

Part

3

Coaching players 10 years and up.



COACHING PLAYERS 10 YEARS AND UP

The third level of the Hockey Development Model further develops players' technical and tactical abilities and capacities through a variety of simplified games with teams of three and also of four players. In addition, level 3 also presents a specialized training program for developing young goalkeepers, for gaining experience in the penalty corner attack and defense and finally introduce the young player into the difficult technique of hitting the ball. Before putting these programs to work, however, coaches must understand a little about their players.

The Hockey Player Between 10 and 12 Years

Teachers of players between 10 and 12 years have a rewarding field of operation because at this late stage of their childhood, as many sources confirm, the children are in a “**golden age of motor learning**” (C. Diem). **There exists a sum of favorable conditions in the biological, psychological and motor sphere.** Body and mind are in harmony and balance. Leaving the dream world behind, they strive now, more than ever before, towards realism. All unreal, incomprehensible or fantasy is declined. Their capacity of abstracting, i.e. separating the essential from the less important, is developed, favoring their understanding and reading of game situations. For the first time, the sense that all action is submitted to certain general rules awakens.

Prepubescent hockey players still urge for physical activity, which favors their intrinsic motivation to get more and more involved in sports. However, instead of looking to meet their licentious need for movement as happened in the years before 10, they are now striving after performance, profiting from the fact that **their movements are now more controlled, carried out more economically and with single-mindedness.** Trying to emulate their sport model, they **show dedication for continuous improvement.** In fact, children between 10 and 12 years are even more motivated to practice hard when a few minutes later a game is organized in which they can demonstrate their abilities and capacities to their friends and to the opposing team.

What does this mean for coaches? At this stage of evolution of the young hockey player, their teachers have to pass from a presentation of a great variety of multilateral and specific hockey activities to a more systematic, intensive and purposeful practice of technical-tactical aspects of the hockey game. **Exercises for developing speed, coordination and aerobic resistance are considered the pillars of their multilateral formation, while the understanding, practice and to be mastering of a great variety of simplified hockey games with teams formed by 3 and 4 players are the ones of their specific formation.**

“When we do what we have done always, we will never reach any further”

Games for 6-on-6 Hockey Level 3



“In hockey the brain counts a lot. All players have two legs, two hands, two ears, and two eyes, but only one brain.”

Understanding hockey involves comprehending how the game develops and works. The coach must teach players not only many individual and team skills but also thinking skills. Without understanding the most common situations that occur in the game, it's difficult to make correct decisions; without mastering the playing skills, on the other hand, these decisions cannot be carried out. The most natural way to develop “reading and reacting skills” is to expose the youngsters to many different **simplified games, which teach the players how to be in the right place on the field at the right time.** This is precisely what the simplified games in Level 3 are meant to do.

Reading the game means observing and analyzing the location of teammates, opponents, and the ball as well as the speed and direction of play. This ability allows participants to anticipate the next play.

THE BASIC THREE GAME SITUATIONS

Everything that happens on the hockey field occurs in one of these three situations:

1. The ball is loose and neither team has it.
2. The team has the ball on offense.

The team is on defense, preventing the opponent from scoring.

These three conditions frequently changing phases, but during each of them the player must constantly read and react. How to react depends on the player's position in relation to the ball and his or her proximity to the team's own goal. A golden rule, a precondition of interpreting any game situation, is that the player must face the play to perceive the situation; only then can he react. Turning one's back to the play (as many front runners do, for example, when they receive the ball) is a cardinal mistake.

Loose-Ball Game

The reaction of the player closest to the loose ball dictates whether the team will be on offense or defense. This player's first thought should be defensive until he or she can read the situation perfectly. Generally, the closest player's reaction to a loose ball is to become the ball carrier. While the face off is going on, all other players involved in the game situation (teammates of the possible attacker and those of the possible defender) must know their roles in advance in case their teammate wins, loses, or draws in the loose-ball game. During the loose-ball game, does the player correctly recognize his proximity or closeness to the ball?

Does she know how to assess her distance to it (in relation to that of the nearest opponent), taking into account her and the opponent's speed? When the situation is not clear, does he recognize whether his distance to his own goal allows him to make an offensive or a defensive decision? **Statistics have shown that the team that wins the most loose balls usually also wins the game.** Therefore, to improve a win-lose record, the players should concentrate on winning those loose balls!

Offensive Game

While the player who is closest to the ball chooses between beating his opponent or passing the ball, he also considers his teammates' positions further away from the ball. Some of them should support the ball carrier and join the attack. The more support the ball carrier receives, the more options he has. He should have at least three safe passes to his fellow players, who by their running free give width and depth to the attack and help spread the defense. The width of the attack is determined by how far apart the players position themselves in the outside lanes and by their occupying all attacking positions. It also depends on where they are in the center lane, from which distribution or passing of the ball is the easiest. The depth of the attack is the distance between the players who are closest to and the furthest from the ball up in the field. Whenever possible, there should be low, medium, and high depths on the attack.

How quickly the transition takes place from defense to offense or vice versa is of great importance. Modern soccer is a game of quick transitions. The most dangerous attacking situations can be created after a successful tackle, when the new attack is launched literally within a second. Generally it takes more time for the defense to recognize that they have to change their roles.

Attackers who make use of quick transitions from defense to offense generally attack an unorganized defense, whereas a slow transition might result in an attack's being against an already-organized defense.

The first player, who either beats his opponent and carries the ball up the field (or passes it to the closest supporting player), and the nearest supporting player are the key players. When an attacker without the ball creates passing options, the transition becomes much quicker than in the case when the ball carrier is forced to keep running with the ball in order to create space and time for himself.



Defensive Game

The player of the other team who was not as close to the ball in the loose-ball situation then becomes the defender. He is the key player on defense: after all, his quickness and kinds of movements determine how his teammates have to defend. If he is aggressive, his teammates defend by close one-on-one coverage, but if the first opponent is passive, his teammates only cover the zone.

He should quickly put pressure on the ball carrier, at the same time receiving immediate support from the closest teammate and the rest of the defending players. The role of these defenders depends on their distance from the ball also and whether they are the second-, third-, fourth-, or fifth-closest player to the checking defender. While facing the ball and personal opponent simultaneously, with the head swiveling or turning at all times, the defender may decide to switch opponents without forgetting to choose a correct position between the attacker and his own goal. Does the closest checking player reduce the space and the time of the ball carrier? Does he get immediate support by teammate defenders? Does the whole defensive unit still give immediate support to the checking player after it seems obvious that the opponent will win the loose ball? The ball carrier who is being checked by the closest defender often is not the most dangerous player—someone among the potential pass receivers is.

It is part of a coach's functions to watch how her defenders perform in these four types of play or roles:

1. As ball carrier
2. A player checking the ball carrier
3. A player supporting the ball carrier
4. Players who are covering the checking defender or the area away from the ball

The more a young hockey player understands the game, the better he or she will be able to see, read, and react to all game situations.

ORGANIZING THE TRAINING SESSION

Here are a few recommendations for structuring a training session for players aged less than 12 years old:

1. Instead of starting with a warm-up (which is not mandatory for children less than 12 years), the session should always begin with a simplified game in which the coach presents specific game-related problems to the few players of each team.
2. During a 10-minute game, observe and analyze the technical and tactical playing performance of the players. After the game, assign and have carried out a series of corrective exercises to ameliorate the problem situations you have discovered. The choice of these corrective exercises depends on the technical-tactical aspects that have lowered the quality of play (for example, you might work on tackling at the right instant, not too late and not too early or on receiving skills).
3. After isolated skill practice (always seen as a function of performance in the simplified game), the game resumes. See whether the weaknesses you had previously noticed have been overcome with the help of the corrective exercises or whether other aspects of the game still need improvement. Through systematic questioning from you as coach, players can become aware of the importance of specific soccer knowledge; ask them to work out the correct patterns.

Other Training Tips:

- To facilitate the observation, analysis, decision making, and motor response of the young players, never more than six youngsters per team should participate in the simplified game.
- The space in which the simplified game takes place should initially be rather wide and deep to give the players enough time to decide their moves and enough space to carry them out. Only when the level of technique is high enough to allow the players to draw their attention to other aspects inherent in the soccer game, should the coach reduce the time and space. Gradually, then, both these parameters become similar to those of the official competition.
- Learning and perfecting basic abilities and capacities must be considered an important part of each training session. **The more game-like the situation is that you present to the players in training, the more they are able to transfer the experience to the game.**
- It should be obvious that you alternate exercises and games of high intensity with those of low intensity.
- As the capacity of play improves, the multilateral games are introduced less often in the training sessions. **The multilateral games**, apart from being used to contribute to the intensity, variety, and the fun of the training, **ensure the important and indispensable development of basic abilities and capacities.**
- The training of coordination skills and physical capacities (such as various kinds of resistance, speed, and strength) should be an integral part of the practice session.
- At this stage, Level 3, thanks to players' improved perception and capacity of abstraction, instead of explaining a determined skill or tactical move in detail, coaches need provide only a demonstration of the sequence. This is usually sufficient to allow them to reproduce the same pattern with ease.
- It is especially important for coaches to treat everyone the same way and not show favoritism. Generally, prepubescent soccer players are pleased with their coaches if they are fair with everyone.

“Knowing when not to move is as important as knowing what move to make.”

SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR 3 ON 3

The simplified game is still an ideal framework for discovering, understanding, and resolving specific game-related problems.

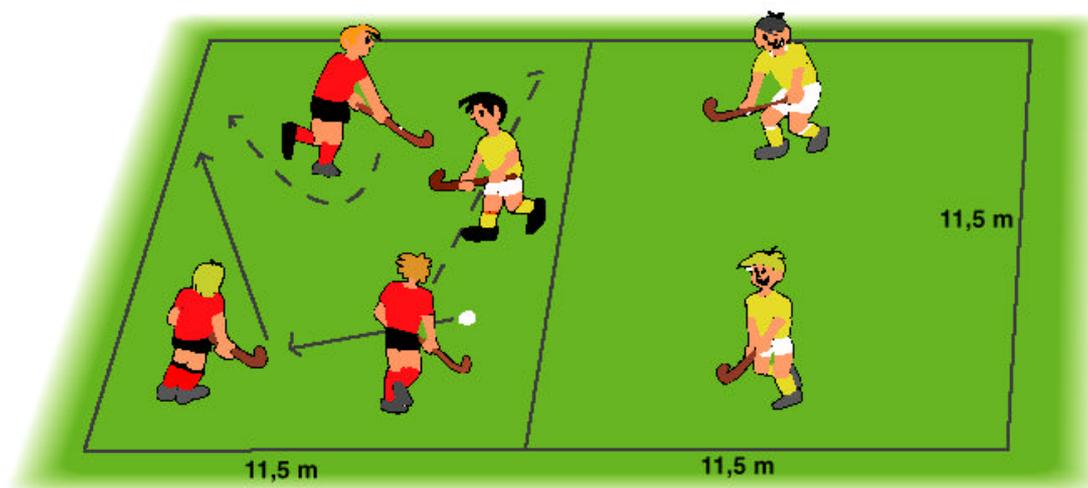
1st Simplified Game

MAINTAINING BALL POSSESSION 3-ON-1

Mark off two adjacent squares of 8 to 10 meters. In one, three attackers keep the ball against one defender. In the adjacent or other square, two of the defender's teammates wait for a pass from their colleague if his or her defense in the 1 on 3 succeeds. Once they control the ball, the former defender joins the two teammates to try to keep possession of the ball in another 3-on-1 situation.

A switch of play from one to the other playing area also occurs when one of the attackers infringes on the rules or the ball played by the attackers runs out of the limited zone. In both cases the defender passes the ball from the sideline to one teammate in the adjacent area, with the opponents staying at a distance of at least 3 meter. Immediately after the successful push-in, the player joins his team members in the adjacent area. Here it's their turn to keep possession in the new 3-on-1 situation. If one defender runs out of energy, he or she may switch positions with a teammate of the adjacent square. After a 5-minute practice, organize a competition with one player of the adjacent area counting the seconds of ball possession.

Duration of the game: three periods of 3 minutes each. After 9 minutes of play the team that achieves the best time is winner. After every change of area (squares), a rotation takes place in the defending team.



“What a player should always try to achieve is that instead of being dependant on his opponent, he should make his opponent dependant on him. How? By always having the ball in his possession”

Pep Guardiola

Variations:

- For more advanced players after every pass to a teammate, the attacker must move at least 5 meters out of his former position. Using this rule helps develop the players' orientation and perception.
- Count (keep track of) the number of successive passes played .
- Only reverse stick passes count (only played with the edge of the stick or with the toe of the curve)
- Count the number of first-time passes during one ball possession.
- Have three attackers face one defender in both playing areas. The group that keeps the ball longer wins.

Training Objectives:

- Learn to avoid playing the ball into the opponent's range of action.
- Learn to pass the ball with precise timing, not too early and not too late.
- Learn when to pass and when to dribble.
- Learn to pass the ball accurately, fast enough, and without indicating its trajectory.
- After passing the ball, be prepared to receive it again; learn to support the ball carrier and consider the support given by the teammates.
- As defender, learn to press the ball carrier and anticipate the opponent's play.

Corrective Exercises:

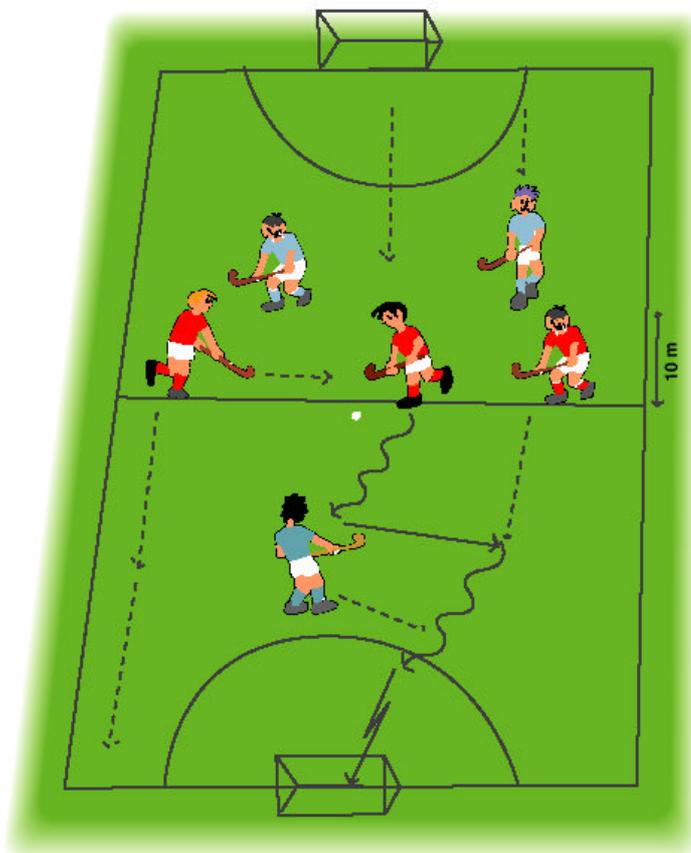
Most of the “ Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games” as well as all the 2-on-2 simplified games make good material for remedial work.

“The attitude of a player is for the coach more important than his aptitude”

2nd Simplified Game

FAST ATTACK

Set up a 6-on-6 Hockey field. Divide the youngsters into three attackers and three defenders, with an additional goalkeeper. The three attackers start with the ball from the centerline of the field and try to beat a defender (the “sweeper”) situated in front of the shooting circle. When the attackers first touch the ball on the centerline, the two defenders situated 8 to 12 meters behind them begin pursuit, trying to help the sweeper, who is doing everything possible to delay the attack.



The attack ends

- when a goal is scored,
- when the attackers commit a rules' infringement,
- when the ball runs out of the playing area, or
- when the defenders can touch the ball three consecutive times or pass it once between them.

When the defenders commit an infringement of the rules inside the circle, a penalty stroke from 7 meters against a neutral goalkeeper is awarded. After five fast attacks, both

teams switch positions and functions until each team has defended and attacked 10 times. After each attack the “sweeper” rotates. In the second series of attacks, the players in attack as well as in defense must assume different playing positions. The defenders who support the sweeper now should also start from different positions on both sidelines.

After the competition, use probing, open questions to work out with your players what the most effective fast attack would be, considering aspects of the dribble, of passing, of controlling the ball, and of shooting.

Variations:

- After a successful tackle or interception, the defenders must pass the ball across the centerline or through one of the two goals, which should be established on the centerline in the wing positions.
- The attackers may not pass the ball more than three times (or you can specify twice).
- Three attackers play against two defenders, with one tackling from behind. (This variation is for more advanced players.)

Training Objectives:

- Consolidate the execution of the basic skills of dribbling, passing, receiving, and scoring at high speed.
- Create correct habits for counterattacking: for instance, initially pass the ball from the depth of the field directly into the path of the teammate, receive the ball on the run, use direct passes instead of receiving and controlling the ball before making a pass.
- Learn to read the game: know when to pass or not pass the ball, always considering the actions of the three defenders that condition the attacking play.
- Learn to look out for an effective attack. Three offensive actions are better than four. After carrying the ball to the third defender, a diagonal pass into the run of one of the supporting players to either side who then shoots from a safe distance is likely to assure a successful conclusion of the fast attack.
- Learn to cooperate in defense and to systematically delay the counterattack when there are too few supporting players.

Corrective Exercises:

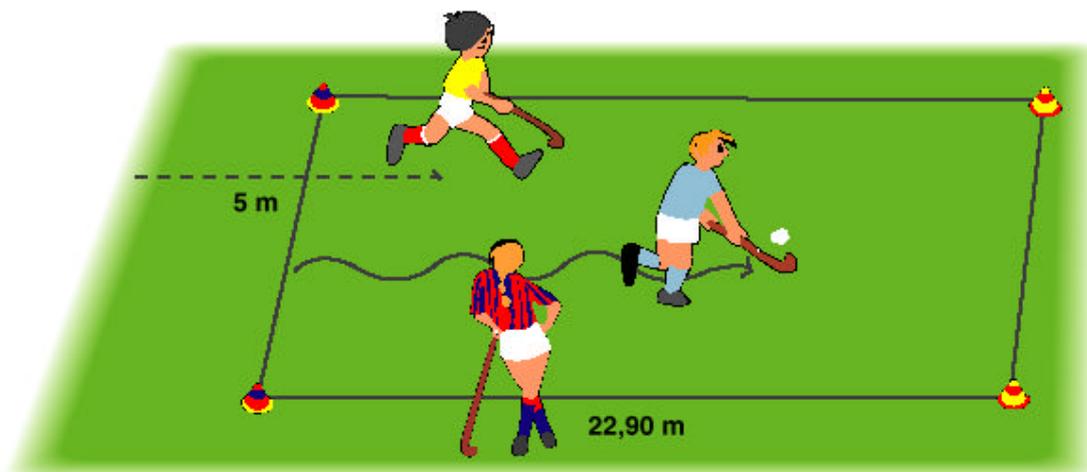
The following corrective exercises should be included in the training program as needed.

1. Dribble and Tag Games

Review the "Dribbling Games" and especially the "Tag Games" in chapter 3, "Games for Basic Abilities and Capacities."

2. Tackling From Behind

One attacker starts with a ball from the centerline of the Mini-Hockey field. A defender stands 1 meter behind this attacker and follows him, trying to execute a successful tackle before the attacker can control the ball in the penalty area.



For attacking with success the forward must

- move quickly,
- invade the path of the defender who nears him (to avoid a collision and an infringement of the rules, the defender must slow down his running speed), or
- feint a stop of the ball with the reverse stick; while the defender reacts to this new situation and prepares a tackle, the attacker can suddenly change speed and escape.

After three attacks, the defender and attacker switch functions. Make sure that both players have a similar capacity in running speed.

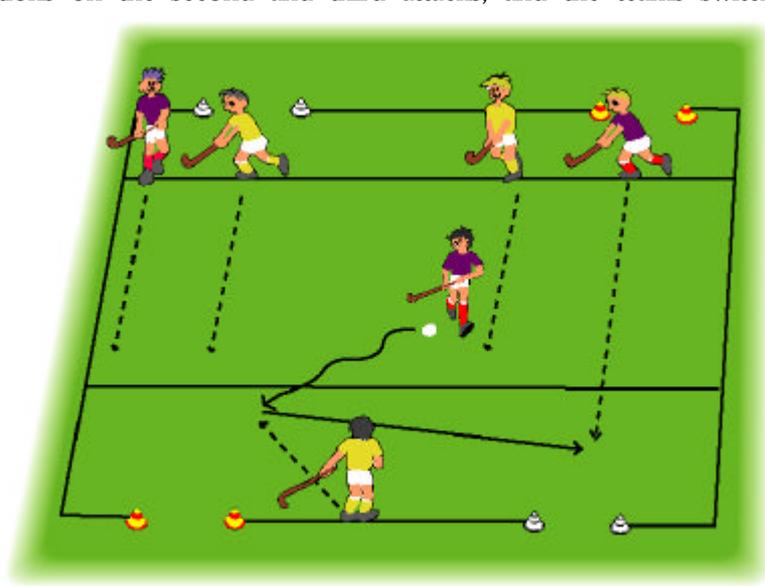
3. Delaying the Opponents' Attack

Review the rules of a “penalty attack” in the Mini-Hockey competition (chapter 4). This practice uses six players. After the coach’s visual signal, an attacker in the center of the Mini-Hockey field dribbles the ball toward one of the two opposing goals defended by an opponent who starts from the end line. This defender closes down on the attacker and channels him to one side of the field. Meanwhile, after the initiation of the attack, four other players (two attackers and two defenders) run from the opposite end line onto the field to support the single attacker or to tackle or intercept his pass.

A goal can be scored only from inside the shooting zone. The attack of the three (one plus two) finishes, when

- one of the attackers scores,
- the attackers lose the ball to the defenders,
- an attacker infringes on the rules, or
- when the ball runs out of play.

The players rotate positions on the second and third attacks, and the teams switch functions after each full rotation. The team which manages to score the highest number of goals in six attacks wins. In case of a foul by one of the defenders, the attack has to be repeated. As a variation, the two supporting defenders and the two supporting attackers may start from the line of the shooting zone, thus putting more pressure on the attackers.



3rd Simplified Game

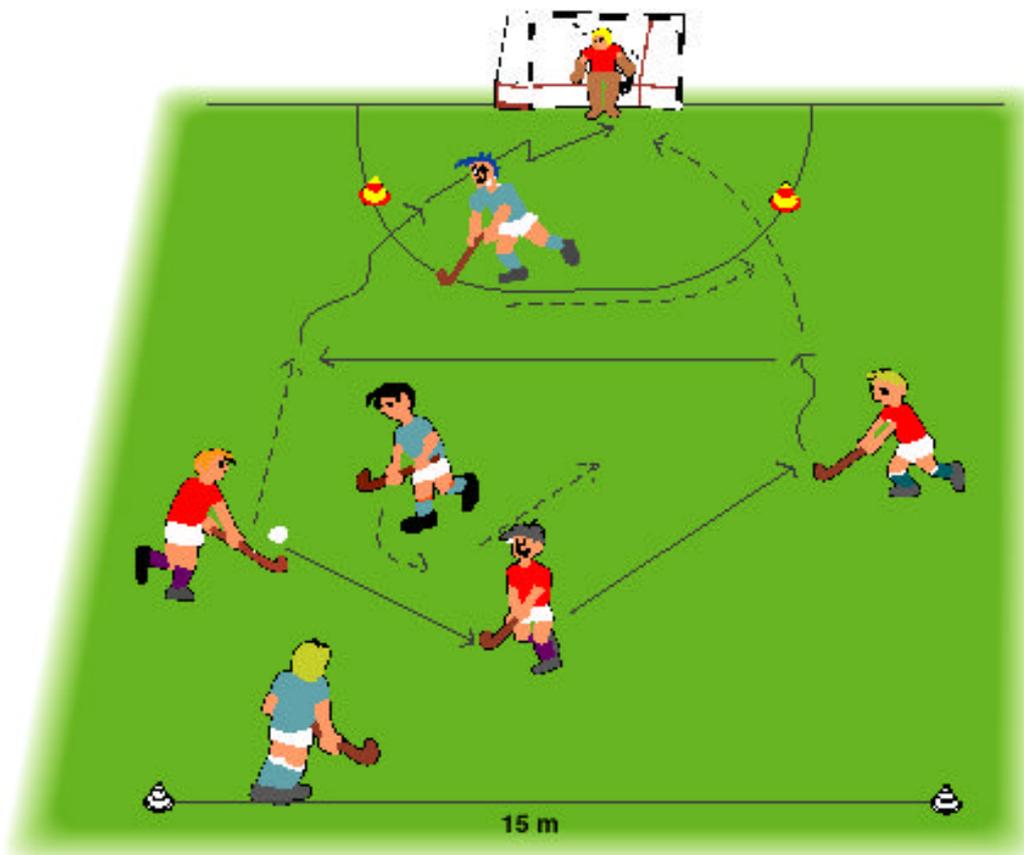
3-ON-1 PLUS A DEFENDER WHO COVERS

The game, which involves six players, is played between the centerline and one shooting circle of a 6-on-6 hockey field. Set up cones to establish two 15-meter-wide goal areas on the circle line and centerline (see illustration). Three players are in possession of the ball and start their attack from the centerline, aiming to alternately control the ball in the goal area on the penalty-area line. This goal, as well as the one established on the centerline, is defended by a single defender who must always remain on the same line without entering the field. One additional midfield player must always tackle first. After the conclusion of the first attack, with or without success, the three attackers turn around to attack the opposite wide goal, again tackled by the same midfield player and a third defender who covers him, remaining always on the goal line.

An attack finishes

- when a goal is scored with a dribble across one of the two cone goals,
- when the ball runs out of the 6-on6 field, or
- when one of the two defenders wins the ball and manages to execute a pass to one of his two teammates.

Duration of the match: three periods of 2 minutes until every defender has played once in each position. The forwards are also asked to switch their positions every 2 minutes.



Variations:

- When the midfield player wins the ball, the other two defenders may leave their positions on the end lines and move to receive a pass. If they manage to pass the ball twice, they now attack, while the former three attackers have to take over the defending positions and functions.
- After dribbling the ball across the goal line, the attackers have to score immediately into a goal defended by a neutral goalkeeper.

Training Objectives:

See the 1st Simplified Game for 3-on-3, which has the same objectives.

Corrective Exercises:

Choose from earlier simplified games for keeping possession of the ball in 2-on-1 or a 3-on-1 situation.

“The good coach doesn’t instruct anything to anybody, he only helps his pupils to discover and to think”

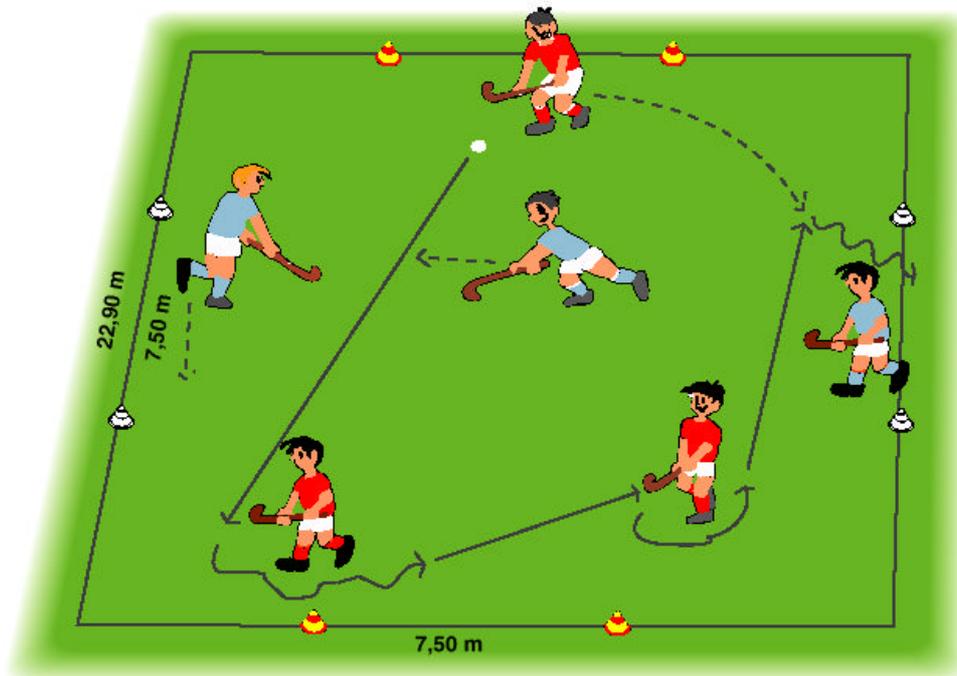
4th Simplified Game

3-ON-3 WITH FOUR INTERSECTING GOALS

Teams of three players simultaneously defend two opposite goal areas (which should be between 7.50 meters until 10 meters wide) and attack the other two. The illustration shows the setup and field dimensions.

The game is started by a ball toss into the center of the square. When the ball runs across any sideline, there is a push-in or free dribble from where the ball left the playing area. During the push-in or free dribble, the opponents must be at least 5 meters away from the ball. To score, a player has to dribble the ball through one of two opposing goals.

Duration of the game: four periods of 3 minutes.



Variation:

- Use the same variations as for the game “2 on 2 With Four Intersecting Goals.”

Training Objectives:

- Practice and consolidate the technical and tactical objectives of the game “2 on 2 With Four Intersecting Goals” and of the previous simplified games.
- Learn to always attack the goal that is less well defended.
- Learn to always attack in a triangular formation, while the defense must assure width and depth (cover), and be able to pressure the ball carrier to force him to commit mistakes.
- In attack, learn to watch for a 2-on-1 situation—and to avoid the 1 on 1.

- Be able to suddenly change the direction and rhythm of the attack without dribbling the ball too close to a defender.
- In defense, learn to pressure the ball carrier to force him to commit mistakes.
- Learn to channel the opponent's play into the desired direction (for instance, into a teammate's tackling area or away from the goal).
- Ensure width and depth coverage.
- Learn to delay the tackle to gain time for receiving the support of a teammate.
- Defending in 1-on-2, learn to delay the tackle to avoid getting outplayed before the support of a teammate arrives

Corrective Exercises:

See the simplified game "2 on 2 With Four Goals."

"From the practical point of view every hour doesn't have 60 minutes; an hour only consists of so many minutes you are able to profit from"

5th Simplified Game

3-ON-2 WITH COUNTERATTACK

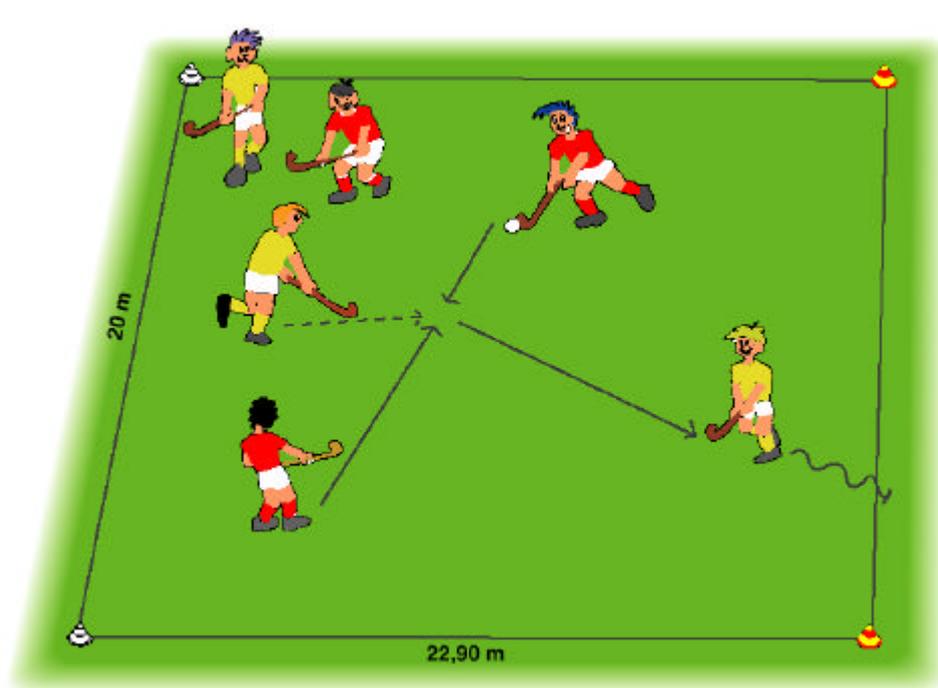
Use a 6-on-6 hockey field with two 20-meter-wide goals established on the centerline and level with one shooting circle. On the full field play between the centerline and one 22.90 meter line. In each half of the playing area, station one team of three players that is to alternately attack alternately the two goals. Two of the three opponents always defend the goal that is being attacked to prevent the attackers from dribbling the ball across their goal line. Meanwhile their third opponent remains in the opposite goal, ready to receive a pass from one of his team's two other defenders, should they manage to win the ball from the attackers. After receiving the ball, the third defender scores with a dribble across his own goal line without any tackle back from the attackers (they may tackle only in the upper part of the field). An attacks ends

- when the attackers score a goal,
- when the ball runs out of the playing area (across one of the end lines), or
- when the defense, after having recovered the ball and passed it across the imaginary centerline to the third defender, scores.

After the conclusion of each attack, one of the two defenders must quickly run toward the opposite goal to reestablish (with the third defender) the "3 attackers on two defenders." In case of an infringement of the rules by an attacker, a free hit is awarded to the defenders—still with the attackers being allowed to defend only in the upper part of the field and never beyond the centerline.

During a free hit for the attackers (taken no closer than 5 meters from the goal line), the defenders, too, must remain at least 5 meters away from the ball.

Duration of the game: 10 attacks for each team or, for more advanced players, four periods of 3 minutes each.



Variations:

- The three defenders don't have to switch positions. Therefore, the attackers practice the 3-on-1 attack at one goal line, and the 3-on-2 attack at the other goal.
- Instead of using two 20-meter-wide goals, the game is played using four 6-meter-wide goals (as a type of Mini-Hockey).
- Behind each end line a hockey goal is established at a distance of 14.50 meters. Immediately after a control on this end line, the same attacker practices shooting with a neutral goalkeeper.

Training Objectives:

- Practice and consolidate the technical and tactical objectives of the "2 on 1 With Counterattack" and the previous simplified games for 3-on-3.
- Learn to systematically create the 2-on-1 situation in attack and to achieve a high percentage of success.
- Learn to tackle back immediately after losing possession of the ball.
- As defenders, acquire the patience to wait for the best moment for tackling or intercepting the ball.
- As defenders, learn to force the attacker to play the ball into the desired direction.
- As defenders, learn to counterattack quickly.
- As defenders, think continuously about what to do next, not forgetting to switch positions after an attack is concluded.

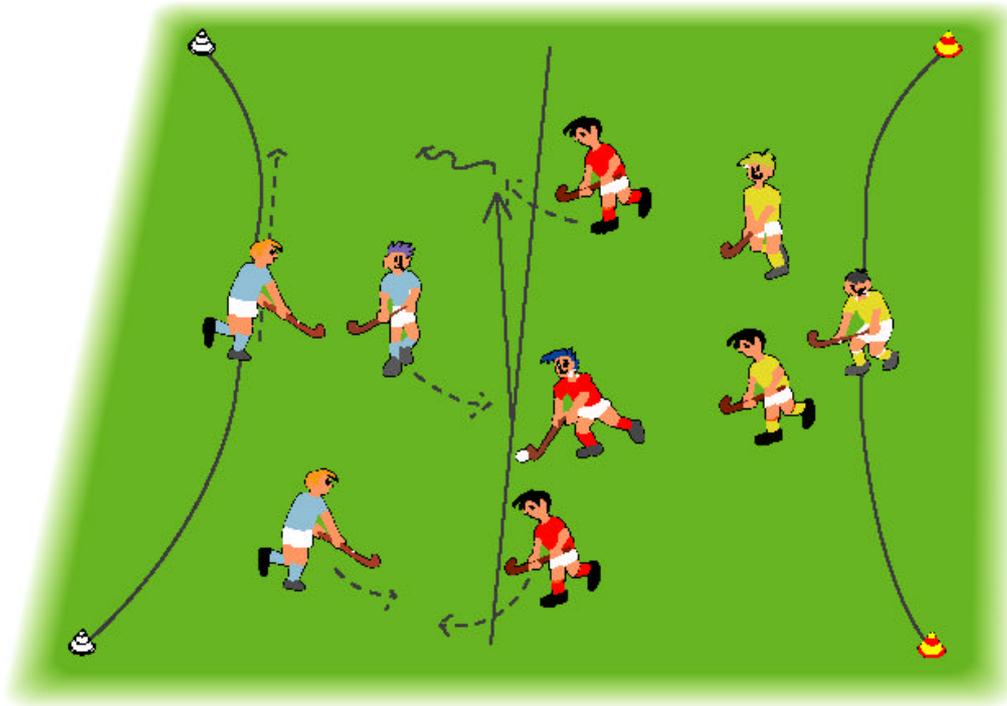
Corrective Exercises:

Use the first four of the 2-on-2 simplified games.

"The more we increase the speed, the more difficult it is to maintain accuracy"

6th Simplified Game THREE TEAMS ON TWO WIDE GOALS

Use a 6 on 6 hockey field between the two shooting circles. One team of three players is in the center of the field and alternately attacks one of the two wide cone goals established on the circle lines. This goal and the opposite one are each defended by (a) two opponents (from the two other teams) who play midfield, well in front of the circle, and (b) a third one who covers them without being allowed to tackle, being away from the circle line.



The attackers have 10 attacks (5 toward each goal) in which to try to dribble the ball as often as possible across this line (to get 1 point) and score in a regular goal without (or later with) a goalkeeper (to get 2 points). After every three attacks, the cover defender changes with one of the other defenders on his team who is in front of him. An attack finishes

- when a goal is scored,
- when the ball runs across one circle line without being controlled ,
- when a defender gets possession of the ball and passes it to a teammate, or
- when the attackers commit an infringement of the rules.

The winning team is the one that gets most points in 10 attacks.

“The player who runs has to think, and the one who thinks has to run”

César Luis Menotti

Variations:

- Each 3-on-3 team has 2 minutes to score a maximum number of goals. The faster they develop their attacks, the more chances exist to score.
- The teams change, depending on the outcome of the attack. When the defenders manage to win the ball and also execute at least two passes on their team, they become attackers of the opposite goal. While launching their attack, the former attackers defend the goal where their attack failed. If the attackers score with a dribble, they continue to attack.
- The attackers can only play a maximum of 4 (3) passes, and work to find the most effective attack.
- To simplify the attack and practice goal scoring, the defense either has
 - one defender in front of the circle, one defender who covers playing on the circle line, and a goalkeeper;
 - two defenders playing on the circle line only and a goalkeeper;
 - or two defenders in front of the offside line and a goalkeeper.

Training Objectives:

- The attackers will learn that before passing the ball, they should consider not only the positions and actions of the defenders but also the movement of the covering defender on the circle line.
- Understand how essential it is that the attacker in the center is the one who should be in possession of the ball—either when the defenders are close or when one defender is going to execute a tackle.
- Consolidate the skills learned in the previous simplified games, and especially the principles of assuring width and depth in attack.

Corrective Exercises:

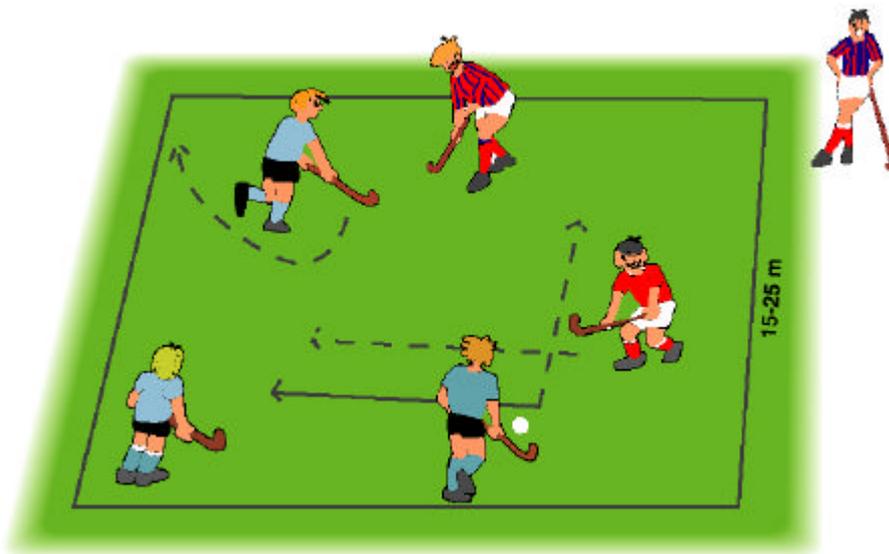
Use the first five of the simplified games for 2-on-2.

“There is no major power on the field than the player’s intelligence”

7th. Simplified Game

MAINTAINING BALL POSSESSION 3-ON-2

See the rules in chapter 4's 9th. simplified game for teams formed by two players. The main differences are that the number of players per team has increased here from two to three, and the dimensions of the field are increased (to a square measuring 15 to 25 meters). The attacking three players have six possessions of the ball and aim to keep the ball for as long as possible. When the ball runs out or is pushed out of the playing area by the defenders, one of the two attackers should be replaced by the third one, up to now waiting outside the area. Keep track of the seconds the three attackers keep possession of the ball. If you have more than three teams, you can organize a tournament to establish the best team.



Training Objectives:

- Learn to consider and then make use of the space available in the depth of the field.
- As an attacker learn to always position yourself in a triangular formation to ensure there being two options for passing.
- Be able to disguise the direction of your pass.
- Develop sufficient speed of the ball when passing.
- Know when to pass and when not to pass.
- Learn to look out systematically for the 2-on-1 situation.
- Remember to lift the head while dribbling the ball.
- Learn to run in an uncontrolled space immediately after a successful pass.
- If there is a pressing defense, learn to use direct or wall passes.
- As defenders, learn to constantly diminish the space and time available to the three attackers and to anticipate their play, especially in the depth of the field.

Corrective Exercises:

Use the 9th. simplified game for 2 on 2 (in chapter 4), the first six simplified games in this chapter for 3-on-3, and the "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" (see chapter 3).

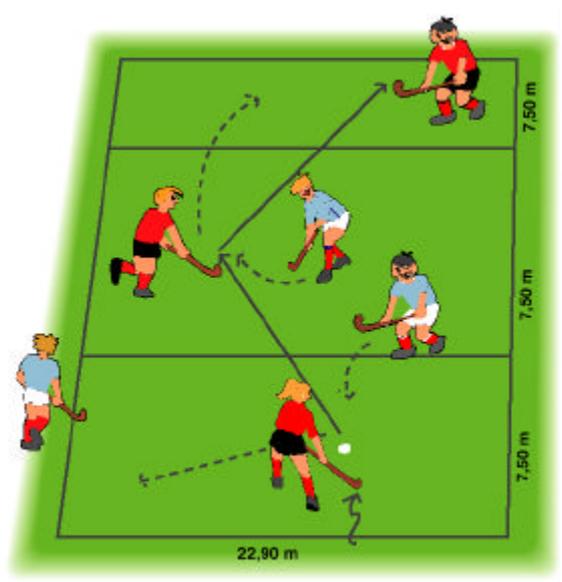
Variation:

- This variation applies to more advanced players. Mark off a playing area 22.90 meters wide and 22.50 meters deep, separated into three zones of 7.50 meters each. The players are three attackers, two defenders, and one substitute for a defender. The more experienced the players are, the less wide and deep the area of play. One zone is assigned to each of the three attackers. Without being allowed to leave their assigned area, they try to keep possession against the two defenders, who may play in any of the three areas. Initially, none of the defenders is situated in the first attacker's zone. But immediately after the attacker touches the ball, both defenders may press him. When one of the defenders tackles successfully and manages to touch the ball three consecutive times, or when the ball runs out of play, the substitute (who should track the time with a stopwatch) moves into the playing area and replaces one of the defenders. With every attempt, the three attackers should try to keep the ball for 10 (or, later, for 15) seconds. The winning team is the one that keeps the ball the most times for 10 (15) seconds within 10 attempts.

If only five players are available, the successful defender changes position and function with the attacker who failed.

Training Objectives:

- Learn to consider and then make use of the space available in the depth of the field.
 - As an attacker, avoid positioning yourself in a straight line with your teammates. Always position yourself in a triangular formation to offer two options to the ball carrier.
 - Be able to disguise your pass.
 - Gain sufficient speed of the ball when passing.
 - Know when to pass and when not to pass.
 - Learn to look out systematically for the 2-on-1 situation.



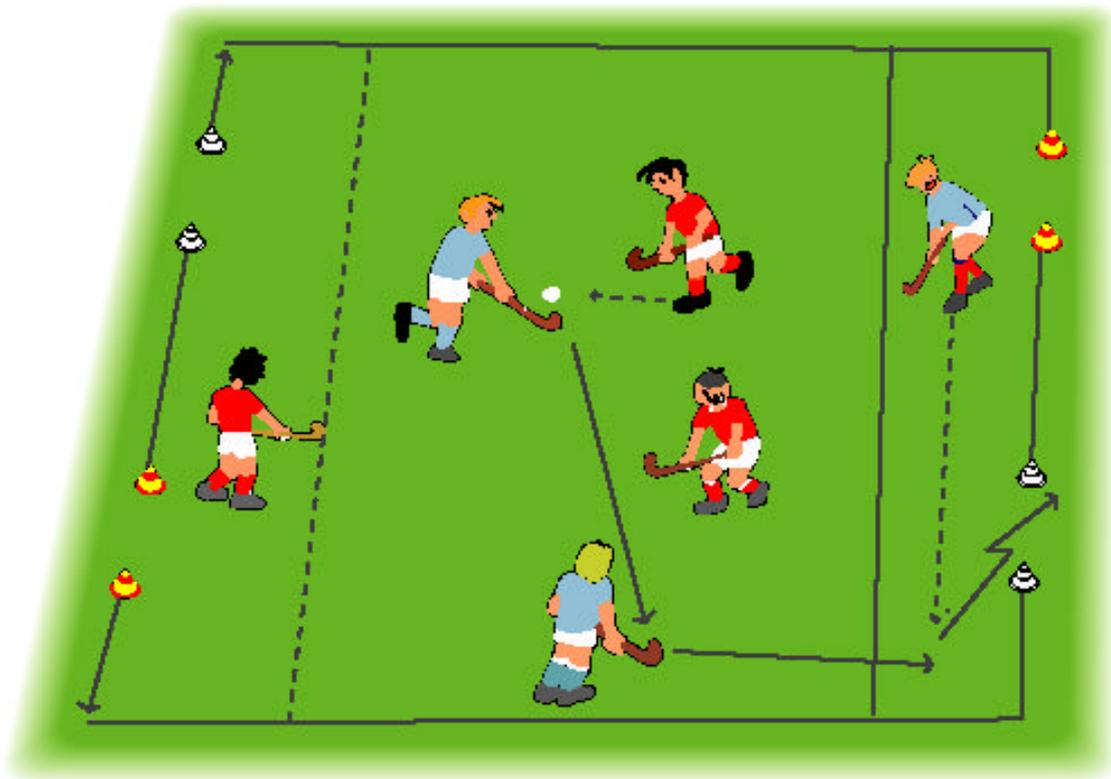
- Develop the habit of lifting the head while dribbling the ball.
- Learn to run into an uncontrolled space immediately after a successful pass.
- If there is a pressing defense, learn to use direct or wall passes.
- As defenders, learn to constantly lessen the space and the time available to the three attackers and to anticipate their play, especially in the depth of the field.

8th Simplified Game

2-ON-2 WITH PASSES TO A TEAMMATE

Use a Mini-Hockey field, starting the game with a ball toss into the center of the field. Form two teams of three players. The two midfield players of each team try to gain possession of the ball and then to pass it to their teammate standing inside the opposing shooting zone. He may not leave the assigned zone. At first, do not allow any of the other players to enter the shooting area. Once the players fully understood the game, the “midfielders” may enter to support their “outlet” player or, when on the opponent’s side, to tackle the “outlet” opponent while he is receiving or trying to score (with or without the teammates’ help). After one attacker manages to score two goals, he has to rotate position and function with a teammate. Restart the game by one midfielder using a free hit or dribble from the edge of the shooting zone to the other midfielder player—but never with a direct through pass to the outlet player in the opposite shooting area.

If there are eight players available, each team has three players in the midfield.



Variation:

- The winning team is the one that keeps possession of the ball longer. No goals are being scored.

“The distance doesn’t matter; it’s only the first step that is difficult”

LOGICAL PROGRESSION FOR TRAINING THIS GAME

Using the following progression of activities helps youngsters develop their capacity for executing passes in the depth of the playing field:

1. 2-on-2 with long through passes to one of the two attackers on the Mini-Hockey field.
2. 2-on-2 with long passes to one attacker (see game above).
3. 3-on-3 with long passes to one attacker.
4. Long passes to one attacker watched by a defender (see the 3rd. Simplified Game for teams formed by four players in chapter 9).
5. Free hit to a marked attacker (see the 8th. Simplified Game for teams formed by two players, chapter 4).
6. Variation of the 7th. Simplified Game: "Keep possession of the ball in the 3-on-3 situation" (in three separated areas).
7. Variation of the 7th. Simplified Game: "Direct, long passes out of the midfield 4-on-4."
8. Long, direct passes to one attacker closely marked in the shooting zone of the Mini-Hockey field.

Training Objectives:

- As a passer, learn to communicate and establish visual agreement with the receiver; pass the ball exactly when the receiver is ready.
- Be able to disguise the direction of your pass.
- As defender, don't allow the attacker sufficient time to think and prepare his play.
- Learn to anticipate or read the opponent's play.

Corrective Exercises:

Use the 5th., 9th., and 10th. Simplified Game for two-player teams (chapter 4) as well as Test 3 of the "Decathlon" to improve the reach of defenders and teach them to disguise the direction of the pass.

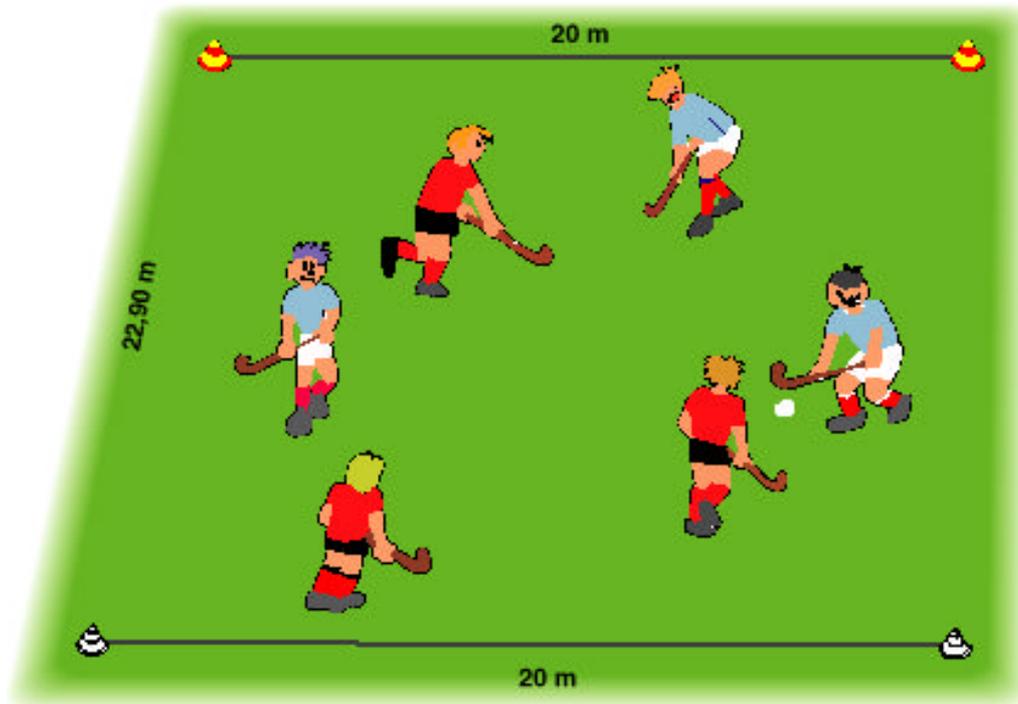
"The way in which the players communicate among themselves and in which they communicate with themselves, ultimately determines the quality of their team"

9th.Simplified Game

3-ON-3 WITH TWO WIDE GOALS

Players use one half of a 6 on 6 field, playing between one end line and the centerline or on the full field between the centerline and one 22.90 meter line. Set up goals on both lines (see illustration for the dimensions and placement). To score, an attacker must dribble the ball under control across the opponent's goal line, which is the width of the 6-on-6 field or 20 meters on the full field .

Duration of the game: four periods of 3 minutes each.



Variations:

- After controlling the ball across the opposing goal line, the attackers have to conclude their attack with an immediate shot on a goal defended by a neutral goalkeeper.
- The same game can be played with four goals (each 5 meters wide), two of them placed on each goal line separated by a distance of 10 meters. To score, the attackers have to either dribble or shoot the ball into one of the opposing goals.

“All behavior of a player is the consequence of his actional personal feelings”

*Training Objectives:***In attacking, players work toward these goals:**

- To know what to do when you are not in possession of the ball: that is, make yourself available for a pass in an area that is not controlled by the defending side. This way, the player in possession of the ball has the choice to either penetrate in the space that the attacker has created or pass.
- To attack in a triangular formation, ensuring width and depth.
- While dribbling the ball, to observe the behavior of both opponents and teammates so be able to make good decisions.
- To avoid revealing the next move.
- To take responsibility for each attacking move; any mistake may result in a goal for the opponents.

In defending, players work toward these goals:

- No player rests on the defense; on the contrary, they all participate fully in attack as well as in defense so that three defenders are always active.
- To ensure always width in the defense, covering the whole width of the goal.
- To make sure that cover is always provided for the player who is tackling a ball carrier (defending in a triangular formation).
- To channel the attack into the direction you want and then keep the ball in this area, crowding it also with your team's other defenders.
- To delay tackling as necessary, until being sure of receiving support from a teammate.
- After each conclusion of the opposing attack, remembering to complete the defense at the opposite side (concentrate on your task).
- To be able to take free kicks quickly and before the opponent defenders can build a "wall" in front of one end line.
- To initiate a counterattack quickly, with or without the help of the other teammates..
- To disguise the direction of any long.

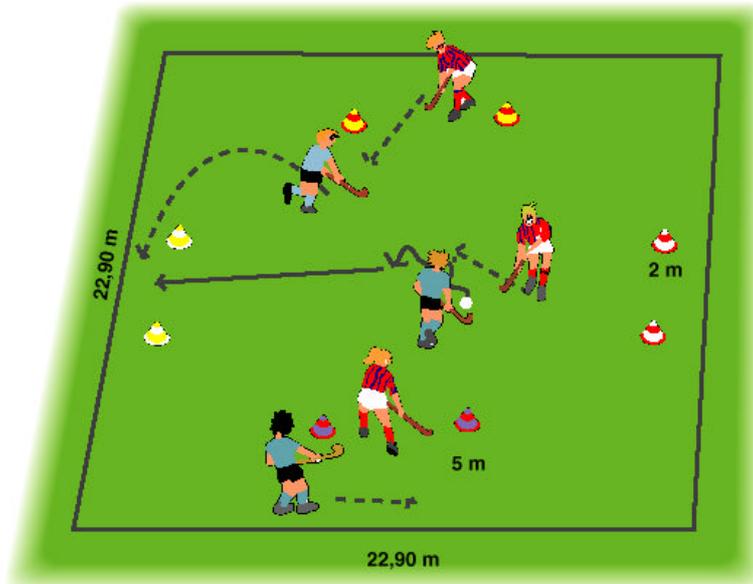
Corrective Exercises:

Choose from any of the earlier simplified games.

10th. Simplified Game

3-ON-3 WITH PASSES THROUGH ANY OF FOUR GOALS

Use half of the 6-on-6 hockey field, placing four goals (each 2 meters wide) 5 meters inside the field (see illustration). After a ball toss into the center of the field, the players of both teams try to pass the ball to another teammate—*through one of the four goals*. Any reception of the ball behind a goal but still inside of the playing area is considered good for a point. Scoring twice in a row in the same goal is not allowed. All free hits must be taken from a distance at least 5 meters away from the nearest goal. After every two goals scored, all players rest for 2 minutes; during the rest they discuss their positive and negative actions of play. (see next page)



Variations:

- A neutral player plays with whatever team is in possession of the ball.
- Instead of passing, dribble the ball through any of the four goals.
- Only passes through any of

the 4 goals executed with the reverse stick are considered valid.

- The game can also be played on a Mini-Hockey field with the objective to score in any of the four goals from any area in the center of the field.

Training Objectives:

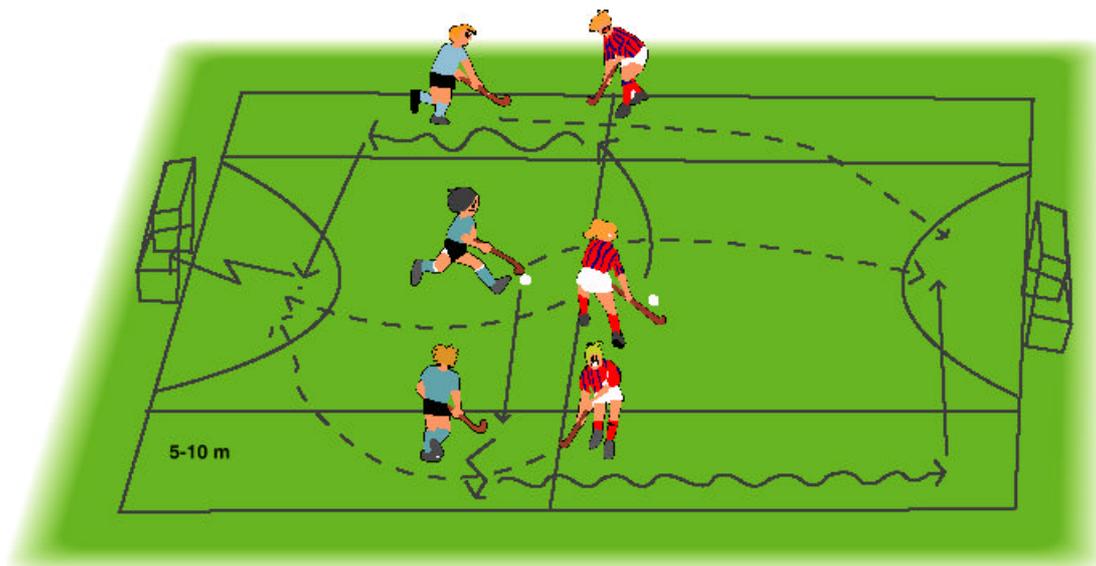
- Improve in the play without the ball; cooperate with teammates, adjusting to their behaviors.
- Be able to frequently change the speed and direction of your run (with the ball as well as without it) to gain some time and space for the next move.
- Run into the space behind the defenders and look out for the less-defended goal (it's imperative to move out of position after a successful pass).
- Reduce the dribble to a minimum, and move the ball quickly with hard passes into the front stick of one of your teammates.
- Play direct or wall passes as required.

Corrective Exercises:

See the corrective exercises given under the 3rd. Simplified Game for teams formed by 2 players (2-on-2 with 4 Intersecting Goals, chapter 4).

11th Simplified Game CENTERING THE BALL

Using cones, divide a 6-on-6 hockey field into three corridors, the two lateral ones between 5 and 10 meters wide. Each team attacks one goal; one of the team's players should be in the right-wing and another in the left-wing position, while the third player enters the central corridor. Both center forwards pass the ball to one of their wings, who must receive it within his zone. After having controlled the ball, the wing advances without any opposition until he arrives more or less level with the penalty area, where he centers the ball to the center forward, who followed in the central corridor. The opposite wing also should follow in his or her corridor. This wing, once level with the area, may run out of his corridor and position himself for executing a deflection or direct shot on goal from in front of the second goalpost. The center forward, however, occupies the zone in front of the first goal post. Both teams practice in the same attacking formation for at least three minutes. Then the places are switched until everybody has played in all three positions. As a next step, hold a competition, in which the team scoring more goals—with a direct shot—out of 10 attacks wins. The competition is over when all players have performed 10 times in the center forward position.



Variation:

- The coach permits the wing to center the ball when stationary. Later the center has to be taken with the ball on the run.
- A goalkeeper is included in the game, but may play only from (remaining on) the goal line.
- The goalkeeper plays with no special restrictions imposed.
- More experienced players practice this game with a defender who marks one of the other two attackers. The wing must therefore decide to which attacker he should center the ball: to the center forward or the wing of the opposite side.

Training Objectives:

- Learn to center the ball with speed and accuracy into the front stick of the teammate
- Gain experience in the direct shots on goal.
- Learn to assume an optimal position in front of the goal before executing the shot on goal.
- Learn to run toward the oncoming ball before executing the direct shot.
- Learn to deflect the oncoming ball with different heights in different angles.

Corrective Exercises:

See the first two variations, which are helpful remedial activities.

LEVEL-3 COMPETITIONS

The 4-on-4 Triathlon and hockey competitions further develop the innate potential of players 10 years and older.

4-on-4 Triathlon

Include the Triathlon periodically in the training program to enhance players' abilities to read and react to more complex situations and to an increased number of players. In the schedule here, "Europe" takes on "Asia" until a winner is decided. The following simplified games make up the 4-on-4 Triathlon.

"The great majority of the players die from the hockey point of view, before they were born completely"

4-on-4 Triathlon

COMPETITION BETWEEN TEAMS FORMED BY 4 PLAYERS

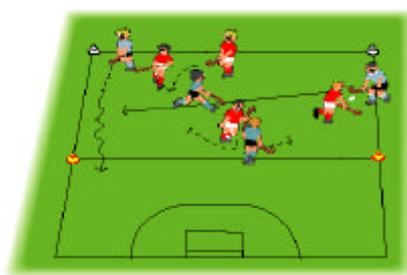
EUROPE AGAINST ASIA

teams	CHINA	KOREA	JAPAN
players' name			

teams	SPAIN	GERMANY	HOLLAND
players' name			

1ST GAME: ACROSS THE OPPOSING GOAL LINE (3X3 MIN).

Field	Match	Result
1	CHI-ESP	
2	KOR-GER	
3	JPN-HOL	



2ND GAME: LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD (3X3 MIN).

Field	Match	Result
1	CHI-GER	
2	KOR-HOL	
3	JPN-ESP	

3RD GAME: SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING (4X3 MIN).

Field	Match	Result
1	CHI-HOL	
2	KOR-ESP	
3	JPN-GER	



Duration of the TRIATHLON-TOURNAMENT: 45 minutes

FINAL RESULT:
(sum of victories)

EUROPE against **ASIA**

— : —

Technical Delegate: _____

ACROSS THE OPPOSING GOAL LINE(55m.)

- the game is played between the centre line and a 22.90 m line.
- the whole width of the field forms the wide goals.
- both teams try to control the ball across the opponent's end line.
- bully to start the game.
- free hits and hit-ins at least 4.50m. from the end line.
- duration of the game:3 times 3 min.

**LONG PASSES OUT OF THE MIDFIELD**

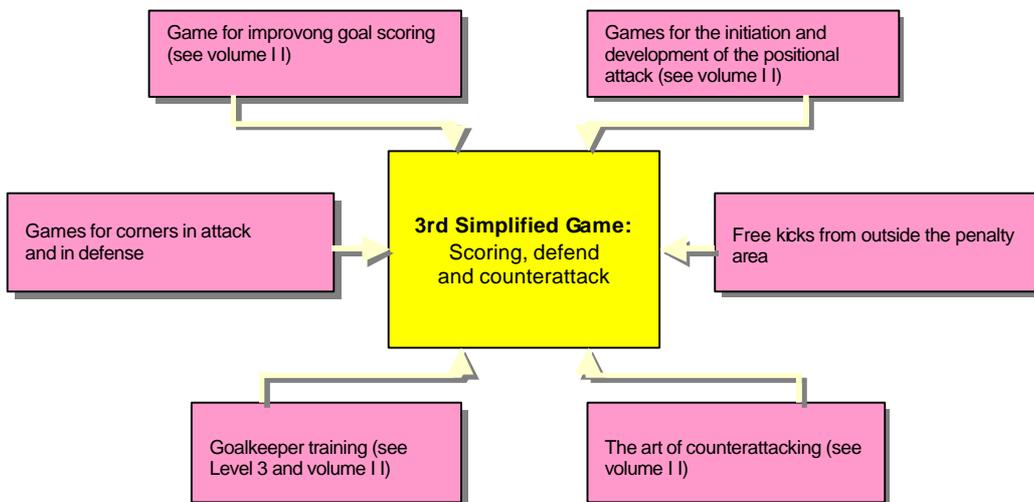
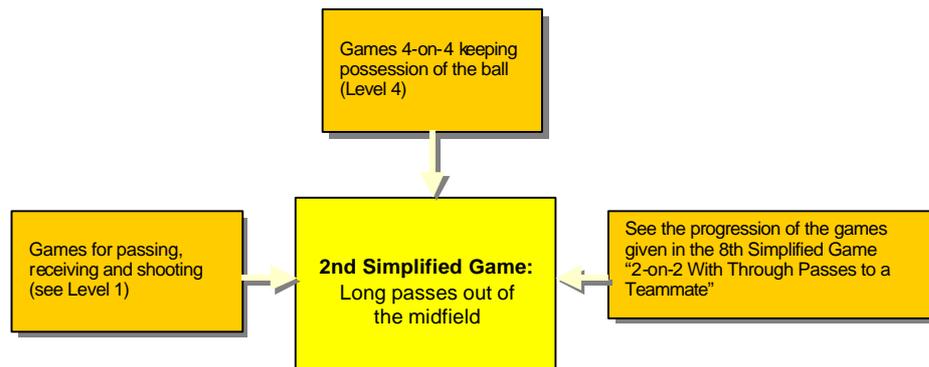
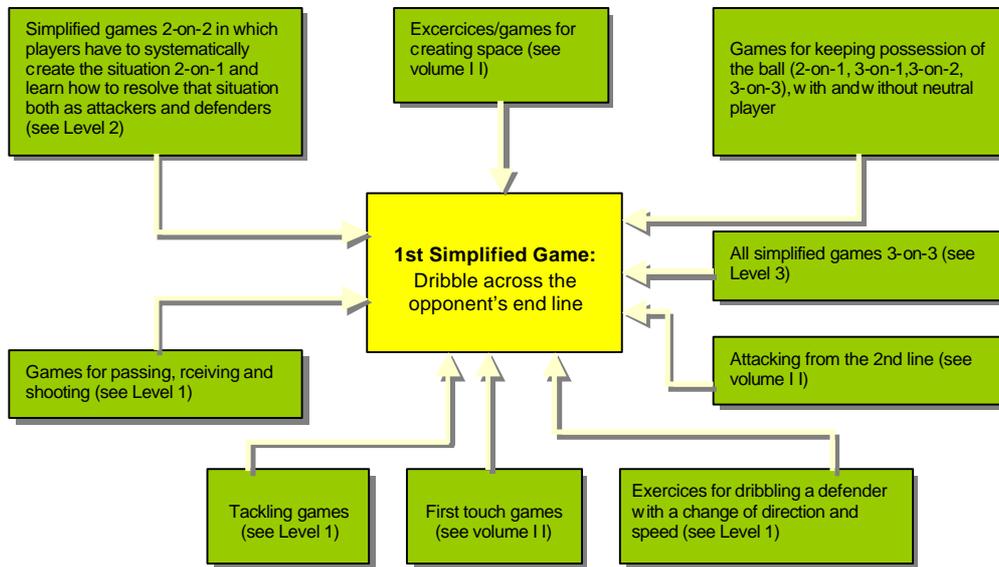
- the game is played between the centre line and a 22.90m.line.
- behind each end line at a distance of 8 m. two 3 m.wide goals are marked by cones.
- without leaving the confines of the area, each team tries to pass the ball through one of the two goals behind the opponent's end line.
- the distance between the 2 cone goals is at least 20 m.
- the game is started with a bully in the centre of the playing area.
- it is best to have reserve balls in order to assure an intensive game.
- duration of the game:3 times 3 min.

**SCORING, DEFENDING AND COUNTER-ATTACKING**

- bully in the centre of the field.
- one team attacks the goal.
- the other one defends it and counter-attacks the two cone goals placed 10 m. behind the 22.90 m. line.
- they have to score with a long pass through one of the two cone goals.
- for the other rules consult the 8-a-side hockey rules.
- duration of the game: 4 times 3 min. every 3 min. attackers and defenders switch positions and functions.
- it's recommended to have a neutral goalkeeper in the goal.



CORRECTIVE PROGRAMS FOR IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF PLAY IN THE 4-ON-4



6-ON-6 HOCKEY

THE RULES OF 6-ON-6 HOCKEY

(recommended for players between 10 and 11 years old)

RULE 1:

The present regulation only refers to the particular rules of the 6-on-6 game. If for any circumstances in the game the rule is not specified here, the official rules of the game of hockey should be applied.

RULE 2: THE PLAYING FIELD

The competition is played on one half of the normal hockey field from one side line to the other and with goals and shooting circles of normal size.

Playing 6-on-6 Hockey permits to have 2 fields on one regular size ground.



RULE 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS

The competition is played by two teams composed of 8 (minimum) or 9 (maximum) players..Only 6 of one team may play at the same time on the field,one of them defending the goal. The game has to be started with at least 5 players/team. After the initiation of the match,the missing players could be incorporated.

The 2 or 3 "reserve players" may substitute at any moment a player who is on the field. The official rules for substitution of a player have to put in practice.

When during a match one team, because of any circimstances (included the expulsions from the referee), should remain with less than 5 players,the referee conclude the match and declares the team with less than 5 players as 0:3 losers.

RULE 4: PENALTY CORNER

During a penalty corner 3 defenders and the goalkeeper defend their goal. They run out from the end linj ,whilst the other 2 players may tackle back,starting at the initiation of the penalty corner from behind the centre point of the field.

RULE 5: DURATION OF THE 6-ON-6 GAME

Two periods of 20 minutes each with an interval of 5 minutes.

Each team has the right to ask the umpire in each half for one "time-out" of 90 seconds.

In case more than one match is played on the same day,the playing time is reduced to 2 periods of 20 minutes.

RULE 6: UMPIRES

For reasons of a better promotion of young hockey umpires, it's recommended to utilize for the 6-on-6 game only one referee with less than 16 years of age or ,in case both teams agree,also two umpires of the same age. The umpires or the referee apply the above mentioned rules of the game.

"If there were no coaches,each player would go out and play as he understands hockey; then it would be impossible to make a team"

'Pep' Guardiola

COMMENTS:

The field's dimensions are adapted to the physiological characteristics of young hockey players. In fact, the measurements take into account all aspects of the game including these:

1. Physical Preparation

- Most of the playing workout is aerobic.
- Frequent, short runs are characteristic, either with or without changes of direction and rhythm, and sudden stops.
- More demands are made on the young players' coordination capacities as he is more involved in the game.

2. Technical Preparation

- The players have frequent contacts with the ball, which benefits their developing basic skills.
- Because players are exposed to less complex game situations, their self-confidence grows, which results in their taking more initiative and using their innate capacity for imagination and creativity.
- This version of hockey includes frequent occurrences of the basic and standard game situations, such as shooting a goal from any angle or the systematic use of the 2-on-1 situation in attack.

3. Tactical Preparation

- In defense, because of the shorter distances between the players, it is easier for them to cover defense.
- In offense, players frequently change the front of the attack, use more wall or first-time passes, and attack more from the second line.
- The shorter distances allow players to gain valuable experiences in such standard situations as corners, push-ins, free hits, and penalty corners and penalty strokes.
- Communication skills and cooperation are acquired under ideal conditions.

The smaller size of the 6-on-6 Hockey field facilitates cooperation and communication among players.



This chapter presents youth coaches with a rich and varied program for children 10 years and up; its application allows kids to play tailor-made competitions and 6-on-6 Hockey not only with pleasure and fun but also with success. With fewer players on a team, smaller playing areas, a variety of simplified games and competitions, all the boys and girls of this age group can feel capable of meeting the demands of a 6-on-6 game. Coaches observe through experience how the simplified games recommended for this age group reappear, one after another, in more complex situations in the 6-on-6 game. Playing 6-on-6 Hockey well is a result of having understood and more or less mastered all these games and the ones in the 4-on-4 Triathlon.

Developing Young Goalkeepers Level 3



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

William Osler

Because few coaches have played as goalkeepers, their knowledge of how to train them is somewhat limited. Relatively few coaches give sufficient attention to the teaching and learning processes for this most important player of the team—even though everybody knows that winning or losing a match depends in many cases on the goalkeeper's performance. Whereas other team members can compensate for the errors of a field player, a mistake made by the goalkeeper usually results in a goal.

Although modern hockey demands good all-around skills from all players, the goalkeeper must be treated as the only *specialist* on the team. In contrast to other team members, the goalkeeper covers a very limited territory and is the only player allowed to play the ball with any part of the body. Due to the goalkeeper's specific function and importance as a key player in any hockey team, special attention and great importance should be given to his or her development.

PROFILE OF A GOALKEEPER

The great influence of a goalkeeper's performance on the result of the game often puts the player in the center of decisive game situations and important discussions. After a fine performance everybody congratulates him, but if the performance wasn't satisfactory, the goalkeeper receives severe reprimands. That is why a goalkeeper must be a serene person! The player should be confident about his abilities and capacities, building constantly on this **self-confidence** through positive self-talk and frequent training.

A goalkeeper should express or radiate calmness and confidence during the game to other team members, thus positively influencing their performance level. On the other hand, the goalkeeper having a strong personality and self-confidence can negatively condition the opponents who, during the conclusion of their attacks, might focus too much of their attention on his play.

When the goalkeeper is insecure, shows nerves, or is slow in the decision-making process, this poor quality of play undoubtedly influences his own team negatively. The team's defenders, as well as its attackers, will likely risk less in offense and be afraid to attack with more than four players nearby.

Just these few comments explain why any average team with an excellent goalkeeper can win or at least tie the match against a much stronger team with a less skillful goalie. And to successfully fulfil his important tasks in the game, the goalkeeper must have certain psycho-physical capacities that differ from those of the field players.

"The ability to relax under pressure is often a vital factor in competition."

L. Moorhouse/L. Cross

Speed

The most important physical capacity for a goalkeeper is speed—speed in reaction, acceleration, power, and limb movements. A satisfactory level of all these qualities of speed allow the player, for instance, to stop balls shot at more than 130 kilometers per hour (about 80 miles per hour) or to close down an attacker who approaches the goal with the ball under control. But speed is not the only physical capacity to take into consideration. It should be combined with excellent coordination and flexibility, along with the other qualities described in this chapter.

Accurate Decisions

To be able to benefit from the different qualities of speed, it's imperative that the goalkeeper effectively uses whatever information is available prior to the opponent's shot on goal. In other words, anticipating the eventual outcome from early components of the opponent's move is an integral part of a goalkeeper's successful performance.

He must have an excellent knowledge and understanding of what is going on in the game as the basis for his perceptions. **What a goalkeeper can "read" or perceive determines how he should act.** The more experience and knowledge the goalkeeper has gained, the more he is able to focus his visual attention on the most relevant sources of information. Expert keepers have developed a better visual search strategy than young ones have, who usually watch only the ball and are less aware of the position and movements of the players off the ball. Therefore, as a coach you play an important part in the learning process as you try to direct the learner's attention to relevant sources of information.



“What is difficult will take time, the impossible can happen overnight”

Considering that more than half of the job of a keeper is mental conditioning and judgement (which both come from experience), it's understandable that **most of the errors among young players are caused less by their technical level of play than by weak or incorrect decision making.**

Technically well-prepared goalkeepers who are physically fit still must be trained to **become excellent decision makers** who know what is best to do in a particular game situation. Their errors in making decisions are caused either by poor attention, poor perception, a lack of determination, or a lack of knowledge (from poor-quality coaching sessions). It's fundamental that young players learn to use their brains to quickly process all relevant information, with the aim to select the best motor response possible to execute—thanks to having already developed a high level of physical fitness.

For goalkeepers, tactical training has to be considered as important as technical preparation. The older the goalkeeper, the more that tactical training should replace technical work (in which no decision making is required initially).

Goalkeepers from 14 years and up should be systematically exposed to a great variety of problems that are included in simplified games specifically designed to improve their performance. Through these games they learn to choose the most effective response among several possibilities.

Courage

Another important aspect of the goalkeeper's performance, besides staying mentality (a characteristic based on self-confidence) and being aggressive as necessary at a given moment, is having courage combined with determination. Being courageous is imperative, especially in 1-on-1 situations, during shots executed from short distances and during penalty corners.

The goalkeeper's capacity to control the arousal level will minimize errors. Studies have demonstrated that performance deteriorates under high levels of arousal; this is especially true of cognitive performance, which includes problem solving and decision making. Every goalkeeper is exposed to high levels of stress some 15 to 20 times during a game; the player is aware that any small mistake or bad judgement can dramatically change the outcome of the competition. In other words, **everybody expects him to be a perfect player**, and the goalie has to live with this expectation.

To overcome this challenge the goalie should be a master of "the inner game of hockey," which involves positive self-talk (for example, "Today's my day!" "I'm the greatest!" "Nobody can score against me"). Nevertheless, when the ball is far away, it's advisable for the goalkeeper to execute in front of his goal some fundamental technical or warm-up drills that keep him physically and mentally ready for the next decisive action.

"The performance of a player is only limited by the rules of the game and his own capacity"

QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL GOALKEEPER

Physical Capacities:

- Ability to diminish reaction time
- Ability to execute quickly movements
- Quick power

Coordination Capacities:

- Balance
- Ability to combine various movements
- Good sense of direction
- Good rhythm
- Sense of space and time

Emotional Capacities:

- Concentration
- Aggressiveness (but respectful of rules)
- Courage
- Able to maintain calm and confidence in stressful situations
- Rationality
- Leadership

Senso-Perceptive Capacities

- Able to recognize (observe and analyze), interpret, and anticipate situations close to the goal with the ball in the center of the attention
- Good visual memory

"Fear is sand in the engine of life"



TIPS FOR TRAINING GOALKEEPERS

To optimize performance, it's effective to have all goalkeepers play a different position frequently, i.e. one outside of the goal area, during the training sessions. This will help them develop in the psychological and physical areas they need to perform well. Furthermore they experience the sort of tension that attackers feel and the difficulties they face when trying to overcome the last player of the opponent's defense. The experiences gained when playing as defender or attacker allow goalkeepers to perform with greater success. Goalkeepers who in their first six years have played Mini-Hockey (with two goals to be defended simultaneously), 6-on-6, and 8-on-8 Hockey before moving to the 11-on-11 competition have a higher level of perception and greater knowledge than traditionally-trained goalkeepers.

Furthermore, thanks to the logical progression of the competitions in which they play an ever more active role, they become mentally quicker and know how to anticipate the opponent's play much better than those who have only been exposed to a traditional training program based mainly on acquiring technical skills.

"Examples teach best"

Ideally, a goalkeeper's specific training is directed and supervised by a specialist goalkeeper coach, usually a former, experienced goalkeeper. However, in most of these cases, the goalkeeper coach doesn't know how to link the coaching of the goalkeeper with that of the defenders—an important task now that goalkeepers are more than ever part of the whole defense.

When a specialist coach trains a pupil with a variety of exercises and games in which the young goalkeeper must solve the common problems which he faces in his competitions, the youngster acquires a broad knowledge and experience that allow him to select the most appropriate technique. The young player also learns to execute skills correctly with requisite speed, flexibility of the muscles, and mobility in the joints.

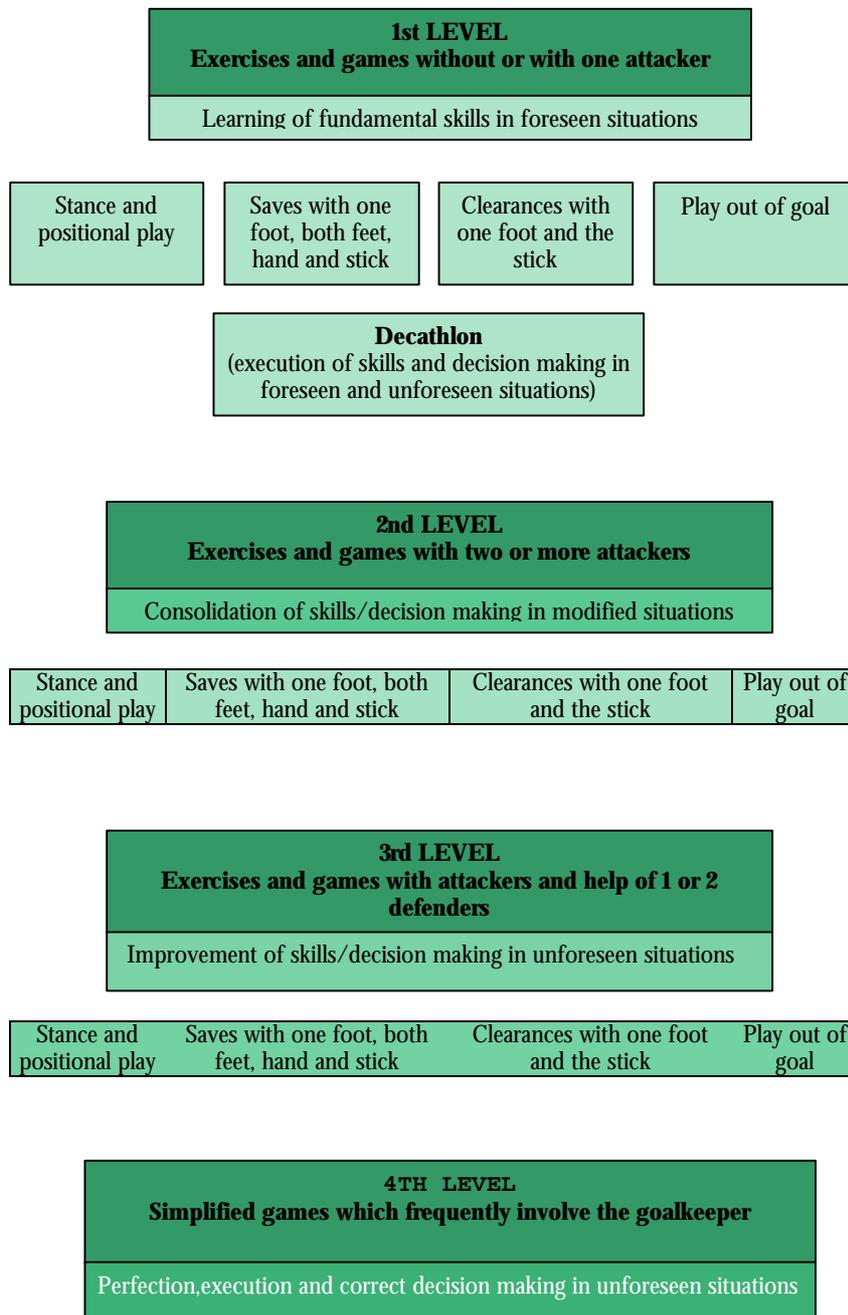
Furthermore such a young goalkeeper learns to command and lead teammates with an authoritative voice. The clarity and brevity of his or her directions ("It's mine!" "Leave it!" "Out!") are imperative for creating the desired effect. Last, but not least, the aspiring goalie learns to encourage teammates with positive comments.

Unfortunately it's not unusual to see many young players, still limited in their performance outside of the goal, suddenly decide to become goalkeepers. Coaches should encourage players to become goalies only when they display a certain natural talent for this particular position. Only those young players succeed who bring to the position a certain basic level of most of the capacities that make a good goalkeeper.

"The road to success has very few travellers because many get lost trying to find short cuts."

DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR GOALKEEPERS

The development model for goalkeepers consists of four levels. The following diagram illustrates each level and its divisions.



Basic Stance

The basic stance is the ready position that goalkeepers assume before their interventions. The following tips will help increase the young goalkeeper's success. Goalkeepers should learn these principles:

- Always initiate the movement from "tiptoe" (on the balls of the feet) position.
- Maintain balance, ensuring it through the feet positioned shoulder-width apart. Raise the arms and hands about the waist. Grip the stick with the right hand a little bit high (slightly above its center) to improve your range of action without losing strength , and let its flat side facing the ball. .



- Keep the weight of the body equally distributed between both legs to avoid finding yourself surprised to be on the "wrong foot."
- Keep the knees forward of the toes.
- Bend the knees slightly to be ready to spring (the upper leg and tibia should form an angle of 110 to 120 degrees).
- Maintain good balance, with the trunk inclined slightly forward.
- Draw the attention mainly to the ball but also stay aware of the positions of teammates and opponents.

- Relax when the ball is being played more than 40 meters away from the goal, assuming the basic position just immediately before a shot could be made.



Positional Play

One ability that is vital for goalkeepers to develop is to get positioned before a shot at goal is made in such a way that they can intercept the ball within a minimum range of movement. Finding the best possible position in relation to both the attacker with the ball and the goalposts helps goalies cut down the number of desperate saves and last-second moves. When good goalkeepers play, it seems as though the balls always come straight to them. Every one of their saves looks easy. Goalkeepers who frequently execute acrobatic dives are not the best ones because their positional play is often at fault. On the contrary, **experienced keepers, conditioned by their fine positional play, hardly need to dive or leap.**

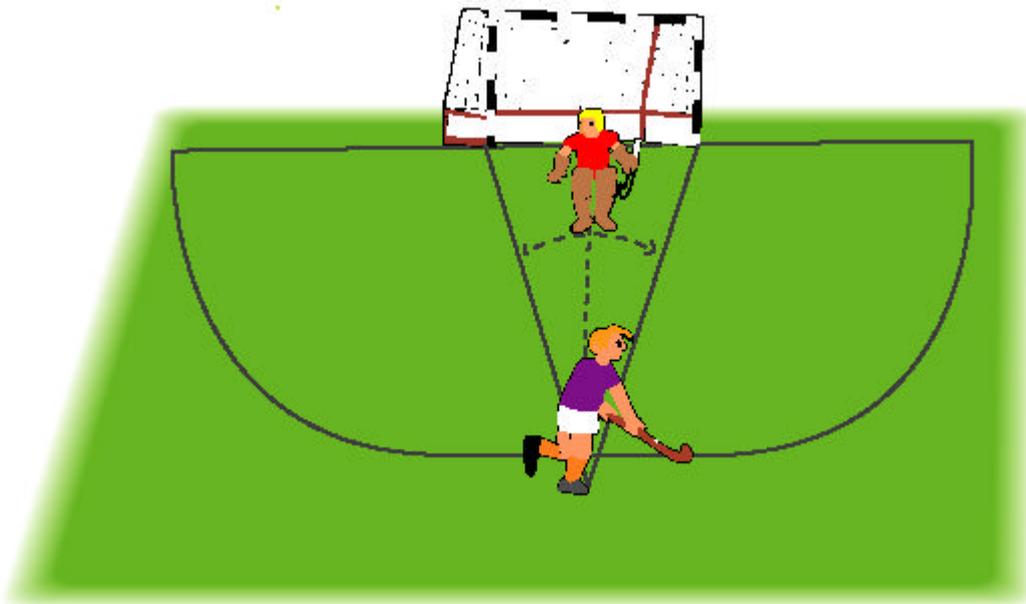
Many goalkeepers feel most comfortable standing on or very close to the goal line. However, there are increasing situations in today's games that oblige them to master the game off the line as well and sometimes to act as sweeper.

In general, a goalkeeper initiates an intervention from the line that divides the angle formed by the triangle of the ball and the two goalposts. When moving forward on this imaginary line toward the attacker in possession of the ball, the goalkeeper finally reaches that point at which he can cover the whole shooting angle without having to execute a save using a maximal range of movement or extension of the arms or legs. **The closer he comes to the opponent who prepares the shot at goal, the less time and less angle are available for scoring. But the more the goalie moves away from the line bisecting that angle, the less his intervention is likely to succeed.**

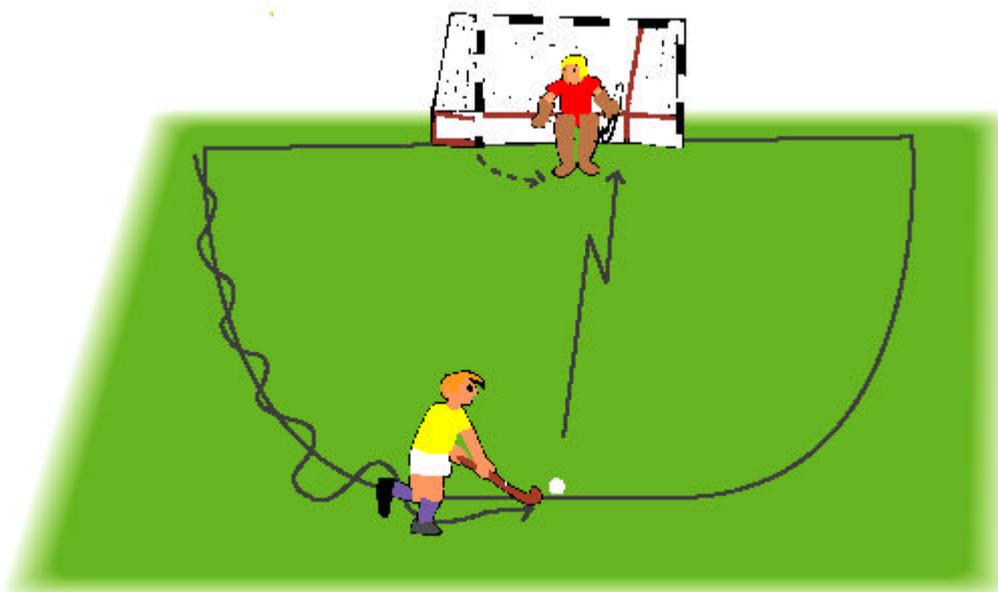
Exercises for Stance and Positional Play

1. This exercise helps inexperienced goalkeepers mentally visualize the triad between the three points formed by goalposts and the attacker with the ball. The attacker positions himself anywhere on the circle line. Two cords (long pieces of rope) should be tied to the goalposts, one at the right goalpost and the other at the left, and tied to his stick. Depending on how the player moves along the circle line, the goalkeeper modifies his position. He tries to always remain on the (imaginary) line bisecting the shooting

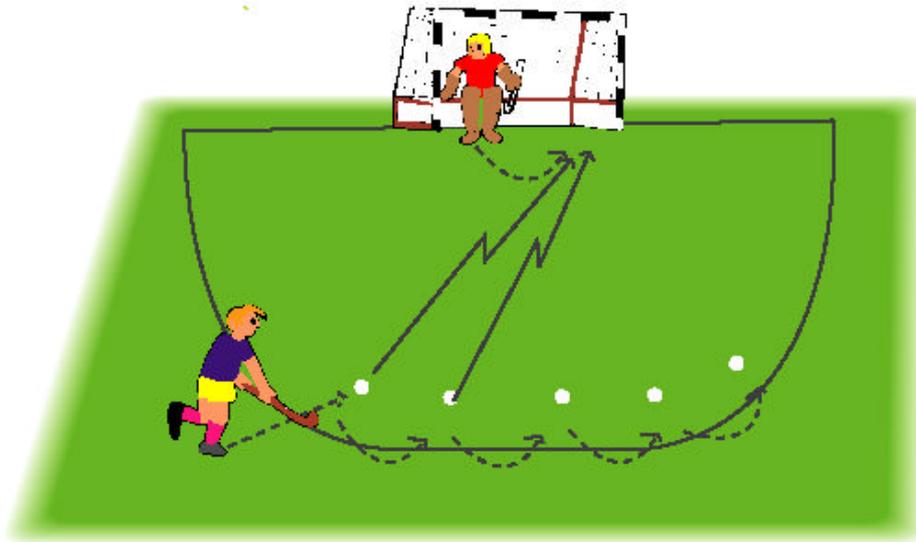
angle, and must come far enough forward to be able to reach with his right foot, without difficulty, to the right rope or with his left foot to the left rope. At the same time, his hands should reach out to control the space to both his sides. If he cannot reach both ropes with his feet, he knows that he is badly positioned, which would allow the attacker enough of a gap to score.



2. One player dribbles the ball along the circle line, frequently changing his direction and then suddenly decides to execute a shot on goal. The goalkeeper, meanwhile, assumes a ready position about 3 meters outside the goal and always positioned on the line that bisects the shooting angle, also moving according to the direction and speed of the attacker. The goalkeeper's coach should position himself behind the goal to carefully observe and analyze the positional play of the goalie and correct this playing position whenever necessary.

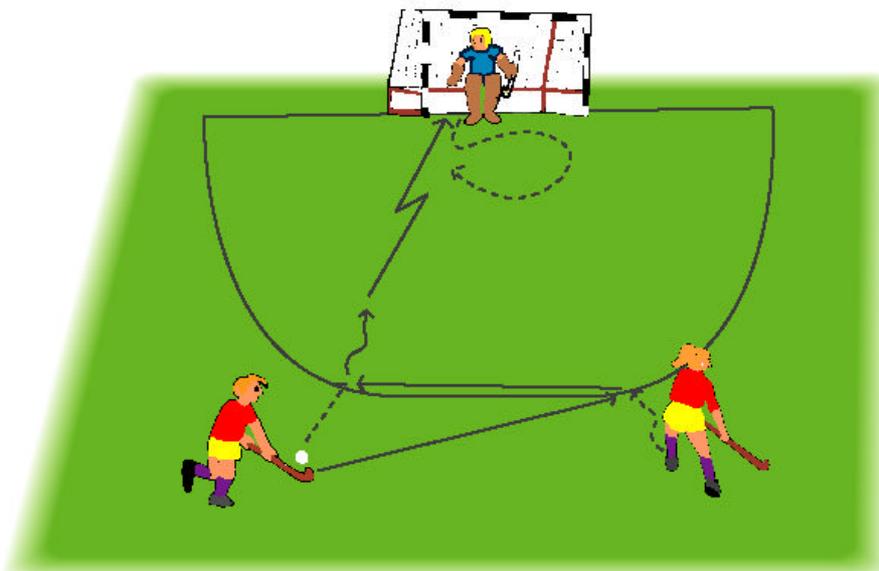


3. Set out five balls no further than 2 meters inside the shooting circle (see illustration). One player strikes them all, one after another, into the goal. To allow the goalie sufficient time to choose an advantageous position for play and assume a correct basic position, the attacker, after every shot at goal, has to run out of the circle before being allowed to take on the next ball.

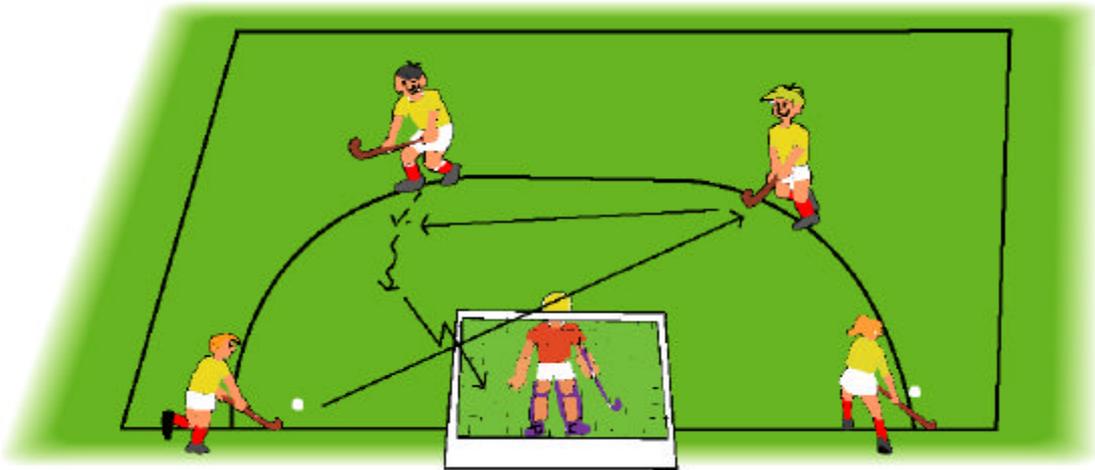


Variation:

- Assign the same exercise with a second attacker positioned close (about 5 to 6 meters) to the goalkeeper. His primary function is to pick-up the rebounds from the goalie's pads, stick, hand or from the posts, but from his position in front of the goal he may also deflect the shot at goal directly into the net.
4. Two attackers at the edge of the shooting circle pass the ball to each other across distances of between 8 and 12 meters. Meanwhile, the goalkeeper has to adapt his position in the goal to the changing position of the ball. One of the two attackers should try "all of a sudden" to surprise him with a shot before the "goalie" can assume an optimal position to save the ball.

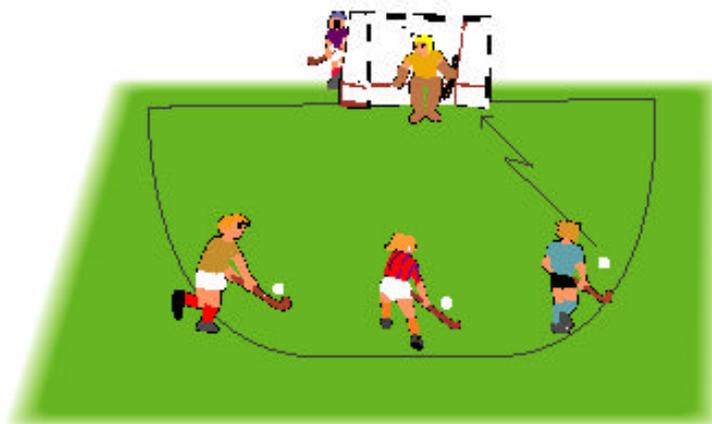


5. Four players practice with the goalkeeper. One attacker on either side of the goal passes the ball from the end line to one of his teammates on the circle line. The player who receives the ball may score with a first-time shot or he may instead pass it back to the end line or to one side where his teammate, always at least 8 meters from the passer, could receive the ball. The idea is for any attacker to surprise the goalkeeper with a shot. The aim of the goalkeeper in all phases of this exercise, however, is to demonstrate correct positional play, allowing him to narrow the angle for any shot at goal.

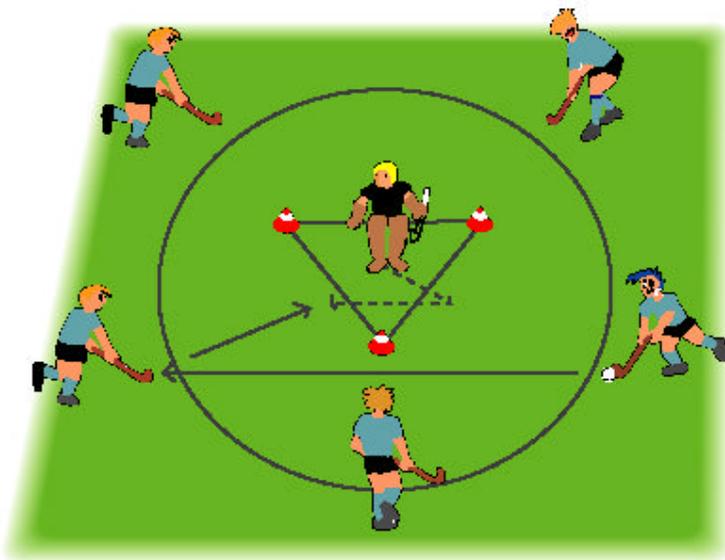


6. As coach, you should stay behind the goal to observe the play. Give a visual signal to one of the 3 players, situated in different attacking positions inside the shooting circle. Then this one tries to score quickly with a shot. Give the goalkeeper feedback on any problems in positional play that you observe from your position behind the goal. The goalie's aim is to always position himself, at the instant any shot is made at goal, on the line bisecting the shooting angle.

This task becomes easier when all attackers face the centerline. So after the coach calls a player's name, that attacker turns around and shoots so quickly at goal that the goalkeeper has hardly any time to position himself correctly in the goal area or to assume an optimal, basic ready position. As a goalie improves, you can reduce the goalkeeper's time further by calling out the attackers' names at shorter intervals.

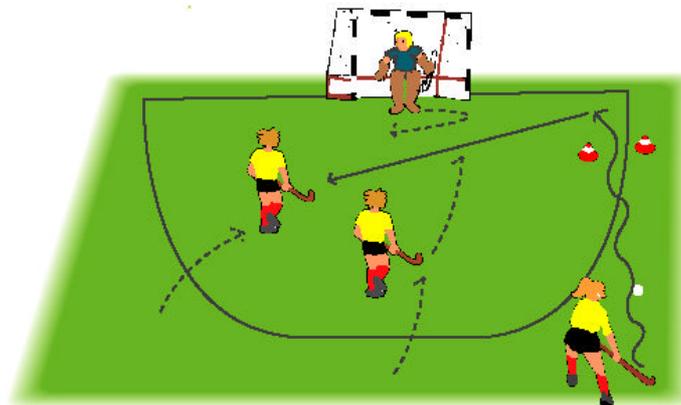


7. Five players are situated around the circle with a diameter of 16-20 meters drawn with chalk on the hockey field. Their aim is to manage to pass the ball from outside the circle through any of the three 3.60 meter gates established in the center of the circle in the form of a triangle (see illustration). A goalkeeper defends all three goals at the same time, moving from one goal cone to the other according to the position of the ball. Work with the goalie to always take small steps, while continuing to attentively watch the ball's trajectory; this technique



allows the player to transfer his body weight easily from one leg to the other. The result should be an optimal positional play, preventing the six attackers from scoring goals. Clearly, the goalkeeper would not be able to adapt quickly enough to the demands of this game by using long steps or moves.

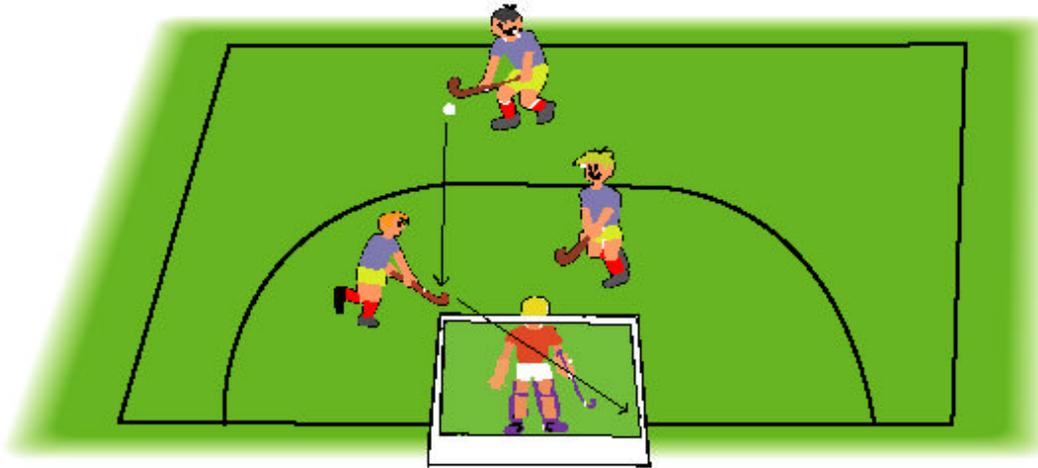
8. A right wing (or left wing) penetrates deeply into the opponent's half. After having dribbled the ball through a pair of cones (the "goal"), placed inside the shooting circle about 7 meters from the right (left) goal post and about 3 meters away from the end line, the wing may strike or pass the ball either to the center forward or to the left wing (right wing) who positions himself in front of the second post. Whoever receives the pass tries to score with a first-time shot or deflection with the stick placed horizontally on the ground. In this exercise the goalkeeper must continually demonstrate an optimal level of positional play without coming fully out of the goal. When the goalie covers the angle of the right (left) wing's shot close to the nearby goalpost, his right (left) foot is already placed in such way that he can quickly cover the goal in case of a center. The wing never lets the goalkeeper know whether he will try to score, execute a dummy goal-shot, or center the ball. Only when the goalkeeper learns to quickly switch positions can he face both forward players and prevent a goal from being scored.



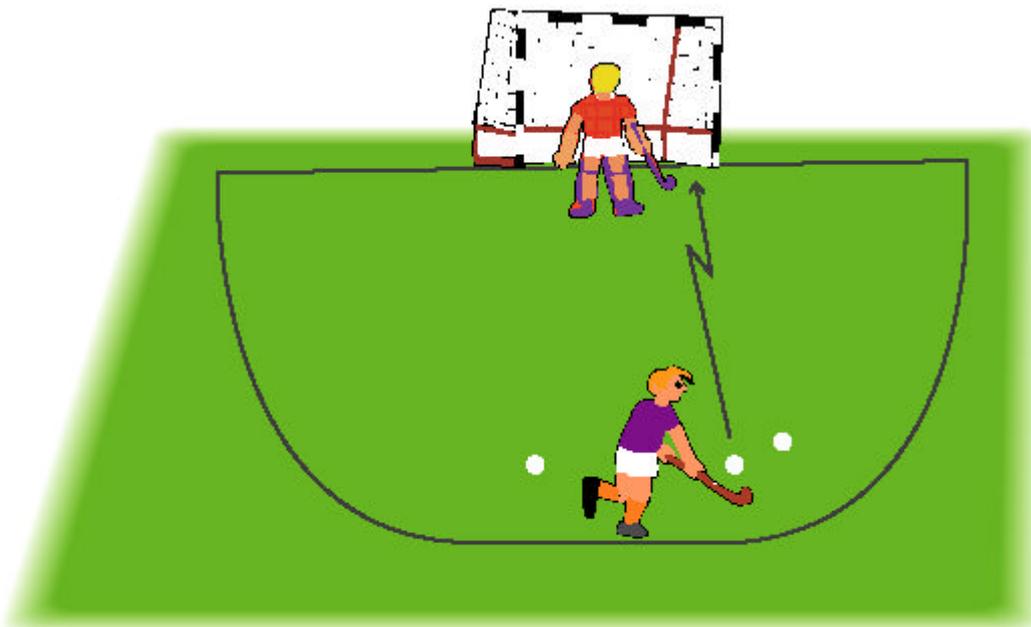
Exercises to Improve Reaction Speed

To improve the goalkeeper's speed of reaction, it's recommended to use also Mini-Hockey balls (100gr.) or tennis balls, with these exercises.

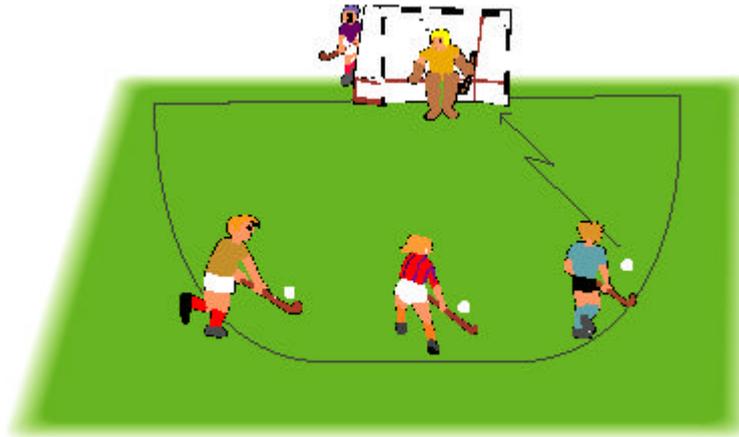
1. Two attackers stand level and at both sides of the penalty point. Their objective is to deflect the shots that a third player executes from the edge of the circle into the goal. To surprise the goalkeeper, the third attacker may also shoot directly—without having the teammates divert the ball.



2. The coach or a player shoots the ball at different speeds and heights into the goal, defended by a goalkeeper turned so that his back is facing the attacker (see illustration). Only when the attacker calls the goalie may the player then turn around to fix the ball, save it, or clear it out of the shooting circle.



3. From a position behind the goal, you, as coach, visually signal one of three attackers, all in possession of a ball, separated by a distance of at least 6 meters and all situated inside the shooting circle at different distances from the goal. While the player you have signaled executes the shot (preferably with the curve always on the ground to save time), the goalie assumes an optimal, correct ready position to prevent the ball from going into the goal. Give the goalie feedback as necessary.



4. Stand behind the goal, ready to visually signal two attackers. The two players, each with a ball and situated on the 22.90 meter line, dribble with the same speed toward the shooting circle. They should stay separated by at least 8 meters. When they come close to the circle line he lets them know through a visible signal (which should be invisible to the goalie) to carry out the shot at goal from the circle line. One attacker shoots, while the other one who simulated a shot without touching his ball, goes for the rebound.
5. Position the goalie on the ground just beside a post outside the goal. One attacker dribbles the ball from 6 meters outside the circle, aiming to score from inside the area. When the player starts the individual attack, the goalkeeper gets up from the ground to position himself well in the goal and assume a basic ready position; he tries to carry out the save. The attacker (who also can be another goalkeeper) has four attempts to score without ever entering more than 2 meters into the shooting circle. The goalkeeper should start twice from each goalpost.

“To play well you have to focus on your “I” interior and not so much on your “I” exterior”

SAVES WITH ONE LEG, BOTH LEGS, HANDS OR STICK

Although the goalkeeper touches the ball less often in the game than his teammates, his preparation program should not last less time or should be less intensive than that of the other players of his team.

An important part of his multilateral preparation is dedicated to the technical training in which different techniques of saving the ball are acquired.

Stopping the Ball With one Leg:

One important aspect to consider in the training of a young hockey goalkeeper is the acquisition of the basic techniques for stopping the ball, with particular attention directed to the technique of the stop with one leg.

A correct stop with one leg has to be initiated always with a movement of the head towards the oncoming ball. Simultaneously the weight of the body is shifted through an active extension of the other supporting leg towards the ball with the playing leg put behind the ball before it passes the goalkeeper.

At the moment of the stop,

- the leg which intercepts the ball shouldn't be level with the supporting leg. A parallel position of both feet would result in a poor balance which may cause the goalkeeper too fall backwards. Falling backwards means that he wouldn't be able to make another immediate second save to stop a possible rebound coming off his pads.
- the leg which plays the ball should be moved towards the oncoming ball (instead of waiting for the ball to come towards the goalie).



- the leg which plays the ball should be placed slightly more forward than the other supporting leg with his toes pointing towards the nearest flag of the 22.90m.-line. Putting the “playing foot” this way will cause that the ball to rebound towards the area in front of the goalie’s feet and not towards one side. A lot of attention has to be given during the stop to prevent the opponent from picking up the saved ball. A save is considered perfect when the goalkeeper is able to initiate immediately an attack with a horizontal pass to one of his teammates.
- the toes of the saving leg shouldn’t point towards one goalpost, because this will result in the main surface of the pad not being directed towards the on-coming ball but towards the post. Injuries may occur through balls which hit the unprotected calf of the leg .
- the leg which saves the ball as well as the knee of the same leg and the head of the goalkeeper must form a vertical line. Using this technique may give the spectator the impression that the goalkeeper intends to kiss his knee or to eat the on-coming ball. With the weight of the body above the “playing leg”, the goalkeeper can’t fall backward.
- his stick should be positioned in a vertical position just besides the right pad in case the save is made with the right leg. This will increase the playing surface for stopping balls directed towards his right side and will allow him to reach further out until the right goal-post, especially when high shots have to be intercepted. Shots directed to the left corner of the goal, the left hand of the goalkeeper is in a low position just besides the left pad to interfere when ever necessary.

Once the goalkeeper has stopped the ball, he has to put the supporting leg quickly together with the playing leg in order to assume as quickly as possible the basic ready-position which permits him to stop in optimal conditions a possible rebound.

THE SAVE-CLEAR TECHNIQUE

Special attention should be directed to the technique of saving and clearing at the same time the on-coming ball with one leg. The save-clear is applied when the goalkeeper has to react to shots with opponents close to him. Due to the extremely short time available for saving and clearing the ball out of the reach of the attackers, he has to use a different technique to solve the problem.

The mastery of the technique of the stop with one leg is imperative for having success with a save-clear. Most important is that the goalkeeper steps towards the on-coming ball without losing balance. To achieve it, he has to **move the head together with the leg towards the ball**. The speed developed by the “playing leg” and that of the on-coming ball determine the travelling distance of the clearance.

“A poor player is the one who has not managed in time to convert his faults into experience”



More important than the distance of the clearance is its direction. Although the goalkeeper's attention focuses mainly on the ball, before the save-clear is executed, he also has to perceive the positions and the movements of his own players for starting a new attack or those of the opponents close to him in order to be able to direct the ball towards zones not occupied by them (generally at the wings).

SERIES OF EXERCISES FOR TRAINING THE SAVE-CLEAR:

1. Who is the Quickest Goalkeeper?

Two goalkeepers, one behind the other, are practicing in their respective 3.60meter wide cone goal.. Both of them assume an optimal ready-position, looking at the coach in front of them. Once the coach steps forward in the direction to one cone, both GK react in the same direction.

The goalkeeper who first manages to touch with his toes the indicated cone, wins a point. The winner is the goalkeeper who collects first 5 points. To reach and touch the cone only one step is permitted.

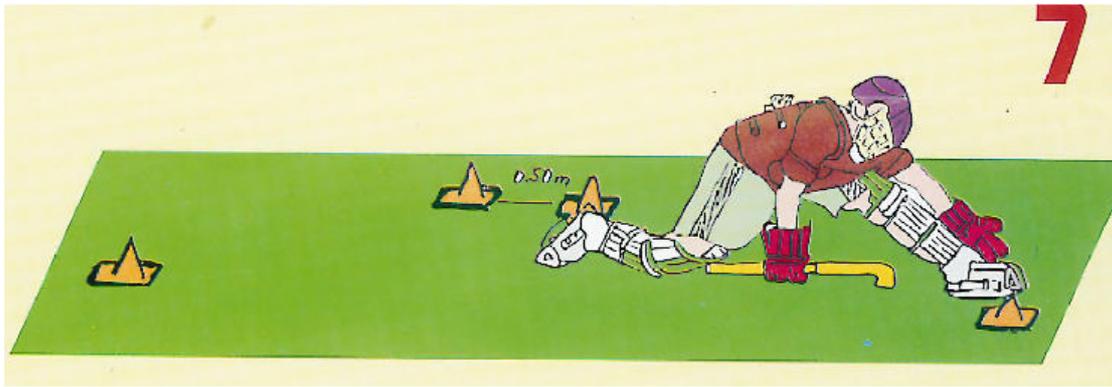


The coach evaluates the technique, especially the initiation of the save with a movement of the head towards the on-coming ball and the support given by the opposite leg which should be extended completely.

Furthermore, the coach should correct mistakes in the basic ready-position and in the speed of reaction and movements of the GK.

2. Extension to the Left and Right

The goalkeeper assumes a basic ready-position in a small cone goal 0.50meter wide. He simulates a save, moving with his left foot and left hand out of the small goal to touch a left cone placed slightly forward on his left, whilst his right leg remains on the same spot. After the return of his left foot into the cone goal, he reaches out to the opposite side with the right foot and his stick. Both have to touch the right cone in front of him on his right. In the meantime the trailing leg remains in the cone goal. The coach in front of him makes sure technique is carried out with perfection.



3. Save-Clear of Flat Shots

One attacker hits the ball from a distance of 12 meters into one corner of the goal. The goalkeeper positioned in the center of the goal should save the ball with his pads, starting from an optimal ready-position and then clear it out of the circle.

Various balls should be directed into the same corner in order to work on the perfection of the technique of the save-clear with one explosive step towards the ball.

Care should be taken that after the save-clear with one leg, the goalkeeper doesn't lose balance and fall backward on the ground which would prevent him from saving a possible rebound.

STOPPING THE BALL WITH BOTH LEGS TOGETHER

Ideally the goalkeeper should always try to bring his whole body behind the ball. This isn't difficult where shots are not directed into the corners of the goal with the keeper has time to make use of the maximum surface of his pads, saving the ball with both legs together.



When stopping the ball, both legs, bent at the knees, are slightly inclined forward to better absorb the power of the shot and to control the rebound. Following the distance of the opponents in the moment of the shot, he inclines his pads more or less, looking forward in most of the cases to let the ball rebound about 0.50 meters which would allow him to clear the already-moving ball with more ease.

In the majority of the exercises proposed in this chapter, the capacity to cushion the oncoming ball with both legs (and also with one only) by means of the grade of inclination of the pads and then clear it out of the reach of the opponent can be developed. Also the test no.8 of the Goalkeeper Decathlon demands this capacity.

STOPPING THE BALL WITH ONE HAND OR STICK

Also the save with one hand or the stick are movements in which the whole body takes part. **Before the goalkeeper catapults his hand or moves his stick into the trajectory of the ball to intercept it, his head must have had initiated the stop.** In continuation the slightly bent leg which is on the side opposed to the oncoming ball, pushes the body out of the basic stance into a more extended position, bringing it as much as possible behind or at least close to the ball. For the practice of these particular techniques, the exercises for improving the speed of reaction are recommended.

SOME MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRAINING OF THE DIFFERENT SAVING TECHNIQUES

Unfortunately, many goalkeepers are trained without the presence of teammates who might affect their play or even players who might be potential goal scorers. It's important to know that the performance of the goalkeeper and attackers improves little when stationary balls or balls in movement are simply shot at goal. To learn how to anticipate the best possible interventions, the goalie needs to be exposed to real game situations during training. **It is the practice of game situations, in the presence of defenders and attackers and with the speed of competition, that best improves any goalkeeper's performance.** The goalkeeper learns to read the game, decide what technique to use, and when to interfere.

Consequently, exercises and games whose objective is to improve the techniques of saves should not give the goalie in advance knowledge of when, from where, or how the shot will be taken. By simulating real game situations, the goalkeeper is forced at the instant of the opponent's attack to find the best possible solution. After making the decision, he or she then acts accordingly, without any loss of time.

During practice, the coach must carefully observe how well the young goalie executes different goalkeeping techniques and tactical plays, evaluating performance and also noting whether the goalie and the last defender demonstrate optimal communication and cooperation. To assure effective learning, the mistakes should be corrected *immediately* after their occurrences. During the process of the youngsters' learning from mistakes, the coach should remember also to praise the players!

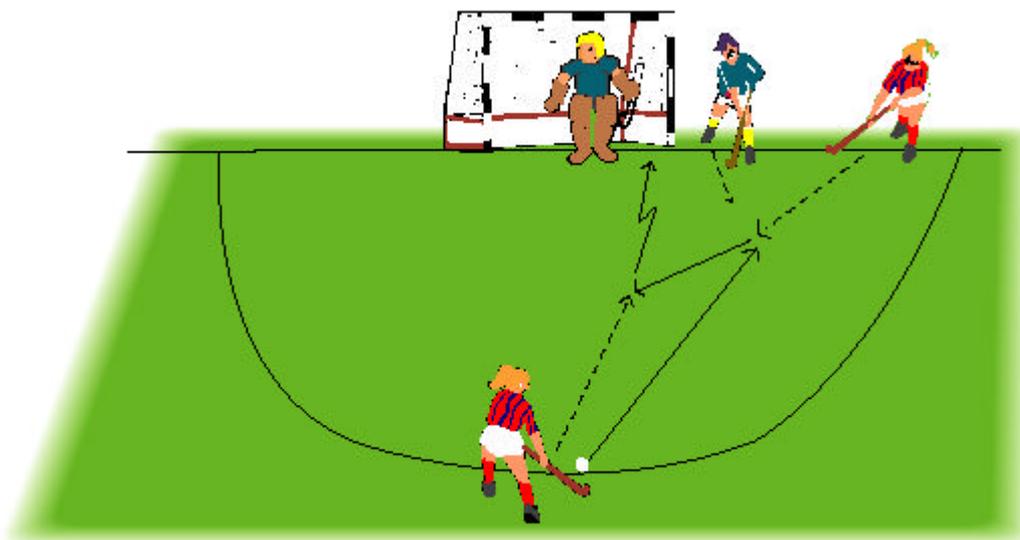
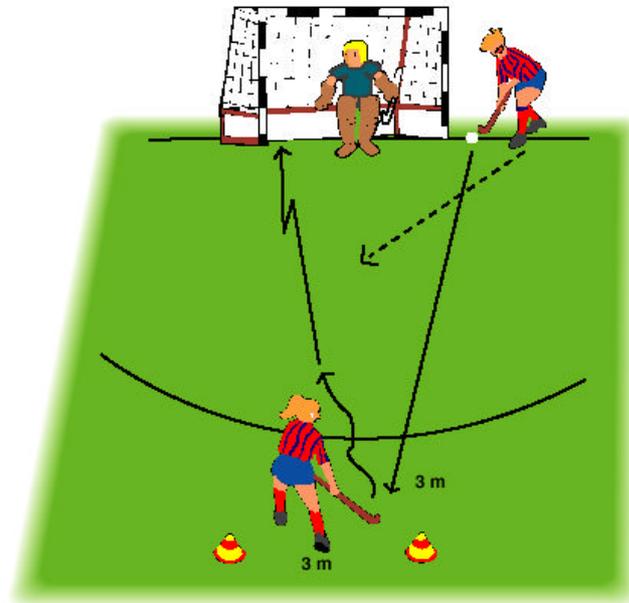
EXERCISES/GAMES TO IMPROVE DIFFERENT SAVING TECHNIQUES
(see also the exercises to quicken up the reaction time)

1. Shot With Opponent (1 on 1).

See "Passing, Receiving, and Shooting Games" in chapter 3.

Variations:

- Use two defenders instead of one. The first closes down the attacker with the ball, and the second covers.
- Use a goalie and defender and two attackers. Play the game as 2 on 1, starting with a pass of one attacker from the circle line to the teammate, who is situated on the end line. After the initial pass, the defender and the goalkeeper (both starting from the end line) try to prevent the attacker from scoring.

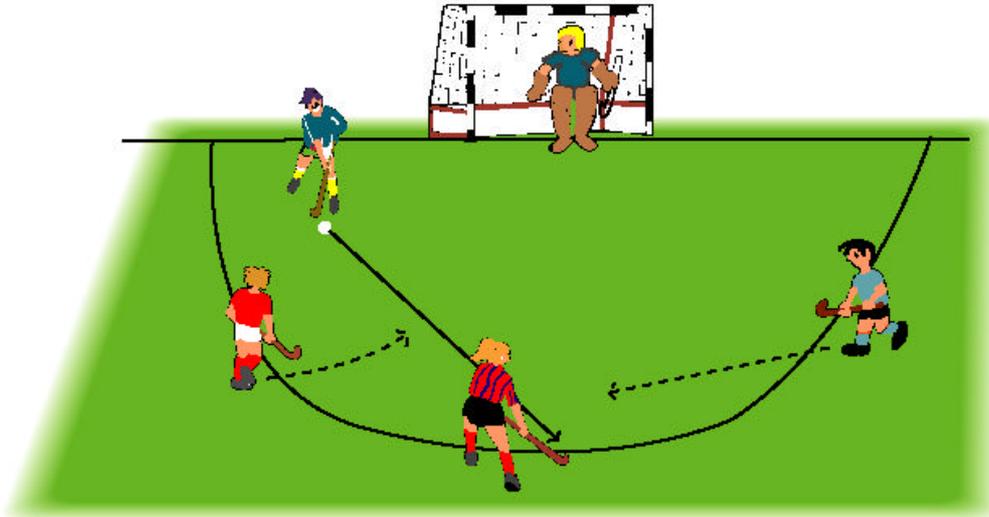


"Success is a ladder which you can't climb up with your hands in your pockets"

American Proverb

2. Quick Shot (1 on 2)

As coach, stand inside the shooting circle to start. The coach quickly passes the ball from inside the circle to one of three players who are expecting it in different positions at the edge of the circle. All three players should be at least 5 meters away from each other. The one who receives the ball played by the coach tries to score a goal while the remaining two do everything they can to prevent his scoring.

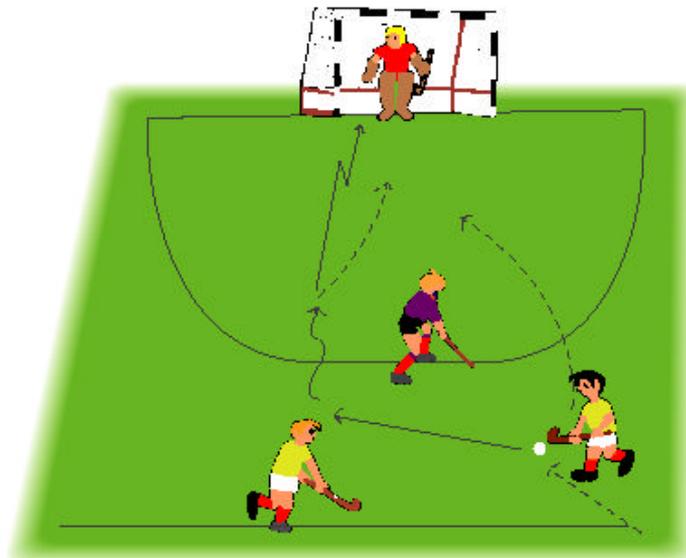


3. Goalkeeper Plus 2 on 1

Two attackers, situated on the 22.90 meter-line, try to overcome a defender and score in less than 8 seconds. The attack finishes with

- the ball being out of the field,
- an infringement by the attackers or the defenders (penalty stroke), or
- after 8 seconds.

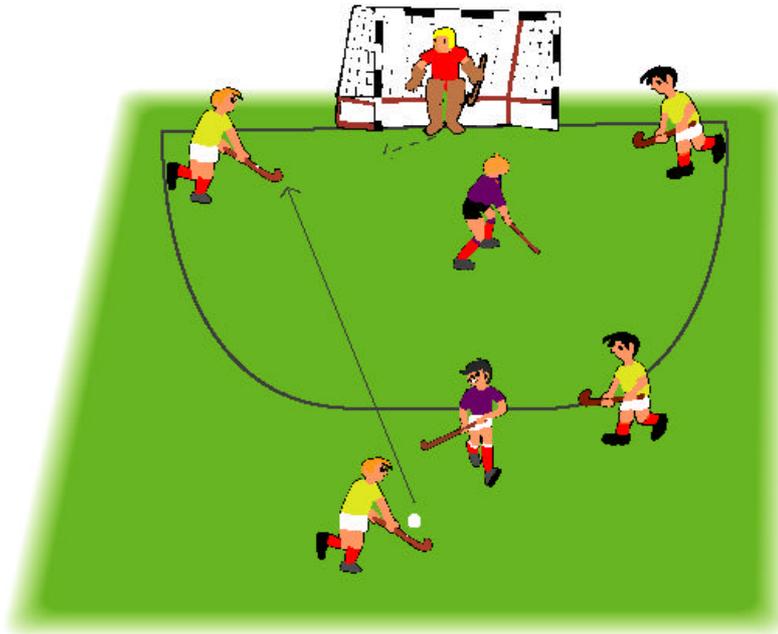
The goalkeeper learns when to leave the goal line and when to remain in goal. As players improve, shorten the allotted time to 5 seconds.



Variation:

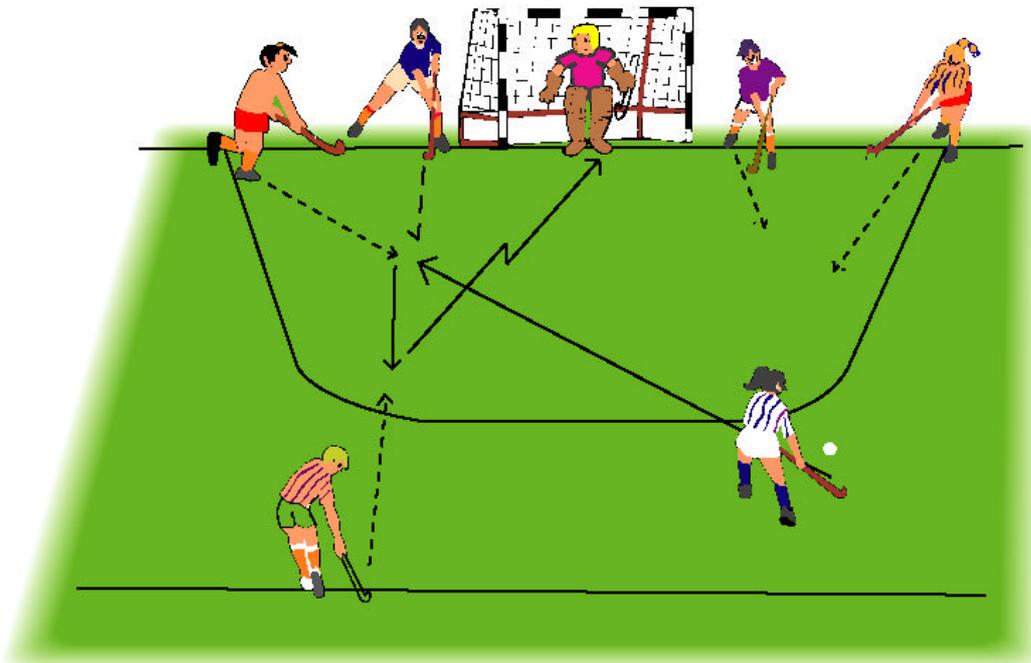
- Three players start their attack from the 22.90 meter-line, with the two defenders expecting them at the edge of the circle. The goalkeeper, besides showing a correct stance and good positional play at the instant of the shot, must decide whether to stay in goal or to run out of it. Subsequently, he has to select and execute the most effective defensive action to avoid a goal being scored with the first or second shot (rebound).

4. Goalkeeper Plus 4-on-2



This game involves four forwards against two defenders, as well as the goalie. The attack is initiated with a free hit on the centerline. The 4 forwards must score within 10 seconds (later on you can reduce it to 8 seconds), trying to avoid playing all in line.. Due to the numerical superiority of the attackers in relation to the defenders, the goalkeeper interferes frequently and, therefore, improves quickly.

5. Three-On-One



“Depending on how we behave, the field of life presents us with a harvest of flowers or thorns”

Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

CLEARANCES WITH A KICK OR THE STICK

The capacity to know how to clear best the ball , when to do it and where to kick it to demands a lot of experience which young goalkeepers only may acquire through frequent training and many competitions in small-sided games.

Most of the times the goalkeeper kicks loose balls with the inside of his foot out of his circle straight to a teammate to initiate the attack. His percentage of failure can be reduced when

- he keeps his head over the ball,
- he uses his side foot,
- he doesn't lean back whilst clearing the ball,
- he follows through with the kicking leg and
- he finishes with the head over the knee of the kicking leg.

More mistakes will happen when the goalie doesn't have sufficient time to clear a saved ball, due to the presence of one or more "hungry" opponents. In a crowded area in front of his goal he can't risk stopping and then clearing the ball because of lack of time. In this situation he generally applies the save-clear.

But when the opponents, at the moment of the keeper's save, are more than 7 meters away, the goalie has sufficient time after the save to select between a clearance kick with the toes (the most powerful of all clearing techniques but with the danger of lifting the ball), with the inside of his left or right foot, or with a slap executed with his light stick of 17 or 18 ounces. The lack of time often doesn't allow the goalkeeper to clear the ball with both hands gripping the stick .Therefore attention has to be given to practise clearances with accuracy and power also with one hand on the stick, as was done in years gone by when the closeness of an attacker demanded this technique.





The distance of the clearance depends on the technique employed by the keeper, the speed power developed by him, on the speed of the on-coming ball (in case the ball is cleared without having saved it before) and also on his equipment (high density foam kickers allow long clearances).

Only after having processed all information available to him ,the goalkeeper will decide which technique to apply to clear the ball far enough out of the reach of the nearest opponents.

Within a split second, the goalkeeper must perceive the spot from where the ball was shot , assess correctly its trajectory, its bounce and its speed and then determine whether to run out or not, when and where to run to meet the ball before the attacker can play it.

The goalkeeper's attention should mainly be focused on the ball, but also on the position and movements of his defenders in front of him in relation to those of the attackers. His

position in the circle is always chosen according to the ball's trajectory, making sure that he only rushes out of goal when a high percentage of possibilities exist to clear the ball before anybody else can play it.

It is imperative for the goalkeeper's play outside the goal to "feel" the precise moment of rushing out of goal. Any mistake in assessing the ball's speed, height and trajectory and also in the running speed of the opponents may result in a goal .

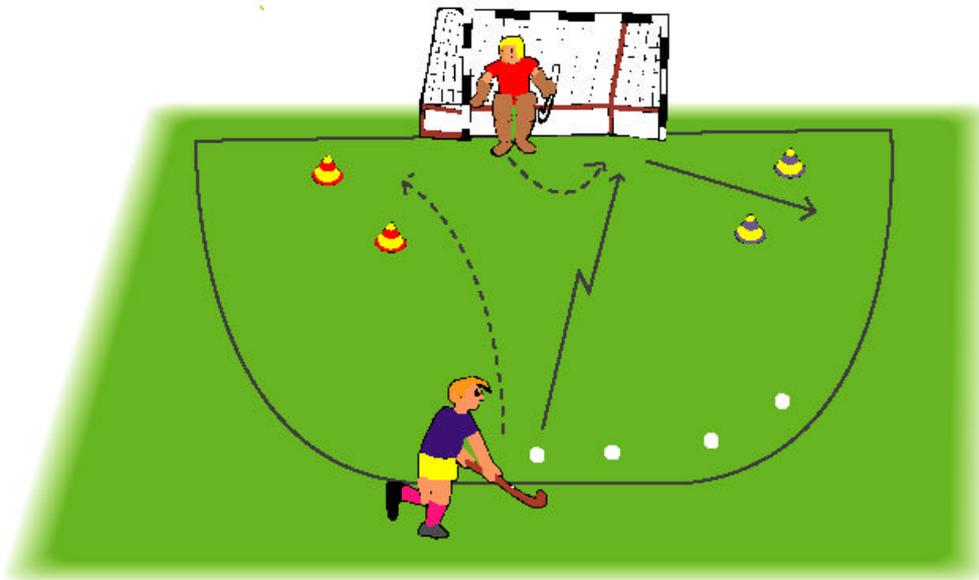
The capacity to clear the ball with any foot or with the stick can be trained and improved by a frequent practice of true game situations like for instance some of the exercises presented on the previous pages and with the 1st, 8th and 9th test of the Goalkeeper Decathlon and the following four exercises:

1. Long Clearances

Balls are played with different speeds and heights from the edge of the circle towards the goalkeeper in the goal. Dependant on the speed and height of the shots at goal, the goalkeeper clears them either after a save or with a first-time-kick, executed as a volley shot or with the toe in order to achieve a clearance which goes as far as possible.

2. Clearance Through an Unoccupied Cone Goal

After the save of the shot with one or both legs, the hand or the stick, the goalkeeper has to clear it through one of two cone goals established close to the edge of the circle on his right and left hand side. As the attacker tries to occupy one of these cone goals immediately after his shot on goal, the goalkeeper has to make up his mind to clear the ball always without risk through the less defended one.



Variation:

The goalkeeper has to clear the saved ball through one of the three cone goals established inside the circle. Two attackers one at the edge of the circle and the other one level with the penalty stroke point try to prevent him to score through one of the three goals , using any clearance technique.

3. Accurate Clearances despite the Presence of 5 Attackers

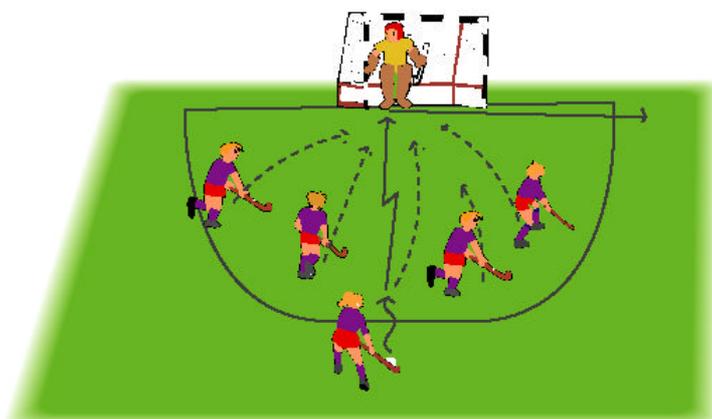
Four attackers position themselves in a half-circle around the penalty stroke point. A fifth one in possession of the ball dribbles it close to the circle line and hits it through a gap created by his 4 team mates towards the goal.

Whilst the goalkeeper tries to save and clear the ball out of the circle, all attackers try to take the rebound of the post, the goalkeeper's pads, body, hand or stick within 3 seconds after the save was made. None of them is allowed to deflect the initial shot at goal and can only take part after the shot at goal is made. To be able to interfere as quickly as possible with a rebound they are anticipating it with both hands separated on the stick and assuming a low ready-position.



Dependant on the distance of the nearest attacker in the moment of the save, the goalkeeper uses a save-clear or a well cushioned save with a successive clearance with his foot or stick.

Needless to say, it's important for him to clear the ball towards spaces which are not covered by the 5 attackers. For every clearance of the ball out of the circle and any infringement of an attacker the keeper gains a point.

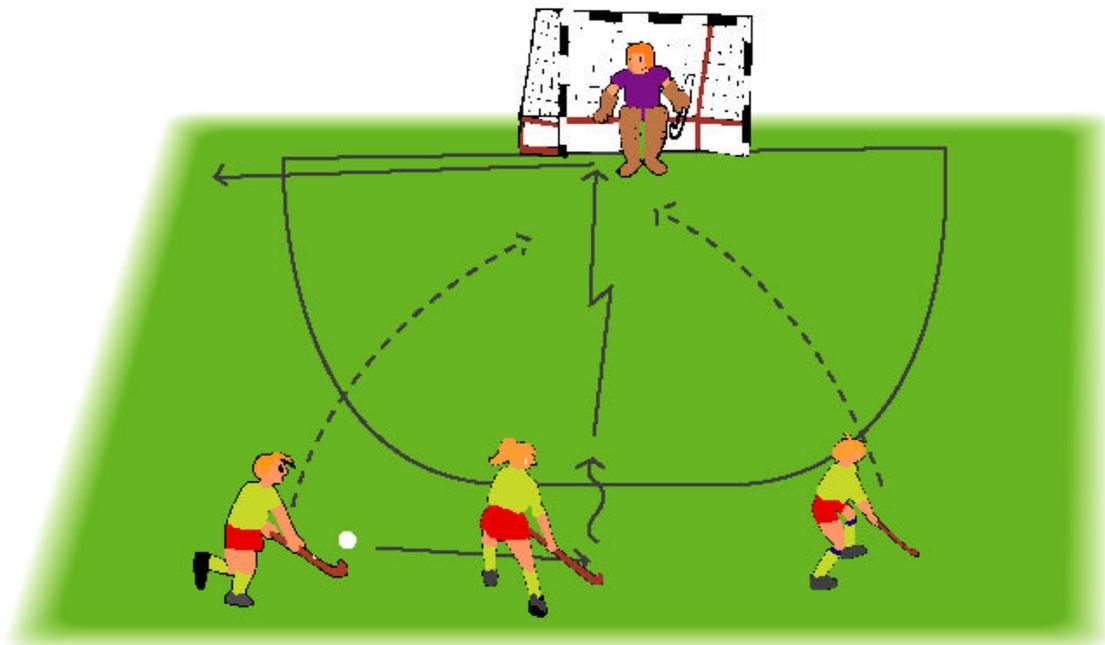


The attackers win a point for a direct goal, a rebound goal, a dangerous clearance of the ball by the goalkeeper and an intentional clearance of the ball over the goal line which the umpire generally penalizes with a penalty corner. For any infringement by the goalkeeper, the coach awards a penalty stroke to the attackers.

All 5 attackers have the right to hit the moving ball from the edge of the circle as many times that they can until they miss the goal. Then it's the turn of the next player until all five attackers have lost the right to score with a direct hit. At this moment the game finishes.

4. Clearances despite the Presence of 3 Attackers

Three players start their attack from the 22.90meter line. Once one of them penetrated with the ball not more than 2 meters into the circle, he has to shoot the moving ball into the goal. His two fellow attackers at his sides do everything to pick up the rebounded ball and score whilst the goalkeeper saves and clears the ball out of the circle, considering the positions of the attackers.



Variations:

- Before the shot at goal is taken one defender (later two) has to be outplayed.
- Two defenders besides both goal posts assist the goalkeeper to clear the ball out of the circle (defensive rebound).

"The road of success is always in construction"

Harald Robbins

THE GOALKEEPER'S PLAY OUT OF GOAL



The goalkeeper interferes often outside of his goal, especially

- at centres,
- when one unmarked attacker manages to control the ball in the circle, without any defender being able to interfere before the shot at goal is taken,
- and when the ball close to his goal is loose after a rebound from the post, anybody's stick or the goalkeeper's body or after a deficiency in the control of the ball by one of his defenders or one of the opponents.

In all these cases, the goalkeeper's decision to rush out of goal or to remain close to the goal line has to be taken in a split second. **Should even the slightest possibility exist that one of his fellow defenders could still prevent the attacker from taking a shot, the goalkeeper has to stay in goal.** Once he has decided to run out, to confront the 1-on-1 situation with determination and aggressiveness, he should not change his decision half way.

In the "one on one"-situation the goalkeeper must be prepared to find the correct solution to the two possible actions of the attacker: dribbling or a shot at goal. Besides narrowing the shooting angle with his rush out, the goalkeeper has to hold back with patience in front of the attacker, forcing him into hurried actions or mistakes. Doing so **he should keep upright as long as possible** with his arms spread out to reduce the attacker's vision and distract him. With this behaviour he can easily adapt to the offensive actions of the attacker and through an execution of a dummy even oblige him to do what he wants him to do. When the attacker

tries to play the ball around him, the goalkeeper, after having assessed perfectly the parameters of time and space may execute with determination out of the standing position a sliding tackle to first block and then clear the ball or in case it runs out of his range of action, he has to continue in the upright position and covers the shooting angle with an optimal positional play



When in a one-to-one situation a goalkeeper decides to run out of goal, he should accelerate as much as possible during the first meters, but then has to slow down when he meets or comes close to the attacker in order to shadow him. **It's more successful to put the forward under pressure with a Y shape run than when running a T shape.** The less time and space are available for the attacker in the one-to-one situation, the more chances the keeper has to win the duel.

But the further he runs out of goal, the more possibilities exist for the attacker to beat him, especially when he slides too early, allowing the attacker to round him or to flick the ball over his outstretched body.

Before the young goalkeeper is introduced to the art of playing on the ground, the standing skills must be fully learnt!

The advantages of a standing position are obvious:

- Good balance
- Easy to change direction and to adapt to new situations
- Better vision as a goalkeeper on the ground has difficulties to "read the game"
- Safety

"An obstacle or difficulty is only an opportunity to improve and to progress"

ABOUT THE SLIDING TACKLE

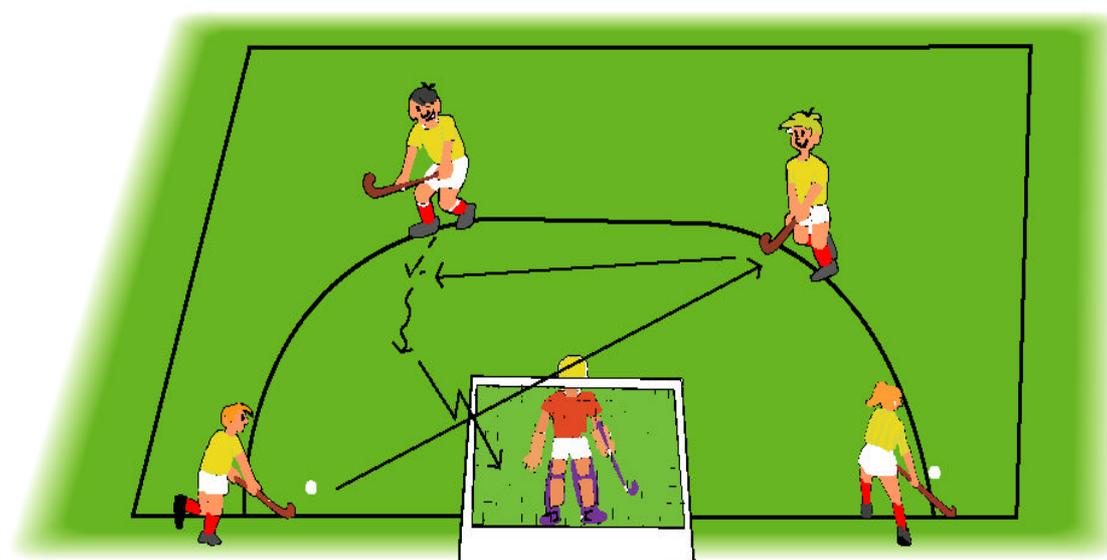
The sliding of the young goalkeeper in front of the attacker towards the right (left) is initiated by a flexion of the right (left) leg and a quick drop of the right (left) hip and the right (left) side of the trunk. Care should be taken that no "tunnel" is offered to the attacker below the armpit.

Young goalkeepers may begin on knees, roll down to side on hips (without rolling on to front) and form a barrier. Then they progress from a standing position.

When the right (left) leg and the right (left) body side are completely extended on the ground, his upper leg should describe a circular movement to sweep the ground in front of the pads in search for the ball. In this lying position his right arm with the stick (as well as his left arm) is completely extended and in contact with the ground. The left hand, generally, has the function to intercept flicks or shots directed over him and at the same time protect his throat.

Although the goalkeepers prefer to execute sliding tackles with the head pointing to the right, in training they should also practice the slide with the head pointing to the left side.

In a one-to-one situation the goalkeeper, whenever possible, should do everything to encourage the attacker to come to his right side which he can cover thanks to his stick with more ease than the left side. To extend his reach to a maximum, he therefore grips the stick as high as possible above its centre without losing too much strength.



"Don't look for guilty ones, look for remedies"

Henry Ford

THE SLIDE DURING A PENALTY CORNER

Although coaches should encourage the keepers (and especially the young ones) to remain on their feet and only dive when necessary, the slide has special relevance in the penalty corner defense. When the goalie faces a striker who generally scores with flat hits, he may get down into a lying position some 4-5 meters in front of the goal mouth, forming with his upright (!) placed pads and body a solid barrier to block the shot (please consult the "Simplified games for the penalty corner in defense").



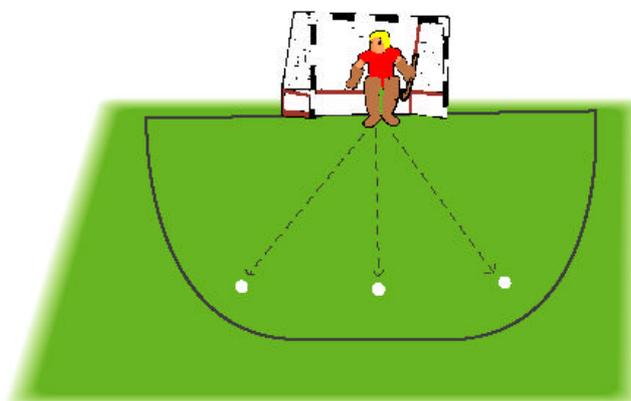
"The best preparation for tomorrow is working well today"

William Osler

PROGRESSIVE SERIES OF EXERCISES/GAMES FOR THE PLAY OUT OF GOAL:**1. Running out, Lie down and Stretch out in front of the Ball**

The goalkeeper rushes out with speed and aggressiveness. His aim is to lie down just in front of the stationary ball placed at a distance between 6 and 8 meters in different spots in front of the goal. From his position behind the goal, the coach evaluates the goalkeeper's technique of running out and getting down, especially

- his quick approach in a straight line until the stationary ball,
- his quick getting down (from a vertical into an horizontal position) without allowing the attacker to pass the ball below his body in the moment of lying down.
- the positioning of his arms in the moment of going down on the ground,
- the positioning of the outstretched body (90 degrees to the run of the ball) and of the part which should face the ball (stomach).

**2. A Sliding Goalkeeper against a Passive Attacker**

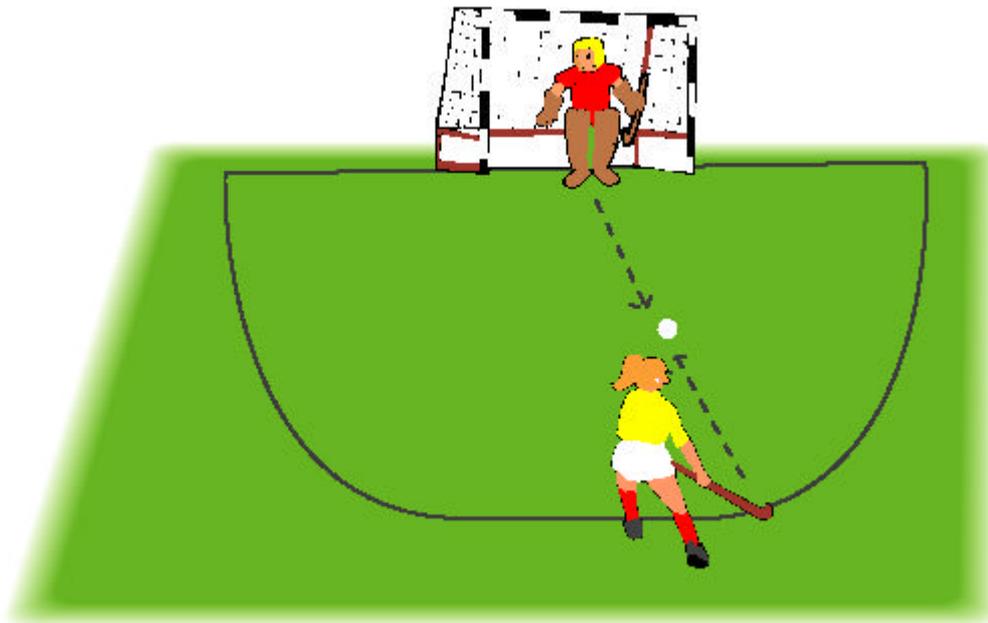
One of three attacker dribbles the ball deep into the circle, keeping it always close to his stick. He runs straight at the goalkeeper without the intention to beat him. The goalkeeper runs out of goal and slides in front of him.

After the slide, he has to clear the ball out of the attacker's reach with his stick or one foot. In this exercise the goalkeeper learns to go down quickly and assume a perfect sliding position in front of the attacker. Dependent on the quality of control of the ball by the opponent, the goalkeeper attacks the loose ball with his feet or the controlled ball with his outstretched body on the ground (stomach facing the ball).



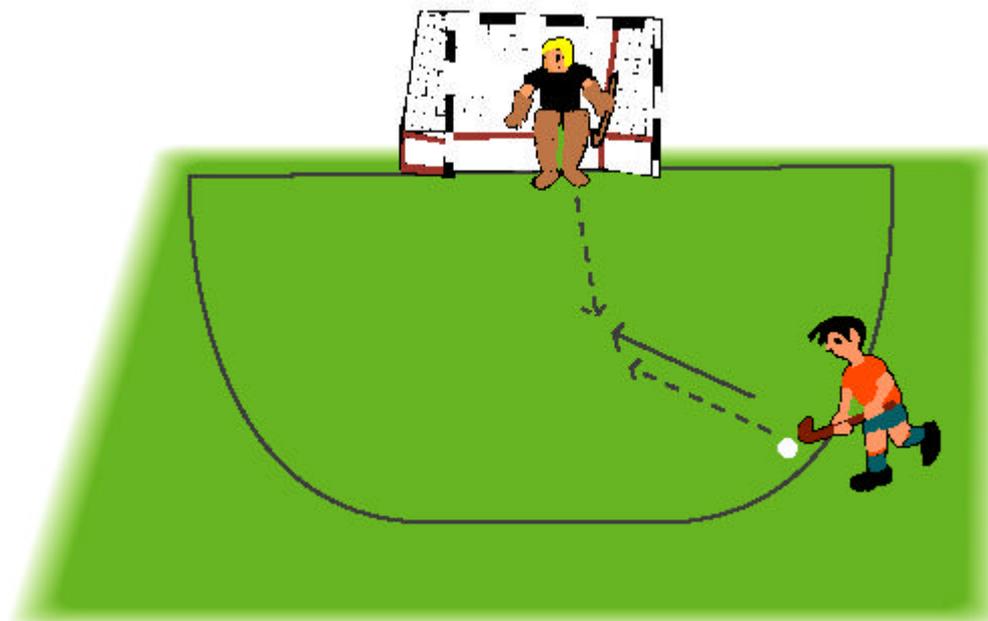
3. Challenge With the Stationary Ball.

After a visual signal of the coach, an attacker and a goalkeeper, with a ball placed half way between them, go for the ball with the intention to score or to clear it out of the circle.



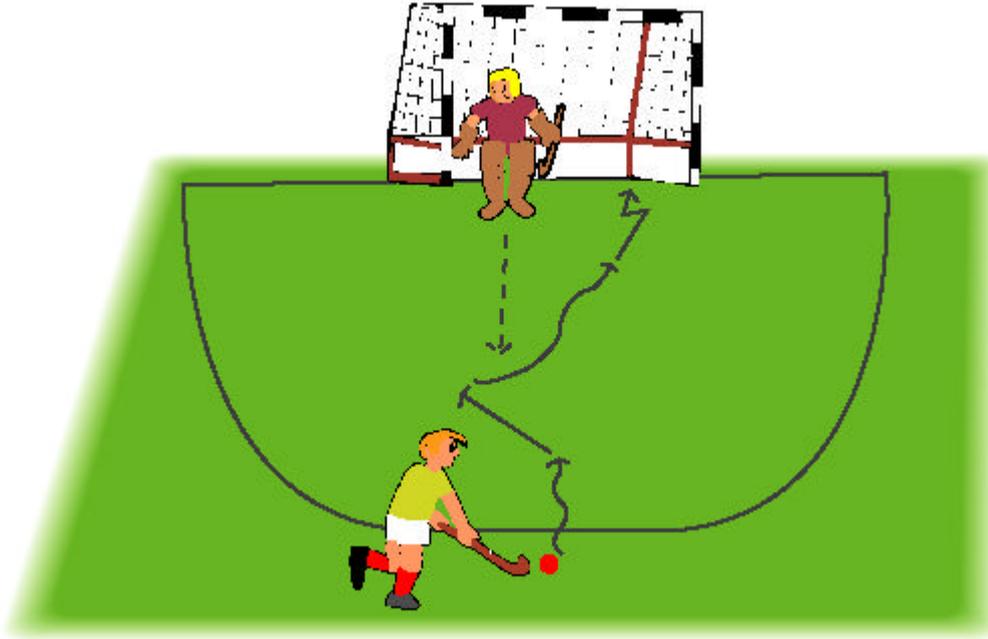
Variation with a moving ball:

The attacker pushes the ball from the edge of the circle toward the goalkeeper. Then the attacker tries to control it again before the goalkeeper can do so. After assessing the speed of the ball, his distance to the attacker, and the speed of his opponent, the goalkeeper decides what to do. Remaining in goal is certainly a mistake. That is why he should choose between running out to block the shot or the dribble of the attacker and trying to clear the loose ball before the opponent can. By practicing this situation frequently, the goalkeeper can gain valuable experience in coping with loose balls in the shooting circle.



4. Challenge in a Real 1 on 1 Situation

Place an attacker on the edge of the circle and the goalkeeper on the goal line. At your signal, the attacker has 4 seconds in which to try to beat the goalkeeper with a dribble and score from any spot inside the circle.



Variations:

- A wing passes the ball across the shooting circle to another attacker, situated on the edge of the circle. While the ball is on its way and the attacker is controlling the ball, the goalkeeper rushes out, trying to do whatever is possible to avoid a goal being scored from a shot or a successful dribble. The goal must be scored within 5 seconds of the initial pass to count as a point.
- A midfielder passes the ball from different positions outside of the circle into a wide space between an attacker at the edge of the circle and the goalkeeper standing on the goal line. Both assess the situation with the intention to win the challenge.

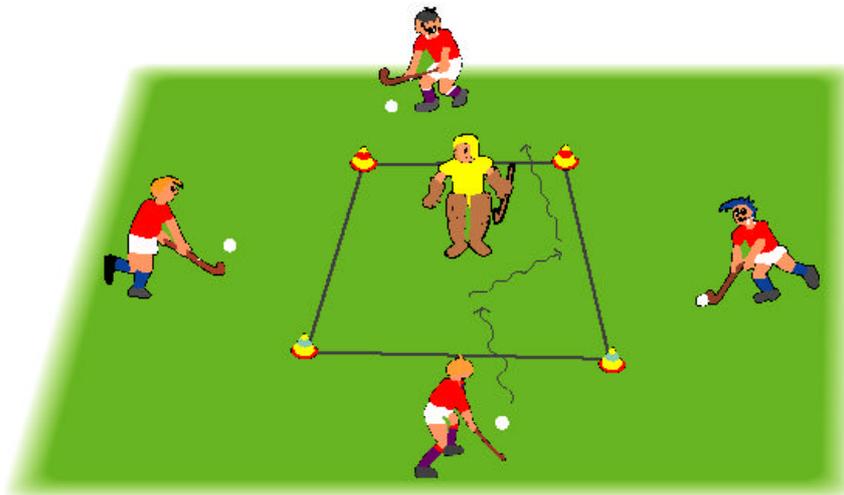
“So that a message is significant, it must not be complicated. In fact, there are only 3 colours but look what Miguel Angelo did with them”

Zig Ziglar



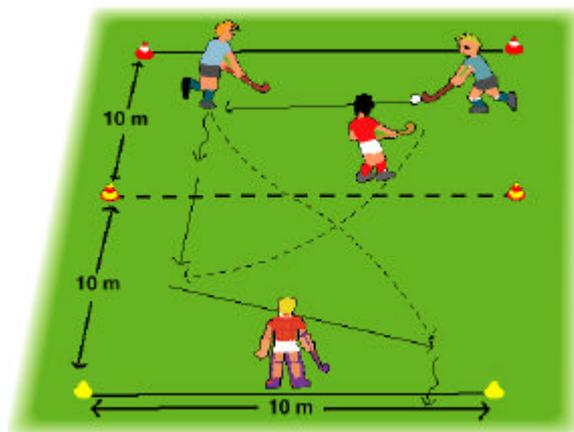
5. The Sweat Box.

Use cones to mark off a square that measures 6 meters on each side, and call on four attackers plus one goalie. The goalie plays inside the square against an attacker who starts from a position 8 meters outside. To collect a point, the goalie must prevent the attacker from running—with the ball under control—across the square. If the attacker loses control of the ball or happens to play it across one of the sidelines, the goalie wins the match. After the first player has attacked, the second, third, and fourth launch their individual attacks after having given the goalie sufficient time to recover completely. The competition ends after 12 attacks, with every opponent having attacked three times. Generally the goalie should win more points than the attackers. The purpose of this exercise is that the goalie will learn from it to condition the opponent's play through the application of body feint. Convincing someone of a feint works only when the manoeuvre is executed in time and when the attacker is about 3 to 4 meters in front of the goalie.



6. Twice 2 on 1

Designate the playing area with cones as shown in the illustration, and use two attackers, one defender, and one goalie. The attackers first face the defender at the 10-meter line. After having played out the first defender and controlled the ball in the first wide goal, the two attackers take on the second defender, who is the goalie. He defends the second goal, set 10 meters behind the first one, but should move out of goal only after the ball has been controlled in the first one. To beat the goalkeeper and score a valid goal, one of the two attackers must control the ball on the second goal line.



7. Dribble Across the Opponent's End Line

This is a variant of the 6th. Simplified Game for 4 on 4 (in chapter 9), so you should use its rules and set-up with the players. Consult the illustration here as well for setting up the field and play. In this variation one field player of each team becomes a goalkeeper. The goalies may play in any part of the field and may use their hands.

COMMON MISTAKES PLAYING OUT OF GOAL

Most young goalkeepers make the same common mistakes, and these are the most frequently encountered errors in playing outside of the goal area:

- Remaining on the goal line instead of running out aggressively to encounter the attacker in possession of the ball.
- Come out although a teammate still can interfere before the shot at goal is to be taken.
- Not establishing good communication and cooperation with other defenders, resulting in a poor synchronization of actions between the goalkeeper and defenders.
- Approaching the attacker with too much speed, instead of slowing down as the goalie is about 4 meters from the attacker. When the goalie reaches an attacker who is still on the run, the attacker has no problem in beating or passing him or her with ease.
- Clearing the ball but without accuracy (perhaps even to an opponent) and without power (not sending it far away enough from the goal, so that the ball may return in a few seconds).
- Going down on the ground too frequently, almost by habit, instead of remaining upright and in a balanced position.



- Going down into a sitting position instead of down towards one side.
- Losing contact with the goal when rushing out to one side to an attacker who has a narrow shooting angle—instead of remaining in goal, covering the shooting angle, and preparing for a possible shot at goal after a back pass.

“Thinking intensively in the accomplishment of one aim is one of the most powerful weapons”

GOALKEEPER DECATHLON

The great majority of coaches, especially those of young hockey players, find it difficult to combine their training of the field players with a simultaneous coaching of goalkeepers. This is where knowing the 10 tests of the Goalkeeper Decathlon comes in handy. The coach may encourage the goalkeepers to practice on their own for short periods of time, assigning them one or two tests while coaching the rest of the team. This way, the goalkeepers occupy their time efficiently until the coach can again involve them in the training and learning processes of the entire team.



The Decathlon can be used as a competition between any number of goalkeepers. If a club or a regional body decides to organize a decathlon for a specific age group, setting aside two days usually works well. Participation in this two-day competition (each of the days includes five tests against five different goalkeepers) generally motivates the contestants to improve in a great variety of abilities, such as positional play, techniques for saving shots, running out of goal, blocking shots while lying down, and different clearance techniques. A goalkeeper has the opportunity to analyze his level of playing and compare the performance with peers and opponents. In turn, the youngster may feel inspired or encouraged to improve by undertaking a series of corrective exercises for whatever deficiencies are observed in his plays.

The Decathlon helps to evaluate the level of performance, among—any number of goalkeepers. Not only can you evaluate the mastery of the specific goalkeepers' skills, but you can closely scrutinize other necessary aspects of an optimal performance: attention; anticipation; optical-motor perception; vision; correct, split-second decision making; will power and pluck; physical capacities like for instance acceleration, speed of reaction, speed of movements, explosive strength and coordination. Thanks to the Goalkeeper Decathlon, you have an ideal and fair selection of evaluation criteria.

The 10 TESTS of the Goalkeeper Decathlon:

1. TWO TOUCHES

- Both gk defend their own goal 4 meters wide.
- After the opening kick from one goal line both gk may leave their goal line to put pressure on the opponent.
- Respond with no more than two touches (body or/and stick).
- Duration: 3 minutes each way.

The gk who kicks more goals, wins.



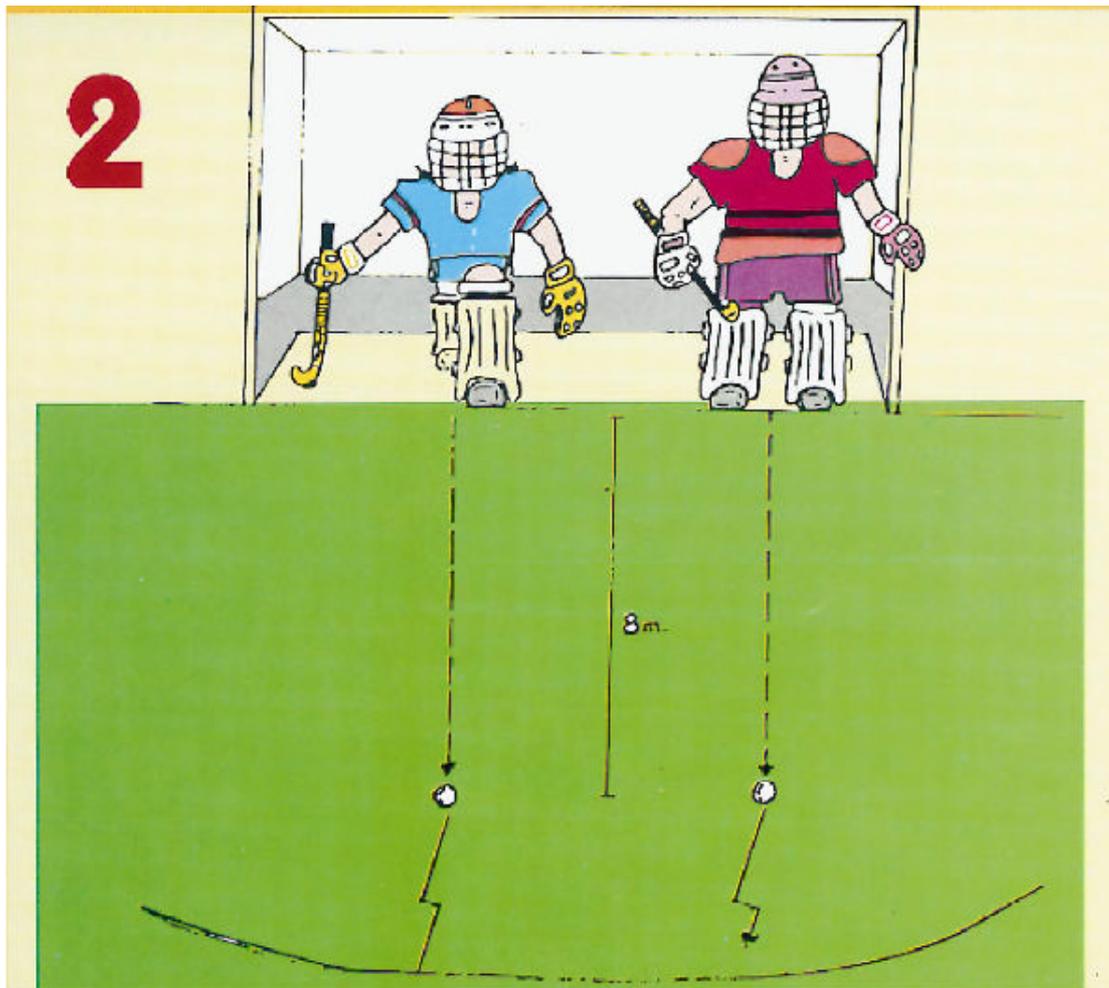
Coaching objectives:

- Kick the ball clear with either foot.
- Accuracy and power in kicking
- Anticipate opponent's moves
- Put an opponent in possession of the ball under pressure
- Reducing the opponent's shooting angle.

2. SPRINT TO CLEAR THE BALL

- Both gk on the same goal line, with two balls 8meters in front of them
- At a visual signal both gk run to their ball and kick it clear of the circle
- Repeat from a sitting and then from a lying position.

The best result out of the three clearances counts



Coaching objective:

- Improve coordination and acceleration

"Our best ideas come from others"

3. SAVING TENNIS BALLS

- Shoot a tennis ball from 12 meters every 12 seconds.
- The defending gk may only move when the shot is made.

The gk who saves most shots out of 6 on target, wins.



Coaching objectives:

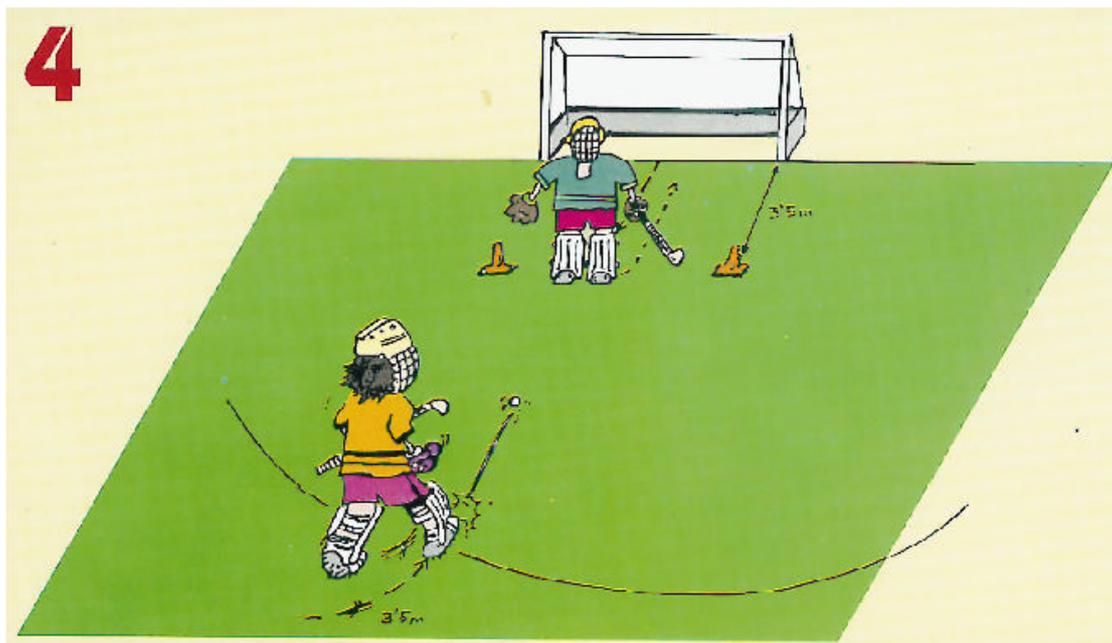
- Improve reflexes and quick movements
- Maintain concentration
- Assume a correct basic ready-position.

“Before criticizing what has been done, an opinion should be ready on what should be done”

4. SAVE TWICE

- The attacking gk starts 3 meters outside the circle. The defending gk moves out of the goal as the attacking gk starts. Runs in front to defend a second goal formed by cones 3.5 meters in front of the official size goal.
- The attacking gk runs and kicks the first ball from the edge of the circle and the other sets off to defend the cone goal.
- After the first ball is saved or missed the goal, a second, carried in the attacker's hand, is lobbed over the defender's head into the official size goal.
- Gk runs backwards to make the second save.

The gk who concedes fewer goals, wins.



Coaching objectives:

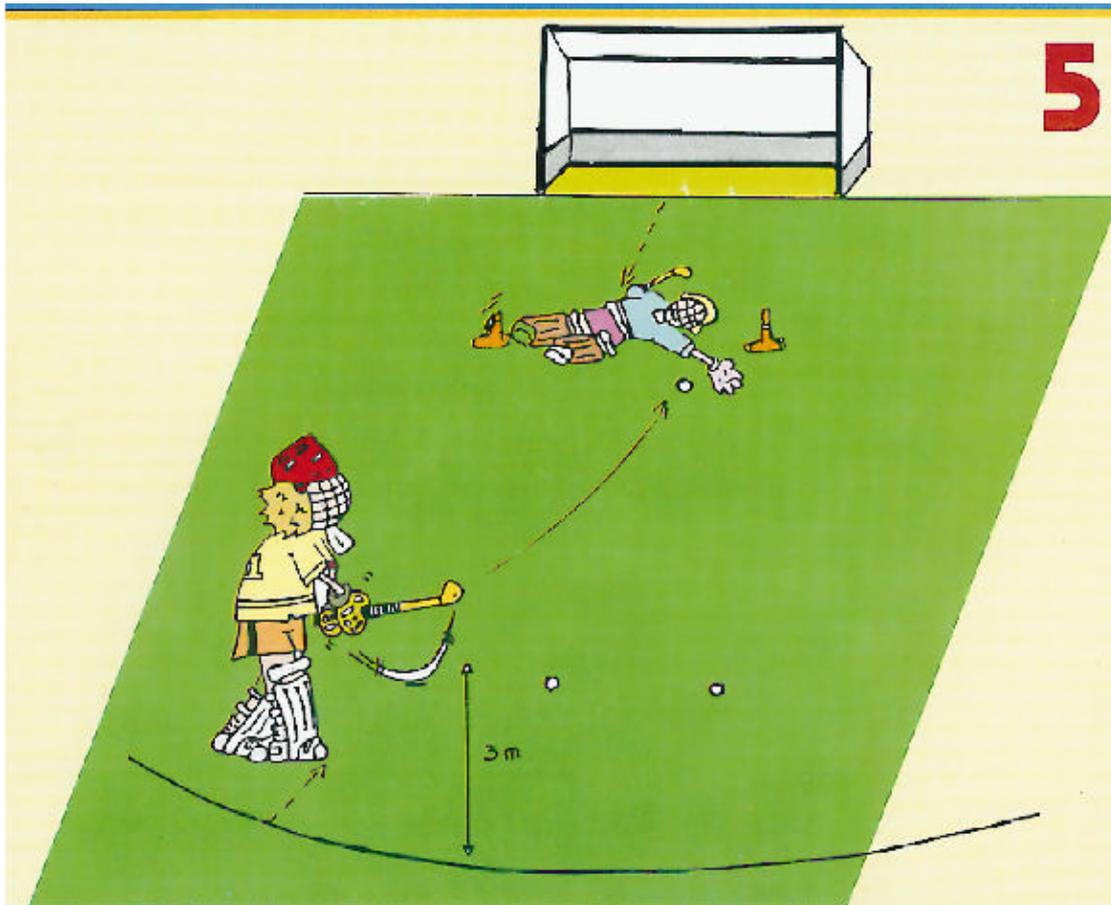
- Improvement of reaction and quick recovery
- Improvement of coordinative capacities

“The more obvious are the deficiencies in the performance of a player or a team, the closer is the solution”

5. SAVING ON THE GROUND

- The attacking gk runs from the top of the circle to hit a stationary ball placed 3 meters inside the D.
- At the same moment the gk starts from the goal line to defend a second goal made with cones 3.5 meters in front of the first one.
- The gk saves on the ground in a lying position.

The gk who saves the most of three low shots on target, wins.



Coaching objectives:

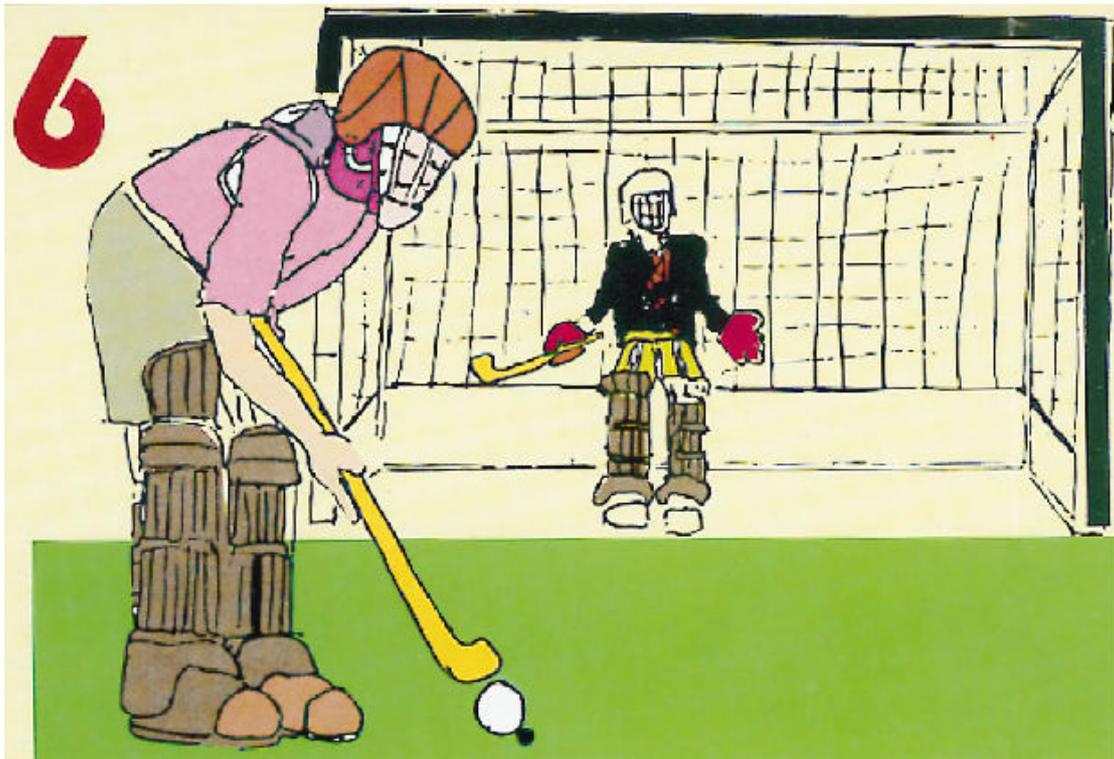
- To quickly adopt a correct position on the ground (the two pads must be on top of the other, the body completely stretched out, left hand free to stop the ball and stick in the right hand).

“You are a lucky player when nothing in your life has been too easy for you”

6. PENALTY STROKE CHAMPION

- Each of the gk starts with 3 points.
- The oldest starts to defend the goal.
- When no goal is scored the goalkeepers switch round .
- The defending gk loses a point when a goal is scored.

The winner is the gk who reduces the opponent's score to zero.



Coaching objectives:

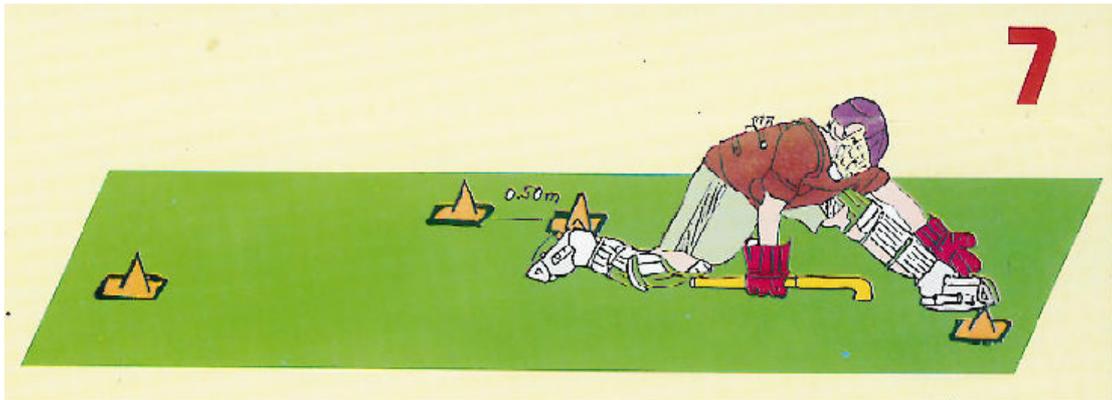
- Anticipate the direction of the ball
- Prepare mentally for each penalty stroke.
- Concentrate only on the ball.

“Success operates on the self-service plan”

7. EXTENTION TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT

- Simulate a save, moving the right foot and the stick until both touch the right cone placed slightly forward.
- The left leg must remain in the central area (0.50 meters).
- Return the right foot into the central area.
- Now touch the left cone with the left foot and hand whilst the trailing leg remains in the central area.

The fastest to complete ten correct moves is the winner.



Coaching objectives:

- Improve flexibility and speed.
- Promote the correct technique of saving with one foot.

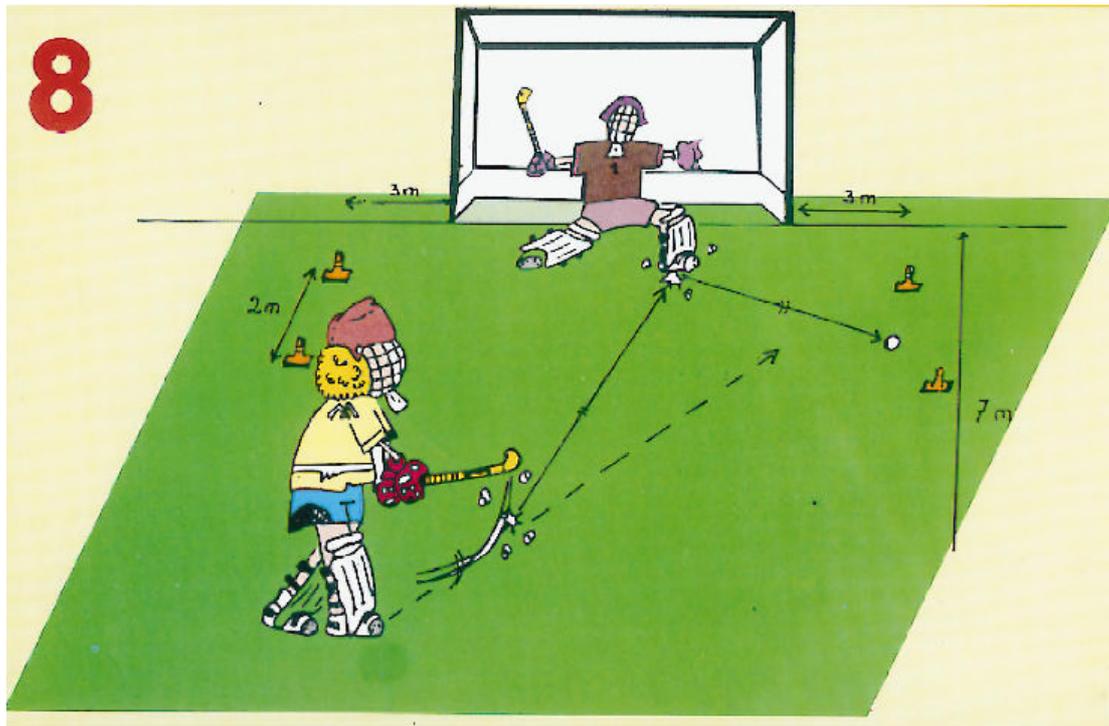
“What is defeat? It’s nothing else than an experience, the first step to something better”

Wendell Phillipps

8. SAVE-CLEAR OR SAVE AND CLEAR

- The attacking gk pushes the ball from 7 meters at the gk's pads.
- The gk must save the ball and clear it with either foot or stick through either of the 2 meters wide cone goals, 3 meters away from each goal- post.
- The attacking gk may run forward to anticipate a successful clearance.

The winner is the gk who clears most of the five shots directed at his pads through one of the two cone goals.



Coaching objectives:

- Save the shot, control the ball and accurately clear it.
- Decide when to clear with stick or foot.
- Disguise the direction of the clearance.

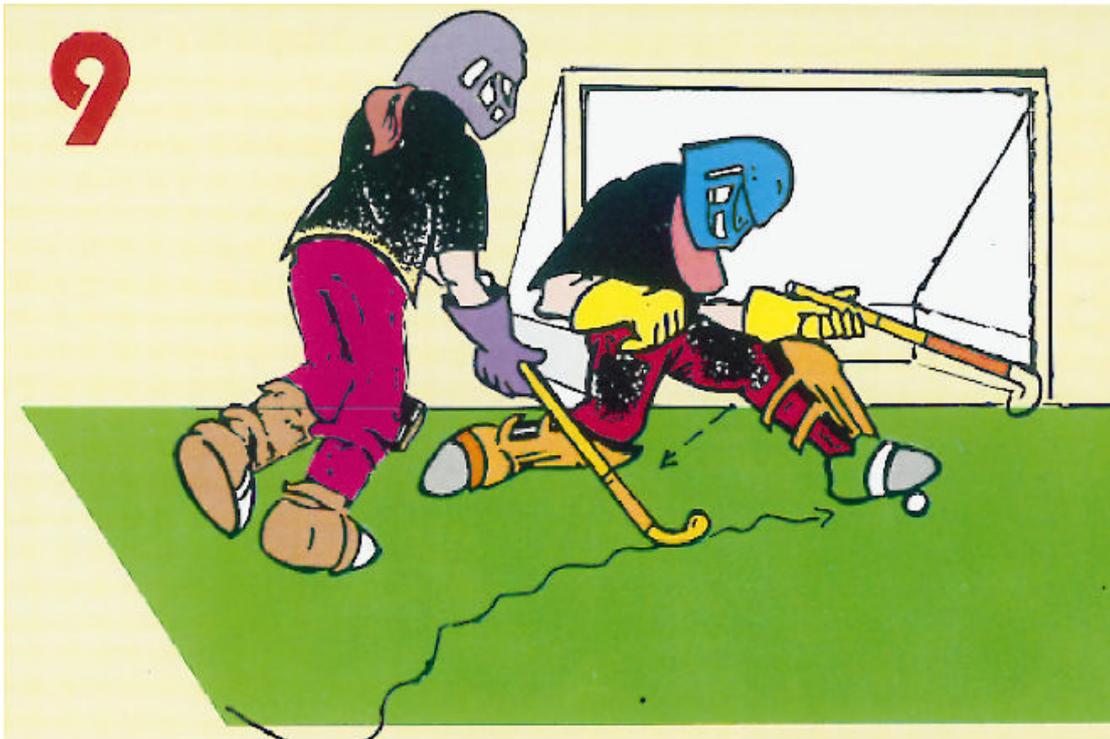
“The winner becomes generally the one who has given his very best”

Charles Buxton

9. DEFENSE IN THE 1-ON-1 SITUATION

- The attacking gk starts from the edge of the circle to dribble the ball at the goal.
- At this moment the defending gk may come out of the goal in order to avoid being rounded by the attacker or to intercept his shot at goal.
- A goal has to be scored within 5 seconds.
- The attack ends when the ball leaves the circle, a goal is scored, the attacker commits an infringement or the time of 5 seconds is over.

The gk who concedes least goals in 5 attacks, wins.



Coaching objectives:

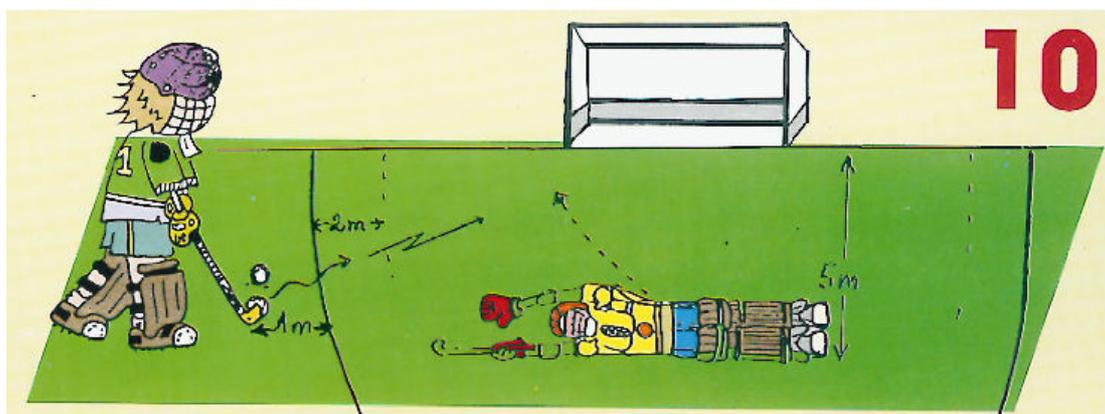
- To improve positional play
- To condition through certain moves the attacker's play.
- To decide when to go on the ground or when to stay upright.

“A good way to generate enthusiasm in the players is to use a positive vocabulary and encouragements”

10. SAVE WITH HANDICAP

- The defending gk in a lying position 5meters in front of the goal.
- The attacking gk in either the right or left wing position dribbles the ball from 1meter outside the circle into the circle.
- Try to score from not more than 2meter inside the circle
- When the attack starts the gk gets up and move to cover the shot.
- Play stops after a goal or when the ball leaves the circle.
- Two attacks from each wing position (5meters inside the field).

The gk who concedes least goals in 4 attacks, wins.



Coaching objectives:

- Use of acrobatic skills.
- Demonstrate will power and no fear.
- Improve coordination.

“The player has to concentrate on his task on hand. The sun rays only can produce fire when have been concentrated in a focus”

Harold Robbins

The goalkeeper is considered the most important player on the team (any mistake this player makes could result in a goal against the team), and great importance and special attention should be given to his development. Because most goalkeeper errors are caused less by technique than by poor decision making, it's fundamental to train young goalkeepers not only in the technical but also the tactical aspects of play specific to the position. All young goalkeepers should be exposed regularly to a great variety of exercises and games in which they learn not only to save balls but also to consider both their opponents and teammates in their play.

The art of hitting the ball properly



"Mastering a skill is without importance when the player doesn't know when and where to use in "

The hit has to be considered as one of the most fundamental techniques in hockey, being of equal importance for defenders, midfield players or forwards. The performance of many players, male and especially female ones, has often been unsatisfactory due to the low importance that they have shown towards continuous practice of the hit during the best ages for motor learning between 10 and 13 years. Because of its possibility to propel the ball over long distances in any direction, the hit is often of decisive importance in the creation of goal opportunities or even in the outcome of a match. Therefore, every player should concentrate on its practice. Since hockey is played on synthetic surfaces the game has developed with even more speed, not only in the tactical and physical aspects but also in the execution of the fundamental skills like, for instance, in the technique of the hit.

Today various techniques are used for hitting the ball. The selection of the most effective technique depends on the game situation. Whilst the "drive" is always associated with one century of field (grass) hockey, in the late 80's other techniques arose, like the slap-shot and the reverse stick hit.

Early in the 90's the two techniques of the "sweep hit" (with the curve always on the ground or with lifting the stick and a follow-through) became the most common used skills for passing the ball over long distances and also for shooting (here especially the reverse low hit with the edge of the stick).

A technique is only considered optimal when it ensures effectiveness. As this was not more the case on synthetic pitches with the "drive", its **technique was modified until the disadvantages (Less power, less accuracy with the danger of the ball being lifted, less facilities for the receiver to control the pass) turned to become advantages.**

Today every coach demands that his players master the most important technique for long passes -**the sweep hit**, because a ball hit with this technique

- has generally more accuracy because of a much wider impact zone (that is the zone of the label and not more the curved part of the stick which is touching the ground during the "drive"),
- assures its smooth running along the ground without any bounce, what results on synthetic pitches in a much higher success rate in the reception and the control of the ball,
- has more speed because of a longer swing-follow-through and a better acceleration of the curve without any temporary stoppage in the turning point,
- can hardly be anticipated by the opponent, because of the possibility of changing the direction of the hit in the very last moment.

All these characteristics are not only important when passing the ball but also have some significance in goal scoring. At the same time as the "sweep hit" other techniques of hitting the ball were developed. They all do have the same 4 advantages which were mentioned above. These techniques are:

- the **"sweep hit"** in which the player hides through quick wrists movements until the very last moment the direction of his pass. In this technique the curve is always on the ground. Top players use the technique frequently for passes up to 30m. With both hands together at the top of the handle, the player, whilst keeping the curve always on the ground and far away from the ball, sweeps it in a low body position (knees very bent). Because of the existence of a much wider impact zone in this technique (compared to the "drive") **the passer doesn't only have to focus on the ball but furthermore has the possibility to read the game whilst he is executing a pass.**
- the low reverse sweep hit** with the stick in the moment of impact in an almost horizontal position. The ball is hit or swept in a low body position with the inside edge. For better balance the right foot should be in front.

In the initial phase of this hit, the stick is lifted and brought very far backwards in order to develop maximum speed of the curve but in the second technique it always remains close to the ground for executing a more accurate but less powerful pass or centre (but not a shot at goal).

In both cases the impact zone at the inside edge of the stick is close to the curve. At the moment of impact, the stick (in both techniques) is positioned almost parallel with the ground.



DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNIQUE OF THE "SWEEP HIT":

Five phases of the hit have to be considered in its training and acquisition process:

- The position of the player in relation to the direction in which the ball is to be played.
- The grip
- The position of the player in relation to the ball.
- The rise of the stick until the beginning of the loop (the backswing)
- The downswing (the proper hit)

1. The position of the player in relation to the direction in which the ball is to be hit

The player should stand with legs comfortably apart, the left shoulder pointing in the direction in which the ball is to be hit. The weight is still placed equally on both feet which should not be placed too close together in order to assure readiness for any other action.

A front-on position would not allow the same solid platform as the side-on position does. Furthermore a front-on position would not allow a complete transfer of the weight of the body from the right towards the front foot. Therefore it's not possible to get any force into the hit. The lack of force is also conditioned by the shorter distance the curve travels in the back and downswing.

Last, but not least, a front-on position doesn't allow the left arm to be extended fully. And for this reason full power cannot be transferred to the ball.

The best position is the side-on position because it gives the player many possibilities for disguising the direction of the hit. Nevertheless, especially when there is not enough time to move into a side-on position, a hit has to be executed in a front-on position using a completely different technique as when using the "sweep hit" technique in a side-on position.

"When you see a good player, intend to imitate him, but when you see a rather poor one, examine yourself"

Confucius

2. The grip

The flat side of the stick must point to the left side. The left hand grips the stick from the left and the right hand from the right. **To impart a high level of power to the hit, both hands must be together on the stick one below the other**, in contrast to most of the other techniques. Both hands should be so close to one another, that **the index-finger of the upper or left hand should touch the little finger of the right or lower hand**.

If the stick is gripped with the right hand at the top of the handle, neither right nor left arm can bend sufficiently to give optimal application of power and direction. The arm muscles are most efficient when the arms are half bent, when muscles are neither over-stretched or over-compressed.

With a normal grip, **the right hand**, being further from the body, **does the main work as regards of power whilst the left is leading, mainly responsible for the direction**.

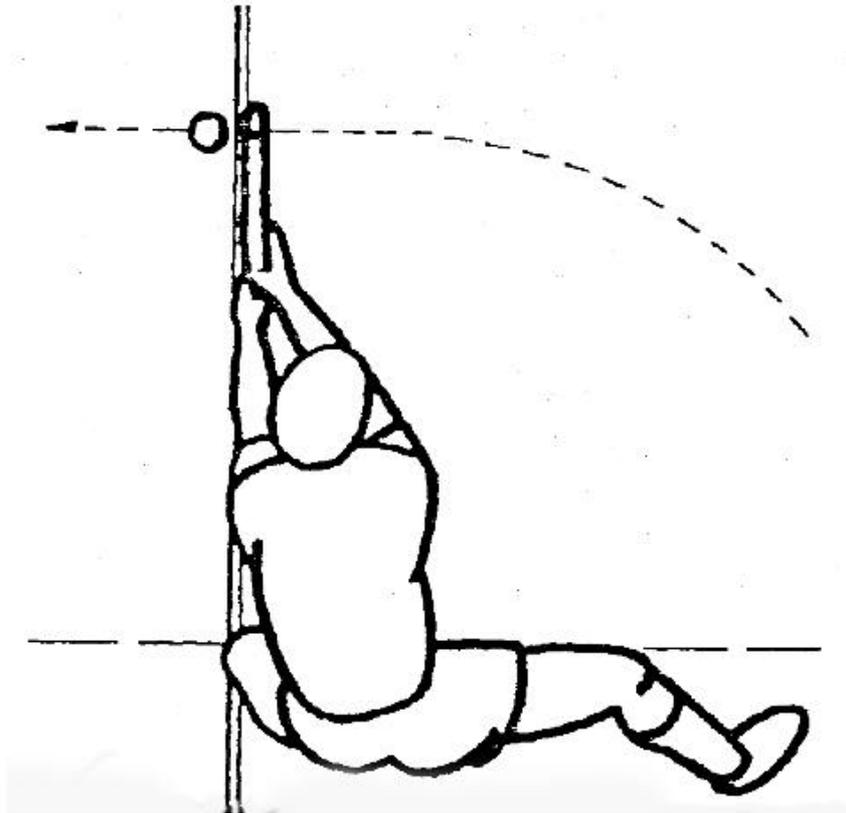
If the player places his right hand at the top of the handle, his right arm is too close to the body, and besides so fully bent that an optimal transfer of power is impossible. With such a grip a player is unable to hit the ball as hard as he could with the correct grip. Another disadvantage of having the right arm close to the body is that it has less freedom of movement. With the left hand in a lower position the directional control of the left arm is more difficult.



“the performance of a player is only limited by the rules of the game and his own capacity”

3. The position of the player in relation to the ball¹

When executing the technique of the "sweep hit", **the zone of impact is the lowest part of the label** (generally reserved for the brand name), situated at the upper part of the curve. For making use of this wider impact zone (compared to the use of a 10cm wide zone in the centre of the curve when the ball was hit with a "drive"), the player is demanded to angle the stick until it reaches at the moment of impact with the ball an **angle of 10 to 20 degrees with the ground**.



Due to this, the **ball has to be placed further away from the body** (as it was in the past) **and always in front of the left foot**. This also means that the player has to **approach the ball with a wide step** (more than shoulder-wide) which separates both feet by more than 1m. with the right foot far away from the right hip.

The correct angling of the stick with the artificial turf is not only achieved through a **pronounced forward-inclination of the trunk** but simultaneously with an **obvious bending of both legs** until about 90 degrees (see sequence of photos).

The descent of the centre of gravity not only takes place in the vertical dimension but at the same time also in the horizontal one when the player transfers all his weight from the right leg towards the front one.

1- see Lutz Nordmann: "Die Kunst der Flach-Schlag-Technik", in Deutsche Hockey Zeitung, no 30/1995

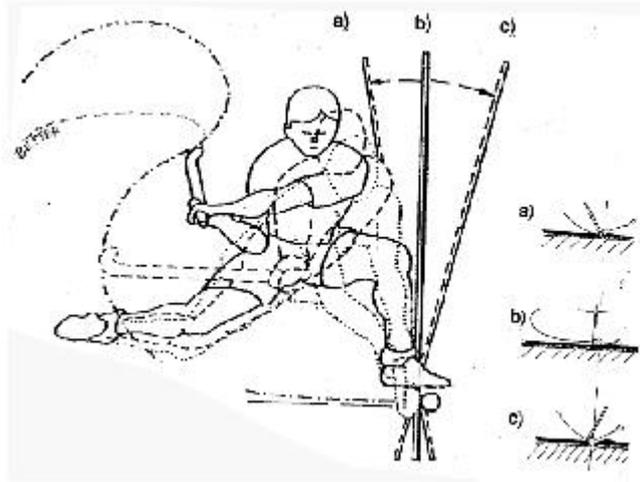


4. The rise of the stick until the beginning of the loop and the downswing²

Together with a wide stride of the left foot towards the ball a first descent of the centre of gravity takes place. **Simultaneously with the stride, the curve of the stick, through a movement of the wrists, describes a tiny loop from inside to outside (a small semicircular movement) flowing straight into the downswing.** The starting in and coming back movement follows more or less the same line. Through this kind of movement a pre-stretching of the muscles is assured which later on allows a more powerful muscle contraction. The smaller the loop is carried out the less time the player needs to hit the ball.

² - David Vinson in "Hockey Sport", December 1996, page 46-47

Main reason of the loop movement is to avoid any dead point or stop at the end of the backswing just before the downswing takes place. This phenomenon also happened in the execution of the "drive" technique. When the left foot steps down behind the ball, the stick is already in the beginning of the downswing or the end of the loop.



Executing the sweep hit the movement of the stick is never interrupted as now **the backswing flows smoothly into the downswing** without any reduction of speed. Whilst descending, the speed of the curve will be even further increased (also with help of the descend of the centre of gravity) until the stick glides for about 0.50 meter at a height of some few centimeters above the ground and always parallel to it towards the ball in front of the left foot. The stick should never approach the ball coming from above as in the "drive".

In the technique of the "sweep hit" the stick approaches the ball always from low and from behind! Care has to be taken that the impact zone above the curved part of the stick is guided towards the ball, at 90 degrees position with the ground, and also in the desired direction of the hit. Naturally the movement of the stick is accompanied first from a descent of the centre of gravity and finally in the last phase by a horizontal transfer of the weight of the body until it is shifted towards the front foot.



With a slight movement of the wrists immediately before the moment of impact with the centre of the ball, the player has the opportunity to modify the angle which the stick forms with the ground or also with the original planned direction of the hit. Instead of hitting the ball with the curve in a 90 degree position he may slightly incline the curve backward. This will

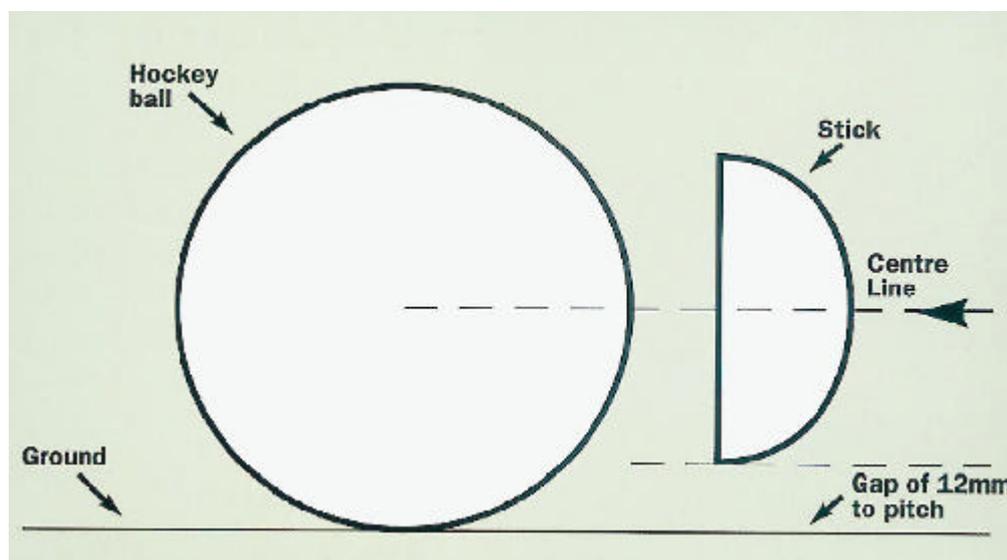
enable him to hit the ball, for instance, above a sliding goalkeeper running out of his goal. To disguise the direction of his hit in the very last second towards the left or right, the player has to hit on the right or left side of the centre of the ball. **In the moment of impact both hands should be about 20 cm above the ground in front of the left tibia with the head almost above the hands. The bending angle of the advanced (left) leg is 90 degrees** whilst the knee of the right leg, comfortably bent, is touching the ground.

After the impact stick-ball the player continues to descend his centre of gravity, but controls actively the forward and curved movement of the stick which must follow the ball direction. **The player must have the sensation of having hit through the ball.**

Executing the "sweep hit" is a skill in which the whole body (and here especially the trunk) and all joints are involved. A player who practises the hit must therefore learn to fit together perfectly all partial movements, respecting the parameters of time, strength, mobility and flexibility. Finally, the hit must become a fluent and harmonious skill.

General recommendations for training the "sweep hit":

- It's advisable to train the "sweep hit" after the player has gained sufficient experience in the push and slap-shot.
- Firstly, no power should be employed when hitting. Instead "hitting through the ball" and "serve it smoothly" to the receiver should be the main objective.
- Practise with closed eyes will help to feel the movement and to train the tactile and kinetic sensory system. The player must learn to sense the quality of the hit immediately after its execution.
- Furthermore it's advisable to hit balls of different size and weight as well as hockey balls under pressure and fatigue.
- Once the players have learnt to consider the key elements of the technique in hitting a stationary ball, they should learn the "sweep hit" with the ball on the run. In order to ensure a proper impact, the player has to modify his position in relation to the ball. More difficult, however, is hitting the ball on the run when the right foot is in front at the moment of the hit. This technique is a must for every top player.



- A lot of degradation is caused when the stick contacts with the ground and before and during the impact of the same with the ball. In order to avoid a loss of speed power and accuracy in the pass, the player's stick should skim the surface. Considering the diameter of the hockey ball (75mm) and the width of the upper part of the curve (51mm) there should ideally be a 12mm gap between the ground and the bottom of the stick at the moment of impact or hitting through the ball in the direction the player wants the ball to go².
- Finally, correct breathing during the execution of a hit is part of the correct technique. Breathe in on the back lift and out during the swing follow-through until the moment of impact. Co-ordinating the breathing properly adds considerable power and consistency to the "sweep hit"².

"The road to success has very few travellers because so many get lost trying to find short cuts"

²- David Vinson in "Hockey Sport" .December 1996,page 46-47

EXERCISES AND GAMES FOR HITTING THE BALL

(DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES LISTED IN THE "PASSING, RECEIVING AND SHOOTING GAMES")

1. One Against One

Two players, facing each other at a distance of 12 (20)meters, are competing inside a 8meters wide area between the centre line and the 22.90meter line of the hockey pitch. Each player tries to hit the ball across the opponent's end line. The ball has to be returned with a hit from the point where it ran over one of the side lines or where it was controlled by the opponent. Scoring is as follows:

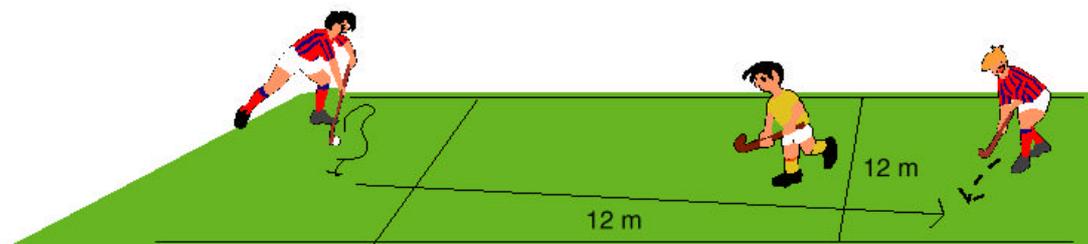
- +1 point = for every goal scored with a "sweep hit",
- 1 point = for every ball hit across one of the side lines,
- 1 point = for every slight elevation of the ball during the "sweep hit"
- 1 point= for any mistake in the reception and the control of the ball in front of the 8meter wide goal.

After a pre-established time the winner plays against the winner of the same competition played in an adjacent area.



2. Disguise Passes in a Two-on-One Situation

The same exercise as 1) with a defender situated in between the two hitters in a square with the dimensions of 12meters x 12meters and for less skilled players 18meters x 18meters. All "sweep hits" which cross the square defended by the opponent and which can be controlled by the second player score one point for the two attackers. For every interception of the ball within his square the defender gets one point. The game is played until one team gains 10 points. The winner is the one of the 3 players who manages to win more points in the 3 competitions. Apart from practicing the correct technique of hitting the ball, the attackers learn to disguise the direction of their passes and to communicate before executing a hit.

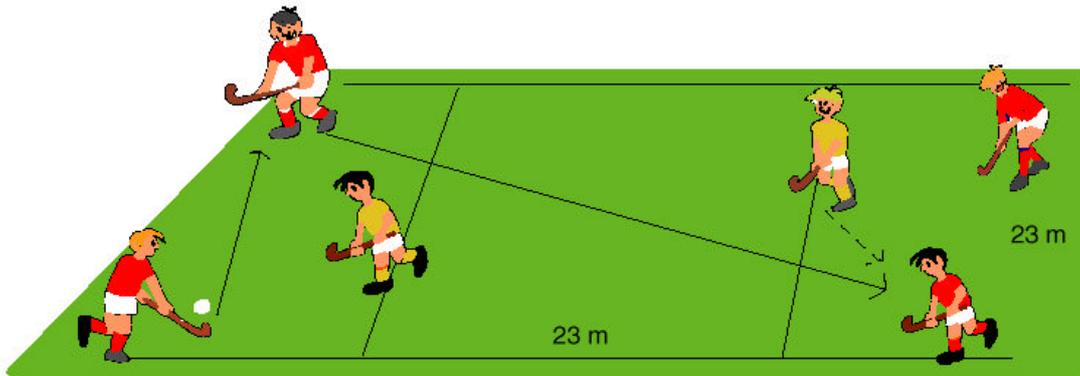


3. Twice "Two-on One"

Two players keep possession of the ball in limited zone (with not more than 3 passes) against one defender until one of them has sufficient time and space to pass the ball with a hit through a central zone to one of two teammates in another area at a distance of about 12-22.90 meters.

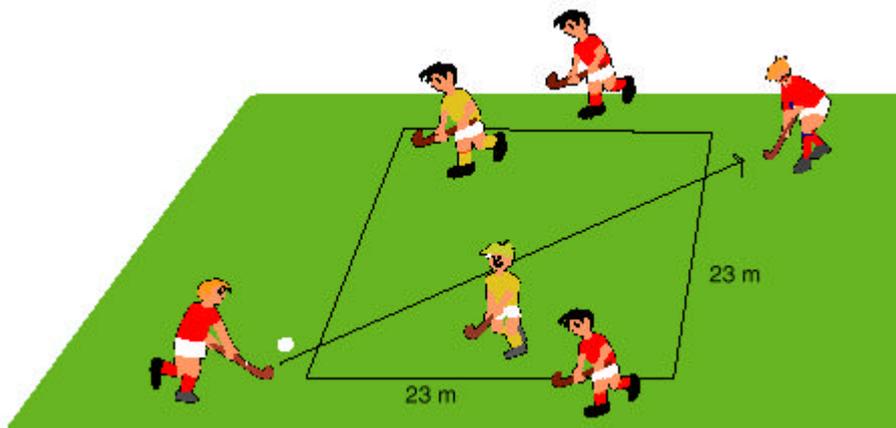
The first defender should do everything to prevent the ball being hit across the central zone, as does his fellow defender on the other side of the central zone. His objective is to read the intention of one attacker to pass the ball. He then tries to intercept the ball hit to the 3rd or 4th attacker or at least disturb them during the reception and the control of the ball. No player is allowed to step into the central part of the field with dimensions in depth and width which depend on the skill and fitness level of its participants.

When the ball doesn't reach a fellow-attacker in the opposite playing area, bounces on its way, runs out of the marked zone or the defender could touch it three times consecutively, a point is awarded to the team of two defenders. The game is played up to 10 points. In continuation, a rotation of the positions of the three teams made up of 2 players takes place. Every team has to defend once.



4. Four-on-Two Across Two Lines

Two defenders control a square 22.90m x 22.90m. Without leaving the zone assigned to them, they must try to prevent the 4 attackers from passing the ball from outside the square across two lines. The 4 attackers try to establish a record of consecutive passes without losing the control of the ball once. The passing and receiving is always executed outside of the square. Every 5 minutes the two defenders switch positions with 2 attackers until all players have played once in defence.

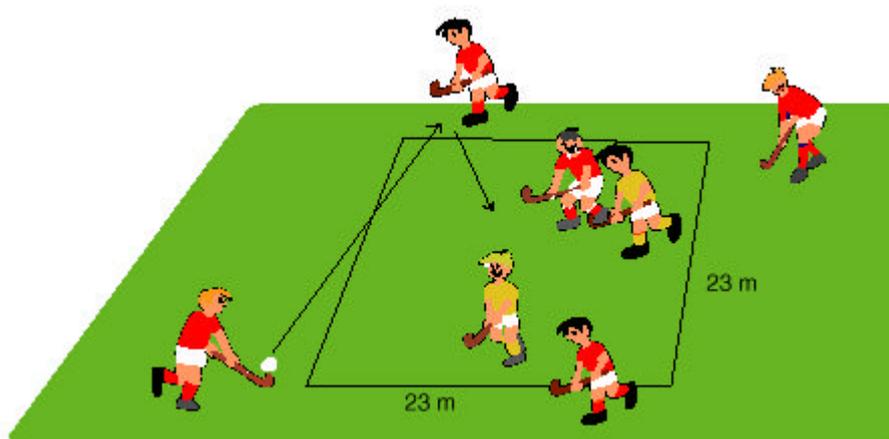


Variation:

A fifth attacker is now playing inside the square. He is continuously offering himself for passes from one of his 4 teammates outside of the square. For each control of the ball and return-pass the team collects two points.

As in the previous game, each pass between the attackers which crosses it, despite the presence of 2 defenders, scores 1 point.

The coach may ask the players to use a pre-determined technique for passing the ball (for instance only with slaps-two hands are separated at the handle- or "sweep hits" with both hands close together and the curve always in contact with the ground).

**5. Games to Keep Possession of the Ball**

4-on-4 or 5-on-5 in quarter of the field or 6-on-6 or 7-on-7 in half of a regular hockey field. Only passes executed with a "sweep hit" over distances in excess of 10 meters count.

6. Hitting Game "Five-on Five" in Three Separated Areas

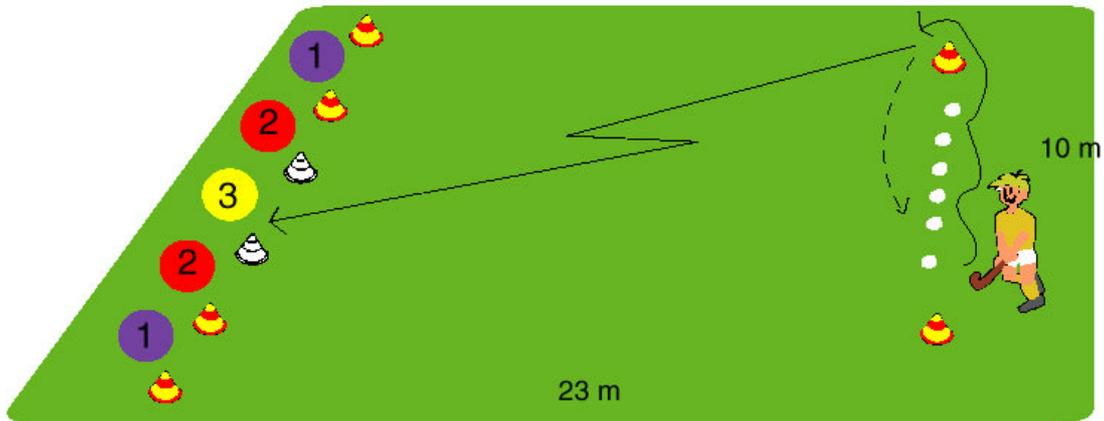
See the 3rd. Game "Twice "Two-on-one". This game is played with two more players (one attacker and one defender) situated in the field of the center where they receive or intercept passes from the two fields on the side where two attackers play against one defender (and his substitute who waits outside the area)

All three adjacent areas, which none of the 3 or two players assigned to it may leave, have the same size (22.90meters x 22.90 meters). The 2 attackers, despite the presence of a defender, have to manage to pass the ball to their fellow-player who offers himself in the central zone where he is closely marked by another defender. In case a pass to him is not possible, the two attackers from the first area try to pass the ball directly to one of his two team mates in the third area, where another defender will do everything to avoid them succeeding. The number of passes from one area to another are counted. Once a defender wins the possession of the ball, he will be substituted by another fresh one who watched the practice.

A long pass through the middle field which is controlled in the opposite one scores two points, whilst any short pass from one field to the one aside scores only 1 point.

7. Scoring Target

Six balls are placed between two cones, separated by a distance of 10 meters, and 22.90 meters in front of a goal-line. The striker starts with any ball which he has to dribble in front of the balls to the cone furthest away, round it and then hit it on the move from the inside-right or inside-left position towards the target (six cones placed on the goal-line).



After his ball crosses the target line, the same player picks up a second ball, dribbles it past the cone furthest away and hits it toward the targets of 1, 2 or 3 points. He continues to do this until the 6th ball has been played.

A ball can be collected only from the line between the two cones, once the previous one has crossed the scoring line or stopped rolling. When reaching a score of 9 or more points, the time is stopped with a stopwatch. If the player fails to score 9 points with 6 balls a nil score is recorded.

Note: More exercises and comments about the hit on the run, the reverse stick hit and the force of the hit are given in "The Science of Hockey" by Horst Wein, Pelham Books, Ltd., London, 1985, pages 46-55

"A crisis starts when the old one hasn't died and the new wasn't born yet "

Berthold Brecht

Simplified games for the penalty corner training in attack and defense



“The development of the game is so fast these days that the coach who says it can’t be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it”

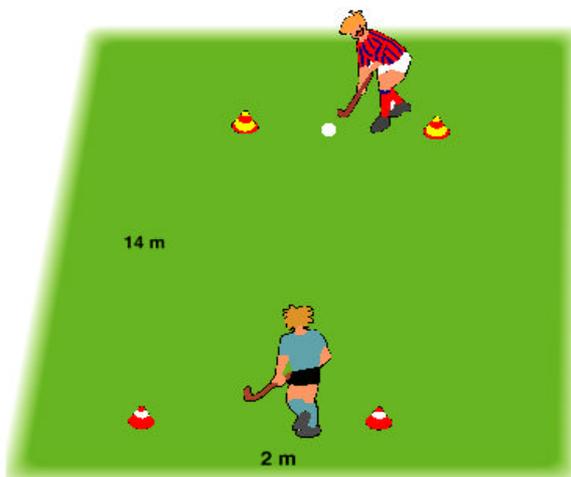
1ST PART:

SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR THE "HIT OUT",
THE STOP AND THE BASIC VARIATIONS IN
GOAL SCORING**1ST EXERCISE : PRACTISE OF THE "PUSH-OUT"**

Two goals, 2 metres wide, are placed facing each other at a distance of 14 metres. One player places the ball on one goal line and drags it with high speed to a team-mate situated in the opposite cone goal.

Once the ball enters the goal, the player stops it with a technique indicated by the coach until the ball is completely stationary. After some minutes of practice, a competition is organized between various couples. Every correct stop of the fast running ball just behind the goal line scores one point and has to be shouted out so that the other couples can hear the score.

The winning couple is the one that achieves the highest number of correct stops with 10 "push-outs". There is no limit of time for the execution of the 10 "push-outs". The coach should ask the players to use different techniques in passing and in stopping the ball. This way the players gain valuable experience in the selection of the technique which suits them best.



In order to evaluate with ease the accuracy of the "push-out", players should practise playing the ball along one of the side or goal lines of the hockey field.

Variations:

- A stationary ball is dragged with high speed to a second player through a goal established with cones at a distance of 7 meters. The couple which scores more often with 10 drag-pushes wins.



- After a visual signal various players in possession of a ball pass it with the assigned technique from the goal line toward the 22.90meter line. The winner is the player whose ball crosses the 22.90meter line first. To gain more experience, every player may also choose the technique which suits him best.

Coaching objectives:

1. To know how to execute different techniques for the “push- out”.
2. To select the most appropriate technique considering the playing surface, the speed of execution, the speed of the ball and its accuracy.
3. To know how to execute the pass without prior body movements so that the opponent has difficulty anticipating the moment of its execution.
4. Make sure that the ball doesn't rise and that the player concentrates on the follow-through. This ensures the desired direction of the pass.
5. To assure accuracy and speed of the push-out.
6. To learn to trap the ball with one touch of the horizontally placed stick. The left hand should grip the stick below the right, the left fingers should point downward with the palm behind the stick (see also "More hints for trapping the ball with the stick").
7. To retain good balance so that the striker is not obstructed and any p.c.variation is possible to put into practise.

SOME HINTS FOR THE SLAP:

- The main objective is to be quick and pass the ball, unexpectedly for the opponents, with maximum speed and power, using your forearms to give your team mates more time for the stop and the shot at goal.
- Make sure you assume a low body position before pushing the ball. The feet are always separated more than shoulder width and the handle of the stick is at or even below knee-level.
- Choose the correct zone of contact "stick-ball" which is at the lower part of the label (brand name).
- In the final phase of the push make sure of a long follow-through without raising the curve of the stick above knee-level.



SOME HINTS OF PASSING THE BALL WITH A DRAG-PUSH:

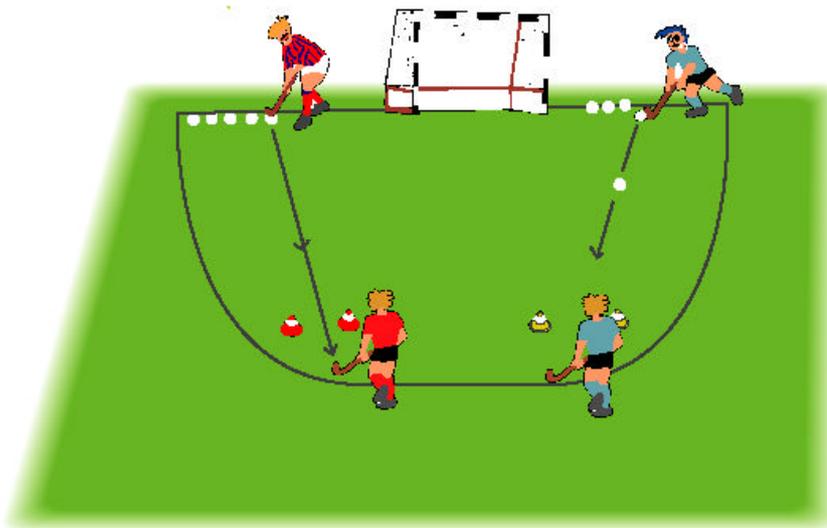
- See the first two hints for the push out with a slap.
- Both hands grip the stick the same way as during the "Indian dribble".
- The flat side of the stick faces towards the ground forming an angle of about 30 degrees.
- The ball is placed close to the right foot on the end line with the upper part of the edge of the curve in contact with it. The rule demands that during the execution of the drag, one foot has to remain outside the field.
- The left shoulder and the left foot are pointing towards the receiver.
- Feet are placed wide apart (more than shoulder width). The left one points into the direction of the pass and the right foot forms a right angle with it.
- When dragging the ball along the ground from the right (behind) toward the left (in front), the ball always remains in contact with the edge of the curve of the stick until it is released as it comes level with the left foot.
- During the quick pull (drag) the player looks to the receiver and shifts the body weight from the centre towards the left foot.
- After having released the ball, the curve should remain low, with the aim of following the ball for as long as possible.

“The way you think after a defeat will determine how much time will pass until you win the next game”

2ND.EXERCISE :TRAPPING THE BALL OUTSIDE THE SHOOTING CIRCLE

Two teams compete in the same circle. One player of each team pushes the ball from the end line through his 1meter wide cone goal, situated at the edge of the circle towards his receiver who stops the ball with a technique indicated by the coach. Every couple have 5 "push-outs".

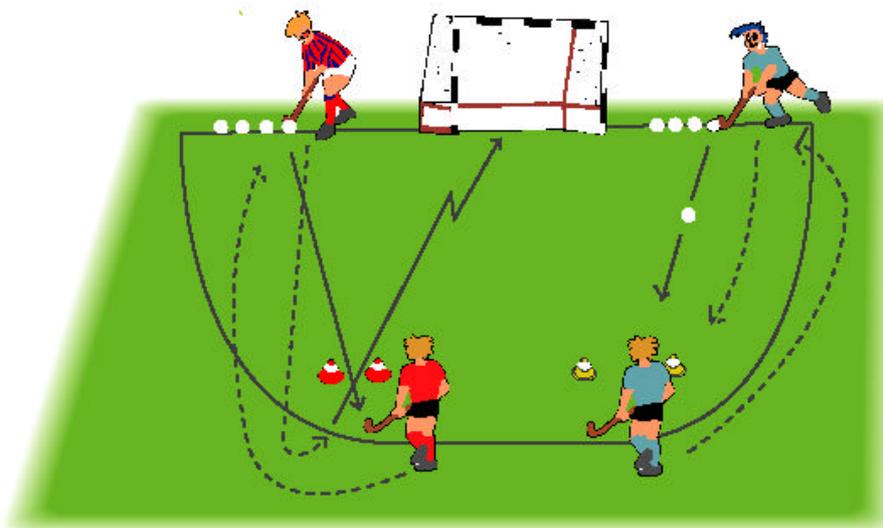
The winner is the couple whose receiver manages to trap more balls just outside the shooting circle. Balls which miss the cone goal don't count.



For the return match, both players change positions and functions and both teams switch places (go the other side of the goal).

Variations:

- After a "push-out" simulation by the coach, both players pass in their ball from the end line through their respective cone goal to their stick stoppers. Whilst the latter try to trap the ball stationary, each passer follows his ball as quick as possible with the intention to strike it first from inside the circle against the boards of the regular goal. Meanwhile the stick-stoppers run along the circle line to the end line from where they are supposed to start the next penalty corner. After 5 trials both teams push practise the push-out from the other side of the goal.



Coaching objectives:

1. To select the most effective technique for playing in the ball with speed and accuracy.
2. To consider additional functions after having executed the pass from the end line.



“Enthusiasm is more powerful than money, politics, fatigue and influence”

MORE HINTS FOR STOPPING THE BALL DURING THE PENALTY CORNER:

- Legs should be bent and for better balance one foot should be moved forward at the moment the ball is being trapped outside the circle. Generally the right leg is situated in front and near the circle, whilst the left foot is placed further backwards. The low body position permits a better view of the ball's trajectory and a possible bounce.
- It's important not to be tense. Be relaxed and think positively.
- Watch the ball until it touches the stick.
- Have the body weight over the front foot when trapping the ball in a stationary position, and in front of both feet with the arms away from the trunk.
- Place the stick (with the curve generally on the left side) in a right angle to the trajectory of the oncoming ball in order to avoid a deflection towards one side.
- To be able to absorb the shock of the oncoming ball, bend the arms slightly and keep the wrists loose. Incline the surface of the stick slightly forward.
- Be prepared to adjust your position quickly, should the oncoming ball deviate from its course.
- After the stop, move the stick quickly towards the right side of the body, grip it again correctly with the right hand in the centre of the stick, which allows you to continue to take part in the penalty corner play (receive a pass or take a rebound with a slap).

3RD. EXERCISE: LOOKING FOR VARIATIONS

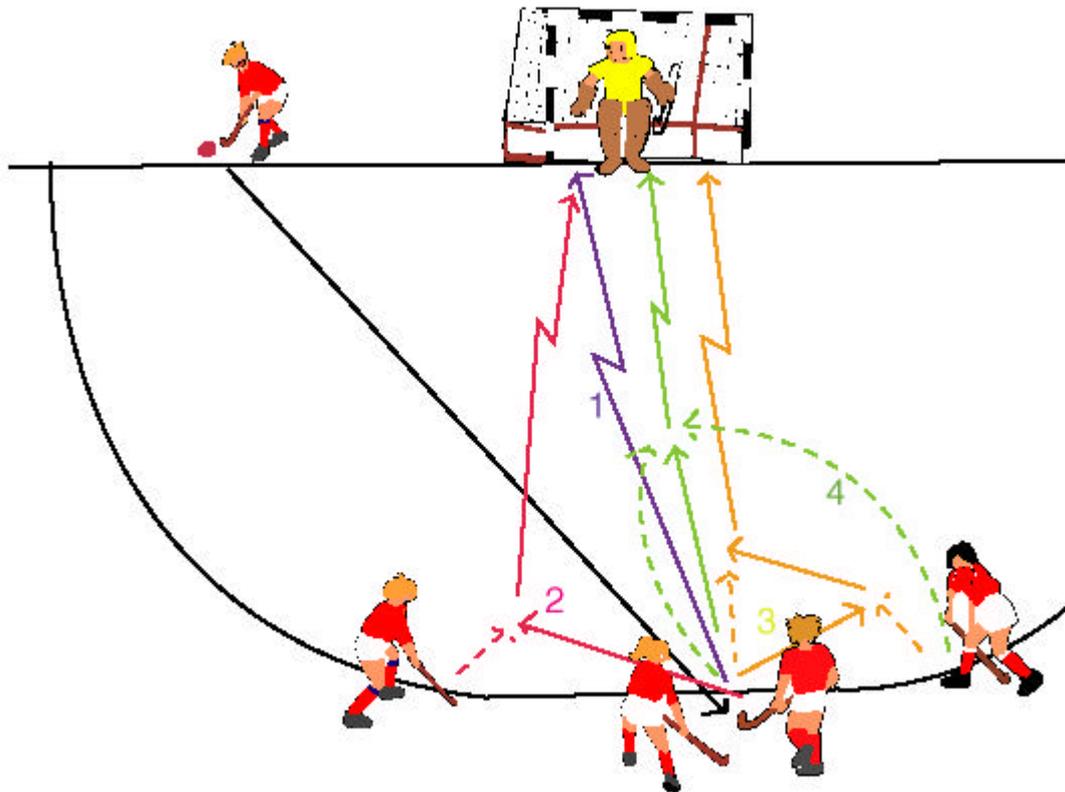


An attacking team with five players is positioned as shown in the diagram. The coach asks the players to demonstrate at least 4 variations of the penalty corner attack. For instance:

After trapping the ball with one touch outside the circle:

- the stick stopper pushes the ball into the circle for the striker who scores,

- the stick stopper pushes the ball some 3-4m. to a third attacker on his left side. From inside the circle the 3rd.attacker scores.
- the striker pushes the ball from outside the circle into the circle towards the 4th attacker on his right side. The latter returns the ball with a triangular pass to the striker who scores,
- the striker pushes the ball to the 4th. attacker who had run at the moment of the push-out with high speed to the penalty stroke point. There he traps the ball which is hit or flicked quickly by the striker into the goal.



Coaching objectives:

- Immediately after having stopped or/and passed the ball, move away to allow the specialist sufficient space for shooting, feinting or passing.
- Synchronise the action of the trap with that of the shot or pass.
- To learn 4 basic penalty corner variations.

“An individual who proceeds too soon may lose the pre-requisite self confidence that is essential for success at subsequent levels”

Ric Purser



“The secret of a good team is order and discipline. One important function of the coach is to let each of his players know what to do in which moment of the game”

4TH. EXERCISE : QUICK SHOT

Two or three pairs of players are positioned outside the circle close to its edge. The right player of each pair, in a low position, holds his stick horizontally as though he has just trapped the ball. Together with the stick, he holds the ball in one hand. After the simulation of a push-out from the end line by the coach, the stick-stopper releases the ball and pushes it along the ground into the circle from where his teammate scores. The pair that scores first with a shot against the boards, wins a point. After every 5 shots, the players of each pair swap their positions and functions.

Variations:

- Various teams formed by three players compete to establish the one who scores more goals with 5 attacks. A goalkeeper can be added.
- Various teams formed by three players compete to establish the one who scores in the shortest time.

Coaching objectives:

- To reduce as much as possible the time between the trap of the ball and the actual shot from inside the circle.
- To learn more about penalty corner shooting.
- See also the training objectives of the first 3 exercises/simplified games for the penalty corner in offense.

“It’s generally assumed that the more you know about something the better you’ll be at it, but a certain innocence will help you to perform better”

L.Moorhouse/L.Cross



SOME HINTS FOR PENALTY CORNER SHOOTING:

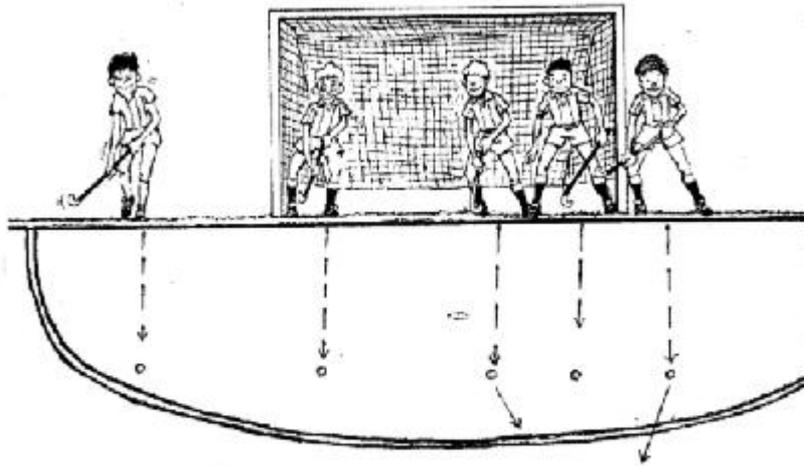
- To be able to hit the ball with maximum speed. The weight of the stick as well as its stiffness has to be considered.
- Decide the exact place from where to hit the ball towards the goal. Consider the running path of the defender and the habits of the goalkeeper.
- Ask the player who traps the ball outside of the circle to use the trap-technique which suits you best for striking the ball with a flick or hit.
- Watch the ball closely before and when you strike it. The quicker the strike at goal is executed, the less chances the defender has to block your shot. Consider also the way opponents are running out.
- When running towards the ball which was played into the circle, the rhythm and the timing of the striker influence the power and the accuracy of the shot, as does the correct position of both feet, at the moment of the impact of the stick with the ball.
- During the hit at goal lift the stick relatively slowly but increase the speed progressively in the swing follow-through, until the moment of impact. There should be no interruption of the pendulum in the turning point (see "The art of hitting the ball properly").
- When maximum power is employed in all phases of the shot, the co-ordination level decreases. Don't try too hard. Be relaxed and have confidence in the important task.
- Don't look up immediately after the impact stick with ball because that will result in less accuracy of the hit.
- Choose the technique and direction of your shot after having carefully studied the habits of your opponents in penalty corner defense.
- After the execution of the shot, anticipate a possible rebound. Therefore, the right hand must grip the stick in its center.
- Also, the best penalty corner specialist needs frequent practise. He must train with and without opponents and team mates until he has improved a few effective variations in attack. Too many variations are detrimental to perfection.

"All behavior of a player is consequence of his personal feeling"

2ND PART:**EXERCISES AND SIMPLIFIED GAMES FOR THE PENALTY CORNER DEFENSE****5TH. EXERCISE : CLEAR THE BALL QUICKLY OUT OF THE CIRCLE**

When one player simulates a push-out, various players in different positions behind the end line and with the stick held only in the right hand, run with the intention of playing their respective ball out of the circle.

The balls are placed at a distance of 13m in front of each player. The one who first plays his ball out of the circle is the winner.

*Coaching objectives:*

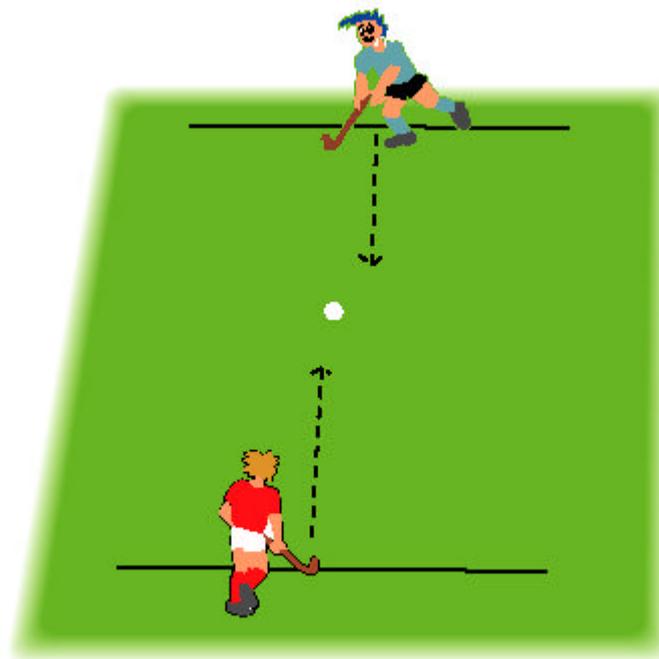
- Running out from a position just in front of the ball but slightly on its left side will enable you to play the ball quickly and always with the front of the stick.
- Grip the stick always with the right hand at the top of the handle.
- To anticipate the moment of the push-out of the ball.
- The first 3 steps should be short ones without lifting the head to look to the ball. A wide stride and lifting the head too early will negatively influence the speed of your sprint.
- In order to achieve maximum possible reach, play the ball with the right arm completely stretched and the right foot in front. Take care that the curve of your stick, facing forward, is in a vertical position at the moment of playing the ball and not inclined backward.

6TH.EXERCISE: QUICK RUNNING OUT AND BLOCKING THE BALL

Before the 7th. game is practised and a competition is organized, all players should experience the following drill:

The right shoulder of two players are facing each other. One player is positioned on the end line and the other on the 22.90meter line. After a visual signal (for instance a simulation of a push-out), both players run as quickly as possible towards the ball, which is placed in the centre between them.

The winner is the player who touches the ball first and moves it at least 2meters out of range of his opponent.

*Coaching objectives:*

- See the exercise no.5
- Besides trying to touch the ball first, it has to be moved out of the tackling area of the opponent.

“Comparing is for the ignorant one comfortable way to avoid judging”

Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

7TH. EXERCISE :BLOCKING THE SHOT ON GOAL

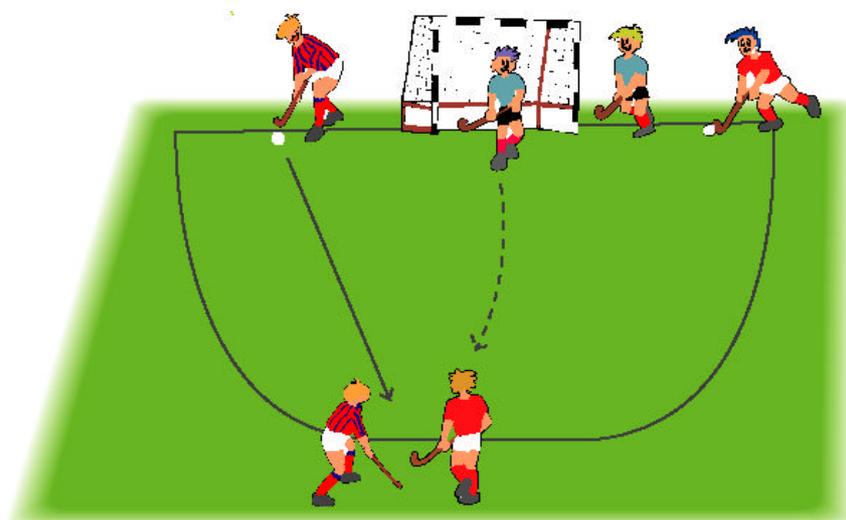


One attacker passes the ball with a slap or drag from the end line toward the edge of the circle where there are two teammates. One traps and the other strikes the ball at goal, despite the active defense of one opponent running out of the goal with the aim of blocking the shot.

After a goal is scored, or the ball has gone out of the circle, a second penalty corner is taken, but this time a 4th. attacker passes the ball in from the opposite side of the goal. Meanwhile, the first player running is substituted by another fresh teammate. In order to perfect the slap, drag or push-out, the trap and the strike at goal, no variations are allowed in the execution of the penalty corner.

For every goal, the attacker gains 2 points as do the defenders for a successful play with the ball out of the circle. But, should the attackers make a mistake and fail to score a goal, the defenders gain only one point. Any infringement of the rules by the defender is penalized with a penalty stroke. The team scoring 10 points first is the winner.

After the first competition both teams swap positions and functions. Finally, the coach may allow the attackers to vary their play instead of always hitting the ball directly towards the goal.



Coaching objectives:

- After having studied the habits of the opponent in pushing the ball out, try to anticipate its moment of execution.
- Don't look towards the ball during the first three steps.
- Be aggressive and confident as you are running out.
- Don't run in front of the goalkeeper. Let him see the trajectory of the ball all the time. That is why the first defender running out should always position himself on the left side of the goalkeeper, aiming to block the shot with the front of his stick only.
- Once the runner has managed to touch the ball, he should attempt to clear it out of the circle.
- After 2 or 3 successive interventions, vary your defence. For instance run out with less speed and anticipate a combination of the attackers
- To learn more about running out during the penalty corner defense.

HINTS FOR THE FIRST DEFENDER RUNNING OUT:

- Generally, the first defender positions himself on the left side of the goalkeeper. He grips the stick with the right hand at the top of the handle.
- In case of any infringement of the rules by the attackers at the circle's edge, the first defender should immediately take the free hit.
- The goalkeeper must inform the first attacker about his intentions. Should he decide to run out very far, two defenders should accompany him on either side with the intention of preventing a combination between the attackers, or to block a shot when the ball is passed from the end line towards an attacker in an inside-forward position.

“Small details may dramatically change the outcome”

Coaching objectives:

- To stimulate creativity and imagination in attack, the attackers should always look to surprise the opposing defence.
- In the presence of active defenders, the attackers should master 2 or 3 penalty corner variations.
- Gain experience concerning the effectiveness of determined penalty corner variations.
- To learn how to modify the attack considering the opponent's tactics in defense.
- To always look out for the rebound whether you are an attacker or a defender.
- To learn how to establish and improve understanding between the attacking players as well as between the defenders.
- To learn more about the functions of the second player running out.

**HINTS FOR THE SECOND DEFENDER:**

- The second defender runs out from the right goal-post with the main aim to anticipate and intercept with his front stick any pass between the opponents who are situated on the left side of the striker.
- At the same time he should also anticipate a possible return-pass to the player who pushed the ball in case he does it from the right side of the goal.
- Due to the danger of getting injured, tackling with the reversed stick should be avoided during the execution of the opponent's shot at goal.
- If the opponents hit the ball directly at the goal, the second defender should look out for a possible rebound of the ball from the goalkeeper's pads.

9TH EXERCISE: PENALTY CORNER TRAINING "FIVE AGAINST FOUR"

This game is similar to the previous one but with an extra player in attack (on the right side of the stick stopper) and also in defence (on the left side of the goal). A neutral goalkeeper is also added.

Before a competition between both teams is organized, the coach practise with both teams the attack and defence, stopping the play various times at the moment the shot at goal is taken. In this way the coach verifies the positions of all defenders as well as those of the attackers. When all players involved have understood their specific task in attack as well as in defence, the competition may start.

After 5 penalty corners are completed ,both teams change their positions and functions. The winning team is the one which scores more goals after having executed 10 penalty corners in attack and another 10 in defense. A penalty corner finishes with a goal, an infringement by an attacker or when the ball moves out of the 22.90meter zone.



Variation:

- The number of attackers is increased to six.
- The 6 defenders situated behind the centre line are now allowed to take part in the game.

Coaching objectives:

- Allow the goalkeeper to gain valuable experience in the defense of penalty corners
- Improve the cooperation in defence, including the goalkeeper's play.

SOME HINTS FOR THE GOALKEEPER'S PLAY:

- The goalkeeper is only allowed to play with full equipment, including helmet.
- The goalkeeper should generally move 3-4m out of his goal in order to reduce the shooting angle of the striker. He should be in a stationary upright position when the ball is trapped dead by the opponents.
- As well as the "flyer" (the first player running out), on his left side, the goalkeeper should anticipate the moment of the push-out with the aim to run out and assume in time an optimal ready- position to stop the shot.
- When the goalkeeper and his defenders have observed the opponents in their penalty corner routines in training or just before the match, they will find it easier to anticipate the exact moment of the push-out.
- If the goalkeeper assists the flyer before he runs towards the attackers, by putting one of his kickers behind the second foot of the flyer, this may help his team mate's acceleration but could result in poor concentration for the goalie's defensive task.
- Whenever the goalkeeper has not anticipated the hit, flick or pass of the striker, he should remain upright.



- Should the goalkeeper decide not to come out of the goal, he should inform his teammates of his intention.
- When the attackers decide to pass the ball, the goalkeeper has to adjust to the new position of the ball with small steps in order to be able to cover the shooting angle. The closer the goalkeeper is situated to the ball, the less angle the attackers have to score.
- The goalkeeper, after he has run out of the goal, should not let the forwards know his real intention. He should slightly incline his head and upper part of his body to the right side until his right knee almost touches the ground. In doing this, it looks as though he is going to lay down on his right side. Once the attackers have noticed his intention, they may decide to flick the ball. At this moment the goalkeeper returns to an upright position in order to save the flick or he lays completely down on his side in case the attackers hit the ball.
- To flop onto the ground from a standing position, this must occur quickly. First bend at the right knee, taking the body weight to the right side and then stretch out the upper part of your body, so that there is no gap under the right arm or stick, which is held firmly, half-way up the shaft. When lying down on the right side, with the pads one on top of the other and as the chest facing the ball, there should remain no gaps for the ball to travel underneath the goalkeeper into the goal. The legs are the first part of the body to go to the ground.

- The goalkeeper has to wait in a standing position until the ball is definitely going to be hit. Only at the moment of impact between the stick and the ball and after having processed all other relevant information he starts to assume a lying position. Both pads are together and should present a large barrier when the ball arrives onto them.
- The left hand should be used to stop and protect helmet and especially the throat. The small area not covered on the left side of the goalkeeper (who lies horizontally on the ground) is looked after a defender who moves slightly out of the goal.
- Frequent training of the penalty corner defence with tennis balls, mini hockey balls or official balls will build up the goalkeeper's confidence.

SOME HINTS FOR THE DEFENDERS BEHIND THE CENTER LINE:

- Two of the six defenders should run as quickly as possible into the shooting circle to assist their 5 team mates in case an attacker doesn't hit the ball directly at goal or one of the fellow-defenders commits an infringement outside of the circle. In this latter case there being a free hit for the attacking team the presence of two or even more defenders is crucial for winning back possession of the ball.
- The remaining four defenders must prepare for a possible counter- attack, anticipating a successful penalty corner defence with a following quick through pass. Two of them should remain close to the centerline. There, they "serve as bridge" for the remaining two defenders offer themselves in the depth of the field. Besides ensuring depth in their possible attacking action, they also should make sure of their possible counter-attack.

"To determine the player's performance, his level should not be compared with that of the others. instead it should always be related to his own capabilities"

10TH EXERCISE: IMPROVE THE DEFENCE ON THE GOAL-LINE

From a distance of 12m one attacker hits 10 tennis balls one after another to the goal which is defended by two opponents, one close to the right and the other close to the left goal post.

After every hit, the attacker has to leave the circle before he runs in again to strike the next ball. The two defenders who manage to save the maximum number of the 10 balls directed at the goal mouth are the winners.

**Variations:**

- Only one opponent in goal has to defend it.
- A goalkeeper is added in order to develop understanding between the goalie and the defender.
- Instead of tennis balls, 10 mini hockey balls are hit at the goal which is defended by goalkeeper and two defenders .

“Before criticizing what has been done, an opinion should be ready on what should be done”

Coaching objectives:

- The defender, situated very close to the left goal-post, must anticipate a save only with the front of his stick. Because of his position, he should not attempt to save the ball with the reverse stick (which would demand more time).
- The defender situated close to the right goal-post should come half a meter inside. This position will allow him to concentrate only on a front stick save, because all balls directed to his left side have to be saved by the goalkeeper.
- At the moment the ball is hit or flicked at goal, both defenders must step in front of the goal line, which they are not allowed to touch with their heels.
- In order to assure good balance, legs should be shoulder-width apart and well bent.
- The stick is held close to the defender's feet and on the ground with the curve facing the oncoming ball. This way, a minimum number of movements are necessary to trap the ball with the front of the stick.
- Should the ball rebound from the goalkeeper's pads, the defender closest to the ball has to get it before the arrival of any attacker. The ball should be cleared with a forehand slap with the player facing the centerline or even the goal, thus protecting the ball with his body. When the ball is cleared, the stick has to remain on the ground in order to assure that the ball runs along the ground, a quick execution of the slap and accuracy in directing the ball to a teammate or toward a zone, which is not controlled by opponents.

