal characteristics of their players. Before the season becomes too old, coaches should fill in the chart below so they can take advantage of player strengths.

| Player's Name | Skills & Concepts | Learning Level | Personal Characteristics |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
|               |                   |                |                          |

Skills & Concepts: Strengths and weaknesses of the player.

Learning Level: Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced.

Personal Characteristics: A note regarding strengths and weaknesses in emotional development, mental skills, and maturity.

This information can be used to form practice groups and game lineups for different effects.

## WORKSHEET: Player Evaluation – Personal Inventory

This can be used with your players to have them assess their personal characteristic that they bring to the team. This is a good lead in to a player-coach conference session to open discussion.

Part A: Rate yourself in each of the following categories

|   | Rating Scale    |   |   |                    |   |
|---|-----------------|---|---|--------------------|---|
|   | 1 = low or poor |   |   | 5 = high or great! |   |
| 1. Organization skills, abilities to meet deadlines | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 2. Confidence in yourself                           | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 3. Coachability                                     | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 4. Team concepts; understanding & absorption        | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 5. Willingness to learn (from coaches & teammates)  | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 6. Intensity (During practice)                      | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 7. Intensity (during competition)                   | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |
| 8. Ability to respond and react to teammates needs. | 1               | 2 | 3 | 4                  | 5 |

Part B: List some of the personal strengths you bring to this program

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Part C: List some of your personal weaknesses that the coaching staff should be aware of.

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### Identify drills to help advance the skills of your players to the next level





For the selected skill (top right), assess the current level of your team and indicate that level in the left hand column of the chart. In the remaining columns, list drills that incorporate this skill and plot the skill level required to perform the drill. Determine how well the drill matches the skill level of your team and whether it is appropriate to use. If the skills exceed the drill's requirements, the drill is apt to be unproductive and a waste of time.

**SKILL-DRILL MATCH** (Ref: NCCP Level I Theory, 1991)

**SKILL:** \_\_\_\_\_

|                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Advanced</b><br>↑         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Intermediate</b><br>↑     |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Beginner</b><br>↑         |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Current Level of Team</b> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**SKILL-DRILL MATCH****SKILL:** \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Advanced</b><br>  |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <br><b>Intermediate</b><br> | ● |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <br><b>Beginner</b>  | ● |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Current Level<br>of Team  |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## TECHNICAL PREPARATION

### Module

# 4

**GOAL:** To assist the coach in developing a higher, more effective level of offensive and defensive team play.

**OBJECTIVES:** Coaching Competencies of the Competitive Coach include the ability to:

- Understand the principles in developing team attack and team defense
- Implement basic tactics to maximize opportunities
- Encourage creativity within your players as they improve their individual skills

### INTRODUCTION:

*The focus of this module is help coaches put the individual abilities of their players' together in a concerted team effort whether on attack or defense.*

*Coaches can build their attack by mastering basic tactics and combining them to form the team attack. Team strategies require the understanding of the entire team, so it's important to stress the involvement of all players.*

*A team that understands the basic principles of defense will always maintain good positioning and make it very difficult for an attacking unit to mount their attack.*

## Developing Team Play

One of the most significant rule changes to the game of women's field was the addition of the restraining line, allowing for only 8 attackers and 8 defenders in the attacking end (below the restraining line) at any time. The change has brought the greatest implications to the attacking game, as more free space to create the play has allowed for more exciting play, while defensively, good positioning is still the name of the game.

| Basic Principles |   |
|------------------|---|
| Defense          |   |
| Depth            | - stay goal side of the ball  |
| Delay            | - slow down the movement of the attack                                    |
| Concentration    | - prevent penetration   |
| Balance          | - prevent being outflanked  |
| Attack           |   |
| Penetrate        | - work to get behind the defender   |
| Support          | - the ball carrier with width & depth (front-back-long-short-wide-narrow) |
| Mobility         | - penetrate or create space   |

### Transition is Critical

It is easier for a team to rebound from defense to attack than from attack to defense, so a team that can master the transition game will have a big advantage over their competition.

| Tactics   |  |
|---|--|
| Defense   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- forcing weak</li> <li>- pressuring the clear</li> <li>- midfield defense - recovering low &amp; middle</li> <li>- double teams</li> <li>- communicating movement</li> <li>- helping defense and slides</li> <li>- crease defense</li> <li>- defending odd-man situation</li> </ul> |  |
| Attack  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 on 1</li> <li>- Quadruple threat ("Q")</li> <li>- Fast Break</li> <li>- Odd-man situations (2v1; 3v2; 5v4, etc)</li> <li>- Screens &amp; picks</li> <li>- Clearing the strong side</li> <li>- Draw &amp; dump</li> <li>- Motion Offense</li> </ul>                               |  |

(ref: Women's Lacrosse Australia Lacrosse Coach Education Program)

## TACTICS ON TEAM ATTACK

### 1-on-1

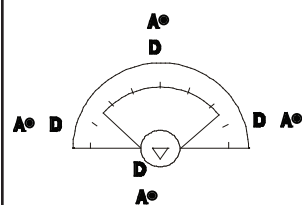
The basic principle for all attack players is to get around their defender and into prime position for a scoring opportunity. Every player must be continually “attacking the defense”. Whether it’s driving ahead using her speed, using a simple stutter step and head fake, or any one of a number of dodges, attack players must work at getting the upper hand on their opponent and move into the position they want to be in.

Once a player takes possession of the ball, regardless of where she is on the field (unless she is totally unguarded) her first instinct must be to challenge 1 on 1 -- to make a move on the defense.

It is equally important for players to quickly recognize when a 1-on-1 opportunity is no longer there (ie., has become a 1v2 or 1v3), and consider other options.

#### DRILL: 1-on-1

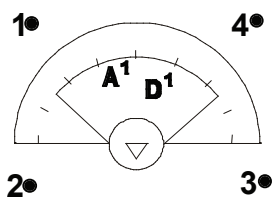
##### 1 on 1 to Goal



- each attacker starts with a self toss and challenges 1 on 1 to goal (start with the pair at the top of the fan and move clockwise)
- attackers rotate clockwise to the next position, defenders rotate counterclockwise

#### DRILL: 1-on-1

##### Death Drill

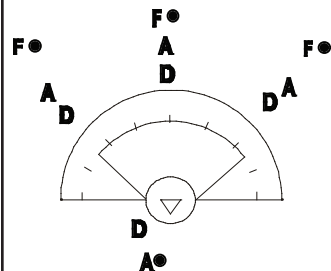


- position four players with balls in four corners around the fan
- one attack player (A1) and one defender (D1) start inside the fan
- the attack player must lose the defender to receive a pass from one of the four corners then go immediately to goal for a shot - cut & recut in different directions
- the attacker must work hard to get into a good scoring position before shooting.
- finish every shot
- the attack player repeats until she has received a pass from each of the four corners

Variation: Add a second defender

#### DRILL: 1-on-1

##### Maryland Drill



- each attacker receives a pass from the feeder (F) and goes 1-on-1 to goal
- defenders should know where to defend and why
- incorporates crease defense

Variation: 2v2 to goal

## **“Q” - Quadruple Threat Position**

### ***Where your players' game begins!***

Once the 1-on-1 challenge is over, the attacker who maintains proper “Q” positioning will always be ready to implement any one of a number of options.

Positioning of the stick is all-important. It must be in a protected position to allow the player to take action in one of four ways.

If a player is maintaining a proper “Q” position she can:

1. Drive 1 v 1
2. Shoot
3. Pass
4. Draw shooting space

From “Q” a player is ready to attack the defense!

### **What does “Q” look like?**

- Top hand – basic cradling position: stick is in fingers, not gripped in palm
- Stick is completely to one side of the body
- Head of stick is by the ear & above the shoulder
- Bottom arm – extended straight out & away from body

The player's field position will dictate where exactly she positions her stick in the “Q”.

### **What does “Q” look like?**

#### **Midfield:**

*top hand down 6 – 8” from throat of stick and out away from the body to permit longer passes*

#### **Around the 11m:**

*top hand down & in – shaft of stick is closer to the body to permit short push/pull passes*

#### **Around the crease:**

*bottom hand is up (close to throat of stick) and in – stick is close to body in a protected position*

**DRILL: Developing “Q” in your players**

Pass / Shoot options:

- Mirror work -- if you can't see the ball in the mirror, then it is protected. Play against yourself in front of the mirror. Fakes, switching hands, etc
- Wall ball -- between each rep bring stick back to Q; to be productive you must actively play against the wall (on your toes, moving at all times)  
[See the “30's in 30” workout]
- Partner passing – about 10 m apart, feet are square to partner, stick is in “Q”, focus on the wrist in passing; top hand provides the accuracy, bottom hand the power
- Catching the Rock – give to the shoulders (Q) so ball is protected. Want to catch between your shoulders in the midfield to protect the ball, must move your body to get there.

**“Q” CUE****Ready Position**

*Encourage your players to think, “ball-shoulder-shoulder-defender” when they are being marked. The result will be that she is now squared up to the defender and the defender is forced to check through the body, which is a foul.*

**“Q” CUE****Passing**

*Encourage your players to think, “protect, push, pull, point” when passing from the “Q” position.*

1. Protect – stick is in “Q”
2. Push – top hand action
3. Pull – bottom hand action
4. Point – to target

**DRILL: Wall ball - 30's in 30**

[Borrowed from: Randall Goldsborough, US National Team player - 2001]

**Instructions:**

- Position yourself about 2 meters from the wall
- Do 30 reps of each with each hand
- Be on your toes, moving at all times
- Between each rep bring it back to Q
- Be creative
- Have fun
- It takes about 30 minutes!

**Variations:**

Try this same combination with partner passing

- 10 meters apart
- feet square to partner
- stationary pass
- start with stick in Q, use wrist, return to Q after each pass

**WORKOUT**

Overhand pass  
Overhand with face dodge  
Overhand with cradle fake  
Overhand throw / reverse catch  
Overhand throw / reverse catch / reverse throw  
Face dodge – flick pass  
Switching hand  
Behind the back  
Around the world  
Quick sticks  
1 handed high grab

## Rolling Around the Stick

A player in position and ready to take action is always a threat and should expect heavy pressure from the defense. In a situation where the defense comes to double team, the ball carrier must react quickly.

A step back from the defense:

1. Improves the field of vision
2. Opens up a passing lane

### Rolling around the stick

- The player's first move is to take two or three steps directly back from the defensive pressure still in "Q"
- If the player is right handed, they turn toward their right, keeping the stick in the "Q" position, they move around it, regrip so that they would be left up, and run away from trouble

## The Fast Break

The fast break is the most basic form of attack, and is a strategy most commonly used by teams of all calibres. A team simply advances the ball quickly up-field before the defense has a chance to get set.

### Starting the Break

1. To implement a fast break, everyone should be thinking fast break in the sense of an instantaneous transition from defense to offense.
2. There is a split second to be gained on the fast break if players can react as soon as they are certain that their team will get possession of the ball. The ability to react and gain the sense of timing is developed through the experience of playing together.
3. Passes must be made aggressively. They should not be lob passes, which give the defense time to move in and intercept or knock it down.
4. A fast break will generally lead to odd-man situations. Players must learn to recognize when numbers are in their favour and be patient and take advantage of the situation.

### Considerations for the Fast Break

#### On Attack

- strategy
- positioning
- decision making

#### On Defense

- strategy
- movement
- positioning
- communication
- decision making

### Reasons for using the Fast Break:

1. Usually creates a scoring opportunity.
2. Allows attacking team to control the tempo of the game.
3. Makes every player a potential scorer if she hustles on the fast break.
4. May force defenders to change their style of play - adversely affecting their game.
5. If a team is known for its fast break, the opponents will do everything possible to get the team to play a slowdown or deliberate game rather than the other way around, so the fast break team will attempt to get the opponents to accelerate their attack as much as possible.
6. Invariably leads to better defense on the part of the fast-breaking team. A successful break stimulates the players' defensive play so that they come up with many more steals.
7. The fast break is very effective against zone defenses providing your players move the ball quickly enough to get a scoring opportunity before the zone has time to organize.

### ROLES ON FAST BREAK

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>The Ball Carrier</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look up and see the whole field.</li> <li>2. Run! Run! Run!</li> <li>3. Make the defense play you.</li> <li>4. Let the play develop itself. Don't have your mind made up about what you want to do.</li> <li>5. Make the easy play.</li> <li>6. Hit the open player: If a teammate is ahead on the break and is open, pass the ball.</li> </ol> | <p><b>Support Players</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stay wide to fill the lanes.</li> <li>2. Read the numbers... go to the spot where you will have the advantage.</li> <li>3. Be a good receiver.</li> <li>4. Communicate! Communicate!</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

## Odd-Man Situations

As mentioned, a fast break will often result in odd-man situations, where the attacking team has a numbers advantage: 2v1; 3v2; 4v3; etc.

To develop the skill of reading and reacting to an odd-man situation, it's easiest to begin at the lowest level -- the 2v1. If players understand the basics of a 2v1, every other odd-man situation is simply working to isolate the 2v1.

The basic premise is that one defender cannot adequately cover two attackers, so the task is to force the defender to commit to one player, leaving the other open.

### DRILL: 2 v 1

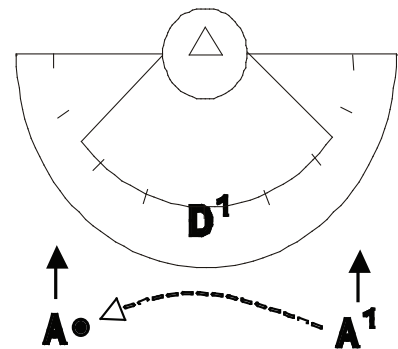
Begin play with a pass between the first two players in the two attacking lines (inside the restraining line)

#### On Attack

- the two attacking players should spread out to make it difficult for the defender to see and cover them both
- the ball carrier must always be a threat with the ball and force the defender to play her
- if the defender doesn't pressure the ball, the ball carrier continues to goal
- the second attacker must be patient and react and move according to the play
- once the defender moves to play her, the second attacker should move to the open space and be prepared for a pass
- attackers sticks should be on the inside of the field
- the second attacker should expect the goalkeeper to anticipate the pass and be in good position, so must make a play for the best possible shot

#### Variation:

Both attackers approach the defender together (ie., one right behind the other); non-ball carrier breaks away as they entered the fan, forces the defender to make a decision. The ball carrier reacts appropriately.



#### On Defense

- the defender must have her feet in the same direction as the players coming in
- as the 2 players approach, she forms a triangle between herself and the attackers, where she is the lowest point of the triangle, closest to the goal, and closer to the player with the ball
- stick is in the upfield hand in the passing lane
- commit to the ball carrier by the 11m and close in, giving the goalkeeper an opportunity to clearly see the pass if it's made and either cut down the angle or come out for the interception

**DRILL: 3 v 2**

- start with 3 attacking lines at centre
- stagger the two defenders one behind the other
- whistle the play down if the attack takes the ball behind the net
- if a shot is taken, have the goalkeeper clear to one of the defenders

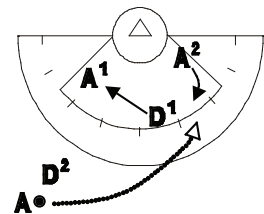
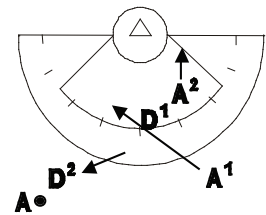
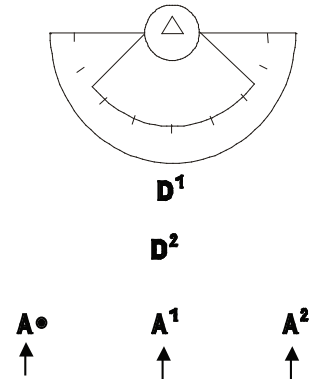
NOTE: To improve reaction from defense to attack and attack to defense, finish the play with a clear from the goalkeeper whether or not a shot is taken.

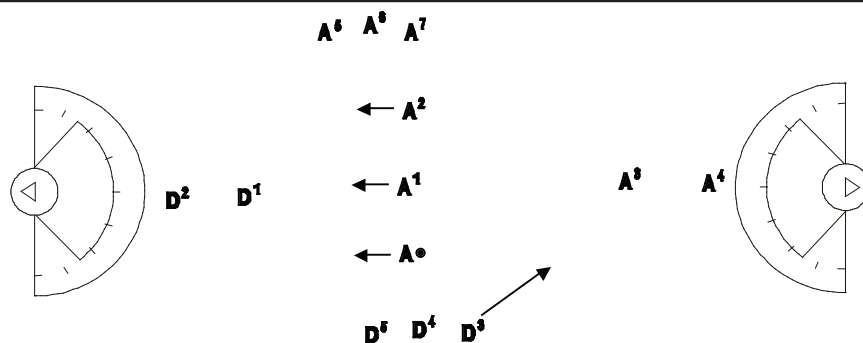
**On Attack:**

- the ball carrier must wait until a defender (D2) plays her (must force her to play her) before looking to move the ball
- Look at the 2 v 1 - who's open?
- The non-ball attackers must work to make the second defender (D1) commit to one of them
- one non-ball attacker (A2) drives hard to the crease
- the other non-ball attacker (A1) cuts hard through the fan
- If D1 commits to A2 on the crease (top right) A1 will be open cutting through
- If D2 commits to A1 (bottom right), A2 can pop up and be open for the pass
- DO NOT take the ball behind the net
- Work quickly because a man-up situation doesn't last long

**On Defense:**

- Communication ("I've got ball" / "I've got 2!")
- Stagger start (back defender no closer than 15 m)
- Feet in same direction as goal
- Sticks up - in the upfield hand
- Pursue the ball; if down/run it out
- Watch for 3 sec/Obstruction/Shooting Space



**DRILL: 3 v 2 Continuous**

- start with 3 attackers at centre, one with the ball, all going to goal against 2 defenders (D1, D2)
- play the 3 v 2 as previously described to isolate the 2 on 1
- once the shot has been taken, D1 and D2 cut out for a clearing pass from the goalkeeper and continue up field
- D3 joins the play as the third attacker and the three players (D1, D2, D3) go to goal against 2 new defenders (A3, A4)
- repeat going the other way with A3 and A4 picking up A5 against D4 and D5, etc.

## DEVELOPING THE ATTACK

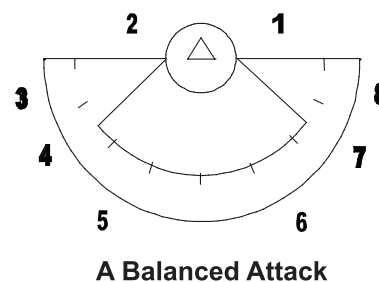
When setting up attacking strategies, it's important to assess your players to help decide what strategies will work best. Use your assets to your advantage.

| Considerations for Developing Team Attack Play |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Team Abilities &amp; Limitations</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed</li> <li>• Shooting</li> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Feeding</li> <li>• Ball-handling</li> <li>• Game intelligence</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Types of Attack</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast Break: advance the ball as quickly as possibly up field for a shot</li> <li>• Set Plays: beginning, middle and end</li> <li>• Motion Offense: constant movement of ball and players</li> <li>• Formation Plays: work in small groups to set-up</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Individual Abilities</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best shooter</li> <li>• Best ball-handler</li> <li>• Best feeder</li> <li>• Most agile</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Other</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply principles of penetration (1v1), support (balance) and mobility (cutting)</li> <li>• Co-ordinating movement as a team</li> <li>• triggering set plays and formations</li> <li>• focusing on the critical scoring area</li> <li>• feeding areas behind the goal</li> <li>• strategy against helping defense (challenge, draw &amp; dump)</li> </ul> |

## Settled Attack

You should have a well-developed strategy when your team is on attack that incorporates all players and creates continual motion. In Level 1, the concepts of balance and motion were introduced. Motion was created by a simple pattern of cutting (v-cuts) through the fan and replacing to maintain balance.

Attacking strategies should incorporate all 8 players allowed below the retraining line. When an attack is balanced, the players are spaced out giving width and depth to the attack. This automatically spreads out the defense and forces the defense to work harder to cover their checks. A simple balanced attack is shown below:



In Level 2, the focus is creating continual movement by the attacking unit to:

- open up space for the ball carrier to challenge 1 v 1
- provide a variety of scoring options for cutters.

Components within a motion offense include, but are not limited to, the following:

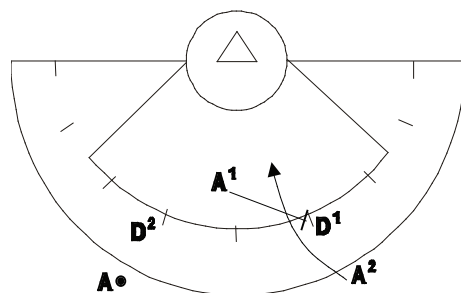
- 1 v 1
- Screen/Pick & Pick-and-Roll
- Clearing strong-side
- Draw & dump

## Screens & Picks

Off-ball players are an important part of every attack as they must continually work to create openings for the ball carrier, other players, or themselves. One way of doing this is to set a screen.

The primary purpose of setting a screen is to allow a teammate to get “open” or to get away from her defender. By setting a screen, a player blocks the path of the defender so that they cannot follow their check cutting off the screen.

The player who is setting the screen (A1) should remember the following key points:



- Keep your feet shoulder width apart, bend your knees and take up a strong balanced position.
- Expect contact - the idea is for the defender to run into you!
- Line up the defender in the middle of your body.
- Let your teammate know you are screening.
- Do not push or contact the defender.
- Remain stationary.

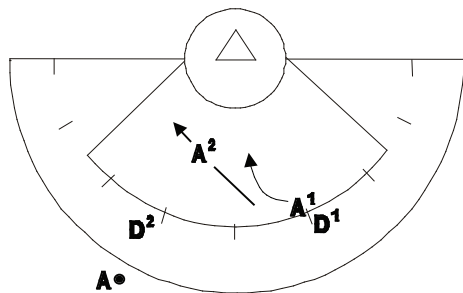
The player who is “cutting” off the screen (A2) should remember the following key points:

- Don't cut too soon. Wait for the screener to set the screen properly and to be stationary.
- Fake in the opposite direction that you are going to cut to put the defender off balance.
- Cut close to the screener! Brush shoulders with them. If you leave a gap the defender may get through it!
- “Read” the defense and make your move accordingly.

## Pick & Roll

(continued from screens & picks)

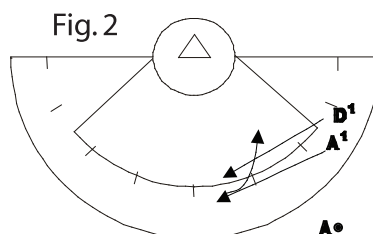
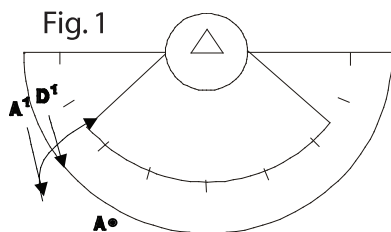
The player who is “rolling” off the screen (A1) should remember the following points:



- Once the “cutter” (A2) has gone, the screener (A1) can “roll” to the goal.
- The player rolling must seal the defender on their back to be open for the pass.
- It is often the screener who gets open and gets the scoring opportunity.
- Setting the screen can often result in a “switch” of defenders, which will often happen (accidentally at lower levels of competition), resulting in advantages like height or speed mismatches

## Backdoor Cuts

A backdoor cut is an off-ball move where the attack has cut to get behind the defender. The initial cut is made from low (goal) to high and the second cut is back towards goal below the defender.

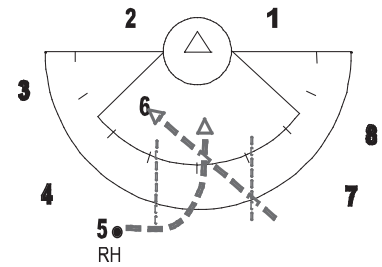


## Clearing Strong Side

Another way for off-ball players to help create opportunities on attack is to clear the strong side of the ball carrier.

When the ball is in the air to the receiver, the player to the receiver's strong side should either set a screen away from the ball carrier, or cut through the fan taking her defender with her. This leaves an immediate gap for the ball carrier to challenge 1v1 to goal with her strong hand the moment she receives the ball.

- In this example, play starts from the basic balance. 5 is right-handed (right is her strong side).
- When 5 receives the ball, 6 automatically cuts through the fan (towards 2) asking for the ball, and in doing so, creates a very large gap for 5 to challenge her defender 1 on 1 to goal.
- If 5 was left-handed, 4 would move toward 3 and set a screen, opening 5's left side to go to goal. The angle on a left-handed shot from the left side of the field is poor, which reinforces the importance of setting up players to play to their strength.



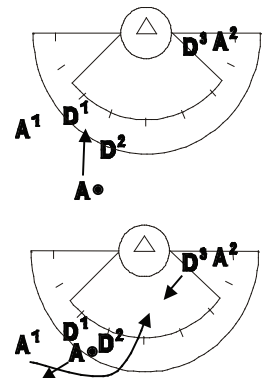
## Draw & Dump

We generally consider the off-ball players as the ones to create space and opportunities. But the ball carrier can help free a teammate by drawing & dumping.

If the defense is putting additional pressure on the ball carrier (ie., helping defense or double team), the ball carrier can fade (back up) and draw the defenders further out of the play, allowing space for the player whose defender left to double, free for the ball.

The ball carrier should be in "Q" giving her the best opportunity to pass over the defense.

### DRILL: Draw & Dump



- the ball carrier challenges D2 forcing D1 to come to help with a double team
- A1 moves behind the ball carrier and towards the middle to look to receive a pass
- As A1 runs behind, the ball carrier fades back to draw the defense towards her (may roll around her stick) then dumps to A1
- A possible 2v1 is created between A1, A2 and D3
- D3 would likely slide to A1 in the middle leaving A2 open

## Motion Offense

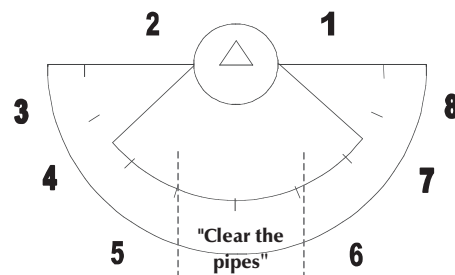


### Motion Offense

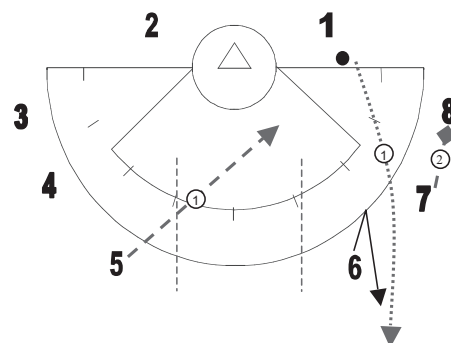
- Players are evenly spread out and balanced around the 15m.
- The top-middle of the 15m is left clear (clear the pipes) to create space for a player to challenge her defender

The ball carrier up top should always have 4 options:

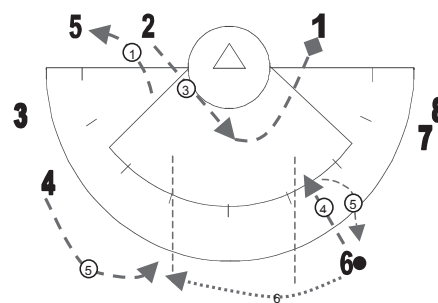
- **CHALLENGE** 1v1 to goal
- **DRAW** shooting space as they drive
- **FEED / DUMP** inside (to a cutter on the crease or give & go from the top)
- perimeter **PASS**



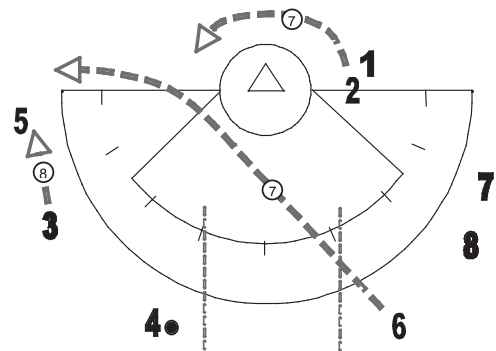
1. As the ball is in the air from 1 to 6, 5 cuts through the fan at top speed and clears to the same side.
2. If 6 is a righty, 7 sets a screen for 8 to clear space on 6's strong side



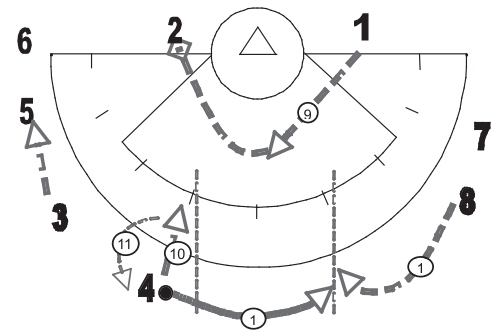
3. As 6 receives the ball, 2 rolls around the crease asking for the ball. If she doesn't get it, she continues around to set a screen for 1
4. 6 looks to challenge 1 v 1
5. If it's not there, she backpedals. 4 starts to roll out and cut towards the 15m
6. 6 passes lefty up to 4 coming into the fan



7. 6 cuts hard immediately through the fan for a give and go. 2 returns to her original spot.
8. If 4 is a lefty, 3 moves away to set a screen

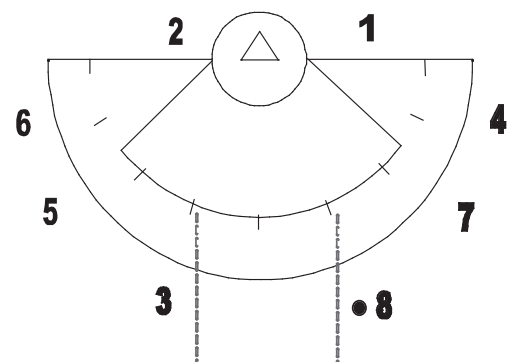


9. As 4 receives the ball, 1 rolls around the crease asking for the ball. If she doesn't get it, she continues around to set a screen for 2
  10. 4 looks to challenge 1 v 1
  11. If it's not there, she backpedals. 8 starts to roll out and cut towards the 15m
  12. 4 passes righty up to 8 coming into the fan
- REPEAT



### Back to Balance

NOTE: When one of the top cutters who would normally get the ball on a perimeter pass is covered and can't get the pass, they cut through to the SAME SIDE. For example, in the diagram to the right, 3 would normally be the next to receive the ball from 8 on a perimeter pass, but if she's covered, she would cut through towards number 2's side of the field.



**Do's & Don'ts of the Motion Offense**

1. every cutter should look and ask for the ball on their way through - stick up on the inside on the shoulder, so that when the catch is made the stick is in shooting position
2. ball carrier should look for the second cutter. The first cutter is rarely open. The closest player to the ball is usually of least help, so they clear through to create space.

**Development of Motion Offense**

1. Cutting
2. Looking for the ball
3. Draw & Dump
4. Screens
5. Set up 8 people on the fan  
(slow motion, talk it through)
6. Repetition
7. Add defense
8. Game speed

## OTHER INDIVIDUAL ATTACKING SKILLS & TACTICS

As players progress to higher competitive levels, individual skills become refined and creative variations are developed. These do not necessarily have to be taught to the players, as they will pick them up by observing others and experimenting themselves. Coaches should however provide players with these opportunities.

### Cradle & Fakes

Over the years, the cradle technique has evolved into a more efficient one, where the player is always in position to quickly react and move the ball. Being prepared for the next move is crucial for an attacker -- whether it's a pass, or shot or a drive to goal, the ball carrier must have her stick in a position to do any of these.

#### GRIP: Top Hand

- Open your top hand and locate the inside of your knuckles
- Lay the stick across your knuckles and hold the stick with your fingertips (not on your palm because this will decrease the range of motion and flexibility of your stick)
- You should be able to fit a pencil between your palm and the stick.
- Roll the stick between the pointing finger and thumb, using fingers to help guide.
- Plastic sticks: top hand should be at LEAST 10 cm (4") to 15 cm (6") down the shaft
- Wooden sticks: top hand should be around the bottom of the leathers so you have more control
- Hold the stick upright, above your shoulder and cock your wrist back at a 45 degree angle (the ball will sit in the stick, above your shoulder)
- Lift the elbow so it is away from the body (this will become easier when we add the bottom hand)

Note: **all motion comes from top hand**, top hand wrist to allow for quicker release, more snap on the passes and shots

#### GRIP: Bottom Hand

- Hold your bottom hand all the way at the bottom of the stick
- Bring the butt end of the stick in front of your body (keeping it within the frame of the shoulders)

Note: **the bottom hand is support only** – it should not dictate the cradle

**Quick Cradle**

Quick half-cradle on the dominant side. Using top hand only, roll the stick between pointing finger and thumb, using fingers to help guide.

**DO NOT USE BOTTOM HAND**

Bottom hand is support only!

**Semi-Circle Fake**

Using your bottom hand only, begin exactly like #2. REV the engine, scrape your face, and look at the ball. Again, using only your bottom hand, twist the stick back the same way it came.

HINT: This move is awkward because you are only using your bottom hand. Although it may not be something you use in a game, it will tremendously increase your ability to manipulate the stick with your fingers.

**Full Circle Fake Cradle**

Begin with the back of the stick on your shoulder as the crosse faces away from your body. Use bottom hand to turn stick (hint: like you are on a motorcycle- REV the engine) so that the back strings of the crosse practically scrape your face. Continue twisting (clockwise for righties, counterclockwise for lefties) until the ball in your stick faces you. Take top hand and put your palm underneath the stick and grab it in your fingers, pulling the stick toward your dominant shoulder all the way back to rest position.

HINT: The best way to develop this move is to establish a rhythm (out and back, out and back, etc.) The most confusing aspect of this move is the direction you're supposed to turn the stick. Remember two things: (1) You are going the opposite direction you would normally go to cradle your stick; and (2) the dangling leather from the back of your stick should virtually "scrape your face" on the initial twist out.

**Quick + Full Combo**

The objective is to combine two moves into one, distinct maneuver. The most difficult thing about this one is how to twist your hands. It should be top hand (cradle), bottom hand (REV and scrape), and top hand (return to rest position).

## Shooting

To make the move from shooter to sniper, players have to become smarter in:

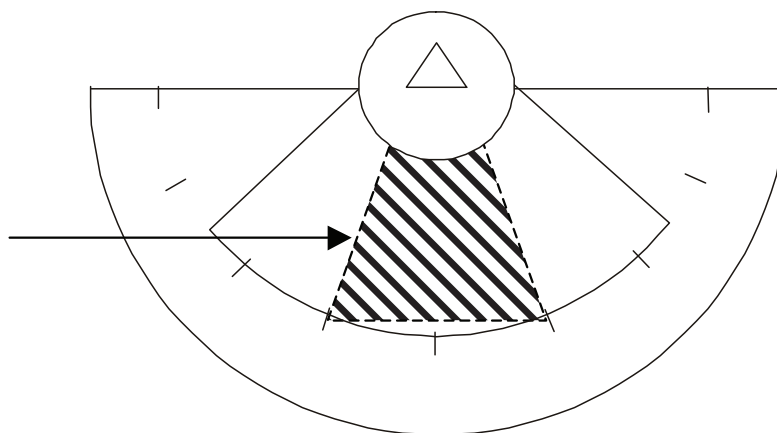
### 1. Generating **POWER**

- bring the hand down further on the stick
- drag the head of your stick across your body, and snap the butt end
- placement of the ball in the pocket is important. When the ball is a little higher it can allow for more power and accuracy in shooting/passing

### 2. Getting into **POSITION** to shoot

- Coming around crease
  - ask for ball with up field hand (on the turn) so when you turn to shoot you have all of net as option
  - Always square up to the cage to shoot
  - move goalie towards where she wants to protect non-stick side, looking high and fake -- to get her off the pipe - shoot back to the inside pipe
- From the top of the fan
  - if defender is playing low - ask for ball with the hand furthest upfield (could be left or right) ie., ask for the ball behind
  - if defender is playing behind or recovering in ask in front (reverse)

Critical Scoring Area



### 3. **PLACEMENT** and knowing how to make the keeper move.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Protect your stick from defender/Goalkeeper</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hide stick from goalie's view (drop stick - like a fake)</li> <li>• wrist movement is key</li> <li>• drop, cross over shot - wrist movement only = snap</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Free position shot</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• run straight at the goalie, fake high to non-stick side</li> <li>• watch for when the goalie makes a move (lean or step)</li> <li>• shoot to inside pipe</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Find the weaknesses</b><br><br>Observe how goalkeepers move – most are weakest <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) on their low non-stick side</li> <li>b) on the move</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Goalkeepers are taught to be patient. Be smart &amp; stay composed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use shoulders, head and stick to fake the goalie</li> <li>• a stick fake is not effective because the goalie won't move             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- she knows you can't shoot with your stick turned</li> </ul> </li> <li>• get the goalie to lean, to step, or go off balance move the goalie then take the shot where they were</li> </ul> |
| <b>Get the goalkeeper to step</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sell your move - shoulders, head, stick</li> <li>• step on diagonal in one direction, looking to shoot</li> <li>• next step cross over shot back opposite corner</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Make her drop her stick</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low fake, making the keeper drop stick and body</li> <li>• snap the stick to high</li> <li>• if goalie doesn't move - shoot low</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Shoot Low</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if you want to shoot low, get the goalie to come up on her toes and stand tall</li> <li>• step high, bring the stick head high, bring your own head high, and snap the wrist low</li> <li>• bring stick from highest point to lowest point as quickly as possible (direct or cross body or side arm) - all wrist control</li> </ul>  |

## OTHER SKILLS

Every season, you will continue to pick up new skills at coaching symposiums, by observing opposing players in action, or even new skills that your own players invent. Continue to generate a list of all these new skills that you can introduce to your players every year.

### One-Handed Skills

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- a) Cradle
- b) Dodge
- c) Catch (off the draw or throw)

### Catching

---

- a) Drop Catch
- b) Dodge
- c) Reverse Catch

### Ground Balls

---

- a) Straight Pickup
- b) Swivel Pickup

### Cutting back to the ball (Mid-field)

---

- a) If the defender is pressuring the stick side from behind, ask for ball with reverse hand, and roll to stick side strong side up
- b) If the defender is pressuring the off stick side - forcing player to turn and go on weak hand -- ask for ball strong up - pivot with reverse up

### 1v1 Moves to Beat the Defender - "Selling the defender"

---

- a) change of speed, change of direction
- b) head fake, body fake
- c) Dip Dodge or Sword & Sheath
  - from a natural cradle position, with the top hand only, the player brings the stick across her body towards her opposite hip as if to put a sword into its sheath.
  - She then takes the stick with the other hand at the top and brings it back into a cradle position on the other side.

## THE PRINCIPLES OF TEAM DEFENSE

### “POSITION” IS STILL EVERYTHING

Good defense in women's field lacrosse is all about positioning. Regardless of the level being played, defensive positioning is critical. In Community Stream - Development, the focus was on individual defensive skills and positioning. These must be reinforced at every level. As the level of play increases, defensive strategy is all about orchestrating the collective skills to operate as one unit.

| Considerations for Developing Team Defense   |
|--|
| Team Abilities & Limitations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Game intelligence</li> </ul>  |
| Types of Defense <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man-to-man</li> <li>• Zone</li> <li>• Press</li> </ul>   |
| Individual Abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speed</li> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Anticipation</li> <li>• Determination/Heart</li> </ul>                     |
| Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply principles of delay, depth, concentration and balance</li> <li>• Roles, movement, communication, positioning</li> </ul> |

### Defense In The Attacking End

#### “Pressuring the Clear”

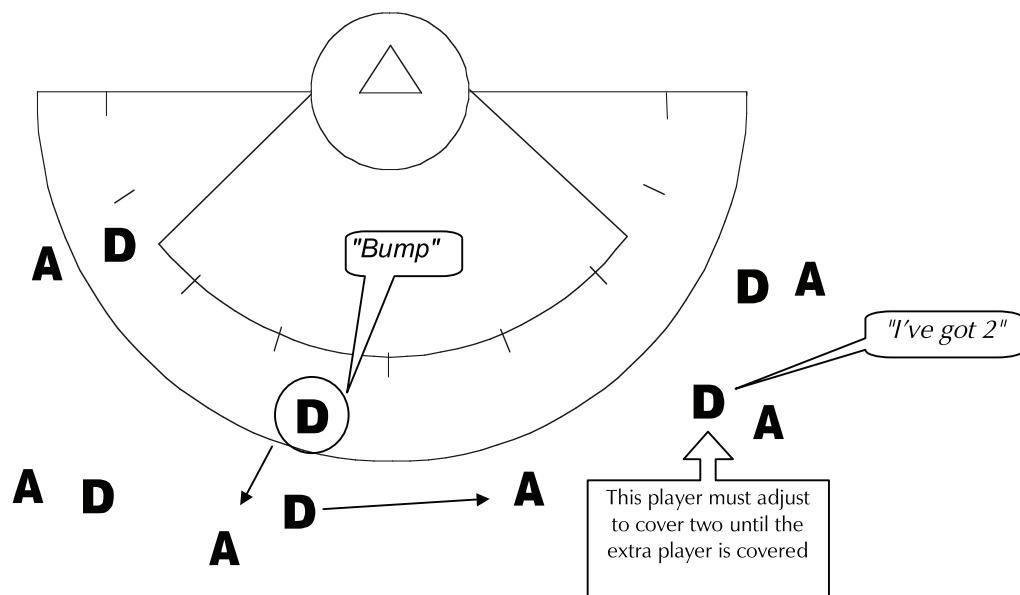
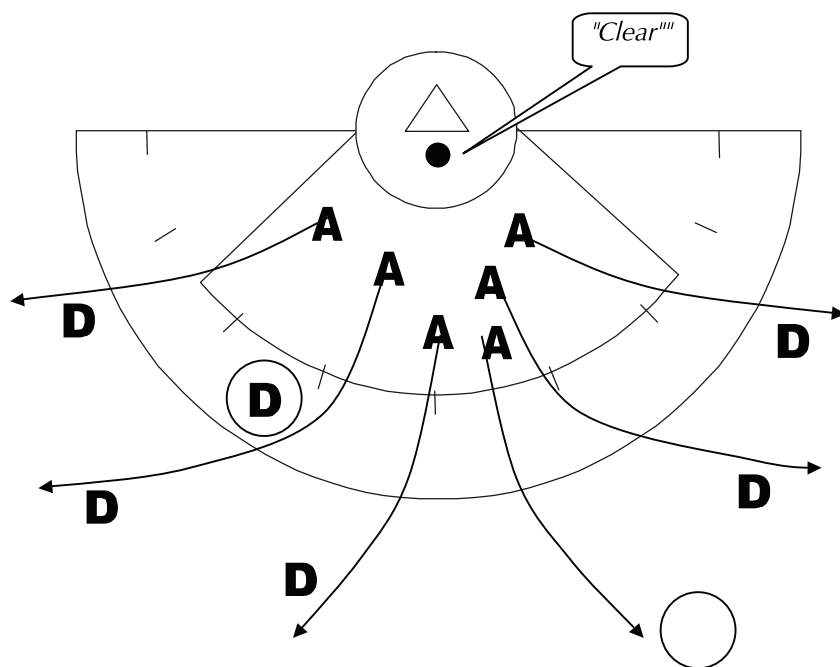
After a turnover (a saved shot or steal), every member of the attacking team must immediately think “defense”:

1. find a check
2. close in and cover tightly prevent the clearing pass
3. prevent the clearing pass

#### Forcing Weak

Although we train our players to be equally skilled with the ball whether their stick is in their dominant hand or not, the fact is that players will always “prefer” to handle the ball with their “strong” hand. Therefore, it is a basic positioning tactic in women's field lacrosse to defend on the strong side of the ball carrier with the stick on the strong shoulder. This takes away her ability to cradle or pass or shoot comfortably. This is called “forcing weak.” The attacker's moves are likely to be awkward and poorly executed if forced to use their non-dominant hand, increasing the odds of creating a turnover.

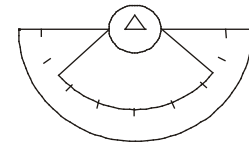
If a defender doesn't have a check, she quickly moves to her nearest teammate on that side of the field and "bumps" her. The bumps continue until everyone is matched up.



## Defense in the Midfield

ALL MIDFIELD DEFENDERS must work to get slightly ahead of their check in order to open up their shoulders to see the ball and their check. The stick is in the hand closest to attacker being marked.

| OFF-BALL DEFENDERS   |   |
|--|---|
| Behind the Ball  | Ahead of the Ball   |
| Must get back as quickly as possible to:<br>a) Chase the ball carrier to create a turnover<br>b) Recover low and towards the middle to be ready to help double.  | Positioning depends on where the ball is being brought up the field<br>a) up the middle of the field (diagram 1 below)<br>b) on the right or left side of the field (diagram 2 next page)                   |
| ON-BALL DEFENDERS  |   |
| Marking the ball carrier on the outside of the field   | Marking the ball carrier in the middle of the field   |
| a) Take an angle that will force the opponent out of bounds<br>b) Keep the attacker between the sideline and your body -- use the sidelines as a defense<br>c) Keep your stick up, on their shoulder.<br>d) This is the critical time for good body positioning in order to prevent the attack from coming back to the inside. | a) Play on the attackers stick side and keep hip to hip (or one step ahead).<br>b) In the case of the attacker running strong hand down the field, attempt to 'GUIDE' the attacker to help or the sideline. |



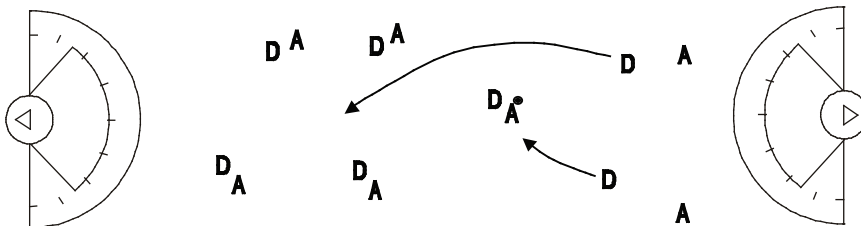
Defense ahead of the ball **D**



**D** Defense behind the ball

### Ball Carrier is in the middle of the field:

Defenders below or parallel to the ball stay tight to their check. Those above the ball sprint upfield and sag towards the middle of the field to be available to double team.



### Ball Carrier is on the right side of the field

1. Everyone is marked tightly on the right side of the field and in the middle of the field.
2. The left side of the field is SAGGING goalside, to the middle. If the ball is swung to the left side of the field, the left side and centre marks up tightly and the right side sags towards the middle.

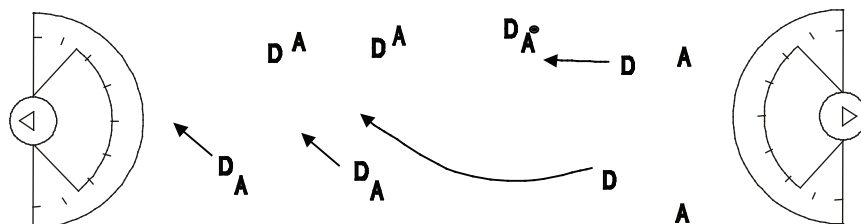


Diagram 2

### Defending a Midfield Cut

A defender has two choices when defending a check who cuts back up field for a pass:

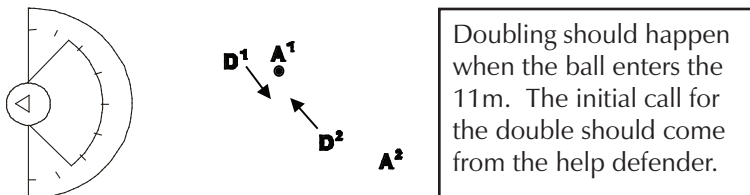
- a) pressure the stick side from behind, and be in position to go for the stick check on the catch
- b) pressure the off-stick side from behind - forcing the ball carrier to turn and go on weak hand

## Double Teams

In order to execute an effective double team:

1. the on-ball defender must have good 1v1 skills
2. off-ball defenders must recognize the opportunity for a double team
3. all defenders must communicate effectively
  - a) to reinforce what each other is doing
  - b) to intimidate the attacker
4. defenders must know what each other's role in the double team is
  - a) the original on-ball defender takes the "body"
  - b) the helping defender looks for the stick check - "ball"
5. Once the defenders have committed to the double team, they must stay with it.

Be patient, let the double team situation arise rather than chase it all over the field.



Doubling should happen when the ball enters the 11m. The initial call for the double should come from the help defender.

## Steps to Execute a Double Team

1. D1 has good position on the ball carrier (ie., has slowed her down, is forcing weak)
2. D2 recognizes the double team opportunity when:
  - a) the ball carrier is near by
  - b) her own check is above the ball (further away from the goal)
3. D2 initiates the double team by yelling, "bring her" (meaning bring the attacker towards me)
4. D1 acknowledges D2 by yelling, "I've got body". D1 should be playing big and overplaying her check to the stick side, thus steering her attacker to D2.
5. When D2 is ready to release attacker to move to the double team she yells, "I've got ball." As D2 moves to the double team she must keep stick up in the passing lane.
6. D1 & D2 work together to trap the ball carrier between them. They must both continue to communicate, relaying back and forth who has what role.
7. D1, who is playing the body, should have her stick up high on the ball carrier's shoulder ready to turn her back into the double team if she rolls out of it. D2 has her stick lower waiting to make a good stick check.
8. D2 steps to make the stick check when it is there. Don't lunge for the stick and lose balance.
9. After making the successful stick check, player's yell "ball down," One of the defenders blocks out the attacker, while the other gets the ground ball.

## Defense In The Defensive End

Communication is key!

Teammates within the defensive unit help each other maintain proper positioning by continual communication.

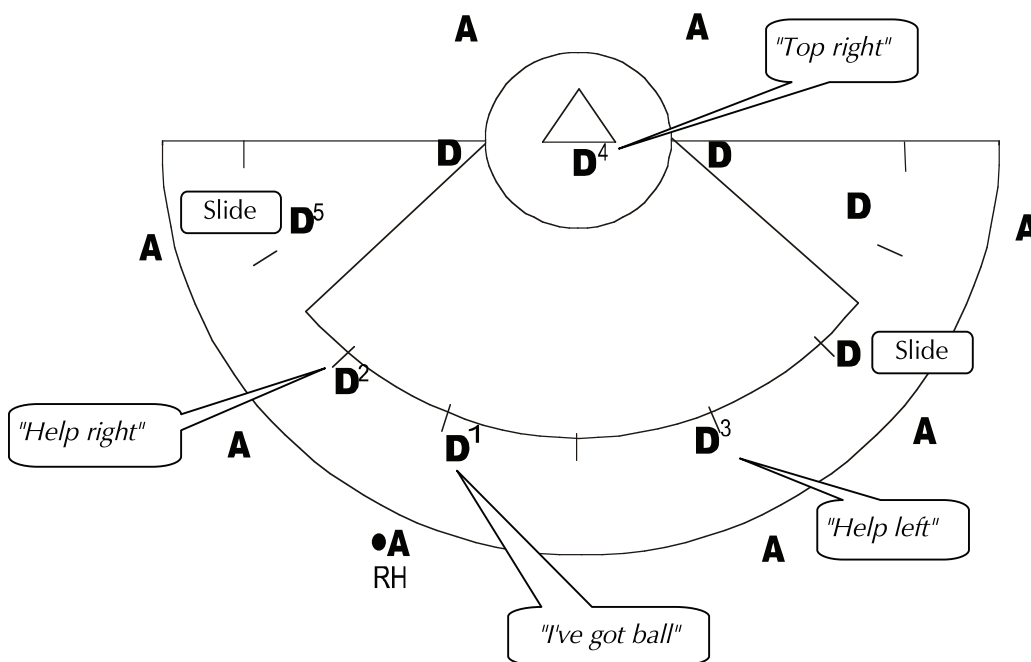
Defenders must establish a common language so they know what each other is doing at all times. A defensive unit can throw an attacking unit off their game simply by making lots of noise.

Wherever the ball carrier is, at least four players should be communicating:

1. On ball defense player: "I've got ball"
2. Off-ball to her right: "Help right"
3. Off-ball to her left: "Help left"
4. Goaltender: calls out positioning of player on the field, "top right"

In the event that two of the attackers pass by each other, the defenders must communicate:

5. "Switch" - if they want to exchange checks
6. "Pass" - if they want to keep their checks



## Helping Defense & Slides

Helping defense occurs when the defense is back in a settled defense (as above). Every defender should be positioned so that she:

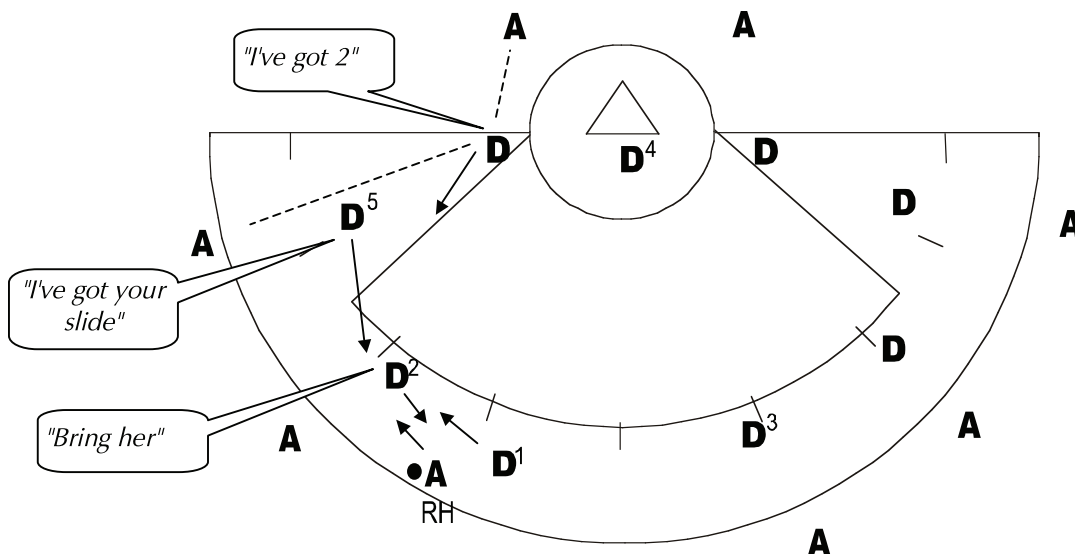
- is goalside
- can see both the ball and her check

The two defenders on either side of the ball are in the “**help**” positions and must be ready to take on the ball carrier if the on-ball defender gets beat.

The two defenders on either side of the help are in the “**slide**” positions and must be ready to take over the “help’s” check if she slides to the ball.

D1 should be forcing a direction based on the strong hand of the attacker. Assuming A1 is right handed, D1 would force to D2. D2 is verbalizing “bring her” and D5 is ready to slide, communicating to D2, “I’ve got your slide”.

In the end of all adjustments, the defender furthest away from the ball should have ‘2’ momentarily, until the double team comes up with the ball. The on-ball defender can put more pressure on the ball when she knows her help and slides are ready.

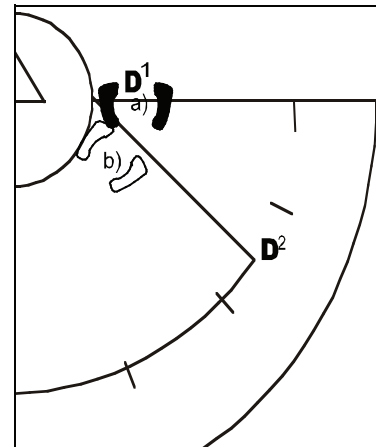
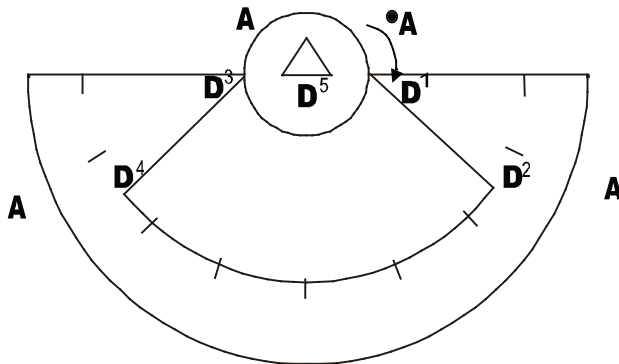


### Covering Cutters Through the Fan

1. stay tight on the cutter's shoulder until she is no longer a scoring threat (out of 11m)
2. open up and locate ball after they are no longer a threat

### Crease Defense

The defender (D1) covering the ball carrier behind the net (A) must square her hips and shoulders to the ball carrier a). She must deny any attempt of the attack rolling the crease by "driving her up the 11m fan line" to her help (D2).



### Crease Defense

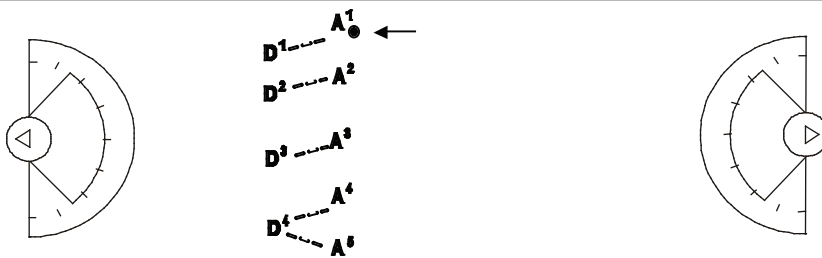
|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Feet:</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- D1 must have both feet on the goal line extended (a) with her left foot touching the intersecting lines of the 11m line and the goal crease.</li> <li>- She is on her TOES ready for any quick type of movement.</li> <li>- If she opens up by dropping her right foot back b) she immediately gives the attacker an opening to goal.</li> </ul>                                       |
| <b>Stick:</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hand are placed at the bottom of the stick with the pocket facing the attacker.</li> <li>- The stick is HIGH and VERTICAL and the arms should start away from the body to create a buffer between her and the attacker.</li> <li>- The stick should stay upright throughout, only moving slightly from side to side to block the attacker from going in a certain direction</li> </ul> |
| <b>Body:</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- D1 must have her hips and shoulders square to the ball carrier (a) -- not angled as shown by (b)</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Stepping Up:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In order to prevent the attacker from rolling inside the 11 m, the defender must keep "hip to hip" with the attacker.</li> <li>- If the attacker (A) starts to roll, D1 steps up with her right foot and attempts to turn the attacker "back" to where she came from.</li> </ul>   |

## Defending Odd-Man Situations

The defender on the ball must:

- play “big”
- play with stick up and in the passing lane
- force the attacker wide and away from their teammates
- close in at the 11m and force the ball carrier to make a decision

### DRILL: 5 v 4 Flat

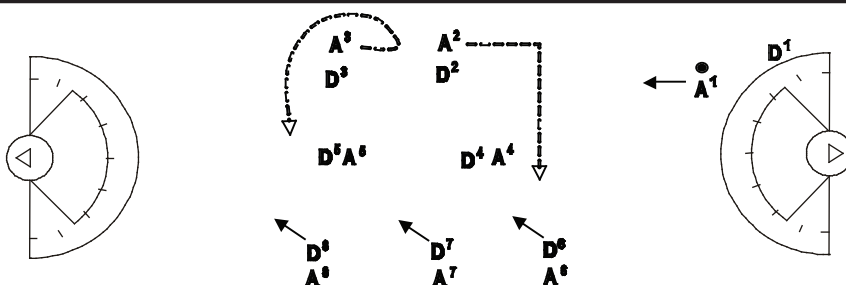


Helps defenders learn to position themselves properly and communicate effectively

- Start the ball with A1
- D1-D3 must match up with A1-A3
- D4 has both A4 and A5 and must be vocal -- “I’ve got 2” (The player furthest away always has two.)

Variation: toss the ball to any one of the attackers and force defenders to make adjustments

### DRILL: 8 v 8



- start the ball with A1 who gets a 10m head start -- then D1 chases
- A1 carries the ball until someone drops to pick them up
- A2 and A3 clear the lane to create space for A1
- Off-ball players on the opposite side of the field sag down (goal side) and in toward the centre of the field to help
- Attacker whose defense leaves them must react and get open
- Play into 8 on 8
- attack must continually look for man-up situation

## SUMMARY

### Offensive Concepts

| <i>Community Development<br/>Training to Play</i>  |                                       | <i>Competition Introduction<br/>Training to Compete</i>   |                                       | <i>Competition Development<br/>Training to Win</i>   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b><br>Beginner   | <b>2</b><br>Beginner-<br>Intermediate | <b>3</b><br>Intermediate  | <b>4</b><br>Intermediate<br>-Advanced | <b>5</b><br>Advanced   |
| a) a basic clearing pattern<br>b) cutting back to the ball<br>c) move the ball up the field by passing it, rather than running it<br>d) a basic balanced offensive formation/pattern<br>e) off ball play<br>f) the give and go to create offensive opportunities<br>g) basic offensive terminology<br>h) recognize and react appropriately to a double team<br>i) goaltender clear to an open teammate |                                       | a) developing a variety of clearing options<br>b) develop midfield transition using a variety of cuts, give and go's trail passes (use the 3 option pass guideline)<br>c) developing a repertoire of shots<br>d) from a balanced attack, emphasizing movement in the form of cut and replace<br>e) the use of picks/screens<br>f) developing crease play<br>g) attacking in a 2 v 1 and a 3 v 2 situation<br>h) recognize the open player resulting from a double team<br>i) recognizing a man up situation and reacting to it (5 v 4, 6 v 5; isolating a 2 v 1 or 3 v 2)<br>j) strategies to gain control off centre draws<br>k) strategies to gain control off throw-ins<br>l) goaltender improves and lengthens clears |                                       | a) increasing variety of clearing patterns – including fast break<br>b) cross-field passes to change the point of attack<br>c) improving midfield transition, trying to create man up situations<br>d) continuing to build patterns and plays in offensive end using cuts, picks, screens, etc.<br>e) fine-tuning all aspects of team offense, and increasing the ability to play the game at the highest speed and intensity level<br>f) developing plays from possession after the centre draw<br>g) set up plays for top shooters<br>h) shooters refining “bread & butter” shots<br>i) learning to play a possession game for the purposes of using the clock, taking the last shot |

## SUMMARY

### Defensive Concepts

| <i>Community Development<br/>Training to Play</i>  |                                       | <i>Competition Introduction<br/>Training to Compete</i>  |                                       | <i>Competition Development<br/>Training to Win</i>  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>1</b><br>Beginner   | <b>2</b><br>Beginner-<br>Intermediate | <b>3</b><br>Intermediate   | <b>4</b><br>Intermediate<br>-Advanced | <b>5</b><br>Advanced  |
| a) introduce goaltending to interested players<br>b) good 1 v 1 defense with emphasis on body and stick positioning, while forcing player weak side<br>c) learning off ball defensive positioning<br>d) determining one's check and what hand they play before the draw<br>e) knowing the importance of a good, legal stick check<br>f) importance of refraining from fouls<br>g) communication skills<br>h) understanding that defense is played by everyone on the field when the other team has the ball – defense starts in the attacking end when the ball is turned over |                                       | a) pressuring the clear<br>b) good defensive positioning – on and off ball<br>c) introduce double teams<br>d) forcing attacker weak side with concept of setting up for the double team<br>e) off ball defenders watching for double team opportunities<br>f) defending against picks and screens<br>g) introduce defensive slide, when defender goes to help on the ball<br>h) introduce more key phrases to improve communications skills<br>i) defending man down situations<br>j) goaltenders to improve ability to throw ball further on clears |                                       | a) defenders' focus, patience, and alertness improves as attackers improve<br>b) defending against top shooters – developing a game plan to shut them down<br>c) improving ability to defend 3 v 2 and 2 v 1 at higher speeds<br>d) being more aggressive in using double teams<br>e) constant communication<br>f) defensive strategies for lost draws<br>g) developing and implementing zone defense, giving defenders the opportunity to change style of defense against opponents forcing them to adjust<br>h) goaltenders to develop skills – to face more variety of shots, harder shots, shots from more angles a stall<br>i) breaking/pressuring a stall |

## MENTAL PREPARATION

# Module 5

**GOAL:** To develop the mental skills as a part of playing lacrosse so that they are as natural as passing, shooting or beating a player one-on-one.

**OBJECTIVES:** The competent Competitive Intro coach will be able to:

- Teach players how to use the visualization and relaxation techniques to reinforce the technical skills.
- Help players become aware of how their emotions can interfere with learning and performance.
- Develop the belief system that leads to positive self-talk.
- Lead players through a progressive warm-up of mental, physical, technical and tactical activities that will bring players to the optimum performance state.
- Help players develop a strategy for maintaining or regaining emotional control and concentration throughout a game.

### INTRODUCTION:

*It has already been discussed how learning is the intuitive change that occurs in response to meeting challenges in a self-directed manner.*

*At the Competitive level, the cognitive changes that must occur are not always obvious. Learning how to meet these complex challenges is as important as the challenges themselves. Knowing how you learn to control emotions or to win in pressure situations are skills players will need throughout their athletic lifespan.*

*Mental preparation is learning how to use the mental skills to first learn the technical skills, then to learn how to perform on a consistent basis in competition and finally to be able to apply the mental skills when and where they are needed.*

*The most important fact of all is that it takes as long to learn these mental skills as it does the Technical, and therefore they should be learned as a way of playing lacrosse right from the beginning.*

*At the **Community** level, cognitive changes happened naturally while the players were:*

- developing the coordination to execute the game fundamentals,
- acquiring the feel for controlling the stick and ball,
- learning how to play the game.

*At the **Competition** level, the cognitive changes that must occur are not quite so obvious, and athletes are learning to deal with new challenges:*

- creating automatic responses to game situations,
- practicing and executing tactics and strategies,
- controlling emotions
- playing in pressure situations

## PREPARING TO COMPETE PART 1

### *The First Two Years*

#### STEP 1. Understanding the Problem

When players are learning to play a sport their enthusiasm for play and their effort to perform are enough to trigger the concentration and control required to learn their skills and to have fun. However, as the players develop expertise, a need to do more than just play and have fun starts to grow: they want to achieve goals, they want to win, and most importantly, they want to feel good about their playing. Unfortunately, this is not easy.

- The opponents are trying to achieve the same things, which for various reasons, makes playing and having fun difficult for everyone.
- Learning how to compete requires concentration levels not yet achieved.
- New successes place players in new situations, which will give players a new set of emotions to deal with.

For many players this will be the first time they are faced with distractions that break their concentration and interfere with their performance.

**TASK 1**  
*Give examples of the problems players have in controlling their emotions and in achieving and maintaining concentration in practices and games. For example, when do players get made or frustrated and how do they show it? Which players use their emotional reactions in a positive manner and which ones use them negatively?*

#### APPLICATION: Creating Awareness

- A. Help the players identify the optimum performance state. Ask the players how they feel after a good game, what they found easy to do and what they were thinking about
- B. Determine the factors that interfere with optimum performance. Ask the players how they felt after a bad game. Compare what they were thinking, feeling, doing in the two games.
  - Compare:
    - Emotional Control
      - Anger
      - Frustration
      - Fear
      - Anxiety
    - Attentional Control
      - Focus of attention
      - Concentration

## STEP 2: Establish a Base

Establishing a base is the process of learning how to automatically use the mental skills as needed. Just as we would like our players to automatically roll and drive for goal when a defensive player lunges to intercept a pass, we want players to automatically increase concentration to stay with a check or to soften the hands and use the body to shoot.

When nervousness or anger sets in, players should automatically take a deep breath and visualize a strategy to offset the problem instead of worrying about outcomes or reacting to the anger, i.e. “when the going gets tough, the tough get going”.

During the Learning to Play Phase of Development the players should have been

- using the soft hands method of relaxation before practising the stick skills,
- visualizing instructions before execution
- controlling negative self-talk.

## APPLICATION: Putting techniques into action

a) **Choose** a skill and have the whole team rehearse the skill

### b) Refocusing

For various reasons: fatigue, increased pressure, low level of ability etc., the players will lose their control of anger, tension, concentration, relaxation or self-talk. Stop the action and give the players time to refocus. Beginners need to stop all other activity to refocus and must start at the beginning of the mental skill in question. Help the players relax the arms, or jaw, visualize the state they want to achieve and then slowly move to the active state. Each time the players go through the process, the refocusing becomes more natural and the players will be quicker to activate the correct mental state when needed.

### c) Reflection

Players are asked to think about their games and practices and to find solutions for plays and skills they want to improve on. For example, if channeling anger is a problem. Have the players think about being very angry and then see themselves applying the energy from the anger to checking with increased concentration, to running their plays more aggressively, or making more intense one-on-one moves.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

*Seeing themselves go through the pattern of a drill before they do it.*

#### **EXAMPLE:**

*Everyone creates the soft hands and then while maintaining the feeling, they practice their stick skills.*

## PREPARING TO COMPETE PART 2

### *The Second Two Years*

Mental skills, like technical skills, change and evolve as the players mature and gain experience. Each level that players move to demands and inspires another level of visualization, concentration, relaxation and control in order to meet the increased levels of emotions, distractions, speed, intensity and skill of the competitive phase. To move up to the next level, the players must go through the re-focusing stage to bring the mental skills up to the new performance level.

Mental skills are used in conjunction with each other. Being relaxed helps players to visualize and concentrate and vice versa.

Consequently, you will see athletes doing a relaxation technique before executing a skill in order to get rid of the tension, i.e. a basketball player who takes a deep breath and exhales before taking a foul shot, or tennis players who focus on their racquet strings to block out unwanted thoughts. The relaxation helps both players bring up the image and feel for the next shot.

### Develop the Path that Leads to the “Zone”

The ideal mental state for top performance is described as being in a zone, living in the moment, being centred, having confidence, having momentum. It is a world of deep concentration where people lose track of time and even their surroundings. The brain is clear of all thoughts except for those of the task at hand and there is a feeling of relaxed readiness.

The question in sport is: “How is this optimum performance state created and maintained?” With most players and teams it happens by chance, others do it naturally as a result of the game situation and some teams bring in sport psychologists to do mental training workshops. The best way, however, is to prepare players early in life as we are now doing. By presenting the mental skills in progressive steps that match the age of the players, coaches can teach the understanding and skills the players will need to deal with emotional and attentional problems. So instead of getting anxious before important games with their minds full of unproductive thoughts, the players will find it quite natural to mentally rehearse their game plan, stay calm and yet be psyched and ready to play. The idea is that the mental skills will be part of the players’ character and they will know what being prepared to play feels like.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

*The easier and more quickly a player can free the body of tension through a relaxation technique the easier it is to visualize, control inner thoughts (self-talk) and to concentrate (attentional control). As the player moves into deeper levels of concentration, the images become stronger, interfering thoughts disappear and the player moves into deeper levels of relaxation. Also, one skill is often used to engage another such as when players visualize a quiet time in order to relax.*

#### **TASK 2**

*In lacrosse, mental control and skills have to be performed while the player is in action. Create the progressions that will lead a player to be able to relax while running down the field on a 4-3 break.*

## PREPARING PLAYERS TO PLAY

### The Holistic Warm-up

The warm-up must be progressive and must involve the physical, mental, technical and tactical components of preparation. Being “in the zone” is a holistic state and is initiated by keeping thoughts on the process until the behaviour becomes automatic.

The following warm-up sequences pertain to the skills and game simulations only. It is not intended that coaches will ignore the stretching and the other parts of the warm-up.

### Playing catch:

- Use the soft hands technique or any other body part where tension is felt, i.e. jaw, shoulders etc. At any time that tension enters a body part, stop the action and RESTART the relaxation sequence.
- Use all the joints in order to throw.
- Watch the ball into the stick when receiving.
- Generate all force from the core area.
- Gradually add force while focusing on accuracy.
- Control the breathing by exhaling as the pass is thrown.
- Introduce visualization by looking to where the defender would be and throw to the stick.

### The rest of the warm-up:

- As the tempo and complexity increases players are to be alert to the presence of tension or unrelated thoughts. Follow the above techniques to keep focused and tension free.
- Start with simple warm up drills and steadily work up to more and more complex game simulations (2 v 2; 4 v 4; 8 v 8) including both offense and defense, increasing to game speed.
- The players require this type of routine to get their bodies ready to perform at speed. They are also intuitively increasing their concentration to complete the passes and to stay with their checks, and developing the timing and coordination of the pattern.
- The familiarity, rhythm and repetition of the activity all blend to build the confidence that leads to relaxation and increased feel and therefore even greater confidence.
- The players become excited about starting the game rather than anxious about uncertain outcomes.

### TASK 3:

*How can coaches train players' mental skills during the following time periods?*

- Warm-up
- Pre-game
- Start of game
- While on the bench
- Half-time
- Post-game
- Practice
- During off-time at a tournament

## Starting the Game

The start of the competition is another time for uncertainty and anxiety to creep in. Start with what has been rehearsed, e.g the basic pattern of the motion offence. Running the simulation activity early in the game can reactivate the feeling, relaxation and confidence of the warm-up. Once again the thoughts of how to run the offence or to stay on one's check will block out the thoughts and concerns about the opposition as well as any self-doubts.

## On the Sideline

Players should be watching the flow of the game and thinking about what they will be doing when they go in. This is the time to refocus, keep the body parts soft and plan strategies. Keeping the mind on the task keeps it off of the outcome. This is the practice that players need to do in order to prepare themselves for critical games that have to be won, or for the critical parts of the game when goals have to be set up and scored.

## Snap Shots

1. You cannot visualize what you have not done. The better players know their plays and the more automatic their skills, the better will be their performance and the easier it will be for them to use their imagery. This means that not only should players practice their technical skills but also the mental ones right down to practicing using the mental skills in warm-up and doing the visualization when appropriate. The guide for coaches is: what players can't visualize is what they don't know, and therefore, will not be able to perform in pressure situations. Have you every wondered why players will regress to what they know best when under pressure?
2. Players must know the material i.e. be well drilled and practiced in order to see themselves playing a whole game without a mistake.
3. Players learn how to use their mental skills in their own way and on their own terms. Like athletic abilities, cognitive abilities are inherited, and players will see and feel how to do things in different ways and at different levels.
4. Once the skill has been used successfully under stress, the whole process will become easier the next time.

## Individual Differences

The development of the skill to use self-talk and visualization should be done on an individual level. Each player will have their own problems and their own solutions. Once the players understand the mental routines of warm-up and cool-down, coaches or assistants must work on an individual level to continue the development of the mental skills.

## Attentional Control

Attentional Control is the ability to focus. It can mean focusing **externally** which, involves things in the environment and **internally**, which involves how we think about things. In both environments the focus of attention can be **broad** or **narrow**.

Individually, we can be very strong or weak in one category, weak, semi or very strong in all of them or a mix of the various combinations. The ideal is to have skills in all areas and be able to switch from one to the other as needed. There are pros and cons to every mix and it will be up to the coaches to first discover strengths and weaknesses in themselves as well as those of their players. We must work to develop and expand abilities in the weaker areas.

## APPLICATION

### For Coaches:

Internally: Coaches should have a broad focus or vision to set goals and to plan the seasonal planner and then be able to focus in on writing the individual lesson plans and working out the needs of the individual player.

Externally: It means coaches should be aware of what all players on all parts of the field are up to and yet be able to focus in on the needs of the individuals who are having problems. Coaches who can't do this tend to keep their players all together and do one drill at a time.

### For Players:

Internally: Players should be broad enough to work with others and to plan team goals, and yet have the ability to focus in on their own needs and to spend time practicing.

Externally: Players should be able to see the whole field, i.e. to see the open players, and then be able to narrow in to shoot or pass accurately.

*One of the key factors in the execution of mental skills is the way players focus their attention. This is an inherited characteristic that can be altered through training and is a part of the training to become a better coach or an elite player.*

*Attentional Control is a hereditary factor that can be enhanced through training. It is attained by learning to concentrate and focus, which leads to the ability to centre and then to eventually being able to get into the “the zone”.*

#### **TASK 4**

*One of the unique features of field lacrosse is the requirement for 3 players from each team to remain behind the restraining line. It is possible that these players may be on the field watching for an extended period of time while their teammates work the ball into scoring position. What are the effects of this situation on the mental skills of players? How can mental skills better prepare players for these situations?*

## Definitions

### **BROAD-EXTERNAL**

Strengths: Reads a complex environment well. Good “game sense”

Weaknesses: May react too quickly without thinking. Has difficulty focusing on details.

### **NARROW-EXTERNAL**

Strengths: Good concentration on one thing

Weaknesses: May stick to the same response even though it is not working. May not see other players or read floor situations.

### **BROAD-INTERNAL**

Strengths: Good analytical ability. Organizes and sets Goals.

Weaknesses: Can become overly theoretical, has trouble sticking to one thing. May not react quickly enough, often dwells on the previous play. Has difficulty following through with the execution of the plan.

### **NARROW-INTERNAL**

Strengths: Good concentration on one thing (e.g. a thought or idea such as a game plan).

Weaknesses: Fails to attend to and incorporate new information. Has difficulty seeing the whole picture, understanding consequences and setting goals etc.

## Positive Self-Talk

### A 3-Step Approach to Reducing Negativism in your players

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Step 1:</b> | Listen to what you're saying and thinking. Become aware of your thinking and inner voice. Be particularly sensitive to any negativism. Start blowing the whistle on yourself as soon as any negative input is generated. |
| <b>Step 2:</b> | Listen to what you're saying as you become aware of any negativism shout STOP with your inner voice. You'll be amazed to find it actually stops!   |
| <b>Step 3:</b> | Replace the negative talk or thought with something positive and constructive.   |

Teach your players this technique and you will see an improvement in their confidence, enthusiasm, their willingness to learn and most importantly their belief in themselves.

*"To achieve your fullest potential as a competitor, you must reduce your negativism to a minimum."*

*James E. Loehr*

[Borrowed from: Loehr, James E., Mental Toughness Training for Sports, Achieving Athletic Excellence. Penguin Books Canada Ltd. Toronto, Canada 1982.]

## TASK 5:

### *Applying your Knowledge*

*Players moving up to a more intense environment may want to know how to control their nervousness and execute a play in pressure situations. What steps can be taken to ensure this happens?*

## WORKSHEET: Mental Toughness Formula

*The following Mental Toughness Formula is predicated on control. It is a formula that guarantees success if your players can consistently answer “yes” to the four statements below following the day’s competition:*

**1. I gave 100 percent of my best effort throughout the contest regardless of outcome.**

In other words:

- you didn’t play it safe emotionally
- you tried your hardest until it was over
- in no way can you say, “I could have done better if I would have tried harder.”
- you put yourself on the line and risked losing, giving your absolute best effort.

**2. I kept my energy and attitude positive during the competition, most important, during crisis and adversity.**

You didn’t turn negative and sour as the problems mounted. If your attitude was to get challenged, inspired and more determined in response to the problems, you are fast developing the mental toughness skills of a champion.

**3. I projected a strong and powerful physical presence during the competition, most importantly during crisis.**

You looked like a winner regardless of the score. You projected the image of a confident fighter throughout the battle. You looked the way you wanted to feel.

**4. I offered no excuses!**

You never used a problem as an excuse. You were totally responsible.

*If your athletes can answer “yes” to these four statements following the competition regardless of the score, they were successful. They are most certainly winning the mental toughness battle. As a coach it is important that you make the time to challenge your players with these statements and help them move towards a “yes” response for each!*

*[Borrowed from: Loehr, James E., Mental Toughness Training for Sports, Achieving Athletic Excellence. Penguin Books Canada Ltd. Toronto, Canada 1982.]*

## PHYSICAL PREPARATION

# Module 6

### GOAL:

1. To provide coaches with the knowledge of how to design practices that will physically prepare players for the ever increasing demands of competition.
2. To refine player skills by improving coordination and balance.

### OBJECTIVES: The competent Competitive Intro coach will be able to:

- a) Design practices that will develop the physical abilities of:
  - endurance of the cardiovascular system,
  - endurance to maintain performance involving strength and speed
  - flexibility
- b) Refine player skills by improving co-ordination and balance by:
  - analyzing skills,
  - correcting coordination and balance problems,
  - planning practices that will improve balance and coordination,
  - and helping players use their mental skills when working on skill development and coordination problems.

*Motivation can be enhanced by involving the players in setting goals, in planning how to achieve the objectives and in the development of skills.*

*Once the players understand the importance of maximum effort and recovery, and once they experience the benefits of being strong and fit, they will also understand what it takes to compete well.*

### INTRODUCTION:

*The Learning to Compete Phase of Athlete Development must include a training component that will prepare players for the increased speed, intensity and endurance that will be demanded of them.*

*Unfortunately, there is rarely time in the schedule to organize separate training sessions. Therefore, to ensure that the players are adequately trained and prepared for competition, coaches can extend practice time through the use of off- field venues for warm-up and cool-down and must ensure that the practice activities will: overload the muscles and cardiovascular systems enough to stimulate a training effect, and be fun and challenging enough to motivate maximum effort. Both these objectives can be met by teaching lacrosse as a running game, by making practices fun and challenging and by combining physical preparation with technical development to ensure that muscles are trained in the way they are used.*

## The Physical Abilities

### ENDURANCE

Endurance is the physical ability to maintain whole body functions (cardiovascular endurance) or repeated muscle contractions involving strength and speed without a deterioration in effort, intensity or coordination. Endurance is trained through repetition of an intense activity until fatigue sets in, coupled with an appropriate amount of recovery time.

#### **TASK 1**

*Discuss how endurance affect performance, ie., speed, strength, and the execution of technical and mental skills.*

### STRENGTH

Strength is the amount of force that can be generated in a single contraction. Strength is achieved by activating the maximum number of muscle fibres and motor units required for a specific activity and by increasing the size and number of the muscle cells used to produce energy. Strength at the Learning to Compete Phase of Development is trained through plyometrics and use of body and partner weight as the resistance.

#### **TASK 2**

*Discuss what effect strength has on performance and the execution of skills?*

#### **TASK 3**

*Identify where maximum speed is required in lacrosse.*

Note: Strength endurance is the ability to repeat a strength activity many times.

#### **TASK 4**

*How does the lack of flexibility affect the execution of skills and mobility ie., running?*

### SPEED

Speed is determined by:

- how fast muscles can contract (inherited)
- technique and coordination
- the other abilities of strength, flexibility and endurance

Speed is best trained at the beginning of the practice -- after a warm-up and a good stretch of the muscle groups being trained.

#### **TASK 5**

*What are the difficulties in training while practicing? How can they be overcome?*

### FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is the unrestricted range of motion about a joint.

| PHYSICAL ABILITY        |                      | Application in the game   | Importance in WF Lacrosse | Energy System     | (Supp. Pg. 44)   |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---|---------------------------|-------------------|--|
| ENDURANCE               | AEROBIC Stamina      | - full game capability  | High                      | Aerobic           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- high intensity steady-state efforts for 10-15m+ (75-85% MaxHR)</li> <li>- moderate intensity steady-state efforts for 30m+</li> <li>- high intensity intermittent efforts of 15s to 2-3m followed by pauses of equal or shorter duration for 20-30m+</li> </ul> |
|                         | Maximal STRENGTH     |   | Moderate                  | Anaerobic         | Exercises involve localized muscle masses, ie., sport specific resistance or weight training. Must be functional.  |
| STRENGTH                | Strength ENDURANCE   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- defense – creating space, setting picks</li> <li>- offense- driving to goal, long passing at speed</li> </ul>  | Moderate                  | Anaerobic Lactic  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repeated muscle contractions that are sustained for several seconds; Light weights - 12-15 reps, OR</li> <li>- Several sub-maximal muscle contractions performed consecutively at a constant rate</li> </ul>  |
|                         | POWER Speed-Strength | - exploding off a pivot   | High                      | Anaerobic Alactic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Movements requiring jumping, bounding, quick pushing ie., plyometrics.</li> <li>- Speed of execution and muscle contraction is higher than Max Strength.</li> <li>- MUST have a good strength base first.</li> </ul>  |
| SPEED                   | Maximal SPEED        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- free position shot</li> <li>- cut through the fan</li> <li>- goalkeeper save</li> </ul>  | High                      | Anaerobic Alactic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- performed at maximal or near maximal speed</li> <li>- short bursts 6-8 sec AND</li> <li>- 8-10 times recovery</li> <li>- total time of all reps 30s-2m</li> </ul>   |
|                         | Speed ENDURANCE      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fast break</li> <li>- breaking out on a clear, and re-cutting until the ball has been successfully cleared</li> <li>- playing defense in your fan, covering repeating cutters until the ball is turned over</li> </ul> | High                      | Anaerobic Lactic  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- performed at near maximal speed</li> <li>- sport specific</li> <li>- efforts of 10-60 seconds AND</li> <li>- 6-8 times recovery</li> <li>- total time of all reps 2-5m</li> </ul>   |
| FLEXIBILITY             |                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sprinting</li> <li>- dodging</li> </ul>  | Moderate                  |                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- controlled movements</li> <li>- stretched position maintained for 20-40s</li> </ul>   |
| CO-ORDINATION & BALANCE |                      | - catching, passing, running with the ball while executing tactical elements in game situations, with changing environments   | Very High                 |                   | Repetitions of proper technique; Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, Ab Circuits   |

## Training the Physical Abilities

In the early stages of the Learning How to Compete Phase of Player Development (or of the season), the emphasis is on technique, endurance and flexibility. Once players have learned what to do and can sustain a continuous effort, strength and speed can then be introduced. It is important to follow the principles of training at all times.

### Principles of Training

- Training requires that the muscles be overloaded. They must work harder, longer or faster than what they are accustomed to in order to trigger the changes that will result in improved levels of fitness.
- To ensure that the stated physical ability is being trained, the recommended exercise time, intensity, total work time and recovery time must be followed.
- The recommended intensities, duration, resistance and recovery must be adjusted to match the abilities of the player. Personal training programs are recommended with players keeping their own performance records. However, motivation can be increased if players with similar abilities train as a group.
- Training is very specific, which means that the closer the training activity resembles performance in a game, the greater the training effect. By adding the training variables to scrimmages, minor games and drills to overload the energy systems, players will be trained while they are practicing the technical components of lacrosse.

## Designing Activities for the Training Programs

1. Select the physical ability that needs to be improved.
2. Decide which energy system is used to supply the energy.
3. Isolate the part of the game where the physical ability is used (technical, tactical, other), and design an activity or a drill that can be used to train the physical ability along with the skills involved.
4. Apply the appropriate variables. Adapt the activity to accommodate the energy system variables of exercise time (duration), intensity and recovery time.
5. Add the number of reps and sets as dictated by the physical ability and age of the players.

## STEP 1: Select the Physical Ability

### Guidelines for selecting abilities to train.

- Decide what part of the game needs improving
- Remember to build an aerobic base first, ie. pre-season, to establish the cardiovascular system. (The aerobic system is then maintained and developed during the season using the Interval training method).
- Match the importance of the physical ability with the time spent on training it.

### Factors to consider when planning training program activities

- When training for speed and strength, endurance is also trained when the maximum number of sets are used.
- When training for speed and strength, flexibility is also trained because the momentum from the forces that are applied extends the range of motion around the joints.
- Flexibility training enhances all physical abilities because of the reduced resistance to movement and the increased blood flow that it allows.
- Select only one factor to train per practice.

e.g. Training for speed should be done at the beginning of a practice with the remainder of the practice run at half to three quarter speed to allow recovery of the energy systems trained.

## Training Periods

The goals of the training periods should include the development of:

### 1. PRE-SEASON

#### 8-12 weeks prior to competition

- aerobic capacity (endurance)
- general strength
- flexibility
- speed form training.

### 2. IN-SEASON

#### Competitive Season

- anaerobic capacity (high intensity)
- sport-specific speed
- sport-specific muscle strength & endurance
- muscle power

### 3. POST-SEASON

#### 3-4 weeks

- rest, physical and mental recovery

### 4. OFF-SEASON

#### Between POST and PRE Season

- Recovery and rehabilitation
- Development of general, balanced muscle endurance (active rest)
- Development of balance and coordination

## STEP 2: Identify the energy system needed to train the physical ability

To increase speed, strength and endurance focus on training the systems that supply the energy. As a result the central nervous system and psychomotor pathways will also adapt to the new demands.

### Definitions

| Energy System  | Performance Factor trained  | Description   | Variables   | When trained  |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Anaerobic Alactic</b><br><br>Training increases the times this system can be engaged.                     | <b>Speed,</b><br><br><b>Strength</b>  | Maximum force or speed applied in a single rep., or repeated reps lasting not longer than 8 to 10 sec.<br>Energy is stored in the muscle cells. | <b>Exercise Time:</b><br>Up to 10 sec.<br><b>Intensity:</b><br>90% to 100% of maximum<br><b>Recover Time:</b><br>8 – 15 x the exercise time   | In-season for players learning how to compete.<br>At this stage of development, the focus is on the endurance of these factors. |
| <b>Anaerobic Lactic</b><br><br>Training increases the intensity and the length of time this energy can last. | <b>Speed / Strength</b><br><b>Endurance</b><br><br>$\text{Power} = \text{speed} \times \text{strength}$ | Maximum effort lasting up to 2 min.<br>Produces Lactic Acid   | <b>Exercise Time:</b><br>10 sec.- 60 sec<br><b>Intensity:</b><br>75% - 80% of max. for 10 to 30 sec.<br>Lower for longer periods of time<br><b>Recover Time:</b><br>6 - 12 x exercise time            | Pre-season and into the season.<br><br>Maintained to the end.   |
| <b>Aerobic</b><br><br>Training increases the intensity at which this energy can be applied.                  | <b>Endurance</b><br>Cardiovascular<br>Muscular  | CO <sub>2</sub> , water and heat are by-products.   | Heart Rate is kept at the optimal level for 12 to 15 minutes.<br>Or<br><b>Interval Training</b> where: moderately high <b>intensity</b> & 1:1 rest/pause ratio is used for any <b>exercise time</b> . | Pre-season (low intensity)<br><br>In-season for high intensity use of the aerobic system.                                       |

Endurance is the most important factor in lacrosse at the learning how to compete phase of development and therefore this factor should receive the most attention. Endurance is best trained using Aerobic Interval Training methods

**AEROBIC TRAINING***Example:*

When jogging it is best to take your 10-second heart rate.

If you are 15 years old, your 10s heart rate should be at least 26, but no more than 29 during your aerobic training. You may have to adjust your intensity:  
 - speed up your activity  
 - slow down

| <b>AGE</b> | <b>75% HR MAX</b> | <b>85% MAX</b> | <b>10s 75% HR MAX</b> | <b>10s 85% HR MAX</b> |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 14         | 155               | 175            | 26                    | 29                    |
| 15         | 154               | 174            | 26                    | 29                    |
| 16         | 153               | 173            | 25                    | 29                    |
| 17         | 152               | 172            | 25                    | 29                    |
| 18         | 152               | 172            | 25                    | 29                    |
| 19         | 151               | 171            | 25                    | 29                    |
| 20         | 150               | 170            | 25                    | 28                    |
| 21         | 149               | 169            | 25                    | 28                    |
| 22         | 149               | 168            | 25                    | 28                    |
| 23         | 148               | 167            | 25                    | 28                    |
| 24         | 147               | 167            | 25                    | 28                    |
| 25         | 146               | 166            | 24                    | 28                    |
| 26         | 146               | 165            | 24                    | 28                    |
| 27         | 145               | 164            | 24                    | 27                    |
| 28         | 144               | 163            | 24                    | 27                    |
| 29         | 143               | 162            | 24                    | 27                    |

**STEPS 3 & 4: Select the activity and apply the variables.**

**Physical Ability:** \_\_\_\_\_

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Description of Activity</b><br>(drill/game simulation) | <b>Variables</b><br>Intensity:<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Exercise time/ rep:<br>(Duration)<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Recovery:<br>(Pause between reps) |
|---|--|

## STEP 5: Add the number of reps and sets

(Use the Rep & Sets guide)

Reps / Set \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Sets. \_\_\_\_\_

The number of reps and sets will vary according to the fitness level and age of the players.

When starting with younger or less fit the players start with fewer reps and sets and allow extra time for recovery. As the players get more fit, increase the reps to the maximum that is recommended, decrease the recovery time to what is required by the energy system, and then increase the number of sets. Note: The intensity levels must always be as hard as the players can go without moving up or down into one of the other energy systems.

### Reps and Sets Guide

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Anaerobic Alactic Energy System</b><br>Use 4 to 7 seconds. per repetition.<br>Note: The amount and intensity of the work load and recovery time are regulated so the players can perform as close to maximum effort as possible. Once the players fatigue, stop the training or make an adjustment to one of the variables. | No. of Reps. 6 to 10<br>Pause between reps: 8 to 15 times the exercise time<br>Sets: Up to 3 sets<br>Pause between sets: 3 minutes<br>Total work time: 2 to 3 minutes  |
| <b>Anaerobic Lactic Energy System</b><br>Use 30 sec. to 90 sec. for the exercise time. The exercise and work times are determined by the abilities of the players. When the players start to fatigue then the lower intensity energy system will kick in and change the focus of the training session.                         | No. of Repetitions: 3 to 10<br>Pause between reps: 6 to 8 times the exercise time<br>Sets: Up to 3 sets<br>Pause between sets: Up to 5 to 10 min.<br>Total work time: 4 to 6 minutes   |
| <b>Aerobic Energy System (Interval Training)</b><br>The aerobic system can be used to mirror the exercise time of the other two energy systems. The idea being that if maximum effort is not required in either of these systems, the aerobic system will take over at a fairly high rate of delivery.                         | No. of Repetitions: 6 to 12<br>Pause between reps: 1 to 2 times the exercise time<br>Sets: This training can eventually be used for half the practice.<br>Pause between sets: 5 minutes<br>Total work time: Up to 30 minutes |

### The Seasonal Planner:

The seasonal planner should show a weekly increase in the load (intensity, resistance, repetitions, sets or reduction of recovery time) until the end of the season is reached where the training is tapered (reduced) to allow two weeks for the body to recover and to store energy for play-offs.

## Training for Aerobic Endurance

Adequate aerobic conditioning is important in lacrosse, as it is a running game. Athletes need to be in peak physical condition in time for competition and to maximize the physiological adaptations that are derived from aerobic endurance training.

During the off-season it is important for athletes to develop a base of cardiorespiratory fitness. This can most effectively be completed by long-duration and low-intensity workouts, most commonly by running. During the preseason workouts should focus on increasing training intensity, maintaining or reducing training duration, and incorporating all types of training into the program.

There are a variety of ways to train for aerobic endurance.

1. Long, slow distance  
Training sessions at approximately 80% of age-predicted maximum heart rate (220-age), for at least 30 minutes duration
2. Pace/Tempo  
Aerobic/anaerobic interval training.  
Can be steady (continuous training for 20-30 minutes at competition pace) or intermittent (competition pace but consisting of shorter intervals with rest breaks)
3. Interval  
Working at 85-90% max heart rate for 3-5 minutes work intervals, with equal rest intervals.  
1:1 work:rest intervals.
4. Repetition  
Working at 90-100% max heart rate for 30-90 seconds with 5x rest interval.  
1:5 work:rest intervals.
5. Fartlek  
Combination of all training types.

## Training for Speed & Agility

Speed is the ability to achieve a high velocity. Agility is the ability to explosively brake, change direction and accelerate again. Speed-strength is force developed rapidly or at high velocities. Speed training involves an interaction between stride frequency (leg turnover rate) and stride length. Stride rate is generally believed to be more trainable.

Sprint-type training has greatest effects on the anaerobic alactic energy system. Training should be conducted after warm-up but before fatiguing exercises in order to conserve the energy system. Training will involve brief work bouts and frequent rest periods of minimum 2-3 minutes in order to maximize power availability during successive repetitions and sets. Intense intermittent training is generally superior to submaximal distance or duration methods in developing the metabolic power and capacity needed in high-intensity sport.

Assisted and resisted sprinting can be used to develop speed and agility. Assisted sprinting uses methods to artificially increase speed as a way to improve stride frequency. Gravity-assisted sprinting such as downhill sprinting is an example, or high-speed towing using a harness and stretch cord is another example. When performing assisted sprinting, arm and foot turnover rate, having the foot plant directly underneath the hips, and aggressively exploding through the movement need to be emphasized.

Resisted sprinting uses resistance to improve speed-strength and stride length. Running uphill, up stairs, or with a harness, parachute or sled are examples of resisted sprinting. Explosive arm and knee punching action and explosive leg drive off the ground should be emphasized when performing resisted sprinting to gain the desired training effects.

Agility will be improved when the component parts of agility (balance, speed, strength, and coordination) are improved and by practicing the movements in training. Agility training includes the use of agility ladders, or using players sticks lined up like a ladder. Following are a few examples of agility ladder exercises:

- Run through the ladder placing one foot in the middle of each square; Emphasize arm swing, powerful high knee drive with the toes dorsiflexed and quick ground contact
- Run through the ladder touching both feet in each square. Emphasize arm swing, powerful high knee drive with the toes dorsiflexed and quick ground contact.
- Begin by standing sideways to the ladder

Moving in a lateral fashion to the right, step into the first square with the right foot. Step in with the left foot; step back out with the right foot; step back out with the left foot. Repeat sequence all the way along the ladder.

## Training for Strength

Training to increase strength is most effectively done through resistance (weight) training and plyometrics. Incorporating resistance training exercises that mimic the movement patterns of the sport increases the likelihood that the muscles involved in the sport will be recruited. From pre-season to in-season, the training program should progress from general to sport specific. An appropriate weight training program should be put together by a qualified strength and conditioning professional who is familiar with lacrosse.

Plyometric exercise refers to activities that enable a muscle to reach maximal force in the shortest time possible. It involves a quick, powerful movement using a pre-stretch or counter movement.

Due to the high intensity of plyometric training, there is a risk of injury. It is important the athlete have a sufficient base of strength, speed, and balance before beginning a plyometric training program. They must be sufficiently mature both physically and physiologically and be able to take instruction well. Research has yet to determine the age at which one is physically able to participate, but prepubescent children should not participate in depth-jumps or other high intensity lower body plyometrics. Proper technique must be demonstrated, and performance of exercises needs to be monitored. In addition, landing surfaces should have adequate shock-absorbing properties, for example a grass field or rubber mat.

There are 3 main modes of plyometric training:

1. Lower Body  
Used to improve horizontal, vertical and lateral movements.  
Includes jumps in place, multiple hops, bounds, box drills, and depth jumps.
2. Upper Body  
Includes medicine ball throws/catches, and several types of push-ups.
3. Trunk  
Movements need to be shorter and quicker to elicit the plyometric response.

As the intensity of plyometric exercises increase, the volume or number of repetitions and sets should decrease. 1 to 3 training sessions per week is appropriate and dependent on the level of conditioning. It is important to make sure there is 48-72 hours recovery between training sessions. Because plyometrics involve maximum efforts to improve anaerobic power, complete recovery is important.

| Low Intensity<br>(Beginner)   | Medium Intensity<br>(Intermediate)  | High Intensity<br>(Advanced)  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Squat Jump</b><br>Assume squat position, interlock fingers behind head; explosively jump up to a maximum height; Land in squat position & <i>immediately</i> repeat the jump.  | <b>Double-Leg Tuck Jump</b><br>Assume a comfortable upright stance; explosively jump up using arm momentum; pull the knees to the chest, grasp knees with both hands & release before landing; land in starting position & <i>immediately</i> repeat jump.  | <b>Pike Jump</b><br>Assume a comfortable upright stance; explosively jump up using arm momentum; keeping legs straight & together try to lift them to the front & try to touch toes with hands; land in starting position & <i>immediately</i> repeat jump.   |
|   | <b>Double-Leg Hop</b><br>Assume comfortable upright stance; with double arm swing, jump as far forward as possible; land in beginning position & <i>immediately</i> repeat the hop.   | <b>Single-Leg Hop</b><br>Assume comfortable upright stance on 1 foot; explosively jump forward using both arms to assist; land in starting position & <i>immediately</i> repeat hop <u>using the same leg</u> . Repeat sequence with opposite leg.  |
| <b>Skipping</b><br>Begin with 1 leg lifted to approx 90 degrees; as 1 leg is lifted the opposite arm is lifted; jump up & forward on 1 leg; land in the starting position on other leg. <i>Immediately</i> repeat the skip. | <b>Single –arm alternate leg bound</b><br>Jog at comfortable pace; begin with the left foot forward. Push off with the left foot as it contacts the ground. During push off bring right leg forward by flexing the thigh to a position parallel with the ground. Land on right leg & <i>immediately</i> repeat sequence. Goal is to cover as much distance as possible. |   |
|   | <b>Push-Up with Clap</b><br>Lie in push-up position; lower chest to floor; on up phase explosively push body into the air & clap hands in front of chest before returning to ground; with hands on ground repeat movement.  | <b>Incline push up depth jump</b><br>Two mats, three to four inches high, placed shoulder width apart; A box high enough to elevate your feet above your shoulders when in a push-up position; Face the floor as if you were going to do a push-up, with your feet on the box and your hands between the mats; Push off from the ground with your hands and land with one hand on each mat; Push off the mats with both hands and catch yourself in the starting position.<br><i>Keep the catch time to the shortest time possible.</i> |

## FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility is the range of motion available in a joint or group of joints.

Flexibility is important for:

- the execution of skills,  
*Tight muscles restrict movement and will prevent full wind-up and follow-through, which will effect speed, accuracy, coordination or balance.*
- decreasing the potential for injury,  
*Stretching increases the elasticity of the muscles, and therefore when external forces are applied, instead of tearing or stressing the tendons and attachment sites the muscles stretch.*
- reducing post-exercise soreness and stiffness, and speeding up recovery.  
*Muscles tend to shorten and tighten after vigorous exercise. Stretching the muscles increases blood flow, which speeds up the removal of lactic acid and promotes the healing of micro injuries caused by exercise.*

### Training:

- Training for flexibility is different than using stretching to prepare players for activity. Flexibility training is best done in the pre-season. (For players with flexibility problems off-season training with a specialist should be considered.)
- General Stretching Technique
- Start all stretches with:
  - a light warm-up involving continuous, dynamic efforts (e.g.: light running for 5 minutes).
  - an easy stretch and then extend until a mild tension is felt.
- The exercises are performed without the help of a partner, The muscle or muscle group must be stretched in a controlled and gradual manner, without any interruption of the movement and until a slight tension is felt. Any fast contraction or forced extension of the joint will trigger the body's reflex to contract the muscle.
- Take a deep breath and then exhale during the stretch, (this helps relax the muscle and allows for a full stretch.
- Stretch the muscles on both sides of the body and/or joint.

## ACTIVE STRETCHING FOR WARM-UP

In the past, static stretching has been performed before practices or games, but research has shown that dynamic stretching enhances muscular performance and reduces muscle tightness, as it moves the joints through their ranges of motion. Static stretching should be left to the cool down.

1. Dynamic stretching should follow 5-10 minutes of aerobic activity
2. The movements should be controlled through the full range of motion. Do not force them.
3. Maintain tension in the lower abdominals to protect the lower back, control trunk movement
4. Gradually increase the range of the movement over a series of repetitions as you loosen up.
5. Repeat the movements 10-12 times each
6. Spend about 10 minutes in total on the dynamic stretches during warm-up.
7. On the field, the stretches can be done between the goal line extended and the 15m. Any flat surface area of 10m – 20m will suffice.

### Sample Dynamic Stretches

#### **Lunges with Twist**

##### Purpose:

- Warms up – hip flexors, quads, low back/ core, general warm up

##### Technique:

- With stick on shoulders, athletes perform slow lunges and twist upper body towards front leg.

##### Prescription:

Perform as many lunges at possible to 1/2 way distance between crease line and restraining line (~10yards), then light jog to restraining line.

#### **Walking on Heels/Walking on Toes**

##### Purpose:

- Warms up – ankles, calves, shins

##### Technique:

- Walking with normal stride length but keeping toes off the ground – walking only on heels.
- Walking with normal stride length but keeping heels off the ground – walking only on toes.

Prescription:

- Perform to 1/2 way distance between crease and restraining line then switch to walking on toes only, until restraining line.

**High Knees**Purpose:

- Warms up – hip extensors, glutes, hamstrings

Technique:

- With each walking stride lift knee as high as possible towards the chest.

Prescription:

Perform at slow walking speed to 1/2 way distance between crease and restraining line, then full speed/jog speed to restraining line.

**Straight-Leg Raises**Purpose:

- Warms up – hip extensors, glutes, hamstrings

Technique:

- At walking speed; hands overhead holding stick, with each step raise leg in front of body, keeping leg straight. Bring arms down with each step and try to touch toes of straight leg with shaft of stick.

Prescription:

- Perform at walking speed to 1/2 way distance between crease and restraining line, then jog to restraining line.

**Airplanes (advanced)**Purpose:

- Warms up – hamstrings, calves, torso/core, good for improving balance and ankle proprioception.

Technique:

- Taking larger than normal step forward, sweep opposite arm towards foot and raise alternate arm and leg.

Prescription:

- Perform for the distance 1/2 way between crease and restraining line, then jog to restraining line.

**Butt Kicks**Purpose:

- Warms up – hip flexors, quads

Technique:

- Light jog but bringing heels to butt.

Prescription:

Perform for the distance from crease to restraining line.

### **Alternating Side Squats**

#### Purpose:

- Warms up – groin, inner thigh, hamstrings, glutes

#### Technique:

- Begin by facing one end of the field. Step out with foot to a squat position, hold, bring feet back together. Turn 180 degrees to face other end of the field and repeat.

#### Prescription:

- Perform to 1/2 way distance between crease and restraining line, then jog to restraining line.

### **Sprints**

#### Purpose:

- Prepare the body for high speed running.

#### Technique:

- Sprint the distance from restraining line to crease.

#### Prescription:

Repeat 2 times.

- Continue the warm-up with progressive activity that moves the players to game speeds.
- Execute the main game skills by exaggerating the full range of motion for each skill.
- Continue the dynamic stretching in the game simulated activities by extending the range of motion. I.e. sprinting with high knees, shooting with full wind-up and follow-through.

### **PASSIVE STRETCHING**

#### **(Cool-down and flexibility training sessions)**

- Static stretching involves moving into a stretched position and holding that position for a period of time with no movement.
- Static stretching is used for cool down and for flexibility training. It helps to reduce delayed onset muscle soreness, improve range of motion in the joint being stretched, and returns the muscle to normal resting lengths.
- Hold the stretches for a minimum of 30 seconds to give the muscles time to overcome the stretch reflex.
- Stretches should be done on the floor or by supporting the body part being stretched to decrease body tension and allow for extend stretches.
- For flexibility training, do the stretches a second time to extend the stretch.

- Stretch the main muscle groups worked particularly those of the legs, torso, and shoulders. However, if a particular muscle group is going to be used in a practice make sure these muscles are stretched during the cool-down.
- To relieve the boredom during the long slow stretches, use the time to discuss the practice/game just played or to be played, seasonal plans or goals, team plans, etc.

## MOTOR ABILITIES

**Coordination and balance** involve the psychomotor pathways that are programmed during hours of repetition and playing. They are the part of learning that happens at the subconscious level in response to practising; and function most efficiently at the automatic level. They are the part of training that involves habits and motor memory, which is the reason for expressions like “you play as you practice” and for focusing on sound fundamentals.

**Coordination** improves as players learn to pass and shoot more accurately and as they learn to play with greater intensity and speed. Coaches can speed the learning up by sharing the learning process with their players and by giving the players time to develop their coordination in stages from drills to games.

**Balance** is developed as players learn how to handle the forces of increased speed and intensity. After the mechanics of balance are demonstrated and practiced in drills, players need to be in controlled game simulations that will give enough repetitions for learning and strength.

### Putting it all together

The players should have learned how to execute their skills during the Fundamental and Learning How to Play Phases of Development. At the Learning How to Compete level the players will be refining their skills and learning how to maintain their coordination under all circumstances in a competitive environment.

## COORDINATION

**A sequence of movements that are performed in a given order.**

**Movement** – Muscles are paired so they can produce movement in two directions, flexion and extension, e.g. when the biceps contract to flex the arm, the triceps must relax and when the triceps contracts to extend the arm, the biceps must relax. Any contraction or tension in the opposite muscles, called the antagonistic muscles, will interfere with movement and thus interfere with coordination, accuracy and power.

Therefore, the development of coordination involves the training of the muscles to contract and relax at the right time. Efficiency of movement occurs only when those muscles that are required to produce the desired movement are activated.

Example: When beginners throw or cradle the ball for the first time they have no idea what is going to happen. They have no feel of when and where to apply force and muscles contract out of order or all at once which makes the ball difficult to control. Learning how cradle is actually learning how to stay relaxed by using only those muscles that are needed.

**Joints in Order** – Coordination also involves the use of joints or body segments in their correct order, and when maximum force is required, all the joints that can possibly be used must be part of the chain.

## APPLICATION

Coordination is developed whenever players work on refining their skills or make an effort to reach the next level of play. At the Learning to Compete Phase of Development, the coach's task will be to help players practice their skills in progressions of coordinated movements and to break through the mental barriers that block or impede the process. The visualization that players have been encouraged to use will now become an important tool in programming coordinated movements.

## Planning Practices that will Develop Co-ordination

### 1. Gather Information

- a) Decide which skills are fundamentally weak, or for advanced players, which skills break down under pressure.
- b) Isolate the problem area.

### 2. Plan the Practice (Break Down the Skill)

- a) Ensure all players are using all five phases of the skill and teach the parts that are missing.
- b) Add the force producing movements by using
  - all the joints that can possibly be used
  - the joints in their correct order
- c) Increase the speed or force to game levels and observe each player to ensure they are executing all phases of the skill.
- d) Use chaining, or whole-part-whole teaching progressions to plan drills for teaching the missing links.

### 3. Run the Practice

It is critical that coaches and players attend to what happens when new coordinated movements are attempted in drills, scrimmages and games. When new patterns are being formed:

- The movements must be accurate and consistent to reinforce the muscle memory. Any incorrect repetition will undo previous attempts.
- The repetitions must be performed at a slow enough rate to ensure that each repeated action is identical to the desired coordinated movement.
- The number of repetitions required to program muscle memory depends on how difficult the player finds the task.
- As the players begin to feel how to move the body parts in a coordinated fashion, they can speed up the movement. The “feel” is the imagery and the feed back from the muscle memory working together to make the whole process automatic.

#### **NOTE:**

*The problem most players have is in not preparing properly or in the loss of coordination when applying force.*

#### **CHAINING vs SHAPING**

*There are two different ways of teaching skills. Chaining view the whole sequence of a skill as a chain of events in which players use their joints in the proper order.*

*Shaping, also called the whole-part-whole method, teaches skills by focusing on one part of the skills until the whole skill can be performed.*

#### **4. Evaluate the Performance**

The evaluation of the performance is the information the coach uses to design the next practice. Coaches and players are to take note of:

- When the skill breaks down, i.e. when does the player lose coordination
- What causes the skill to break down.
- How the drill or activity needs to be changed to make it more or less complex depending on the degree of success.
- What parts of the skill have and have not been mastered, i.e. which parts of the skill need to be isolated.
- How imagery can be used to bring up the feel

This process is repeated until the players can visualize the full coordinated movement.

**TASK 6**

***Plan a progression for teaching the coordinated movements of a skill, ie., the information players need before they can start learning.***

Choose a Skill: \_\_\_\_\_

**Execute the skill using all five phases**

Demonstrate the five phases of the skill 9module 4 of the Community Coach Development Manual)

- Preliminary Movements
- Preparation Movements
- Force Producing Movements
- Critical Instant
- Follow-through

**Apply the biomechanical principles of movement to the skill**

1. Stability (the preliminary movements)
2. Use all the joints possible.
3. Use the joints in order.



Preliminary Movements and  
force producing movements

With a partner, demonstrate and then list, in their correct order, all the joints that can possibly be used to execute the skill.

**Teaching Points:**

When working with players:

- Start slowly with simulated movements and visualization.
- View the whole sequence as a chain of events then start with the first joint and then focus on each joint as it comes into play. (Teaching players how to use their joints in the order that they are used is called chaining)
- Once the players can execute the parts of the skill in their correct order then speed up the movement.
- Execute the skill using as little force as possible. Any time the player feels tension, use one of the relaxation techniques and start over.
- If there is one part the player doesn't understand then practise this part only until the whole skill can be performed. (This is called the whole-part-whole method of teaching skills, also called shaping)

## Guiding Players to Improved Co-ordination

Once players understand how to do the skill using the conscious mind, the coordinated movement patterns must then be programmed into the subconscious. This achieved by guiding players through a number of learning activities that progress from simple to complex. For example:

### Drills:

Name or describe a drill players can use to develop the coordinated movements of the skill.

### Minor games of 2-on-2 and 3-on-3:

List the rules of a minor game that will focus attention on the proper execution of the skill

### Half field scrimmage and then full field scrimmage:

Scrimmages offer distractions that will cause players to resort to old habits rather than the new coordinated movements just learned.

**League games:** Games are where coaches and players test and evaluate the learning of the coordinated movements. It important to take note of skills or parts of skill that happen automatically and those that don't. The failures become the focus of the next practice.

### COACHING TIP:

*Start the players at a slow enough pace so that they can consciously perform the skill as they have practised. When the play speeds up and the players forget, stop the play and have the player or players repeat the action until they regain their coordinated form.*

## Factors That Interfere With Coordination

Coordination is the result of the interaction between muscles, nerves and an internal feedback loop. Keeping these pathways open is necessary for the continuous coordination that becomes a constant struggle for athletes learning how to compete or to win. The pressure of needing to play harder, faster or more accurately creates tension that blocks or interferes with the signals traveling back and forth along the neuromuscular pathways and therefore causing a breakdown in coordination.

At this point coaches must understand the factors that interfere with coordination and know how to prevent or deal with them.

*A big part of learning how to compete is learning how to keep the body free of tension while under the duress of competition.*

## Overcoming the Factors that interfere with coordination

The factors that interfere with coordination are:

- Using the joints in the wrong order,
- Applying force through the body parts instead of the core,
- Mentally blocking the pathway with unrelated thoughts arising from fear, thinking about outcomes, anxiety, lack of confidence, poor concentration etc.

To overcome the factors that interfere with coordination:

### 1. Use the joints in the correct order.

Whenever players lose the feel of using the joints in the correct order, repeat the above teaching sequences.

### 2. Apply force through the core instead of the body parts;

To promote the feel of applying force using the muscles of the body core:

- Prepare the players by using the soft hands or spaghetti arm warm-up. Anytime that tension is created in the body part e.g. just picking up the stick, enough tension will be created to interfere with coordination
- Apply resistance to the force producing movement of the skill. When the players strain to overcome the resistance they are forced to engage the core muscles.
- Strengthening the core muscles will promote the feel for using the core in the execution of skills as well as to improve stability and balance.
- Tighten the core muscles as force is applied, i.e. the exhaling while shooting and the grunt in tennis forces players to tighten the core. The exhaling also promotes relaxation.
- Use a progression of slowly increasing the force or speed of the skill until the players start using the upper or lower body instead of the core.
- Start over in any teaching sequence whenever:
  - i. the force starts coming from the arms
  - ii. the feeling of using the joints in order disappears.

**3. Mentally opening the pathway using the mental skills**

- Train the players to use their mental training skills to eventually stay relaxed and centred and to control inner thoughts to maintain coordination when performing technical skills. It only takes one stray thought to cause coordination to break down. Being able to maintain coordination under stress and in competitive environments leads to what is known as “being in the zone”.
- To teach players how to compete, players must be exposed to a variety of conditions that will increase the pressure to stay coordinated.

## BALANCE

Balance, like coordination, is in a constant state of development from when infants learn to sit and then walk, through the childhood years of playing and into the teens where balance is further developed through advanced activities like biking, skating, boarding and playing lacrosse etc.

The conscious and subconscious interaction between the muscles, (tendons, joints and ligaments) and the central nervous system is called proprioception. Proprioceptors are sites located along the neuromuscular pathway where their job is to give feedback about the location of body parts in relation to each other and to their range of motion. They play an important role in providing the feedback the body needs in coordinating movement and maintaining balance.

The development of balance is dependent upon strength, coordination and the maturity of the central nervous system, which means that readiness is one of the controlling factors. Training, therefore, must relate to the growth and development needs of the player.

*The development of balance is dependent upon strength, coordination and the maturity of the central nervous system, which means that readiness is one of the controlling factors.*

### 9-12 year-olds:

Fitness training is incorporated into the playing of minor games rather than fitness drills. Technique and coordination training should be the focus of attention as this is the prime age for developing reflexes, mobility, coordination and balance.

### 13-16 year-olds:

Puberty and individual differences are the key factors for this age group. Changing body proportions will create the challenges for proprioception and strength development and therefore the quality of performance should not be emphasized during rapid growth stages. However, during growth plateaus and at the end of the growth period, strength and balance need to be built up and greater emphasis is to be placed on fitness programs.

**APPLICATION**

Coaches can reduce stability by narrowing the base of support by having the players:

- balance on one foot, hop, pass and catch while standing on one foot,
- do stretching exercises that requires one foot or a narrow base,
- lunge walk or run
- balance on an exercise ball or balance board,
- execute exercises or skills while on a balance board

***Balance training occurs whenever the players are challenged to stay balanced when their stability has been compromised.***

**Training**

Balance requires strength, flexibility and coordination, and in fact balance is the coordinated recruitment of muscles, which need to be strengthened to support the body whenever the base is narrowed.

i.e.:

- ankles and legs to move and support the body, and to maintain balance against other players,
- the stabilizer muscles in the core and spine to support balance
- flexibility in hips and shoulders to support balance when the centre of gravity is moved outside the base.

Players can train for strength, coordination and flexibility by:

- Reducing their base of support or by holding balancing positions and stretches for extended periods of time such as is done in:
  - Yoga
  - Pilates
  - Tai Chi
- Using the core strengthening exercises particularly those using balance boards or balls and by performing exercises and skills on one foot.
- Executing skills in fundamentally sound ways. For example when players are allowed to take short-cuts in the execution of skills they miss the opportunity to develop the strength, balance and coordination required to execute those skills. E.g.
  - Trying to stick-check instead of learning how to gain and maintain good defensive position.
  - Checking from behind or even from the side instead of getting between the player and the goal.
  - Running through a player instead of learning the numerous dodges and rolls.
  - Using the strongest players as the offensive weapons instead of a motion offence.

The extra effort and motion, the starts and stops and basically playing lacrosse as a running game push the players to speeds and angles where balance, strength, flexibility and coordination are challenged and therefore developed.

## SUMMARY

The single most important factor in promoting coordination is to use the core not only to apply force but to initiate all movement in the execution of a skill. Why?

- Using the core to initiate movement leads players to intuitively engage all their joints in a coordinated fashion.
- Focusing or centering on the core also engages the nervous system and the neuromuscular pathway and tends to block out the interfering thoughts.
- Players who have learned to use the core to centre and to stay coordinated can execute their skills powerfully and effortlessly under the most difficult conditions.
- Training for balance also develops coordination and strength.

Note: Use the teaching progressions of this Module when players have difficulties learning team plays and learning how to execute plays under pressure.

### **TASK 7**

***Plan practice activities that can be used for developing balance and strength. For each exercise, record the distance and/or time plus the number of repetitions.***

## MODULE 6 APPENDIX

### Core Strengthening Exercises ABDOMINAL CIRCUITS

#### Purpose:

It's important to strengthen the core (abdominals & lower back) for agility. A strong core allows you to change direction easier and faster as well. As your legs decelerate to change direction, your upper body is still moving forward. A strong core will help decelerate the upper body allowing a faster change of direction. Picture yourself in a car without a seatbelt. When the car stops, your body keeps moving!! A strong core is like your seatbelt.

#### Core Contraction:

Draw your belly button towards your spine without contracting or moving any muscles in your upper body or throughout your torso. You can practice this throughout the day sitting, standing and lying.

| Abdominal Circuit #1   | Abdominal Circuit #2   | Abdominal Circuit #3  |
|--|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Hip Crunch 3 x 30</u>: lay on your back, with your legs bent at a 45° angle, feet on the floor. Elevate your hips and contract your CORE and hold. Repeat the elevation of your hips repeatedly, slowly and controlled.</li> <li>2. <u>Pop Ups 2 x 25</u>: lay on your back with a 25-45 lb. Weight plate in your hands and your legs in the air (as if legs on a table, perpendicular to the ground). Contract your CORE and crunch bringing the weight up, toward your toes.</li> <li>3. <u>Lateral Raise 3 x 20</u>: lay on your side, contract your CORE and elevate 1 or both legs upward (switch sides)</li> <li>4. <u>Superman's 2 x 35 seconds</u>: laying face down on the ground with arms extended in front of you, contract your CORE and raise your arms and legs off the ground, hold.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Pop Ups 3 x 25 (Weighted Toe Touches)</u>: lay on your back with a 25-45 lb. weight plate in your hands and your legs in the air (as if legs on a table, perpendicular to the ground). Contract your CORE and crunch bringing the weight up, toward your toes.</li> <li>2. <u>Reverse Crunch 3 x 20</u>: lay on your back with legs in the air, perpendicular to the ground, force your back towards the floor by contracting your CORE. Rotate your pelvis backwards towards your abdominal by contracting your abdominal further. The range of motion is very small, but doing them controlled and slowly is a tough lower abdominal workout.</li> <li>3. <u>Leg Circles 2 x 20</u>: support your lower back, lying on back-lift your legs 6" off of floor and make a small circle with your feet.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>V—ups 3 x 20</u>: lay on your back with legs extended above you, spread them apart creating a V. Contract your CORE and crunch upwards reaching beyond your heels.</li> <li>2. <u>Bicycles 3 x 30 seconds</u>: lay on your back with knees bent at 90°, so they are off the ground, and fingertips resting on your ears. Contract your CORE while cycling your legs and crunching alternately to bring opposing elbows and knees together.</li> <li>3. <u>MB Twist 3 x 20</u>: sit on the ground with a medicine ball in lap (or 5 lb. Object), knees bent and feet off the ground in front of you. Contract your CORE and twist side to side touching the medicine ball (or weight plate) on each side.</li> <li>4. <u>Superman's 3 x 30 seconds</u>: laying face down on the ground with arms extended in front of you, contract your CORE and raise your arms and legs off the ground, hold.</li> </ol> |

## SEASONAL PLANNING

## Module

# 7

**GOAL:** To provide coaches with the knowledge & tools to plan and prepare a complete season of women's field lacrosse.

**OBJECTIVES:** The competent Competitive Intro coach will be able to:

- Develop a complete master plan for the season using the principles of seasonal planning and incorporating his/her coaching philosophy
- Use a variety of teaching techniques and aids to ensure maximum participation and learning
- Plan & run a tryout
- Prepare for practices, games & tournaments effectively

### INTRODUCTION:

*Developing a seasonal plan is critical to the success of any team. This requires advance planning and a "vision" of what you want to accomplish in the duration of your playing season. Within the plan, the goals and objectives of the team should be documented. The level of competition at which the team would like to compete is directly related to the intensity of the practice and training that the players are willing to endure and therefore the season should be outlined accordingly.*

## Developing the Seasonal Planning

### 1. The Context of Your Program

#### TASK 1

##### A. Describe Your Athletes

|      |                        |
|------|------------------------|
| Sex: | Female (    )          |
|      | Male (    )            |
|      | Female and Male (    ) |

List the number of athletes in each age group.

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Children: 8-9            |  |
| Pre-Puberty 10-11        |  |
| Puberty (stage 1): 12-15 |  |
| Puberty (stage 2): 15-18 |  |
| Young Adults: 19-22      |  |
| Adults 22+               |  |

Within each age group, there are important differences:

|                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Height and weight   | Yes (    )    No (    ) |
| Skill level         | Yes (    )    No (    ) |
| Level of experience | Yes (    )    No (    ) |

Years of training and competition in this sport, including this present year:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Average |  |
|---------|--|

*Note: If you coach athletes of various age groups, select one and refer to this group when you complete the following exercises.*

## B. Major Orientations Of Your Program: Your Perception

### TASK 2

Indicate what you believe to be the major orientations that should influence what happens in your program. In other words, given the athletes you coach, where should you put the most emphasis and what should you look to achieve when you implement your program?

For each of the categories below, begin by reading each of the statements. Then choose the one which spontaneously comes to mind as being the most appropriate for you. Only check one statement for each category.

| General  | Skill Development   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have the participants experience new activities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Improve the general abilities of the participants and their mastery of the activity<br><input type="checkbox"/> Identify athletes with the potential to perform at a higher level<br><input type="checkbox"/> Have athletes specialize in a particular discipline or playing position | <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the acquisition of basic technical skills<br><input type="checkbox"/> Improve basic technical skills already acquired<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the acquisition of new technical skills that are complex or more advanced<br><input type="checkbox"/> Improve the ability of the athletes to apply particular game plans or competitive strategies |
| Physical Conditioning  | Performance   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve the athletes' general physical condition<br><input type="checkbox"/> Improve the athletes' sport specific physical condition<br><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare the athletes to achieve particular levels of performance in sport-specific   | <input type="checkbox"/> Give the athletes the opportunity to get experience by taking part in competitions<br><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage the achievement of particular standards of performance physical tests<br><input type="checkbox"/> Participate in competitions to win; win a championship  |

## C. Length of your Program

### TASK 3

*Note: For this task, you will need the current year's calendar, your schedule of competitions if available and a copy of the Season Planner Calendar in your Workbook.*

1. a) What is the date of your first contact with your athletes, when you can have direct influence over their practices (i.e. the date of the first practice session in the program)?

**Start Month:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Start Day:** \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Transfer the starting month into the Calendar. In the week 1 column, fill in the date of the Monday of the first week of your program.

2. a) What is the date of your last supervised contact with the athletes (practice session or competition)?

**End Month:** \_\_\_\_\_

**End Day:** \_\_\_\_\_

- b) Fill in all the dates of all the Mondays in your program. Indicate when the month changes and continue through to the last week of your program, as shown below.

**# of Weeks:** \_\_\_\_\_

|           |         |   |    |    |    |     |   |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |     |    |    |
|-----------|---------|---|----|----|----|-----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|-----|----|----|
| Weeks >>  | 1       | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6   | 7 | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11  | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15  | 16 | 17 |
| Months >> | MAR APR |   |    |    |    | MAY |   |    |    |    | JUN |    |    |    | JUL |    |    |
| Day >>    |         |   |    |    |    |     |   |    |    |    |     |    |    |    |     |    |    |
|           | 27      | 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 1   | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | 5   | 12 | 19 | 26 | 3   | 10 | 17 |

3. Breaks Or Interruptions In The Program: Number of weeks when there are no practices and/or competitions: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Possibility Of Starting Earlier Or Finishing Later

( ) It is not possible for me to extend my program

( ) I could extend my program without too much difficulty by:

- Starting \_\_\_\_\_ weeks earlier

- Finishing \_\_\_\_\_ weeks later

## D. Events in Your Program

### TASK 4

Add all the important events of your program into the planning calendar. Start by selecting the row corresponding to the type of event, then enter the number of events of this type during each week. Circle the most important events.

## E. Dividing Your Program into Training Periods

### TASK 5

In the planning calendar, draw a box to show the beginning and end of each period, and then write Preparation, Competition, and Transition (if applicable) on the row marked Period. The periods are defined as follows

#### Preparation Period - PRE-SEASON

The number of weeks between the first practice session and the first regular or official competition. *Note: Unofficial competitions at the beginning of the program should be considered part of the Preparation Period.*

#### Competition Period - IN-SEASON

The number of weeks between the first regular or official competition of your program and the last competition the athletes will take part in.

#### Transition Period - POST-SEASON

The number of weeks between the last competition the athletes will take part in and the last supervised contact you will have with them. *Note: There may be no formal Transition Period in your program, for example, if there are no supervised practice sessions after the last competition*

### SEASONAL PLANNER CALENDAR

| YEAR                  |  | Period >> | PRE-SEASON (Preparatory) |     |     |    |    |   |     |    |    | IN-SEASON (Competitive) |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|--------------------------|-----|-----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|-------------------------|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
|                       |  | Weeks >>  | 1                        | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5  | 6 | 7   | 8  | 9  | 10                      | 11  | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
|                       |  | Months >> | MAR                      | APR | MAY |    |    |   | JUN |    |    | JUL                     |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                       |  | Day >>    | 27                       | 3   | 10  | 17 | 24 | 1 | 8   | 15 | 22 | 29                      | 5   | 12 | 19 | 26 | 3  | 10 | 17 |
| Team                  | Practices                              |           | 1                        | 1   | 1   | 1  | 1  | 2 | 2   | 2  | 1  | 2                       | 1   | 2  | 1  | 1  | 1  | 1  |    |
|                       | Regular Games                          |           |                          |     |     |    |    |   |     |    | 2  |                         | 4   |    | 2  | 2  | 2  |    |    |
|                       | Tournament Games                       |           |                          |     |     |    |    |   |     |    |    |                         |     |    |    |    |    | 6  |    |
|                       | Competition Days                       |           |                          |     |     |    |    |   |     |    | 1  |                         | 2   |    | 1  | 1  | 1  | 3  |    |
| Evaluations           | Technical; Physical; Mental Selections |           |                          |     | T P |    |    |   |     |    |    | M                       | T P |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Administrative Duties | Player/Team Registrations              |           | R2                       |     |     | SL |    |   |     |    |    |                         | RF  |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                       | Medical History Forms                  |           |                          |     | M   |    |    |   |     |    |    |                         |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|                       | Team Meetings                          |           | PL                       |     |     |    | PA |   |     |    |    |                         |     | PL |    |    |    |    |    |
|                       | Fundraising Activities                 |           |                          |     |     |    | F  |   |     |    |    |                         |     |    |    | F  |    |    |    |
|                       | Team Socials                           |           |                          |     |     |    | SO |   |     |    |    |                         |     |    |    | SO |    |    |    |

Note: Modify the row headings as necessary to reflect the main details of your program.

## 2. Opportunities for Athletic Development in Your Program

### TASK 6

Refer to the information you have entered on your Calendar and use the tables below to estimate the number of training and competition days of your program.

- A. Number of competitions days:** Count all types of competition (preparatory, regular, championships, etc.) but do not include competition type exercises that might take place or be simulated during training.

| Identify the number of weeks of your program when there are competitions and during which there are: |     | Partial Total |
|--|-----|---------------|
| 1 day of competition   | x 1 | =             |
| 2 days of competition  | x 2 | =             |
| 3 days of competition  | x 3 | =             |
| 4 days of competition  | x 4 | =             |
| 5 days of competition  | x 5 | =             |
| 6 days of competition  | x 6 | =             |
| 7 days of competition  | x 7 | =             |
| A: Number of days of competition in your program (add in the totals in the column "Partial Total"):  |     | A =           |

- B. Number of training days:** Count the number of days when there is a supervised practice session in your program.

| Period   | Length (Weeks) | Training Days per Week, on average | Partial Total |
|--|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Preparation  | x              |                                    | =             |
| Competition  | x              |                                    | =             |
| Transition   | x              |                                    | =             |
| B: Approximate number of training days in your program (add in the numbers in the column "Partial total"): |                |                                    |               |

## C. Analyses

### TASK 7

For each statement in the “Key Elements” column in the table below, enter the data corresponding to your program in the appropriate column (A, B, or C). Refer to the information entered on your Calendar and answered in Task 6.

| No. | Key Elements Of Your Program  | Column A                       | Column B                     | Column C                 |
|-----|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
|     |   | If your number is less than... | If your number is between... | If your number is....    |
| 1   | Length (weeks) of your program  | 15                             | 20 and 32                    | 35 or more               |
| 2   | Length (weeks) of the Preparation Period  | 6                              | 7 and 15                     | 16 or more               |
| 3   | Length (weeks) of the Competition Period  | 6                              | 7 and 20                     | 20 or more               |
| 4   | Length (weeks) of the Transition Period   | 2                              | 3 and 4                      | 6 or more                |
| 5   | Number of days when there are Competitions (Task 6-1)                             | 5                              | 6 and 20                     | 20 or more               |
| 6   | Average length of a practice session in the Preparation Period                    | 60 min                         | 75 and 120 min               | 150 min (2 ½ hr) or more |
| 7   | Number of training days per week in the Preparation Period, on average (Task 6-2) | 2                              | 2 and 4                      | 5 or more                |
| 8   | Average length of a practice session in the Competition Period                    | 60 min                         | 75 and 120 min               | 150 min (2 ½ hr) or more |
| 9   | Number of training days per week in the Competition Period, on average            | 2                              | 2 and 4                      | 5 or more                |
| 10  | % of days devoted to competition in your program*                                 | 10%                            | 20-35%                       | 40% or more              |
| 11  | % of days devoted to practice and training in your program*                       | 60%                            | 65 – 80%                     | 85% or more              |

\*10: From Task 6: A divided by (A + B) Ex.: (20 competition days) / (20 competition days + 30 training days) = 20 / 50 = 2 / 5 = 0.40 = 40%

11: B divided by (A + B) Ex.: (30 training days) / (20 competition days + 30 training days) = 30 / 50 = 3 / 5 = 0.60 = 60%

*Note: In the above table, reference values are only general guidelines, and may vary according to the sport or the age of the athletes.*

### 3. Critical Reflection: Issues And Solutions

Based on the preceding analyses, identify the major issues that seem to affect your program. Then, from the list of suggested solutions, indicate the ones that seem most realistic for you and that you could put into practice. If necessary, identify other possible solutions after you have had a chance to discuss with other coaches.

| Possible Issues Associated With Your Sport Program   | Solutions To Consider   |
|--|---|
| ( ) Program is too short to allow any significant athletic development in your sport or discipline (see #1, in Task 7) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the athletes to participate in other sports with similar demands, and in other sports that may help them develop other types of skills.</li> <li>• Enroll the athletes in sport schools or camps, so that they continue their development, and avoid losing too much sport fitness</li> </ul>  |
| ( ) Preparation Period is too short (see #2, in Task 7)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the Preparation Period, by beginning practices earlier before the first regular competitions.</li> <li>• Use some of the early season competitions as a continuation of the Preparation Period, and therefore not too important as far as results are concerned</li> </ul>  |
| ( ) Not enough competition (see #3, 5 and 10 in Task 7)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include simulated competition in your practice sessions</li> <li>• Organize friendly or unofficial competitions</li> </ul>   |
| ( ) Practice sessions are too short (see #6 and 8 in Task 7)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the general warm-up before you go onto the field or into the facility</li> <li>• Train the motor abilities (Agility, Coordination, Balance, etc.) or some physical abilities (flexibility, endurance, strength) outside practice sessions so that you can spend as much of the available time as possible on sport-specific activities.</li> <li>• Create workstations or circuits that enable a larger number of athletes to be active at any given time.</li> </ul> |

| Possible Issues Associated With Your Sport Program   | Solutions To Consider  |
|--|--|
| ( ) Not enough practice or preparation time to enable significant athletic development in the sport or discipline; not enough training opportunities between competitions (see #2, 7, 9, 11 in Task 7) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend the preparation period, i.e. begin practices earlier in the program.</li> <li>• Use some of the early season competitions as a continuation of the Preparation Period and therefore not too important as far as results are concerned.</li> <li>• Increase the number of practice sessions between competitions.</li> <li>• Provide the athletes with programs relating to activities they can do on their own between practice sessions, in order to focus on important sport-specific elements during your practice sessions</li> <li>• Don't allow all of the content of the practice sessions to be dictated by performance in the last competition or by preparation for the next competition; situate the content of practices in a longer-term perspective (several weeks, or the season).</li> </ul> |
| ( ) Competition Period is too long; too many competitions in the program; too many "important" competitions (see #3, 5 and 10 in Task 7)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with other coaches and administrators in charge of the competition structure and seek to reduce the length of the program and the number of competitions.</li> <li>• Consider not taking part in certain competitions when possible.</li> <li>• Give rest to some athletes by withdrawing them from certain competitions or not registering them, and give other athletes opportunities to get competitive experience.</li> <li>• Consider some early season competitions as part of the Preparation Period; so, don't give too much importance to the results of the early season competitions (for example, less points for an early season win up to a certain date).</li> <li>• Prioritize the competitions and focus on those that lead to the "next stage" in the development process.</li> </ul>     |
| ( ) Practice sessions too long (see #6 and 8 in Task 7)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the length (but not the frequency) of practices if possible.</li> <li>• If it is only possible to get into the facilities for long periods of time, include frequent breaks during practices and plan fun activities.</li> </ul>   |
| ( ) Practice sessions too frequent (see #7 and 9 in Task 7)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate hard training days with easy days during the week, in order to avoid fatigue.</li> <li>• Build in a rest day every 2-3 days of practice.</li> <li>• Build in an easy session or a rest day the day after a competition, especially if the competition has been particularly demanding.</li> <li>• Avoid planning a tough practice session the day before a competition.</li> </ul>  |

## 4. Setting Priorities for your Season

### TASK 8

- A. Identify the athletic abilities that are moderately important, important or very important in your sport with a check mark in column 1 of the table. If necessary, refer to the physical abilities and their relevance to women's field lacrosse in Module 6.
- B. Identify the athletic abilities that can be trained given the age of your athletes. Check those that meet this criterion in column 2 of the table. Then, draw a line through the athletic abilities that should not be trained given the age of your athletes, even if they are ranked moderately important or important in your sport.

| Column 1   | C2 | Column 3                          | Column 4                           | Column 5                        |
|--|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Very Important, Important or Moderately Important            | ✓  | Objectives – Start of the Program | Objectives – Middle of the Program | Objectives – End of the Program |
| <b>Physical Abilities</b>                                    |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Maximal Speed  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Speed-Endurance  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Aerobic Endurance  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Aerobic Power  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Maximum Strength   |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Speed-Strength   |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Strength-Endurance                                       |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Flexibility  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| <b>Motor Abilities</b>                                       |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Coordination   |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Balance  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Agility  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| <b>Skills and sport-specific technical/tactical elements</b> |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Basic Techniques   |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Variations of Basic Techniques                           |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) More Advanced Techniques                                 |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Decision-Making  |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |
| ( ) Game or Competition Plan                                 |    |                                   |                                    |                                 |

C. Take a few moments to consider the “entry point” of the majority of the athletes in your program. From the options below, check all those that apply. During the 2-3 months before the start of your program, your athletes:

- ☐ don't do any particular type of training
- ☐ don't do any organized sport, but do a little bit of physical conditioning on an irregular basis
- ☐ don't do any organized sport, but do serious physical conditioning on a regular basis
- ☐ train and compete in another sport
- ☐ train and compete in a similar sport
- ☐ train and compete in the same sport

D. For each athletic ability ranked as very important, important, or moderately important, and that can be trained by athletes of the age you coach, in columns 3, 4 and 5 of the table, indicate which training objectives you should try to achieve at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of your program, given the “entry point” of the majority of the athletes.

Choose from the following options to indicate the objectives for various types of athletic abilities:

### **Physical and Motor Abilities**

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Develop [DE]:  | Try to improve         |
| Maintain [MN]: | Keep at the same level |

### **Skills and sport-specific technical/tactical elements:**

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Acquisition [AC]:   | Patterning movements                     |
| Consolidation [CO]: | Correct execution in variable conditions |
| Refinement [RE]:    | Minor improvements                       |

## Analyzing Women's Lacrosse Technically & Tactically

To develop an understanding of the sport's basic movements and critical components it is useful to complete a skill inventory. Such analysis usually consists of a list of the sport's techniques, tactics and strategies:

| SKILL INVENTORY     |  |                          |
|---------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Phase of the Sport: | <input type="text"/>   | THE PLAN<br>(what)       |
| One Strategy:       | <input type="text"/>   |                          |
| Tactics:            | <input type="text"/>   | EXECUTION<br>(how)       |
| Techniques:         | <input type="text"/>   |                          |
|                     | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> </div> | DOING IT<br>(looks like) |
|                     | <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> </div> |                          |

### Defining the components of the skill inventory:

#### **Phase**

The specific portion of the game being focused on.

#### **Strategies**

Refers to combining and using tactics & techniques to plan and direct team movements to obtain a specific result.

#### **Tactics**

The plans or procedures used to achieve a desired result. Such plans or procedures consist of the use of selected techniques in appropriate combinations and sequences.

#### **Techniques**

Individual, specialized skills that make it possible to perform a sport or activity.

(source: NCCP Level 3 Theory Manual, 1990 Coaching Association of Canada)

### TASK 3:

#### Developing the Technical and Tactical Plan

Brainstorm a list of concepts that you wish to either review or teach, then implement with your team this season.

## Skill Inventory

Phase of the Sport:

One Strategy:

Tactics:



Techniques:

**THE PLAN**  
(what)

**EXECUTION**  
(how)

**DOING IT**  
(looks like)

**PRE-SEASON TIPS - CHECKLIST****Mental Aspect:**

- Administer pre-season motivation questionnaire [design to suit your team needs]
- Talk to athletes about their goals
- Begin to assess potential competitive anxiety concerns and select strategies for these athletes to begin to work with.

**Physical Training:**

- Review physical training principles when designing your training program (ie. develop aerobic capacity before anaerobic lactic)
- Decide what training you need to supervise (personally) and what your athletes can do on their own using the plan you provide them

**Tactics / Strategy:**

- “map out” your practice schedule for the entire season; when you want to introduce new skills and / or strategies
- Use the Skill Inventory Worksheet provided to plan how new strategies will be introduced this season
- Progress from simple to complex skills
- Work on single skills and combination of a few skills before working on complete strategy (ie. lead ups to a motion offence)
- Use periodic testing, particularly self-tests, to indicate improvement

**Important roles for your Manager:**

- Provide team members / parents with a complete schedule as soon as possible
- Order all necessary uniforms & equipment
- Advance book transportation, accommodations, facilities
- Determine your team selection criteria and make public to players (see Tryout Flyer)

**IN-SEASON TIPS - CHECKLIST****Mental Aspect:**

- Assess goals & progress with athletes. Adapt previous goals or set new ones.
- Have athletes work on relaxation techniques and positive mental imagery to prepare for competition. This should be tied into your practice plus can be done at home.
- Provide constructive feedback and emotional support to players – let them know you feel they are ready for competition
- “Rap sessions” – to maintain motivation and open lines of communication with your players; appropriate times – next practice after a competition, between games at a tournament

**Physical Training:**

- Physical training moves into the “maintenance phase”; can be done separately from practice.

**Technical / Tactics / Strategies:**

- Run well-planned, productive practices which encourage players to take risks to improve skills
- Make notes during games of skills / strategies which need to be reviewed at practice
- Simulate the competitive situation in practice

**Important roles for your Manager:**

- Safety concerns
  - put Emergency Action Plan[EAP] in place
- Plan a social event for your team [team bonding]
- Team meeting / parents meeting – outline the season, expectations, financial commitments, gather – contact information, medical information

**Sample “Rap Session” Questions:**

- What went well this week / game/ tournament?
- Did you complete any of your goals?
- What did you learn?
- Where do you still need work?
- Is there anything I (coach) did that you wish I didn't do?
- Is there anything that you wish I did more often?

**POST-SEASON TIPS - CHECKLIST****Mental Aspect:**

- Administer a post-season questionnaire / evaluation of the season (to be completed by players)
- Post-season “rap session” – things to include: what went well, where they could improve, plans for post-season workouts
- Leave things on a positive note with athletes looking forward to returning next season

**Physical Training:**

- Allow for a complete break from training [transitional phase]
- Encourage participation in vigorous recreational sports (cross-training)

**Social Aspect:**

- Have a post-season social gathering with team members (and perhaps family)

**Promotional Idea:**

- Prepare, or have your team contribute to, a year-end report for the athletes including, if appropriate: Team goals achieved, individual goals achieved (and stats where appropriate), tournament results, photos, news clippings, recommendations.

**THE TRYOUT - CHECKLIST**

The tryout should be a positive, constructive opportunity for athletes to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in women's lacrosse.

**Tips for running effective tryouts:**

- Check your facility & equipment – availability, state of repair, quantity
- Notify everyone well in advance – be sure they know what to bring, where to go, when to be there, and what to expect
- Try to get a rough idea of how many might be coming – allow enough time to evaluate everyone; you may want different groups at different times
- Try to have any written forms, letters or such done ahead of time. Keep the forms simple.
- Let everyone warm up and then run a simple practice drill – this allows them to use previously learned skills.
- Select a few basic skills to help in screening the athletes – choose 3 or 4 skills critical to success in women's lacrosse [e.g. cradle, dodge, pass, catch]. You can then re-align the groupings based on observation of these basic skills.
- Rate or measure players' ability on the basic skills you select so that you can provide some feedback to them later
- Tell the athlete what you are looking for [i.e. what is a good performance or score]
- Base your decision on several factors and not just one factor – use skill testing, previous experience and performance in the competitive situation to evaluate players.

**Get some help for try-outs**

Have enough help so that players can be put into small groups

- other coaches, parents, experienced players can do this job
- if records need to be taken, try to get some managerial assistance

**Group your athletes –**

- by experience
- ability
- age
- size
- any other factor that “evens out” large differences between the athletes of the group

- Try to make the experience a constructive one and an enjoyable one – keep things moving, provide feedback, make suggestions where possible, use name tags and call the players by name.
- Don't be in hurry to assess younger athletes – novice athletes may not look good at the first tryout, workout or practice but will improve rapidly. Tryouts should be spaced out so that the novice has time to practice between tryouts.
- Have alternatives ready if you have more athletes trying out than you can handle – be ready with suggestions and contacts for those who would be better suited to a different level or team. Avoid the “cut” as a dead-end experience. Know what other teams, leagues, or events exist so you can re-direct the player to those.
- Know what's next – plan the way you will tell your new athletes about the next practice or workout.
- Stick around – be prepared to answer some questions from athletes and parents who will want advice or will want to feel you out on why you did what you did. Keep conversation focused on the athletes and the program.

**SAMPLE TRYOUT FLYER****Team Dynamic****Selection Process**

The selection process is a difficult and thought provoking evaluation based upon both objective (measurable) and subjective (coaches opinion) criteria. It is inherent in our coaching philosophy that a combination of objective & subjective criteria be taken into consideration in order to select a good team player.

Each player will be provided with a fair and equal opportunity for selection to this team. It is our ultimate goal to create the BEST team from those players who tryout, a team capable of competing with and defeating the competition we will face this season. In order to do this, we must evaluate players on how well we see them fitting into this overall plan.

Tryout opportunities are:

| Date | Event   |
|------|---|
|      | Open Team Tryout; come and find out what the program is all about   |
|      | 1st Official Tryout; 2 hr. training session, some skill testing & game play will take place                                 |
|      | 2 hr. Training Session  |
|      | _____ Tournament; open to all those trying out; team selection will be made at the conclusion of this game play opportunity |

**Selection Criteria**

*(listed in alphabetical order)*

**Objective**

- Game play
- Physical attributes
- Stick skills
- Test results

**Subjective**

- Adaptability & versatility to new positions
- Coachability
- Balance by position
- Intensity
- Mental focus
- Potential
- Team player & chemistry with others
- Willingness to learn