



CORE SKILLS FOR HOCKEY



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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this booklet is to complement the DVD which accompanies it. It contains only the main coaching points for each of the skills demonstrated on the DVD and gives examples of practices that could be used to develop the skills. It is not, in writing, an attempt to comprehensively cover every aspect of technique as this can be elicited from the visual images.

The ordering and numbering of the skills in the booklet corresponds with those on the DVD.

These core skills underpin the 5-3-2 system of play which is the one being adopted by all England national age group teams. The positions referred to in this booklet are those used in this framework. A detailed description of this system can be found as a download in the coaching section on the England Hockey website: www.EnglandHockey.co.uk. The hope is that this will help develop a common approach to techniques and language across the United Kingdom. There is no copyright on this DVD and we would urge widespread copying and distribution.

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Key

Player movement	
Pass	
Dribble	
Shot	
Cones	
Balls	

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1. GRIPS

1. **Basic**
2. **Double 'V'**
3. **One-handed**
4. **Frying pan**
5. **Reverse**
6. **Short handle**

1. **Basic grip**

Used for receive, dribble, push, reverse stick pass - off the dribble, rebounds.

Hands apart.

Left hand at the top of the stick.

Both 'V's formed by thumb and index finger are in line with the toe edge of the stick.

To rotate the stick the left hand moves to the right and the stick turns through the right hand.

2. **Double 'V' grip**

Used for hit, long handle slap.

Both hands together at the top of the stick.

Both 'V's formed by thumb and index finger in line with the toe edge of the stick, but the right

hand may be moved a little to the right.

3. **One-handed**

Left hand only

Used for one-handed dribbling, jab, one-handed tackling.

Hand at the top of the stick.

The 'V' formed between thumb and index finger is in line with the back edge of the stick for dribbling one handed- reverse side. For the other skills the 'V' is in line with the toe edge.

When used on reverse side toe of the stick points downwards, on open side toe points upwards.

Right hand only

Used for one-handed receiving, one-handed tackling, one-handed dribbling.

Hand at the top of the stick.

The 'V' formed between thumb and index finger is in line with the toe edge of the stick.

4. **Frying pan**

Used for reverse stick sweep, reverse stick flat hit.

Both hands together at the top of the stick.

The 'V's formed by the thumb and index fingers of both hands are in line with the flat side of the stick.

5. **Reverse**

Used for the scoop.

Hands apart.

The 'V's formed by the thumb and index fingers of both hands are in line with the flat side of the stick.

6. **Short handle**

Used for clip hit, rebounds.

From the basic grip the left hand moves down the stick to join the right hand.

The 'V's formed by the thumb and index finger of both hands are in line with the toe edge of the stick.

2. PASSING

Open stick

1. Push
2. Hit
3. Clip hit
4. Long-handled slap
5. Aerial

Reverse stick

6. Upright hit
7. Reverse stick - off the dribble
8. Sweep
9. Scoop

Open stick

1. **Push**
Basic grip hands apart.
Keep low.
Ball starts near right foot.
Stick stays in contact with ball as weight is transferred from right to left foot.
Follow through, keeping stick on ball for as long as possible.
For power need to be side on to the target, butt of stick low with a tighter grip.
2. **Hit (off the left foot)**
Double 'V' grip.
Ball position level with front foot.
Feet and shoulders in line with target.
Get low.
Flat backswing, head still and level.
Turn the shoulders.
Cock the wrists on the backswing.
Step towards the ball.
Right knee low to the ground at impact.
Hitting on the move
Right foot crosses over behind left foot to get body into the correct position.
3. **Clip hit**
Left hand slides down the grip to meet the right, in the short handle grip.
Shorter vertical backswing with an emphasis on wrists cocking.
Ball position level with left foot on impact.
4. **Long-handled slap**
Double 'V' grip.
Step to the ball.
Hands low to the ground.
Sweep the stick along the floor before contact.
Strike the ball just above the hook of the stick.
On follow through the right hand crosses over the left.

5. Aerial

Basic grip.

Get low, step in.

Ball is in front of left foot.

Side on to target line.

Smoothly accelerate the stick head once in contact with the ball.

Just before release lever the left hand down against the right for power.

Reverse stick

6. Upright hit

Use the double 'V' grip hands at top of stick. 'V's in line with back edge.

Toe of the stick points to the floor.

Feet at right angles to the passing line.

Rotate the shoulders to the left on back swing.

Stick nearly vertical at impact.

Ball positioned slightly to left of right foot.

7. Reverse stick - off the dribble

Basic grip hands apart.

Arms away from body.

Short backswing.

Hit the pass with the right hand.

Ball opposite whichever foot is leading.

8. Sweep

Frying pan grip.

Stick stays in contact with the ground on backswing and follow through.

Hit middle of ball with toe edge of stick.

Ball in front of right foot.

9. Scoop

Reverse grip.

Ball level with front foot.

Stick under ball.

Pull up hard with right hand.

3. RECEIVING

Scanning prior to receiving will inform the player of defenders' and team mates' positions. This information will dictate where the receiver's next action will move the ball. Scanning after receiving will enable the player to check the information already received to help make correct decisions. Players are advised to look for long passes first as these will be the most dangerous to the defence, and short passes second.

Open stick

1. **From the front**
2. **From the left**
3. **From the right**
4. **From behind in flow**
5. **From behind with pull left to right**
6. **Aerial**
7. **Bouncing ball**

Reverse stick

8. **From the front**
9. **From the right**
10. **From behind in flow**
11. **From behind with pull right to left**
12. **Flat two-handed**
13. **Flat one-handed**

Receiving open stick

1. **From the front**
 - Basic grip.
 - Scan, attack the ball.
 - Stick low to ground.
 - Let the stick 'give' a little on contact.
 - Contact just outside right foot.
 - Angle the stick to control the ball.
 - Scan.
2. **From the left**
 - Basic grip.
 - Scan.
 - Stick down early.
 - Let ball come across body.
 - Receive outside line of right foot.
 - Angle the stick to control the ball.
 - Scan.

3. From the right

Basic grip.

Scan.

Stick down early to receive.

Turn body towards the ball.

Receive behind right foot.

Receive in stride.

Scan.

4. From behind in flow

Basic grip.

Scan.

Open stick.

Allow the ball to come past body.

Angle the stick to control the ball.

Scan.

5. From behind with pull right to left

Basic grip.

Scan.

Allow ball past feet.

Use one touch to move the ball across body to outside right foot.

Scan.

6. Aerial

Basic grip.

Scan.

Keep the arms away from body.

Stick in front of body pointing to the right.

Take the ball early.

Control ball with the shaft of the stick, do not let it bounce.

Move off at an angle with first touch.

Scan.

7. Bouncing ball

Basic grip.

Scan.

Stick upright.

Attack the ball.

Receive on the shaft.

Angle the stick forward for control.

Scan.

Receiving reverse stick

8. From the front

Basic grip.

Scan.

Turn to get side on.

Receive just behind the left foot.

Angle the stick to control the ball.

Scan.

Get ball to open side early.

9. From the right

Basic grip.

Scan.

Let ball run across body to receive outside left foot.

Angle the the stick to control the ball.

Scan.

Get ball back to open side early.

10. From behind in flow

Basic grip.

Scan.

Let ball run past body.

Receive with stick angled to control ball.

Scan.

11. From behind pull right to left

Basic grip.

Scan.

Let ball come past body.

One touch to move to ball across the body.

Scan.

Get ball quickly to open stick.

12. Flat two-handed

Basic grip.

Scan.

Stick flat on ground to left of body.

Shaft of stick angled forward to allow transfer to open stick.

Receive on shaft.

Scan.

13. Flat one-handed

One handed left hand at top of stick.

Scan.

Receive on shaft near left hand.

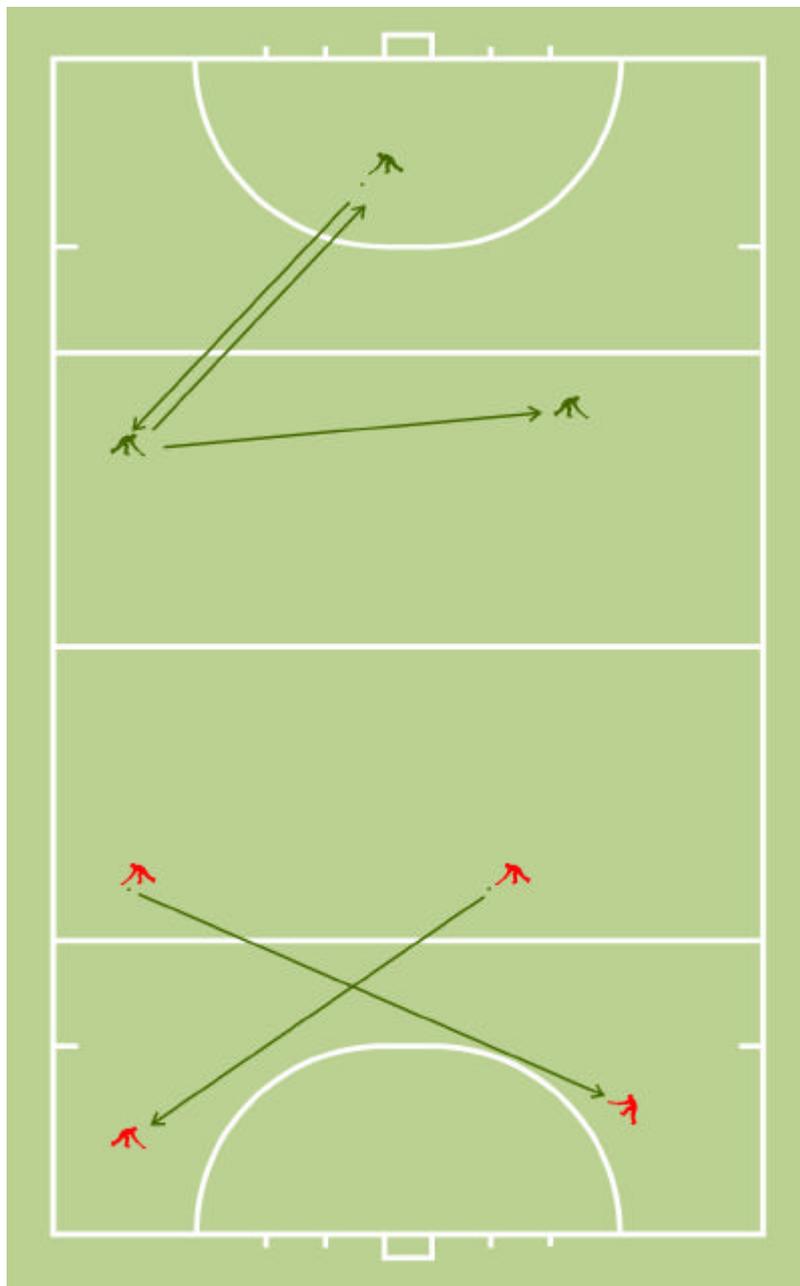
First touch deflection to the forehand.

Scan.

Practices for passing and receiving

The aim is to give a few practices that can be used in the various passing and receiving skills. It is not the intention to add coaching points to the practices as these are covered in the particular core skills coaching points and DVD.

The passing and receiving topics have been linked, because as coaches we would not generally work on these in isolation as it would not be very time efficient.



1. Passing in 3s

Organisation

Pass in any order.

Themes

No static receive.

Receive on the move.

Fake to receive and move in one direction; then move in the other.

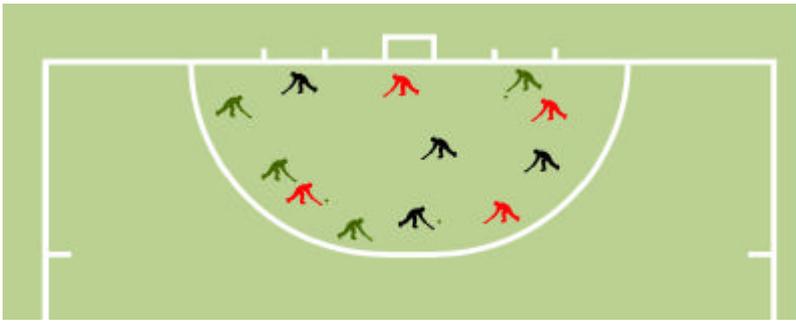
Disguise on the pass.

Pass and move.

Can be used for hit, clip hit, long-handed slap and aerial.

Development

Play in 4s with two balls to improve vision, give more touches and apply more pressure.



2. "1, 2, 3, 4"

Organisation

3 or 4 teams in coloured bibs.

Each is numbered 1, 2, 3 or 4.

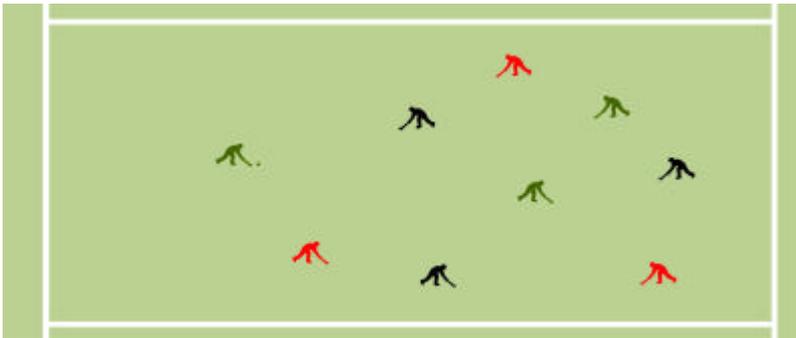
They have to pass in that order with '4' passing to '1'.

Themes

Vision - "Scan" - look to see where next pass is. "Touch" - move the ball to where you want to use it next.

"Check" - make sure the pass is still on. "Pass". Making this practice 2-touch will increase pressure.

Can also have: push pass only, clip hit, long-handed slap or hit, but in a bigger area, disguise on pass, no static receive, ball carrying position- hands high on stick, open body position to see all passes, accelerate to space.



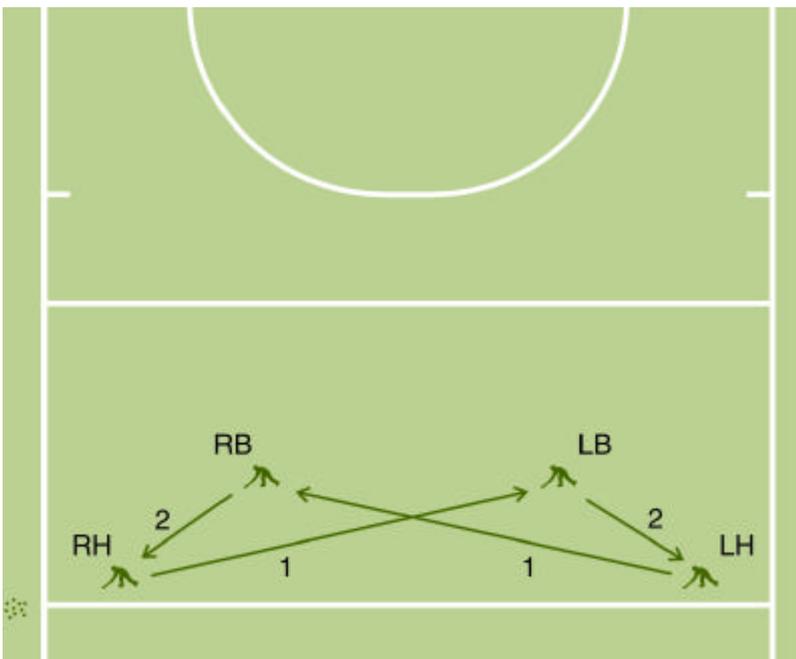
3. 3v3v3

This is a possession game.

Blacks and reds try to keep possession against greens.

If possession is lost, the team of 3 that lost it now become the defenders against the other six.

Vary the size of the playing area to suit the ability of the players.

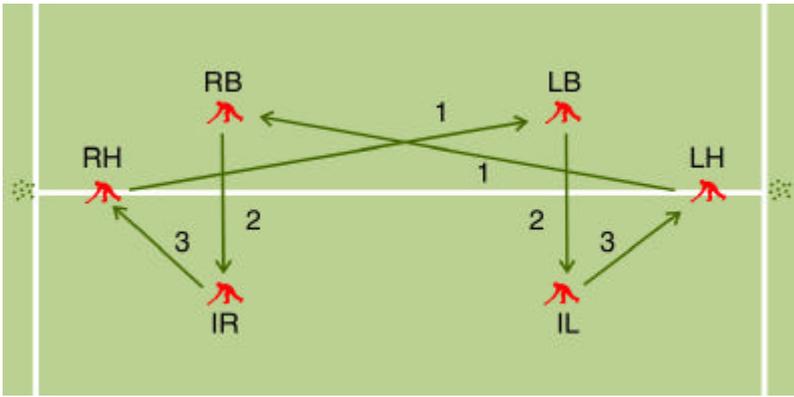


4. Positional passing back four

It is crucial in these practices that individual players practice the skills that relate to their position.

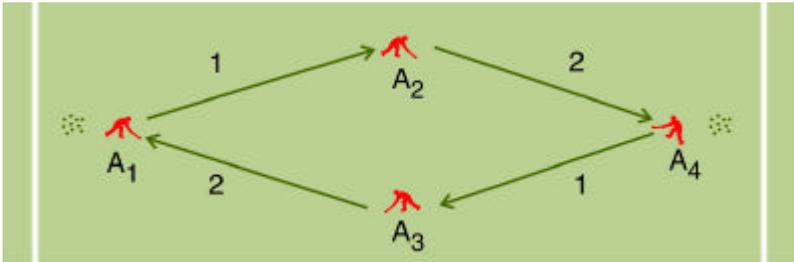
Organisation

Two balls start from RH and LH at the same time. The passing pattern and tempo is maintained. It is important that the players play as they would in a game, e.g. RH, scan before receive, let ball come past right foot etc.



Development

Add IR and IL and pass as indicated on the diagram.



5. Receiving from behind

Organisation

A1 and A4 pass to A2 and A3 at same time.

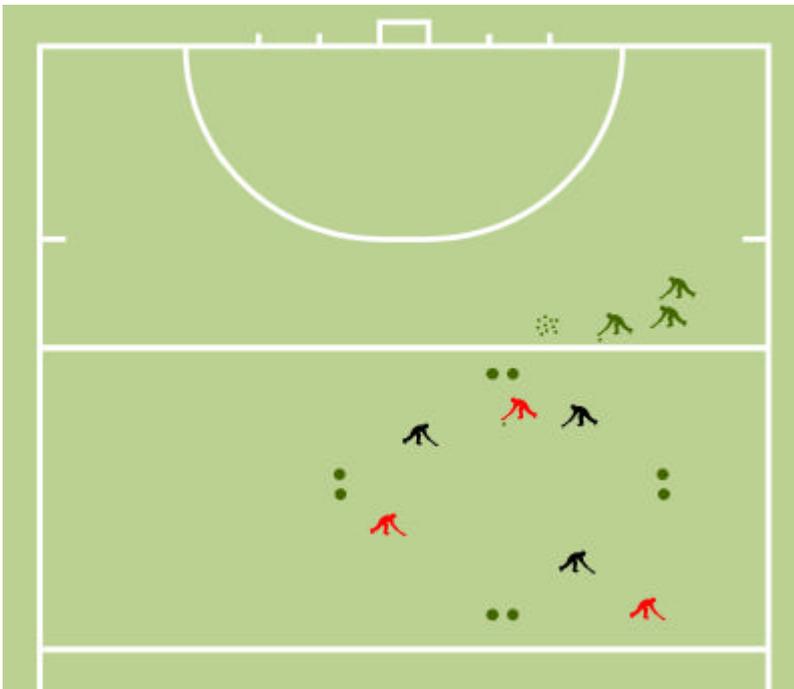
A2 and A3 pass to A4 and A1 respectively.

Themes

- Receive open stick.
- Receive reverse stick.
- Lead and receive.
- Lead, re-lead and receive.

Next are two good all-round passing and receiving games that can incorporate the many passing and receiving skills.

The size of the playing area is dictated by the experience of the player - the better the player - the less space and vice versa.



6. 3v3 with 4 goals

Organisation

Reds versus blacks - greens are waiting to come on. If a ball is lost, one of the greens will be designated to pass a ball on to maintain intensity in the game.

The object of the game is to make a completed pass through either side of any of the four goals.

Teams rotated at suitable intervals.

Themes in these two games:

- Ball protection.
- Open body prior to receive to see all the pitch.
- Carrying the ball where most passes can be seen.
- Disguise on the pass.
- Scan prior to receive.
- Scanning defensively (i.e. not ball watching).

4. MOVING WITH THE BALL

Dribbling

1. Ball carrying position
2. Slalom
3. Indian dribble
4. Pull back
5. One-handed - open side
6. One-handed - reverse side
7. Comfort on the ball with forward vision

Elimination skills

8. Drag right to left
9. Drag left to right
10. Dummy drag right drag left
11. Dummy drag left drag right
12. Lift open stick
13. Lift reverse stick
14. Push and run around

Dribbling

All the dribbling techniques with both hands on the stick have two things in common:

- The right hand as high up as possible, whilst still maintaining control, to increase the range of vision.
- Constantly scanning to look for passes, not only in front, but left and right and behind.

1. Ball carrying position

Basic grip.

Dribble the ball in front of the body and to the right, at about 2 o'clock.

Keep the stick in contact with the ball so that a pass can be made immediately.

Remember that this is the basic position, and when a player is in different parts of the pitch the ball position will change when searching for a pass.

The general rule will be for the player to carry the ball where they can see most of the pitch.

2. Slalom

Basic grip.

Two methods are shown on the DVD.

Keep the ball in front of the body.

3. Indian dribble

Basic grip.

The left hand is turned to the right so that the stick can be fully rotated.

The stick turns through the right hand; the right hand does not turn over.

Keep the ball out in front of the body.

Use short and long drags.

These frequent ball movements when being closed down make it difficult for defenders.

4. Pull back

Basic grip.

Make short pull backs of the ball whilst continuing to dribble.

Ball to right and in front of the body.

Keep stick in contact with the ball.

5. One-handed open side

One-handed grip.

Keep the stick in contact with the ball.

Ball carried to the side of the body which helps protect from opponents.

This upright posture gives good vision for frequent scanning.

6. One-handed reverse side

The coaching points are as above, but with the ball carried on the left side of the body.

7. Comfort on the ball with forward vision

Often when being closed down, players turn away from their opponent and lose forward vision, so pull the ball back to behind right foot, drift into space scanning for passes.

Elimination skills

Following any eliminations it is important to "cut out" the opponent, i.e. having moved wide, get back on the original line of run to make it difficult for opponent to tackle back.

8. Drag right to left

Basic grip.

Fake to beat the opponent on reverse stick side.

Wide drag with the open stick to the left.

Control the ball with the reverse stick.

Scan.

Cut out.

9. Drag left to right

Basic grip.

Fake to beat the opponent on open stick side.

Wide drag with the reverse stick to the right.

Control the ball with the open stick.

Scan.

Cut out.

10. Dummy drag right drag left

Basic grip.

Dummy to make a reverse stick pass to the right, let the stick go past the ball.

Wide drag with the open stick to the left.

Control the ball with reverse stick.

Scan.

Cut out.

11. Dummy drag left drag right

Basic grip.

Dummy to make an open stick pass to the left, let the stick go past the ball.

Wide drag with the reverse stick to the right.

Control the ball with the open stick.

Scan.

Cut out.

12. Lift open stick

Basic grip.

Fake to go down open stick side of opponent.

Wide drag with reverse stick.

Keep the ball out in front.

Lift the ball as the flat stick challenge comes in.

Scan.

Cut out.

13. Lift reverse stick

Basic grip.

Fake to go down reverse stick side of opponent.

Wide drag with the open stick to the left.

Keep the ball out in front.

Lift the ball as the flat stick challenge comes in.

Scan.

Cut out.

14. Push and run around

Basic grip.

Fake to go down open stick side of defender.

As defender's stick comes across, push the ball past the left foot and run around to collect.

Scan.

Practices for dribbling and elimination are to be found at the end of the section on defending as most of these two sets of skills would be coached at the same time.

5. GOAL SCORING

1. **Hit**
2. **Push**
3. **Clip hit**
4. **Squeeze**
5. **Chip**
6. **Sweep - open stick**
7. **Sweep - reverse stick**
8. **Reverse stick flat hit**
9. **Flick - open stick**
10. **Flick - reverse stick**

Deflections

11. **Open stick upright**
12. **Open stick flat**
13. **Reverse stick upright**
14. **Reverse stick flat**

Rebounds

Players need to be able to score from wherever the ball falls around their body. Therefore they need a range of skills which will enable them to do this.

It is vital that players scan frequently in the circle so that they can see both the goal (keeping a picture in their mind of where the goal is whilst their attention is on the ball) and read the defender's position. In the circle the defenders are constantly trying to front and side mark so that they can beat the attacker to the ball. Therefore passes need to be played away from the defender.

Players need to practice these techniques in all areas of the circle as very few goals are scored from the perimeter of the circle.

It is good coaching technique to make as many practices as possible end with a shot(s).

1. **Hit**

Double 'V' grip.

Ball position level with front foot.

Feet and shoulders in line with target.

Get low.

Flat backswing, head still and level.

Turn the shoulders.

Cock the wrists on the backswing.

Step towards the ball.

Right knee low to the ground at impact.

Hitting on the move

Right foot crosses over behind left foot to get body into the correct position.

2. Push

Basic grip hands apart.

Keep low.

Ball starts near right foot.

Stick stays in contact with ball as weight is transferred from right to left foot.

Follow through, keeping stick on ball for as long as possible.

For power need to be side on to the target, butt of stick low with a tighter grip.

3. Clip hit

Left hand slides down the grip to meet the right, in the short handle grip.

Shorter vertical backswing with an emphasis on wrists cocking.

Ball position level with left foot on impact.

4. Squeeze

Double 'V' grip.

Ball behind back foot.

Shoulders pointing at the target.

Keep arms and stick in the same plane.

Hit down hard on the top/back of the ball.

5. Chip

Double 'V' grip.

Ball in front of lead foot.

Hit the bottom the ball.

Ball position and stick angle will dictate the height the ball goes.

6. Sweep - open stick

Double 'V' grip.

The ball is played first time.

Weight on left foot on impact.

Hands close to the ground with the stick horizontal.

Contact the ball on the shaft just above the toe.

7. Sweep - reverse stick

Frying pan grip.

The ball is played first time.

Stick stays in contact with the ground on backswing and follow through.

Hit middle of ball with toe edge of stick.

Ball in front of right foot.

8. Reverse stick flat hit

Frying pan grip.

Flat back swing.

Ball level with right foot.

Stick is as horizontal as possible at impact.

Contact the ball with the edge of the stick.

9. Flick - open stick

Basic grip.

Sideways on.

Ball can start behind the left foot with a short drag before release or it can be level with left foot.

Stick is under the ball and the pushing action is upwards.

10. Flick - reverse stick

Reverse grip.

Ball just to the right of the right foot.

Stick is under the ball.

Right hand pulls up strongly.

Deflections - the ball is played first time

11. Open stick upright

Basic grip.

Stick is placed down in the line of the pass.

Stick face angled to change the direction of the pass towards the goal.

Angle the face of the stick backwards to lift the ball.

Ball played with the toe of the stick.

12. Open stick flat

Basic grip.

Stick is horizontal.

Stick angled to change the direction of the ball towards the goal.

Ball played with the shaft of the stick.

Angle the face of the stick backwards to lift the ball.

13. Reverse stick upright

Reverse stick grip.

Stick is placed in the line of the pass.

Stick face angled to change the direction of the pass towards the goal.

Angle the face of the stick backwards to lift the ball.

Ball is played with the hook of the stick.

14. Reverse stick flat

One-handed left hand grip.

Stick is horizontal.

Stick angled to change the direction of the ball to the goal.

Ball is played with the shaft of the stick.

Angle the face of the stick backwards to lift the ball.

Rebounds

Rebound techniques are generally one-touch techniques and are too numerous and varied to describe in detail, so they are presented only as visual images. There are, however, some general points to make: Start with basic grip.

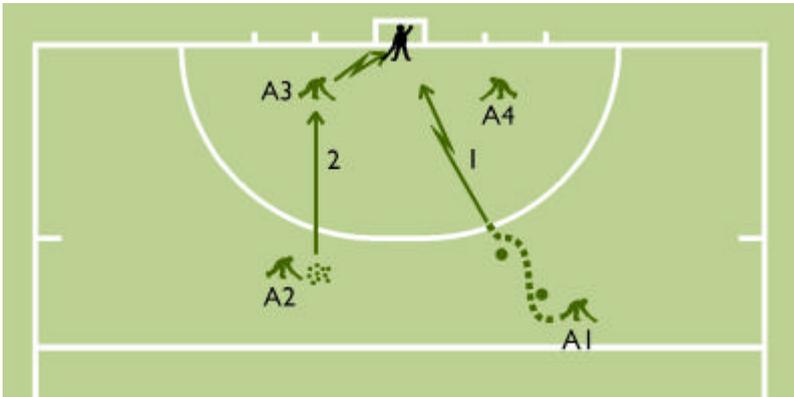
Prepare early with body and stick low.

When a team mate is shooting follow the path of the ball. Do not watch the goal keeper.

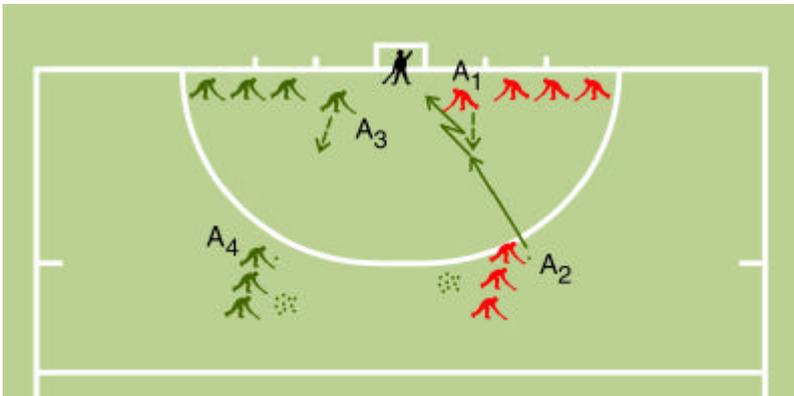
Be prepared to improvise.

PRACTICES FOR GOAL SCORING

Deflections

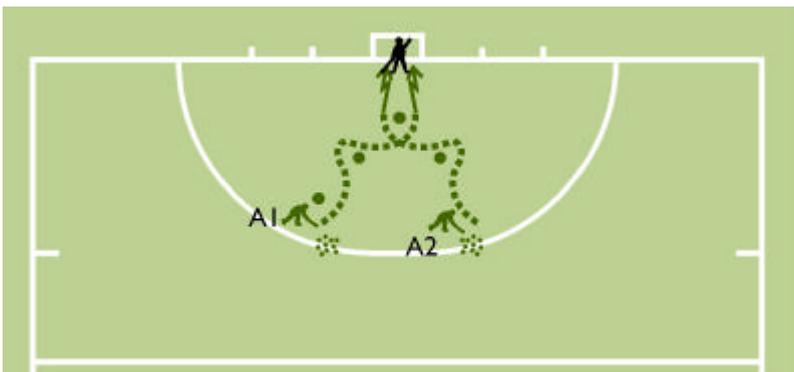


1. A1 dribbles through cones and shoots.
A2 plays second ball immediately after the shot to A3 or A4 for deflection. A3 and A4 may occasionally elect to pass second ball back to A1. No rebound on the first shot. Rebounds played out on the second shot.



2. A1 leads to A2, who passes for a deflection.
Then A3 leads for A4.
A1 then joins back of A2s queue. A2 goes to A4, A4 to A3, A3 to A1.
Development
To play a different sort of deflection, make the pass A2 to A3, then A4 to A1 etc.

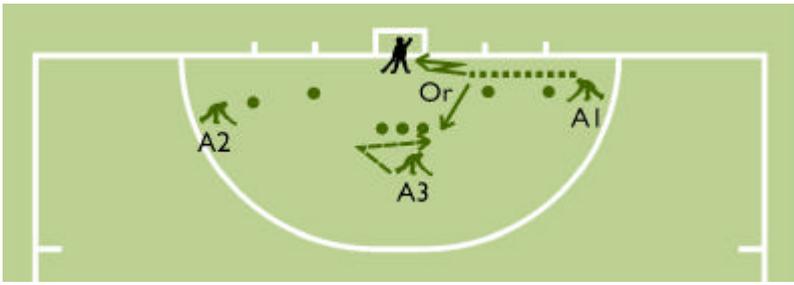
Close in shooting



3. A1 and A2 dribble the ball through the cones in turn, and push, flick or slap shot usually low and in the corner of the goal.

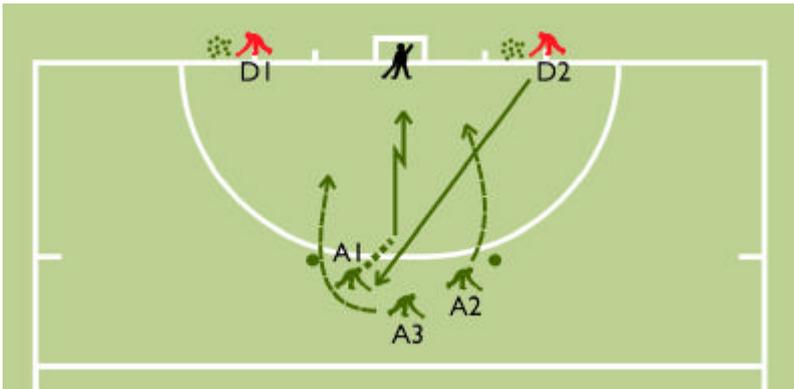


4. A1 and A2 dribble the ball through cones in turn and pass to A3 for a close in shot.



5. A1 or A2 dribbles straight in for shot or pass.

Perimeter shooting

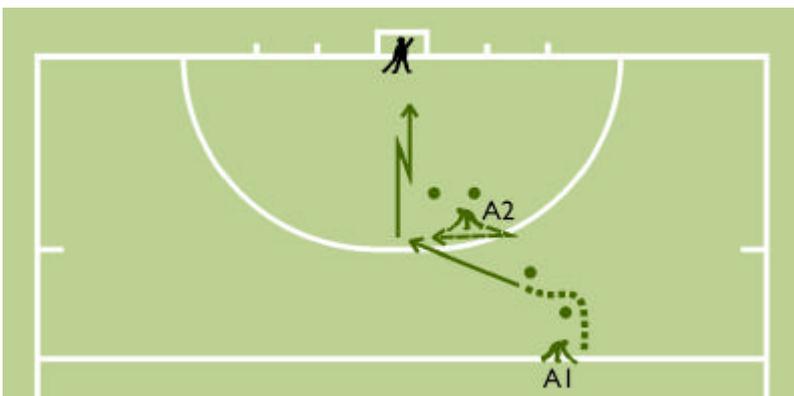


6. D1 and D2 try to hit flat balls between the cones. A1, A2 and A3 attempt to intercept dribble into circle and shoot. Two non-interceptors rebound.

Developments

1. As above, but now A's must make a pass before the shot.
2. As above, but now D who did not pass becomes an active defender.
3. As in 1, but now both Ds try to stop the A's scoring.

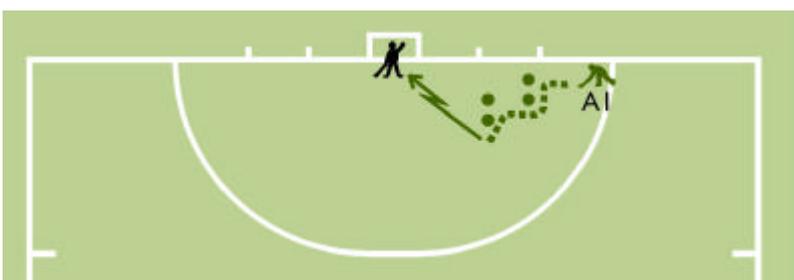
Reverse stick shooting



7. A1 dribbles through cones. A2 leads then re-leads sharply and signals for a pass from A1 for a reverse stick shot.

Development

Different parts of the circle.



8. A1 dribbles into circle, drags left to reverse stick as they encounter two sets of cones, then shoots reverse stick.

For additional goal scoring practices see the section on creating space.

6. CREATING SPACE

1. **V-cut**
2. **Using the blind spot**
3. **Backdoor**
4. **Lead to attack the back of the defender (reverse)**
5. **Lead to attack the back of the defender (open)**
6. **Creating space 2 v1**

1. **V-cut**

Used mainly against back and side marking defenders.

Move in a straight line towards opponent and slightly in the direction of the goal.

Push off strongly on the foot nearest opponent.

Move in a straight line slightly towards the passer.

2. **Using the blind spot**

Used against side and front marking defenders.

Get behind defender and in line with defender and ball.

When defender looks at the ball, either move sharply back to receive pass in the space made away from the defender, or fake to do that and receive on the other side.

3. **Backdoor**

Used against front marking.

Move towards the goal.

When the defender looks away, move quickly to the ball, but on the other side of the defender.

4. **Lead to attack the back of the defender (reverse)**

Make a diagonal run behind the defender to receive on the reverse stick.

If the defender covers the move, side step off the right foot.

Re-lead to receive on open stick.

5. **Lead to attack the back of the defender (open)**

Make a diagonal run behind the defender to receive on the open stick.

If the defender covers the move, side step off left foot.

Re-lead to receive on reverse stick.

6. **Creating space 2 v1**

Note when practising this move, the defender is only defending the potential receiver - and is not defending a 2 v1.

Dribbler changes direction sharply towards receiver.

The receiver darts out to the right.

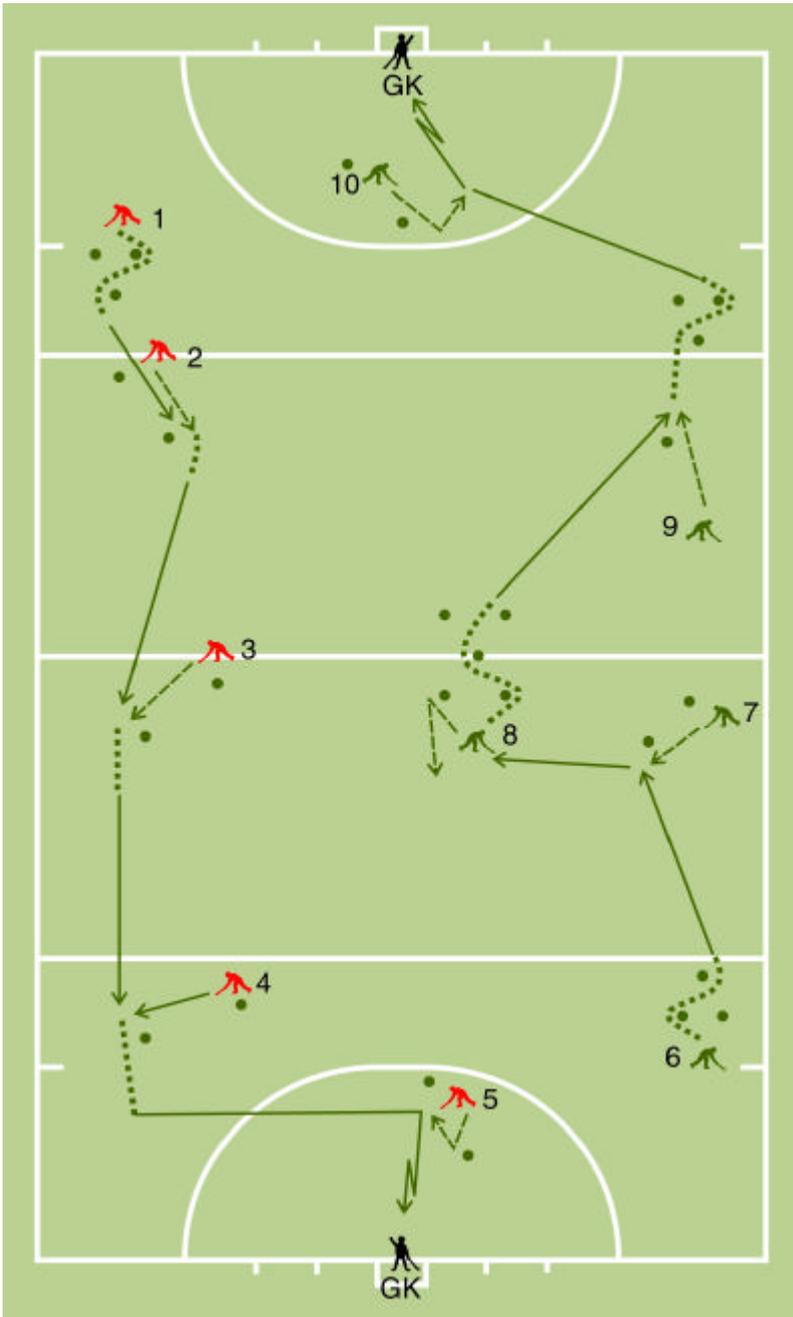
This creates space for the pass.

The receiver gets level with the defender so that the pass eliminates the defender. If the defender stops the pass being given by getting in the passing lane, the receiver re-leads.

The passer disguises the pass by looking at where the receiver was and delivers a weighted through pass.

Practices for creating space

All of the following practices are also good for passing and receiving.



1. Passing circuit

Note all movements of receivers are from one cone to the next.

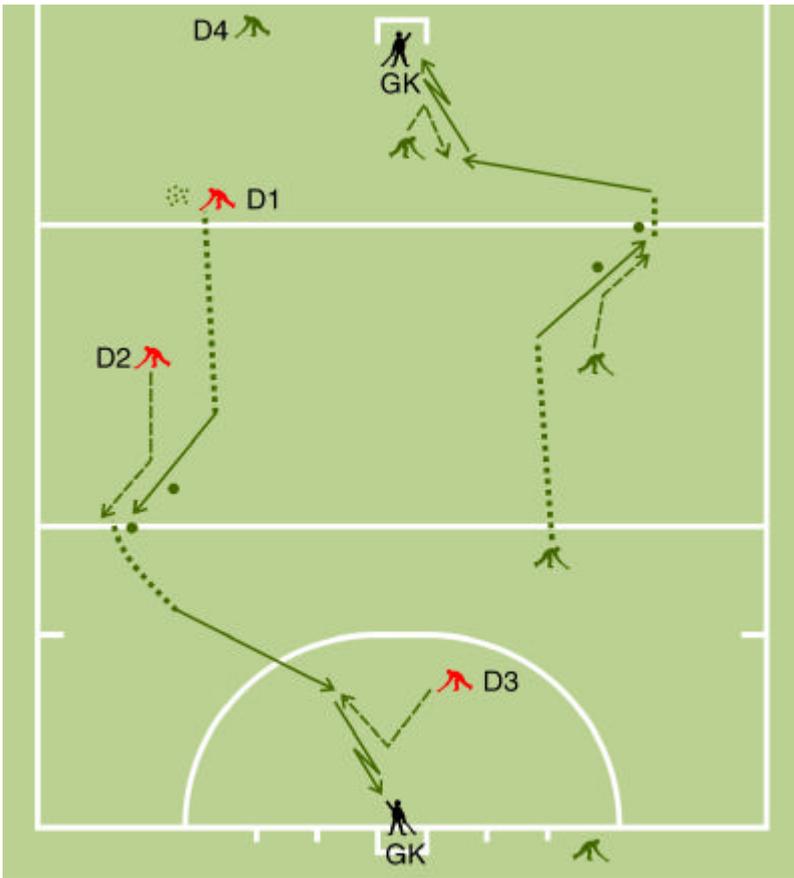
1, dribbles through cones pass to 2, who moves towards cone to receive pass and pass to 3, who moves towards cone to receive pass and pass to 4, who moves towards cone to receive pass dribble and cross for 5, who moves to receive pass and shoot.

6, dribbles through cones and passes to

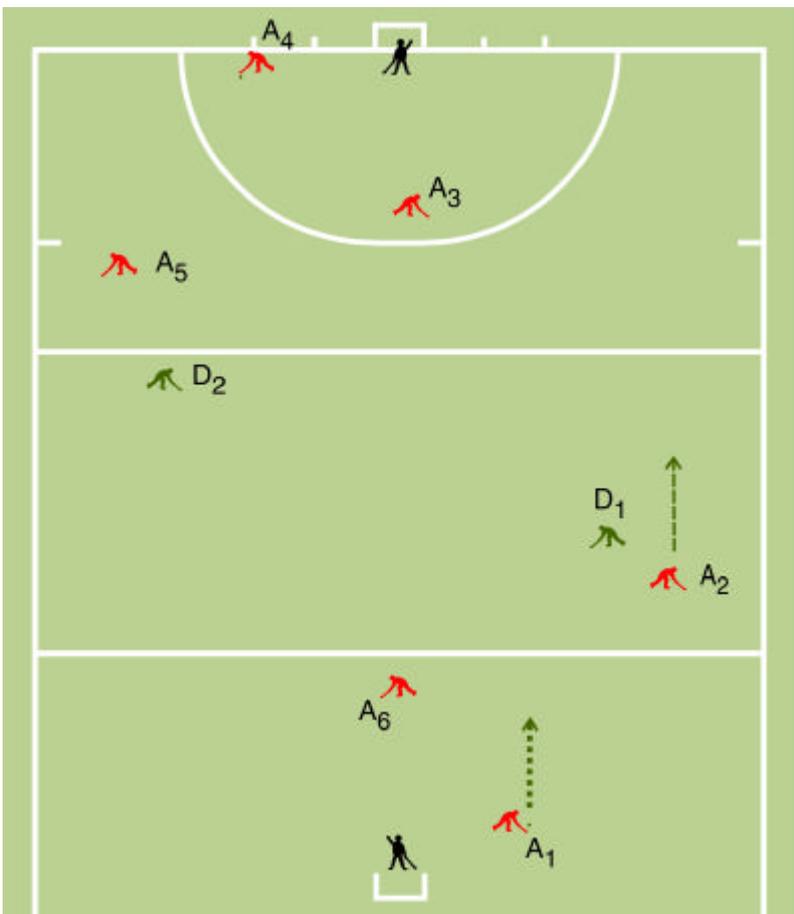
7, who moves towards cone to receive pass and pass to 8, who makes a lead to get free before dribbling through cones and passing to

9, who receives in stride and dribbles through cones and crosses to 10, who gets free and shoots

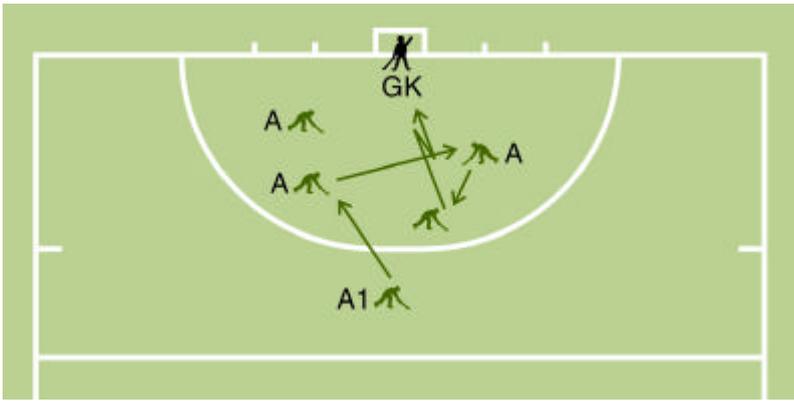
All players follow pass to next station.



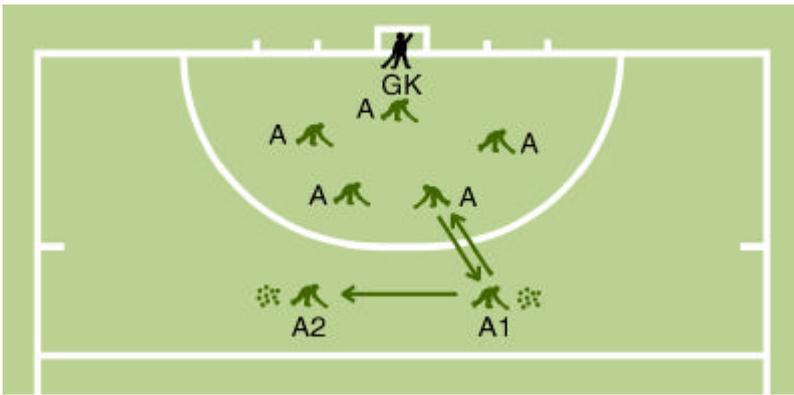
2. D1 dribbles at pace.
 D2 leads out.
 D3 get free lead to receive from D2's cross.
 D3 shoots.
 All move round one spot.
 Same down the other side.
 Then for left hand side.
 Then with the receiver re-leading.



3. D1 only defends against A2 to try to stop A2 receiving. D1 does NOT defend the 2 v1.
 A1 and A2 attack as in the DVD.
 If A2 receives, the pass goes to A3 for a shot.
 If A2 cannot get free, A1 passes to A3 for a shot.
 At the same time, A4, 5, 6 and D2 operate on the other side of the pitch.



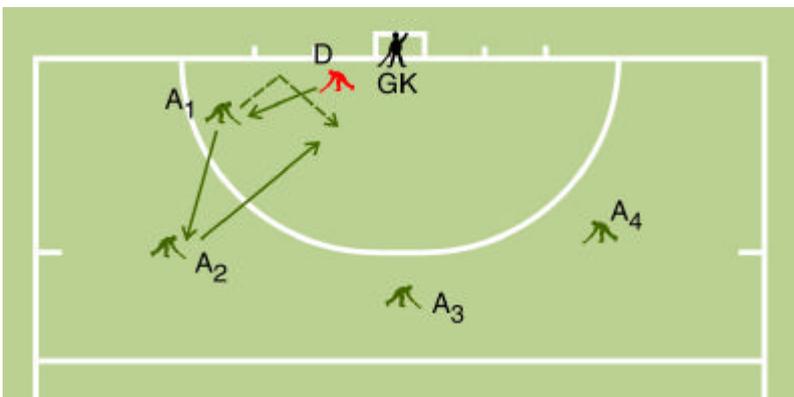
4. A1 feeds other As who control and shoot.
Development to other As making 1 or 2 passes before the shot (as in diagram).



5. A1 passes into circle and receives ball back.
A's all run a sudden move to get free.
A1 passes to A2.
A's run a sudden move to get free.
A2 passes in.
A's develop a shot or pass.



6. As above, but now with defenders in.



7. D passes to A1, and closes down.
A1 passes to A2 and leads to try to get free for pass and shot.
A2 holds for two seconds and if a pass cannot be made, passes to A3.
A3 the same to A4.
If the pass cannot be made or is not successful, defender wins.
Next pair go.
This is also a good practice for individual defending in the circle.

7. DEFENDING

1. **Closing down and channelling - open stick**
2. **Closing down and channelling - reverse stick**
3. **Interception - reverse stick**
4. **Interception - open stick**

Tackling - open stick

5. **Two-handed block**
6. **One-handed block**

Tackling - reverse stick

7. **One-handed block**
8. **Steal**

1. **Closing down and channelling - open stick**

Close down on a curve to force the attacker onto the open stick side.

Maintain the distance of a stick and step away from opponent.

Get as side on as possible.

Jab with stick and fake with body to keep opponent's eyes on the ball, so that they cannot see passes.

2. **Closing down and channelling - reverse stick**

Generally we want to close and channel onto the open stick side where defence is strongest.

There are, however, circumstances when channeling on the reverse side is required. If the attacker receives on the left of the defender and the defender is not in a position to overtake and force onto the open stick is one instance. The other is when there is no defensive cover in place, and to force onto open stick would be dangerous. This would tend to happen in the defensive inside left channel. A general rule would be, if in doubt force to the outside.

Scan to see if cover defender is in place.

Close on a curve to force to the reverse side.

Maintain a distance of a stick and step away from opponent.

Get as side on as possible.

Fake with stick and body to keep opponent's eyes on the ball, so that they cannot see passes.

Interception

Defender needs to be in a position that is ball side of their opponent and which will enable them to see their opponent and the ball.

Distance from opponent will be determined by the opponent's distance from the ball, i.e. the closer the opponent is to the ball, the closer the defender is and vice versa. The correct distance will be that which enables the defender to make up ground and intercept. By defending in this way the defender can provide cover for fellow defenders and restrict space through which the ball can be passed, whilst still maintaining a marking role.

3. **Interception - reverse stick**

Basic grip.

Beat opponent to the ball.

Receive on the hook of the stick.

Angle the stick forward slightly to control the ball.

Get the ball to the open side quickly and scan for passes.

4. Interception - open stick

- Basic grip.
- Beat opponent to the ball.
- Stick low early.
- Receive on the toe of the stick.
- Scan for passes.

Tackling - open stick

5. Two-handed block

- Basic grip.
- Do not get stick down early (immobile in this position), but tackle at the last moment.
- Stick at right angles to the line of the ball.
- Use the shaft of the stick.
- Scan for passes.

6. One-handed block

- One-handed grip.
- Can use right or left hand, depending on the distance needed to reach.
- Jab first, then lay the stick flat on the floor, tackle at the last moment.
- Scan for passes.

Tackling - reverse stick

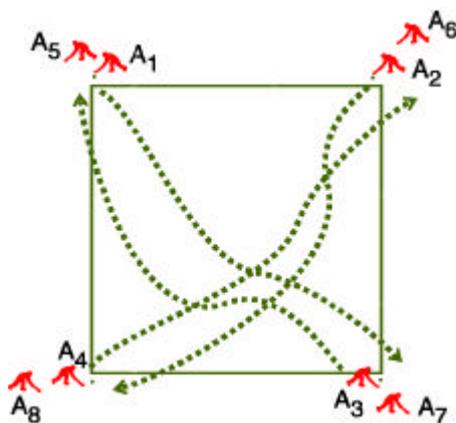
7. One-handed block

- One-handed grip, left hand.
- Extend left arm.
- Make the tackle at the last moment.
- Lay the stick flat on the floor.
- Use the shaft of the stick.
- Drag to open stick side.
- Scan for passes.

8. Steal

- This can be done with one or two hands on the stick.
- Run behind and to the left side of the opponent.
- Extend the left arm.
- Trap the ball then pull towards tackler.
- Drag the ball to the open stick side.
- Scan for passes.

Practices for dribbling, eliminating and defending



1. Ball carrying position

- At the same time A1, 2, 3, 4 dribble to the diagonally opposite corner
- Then A5, 6, 7, 8 go etc.

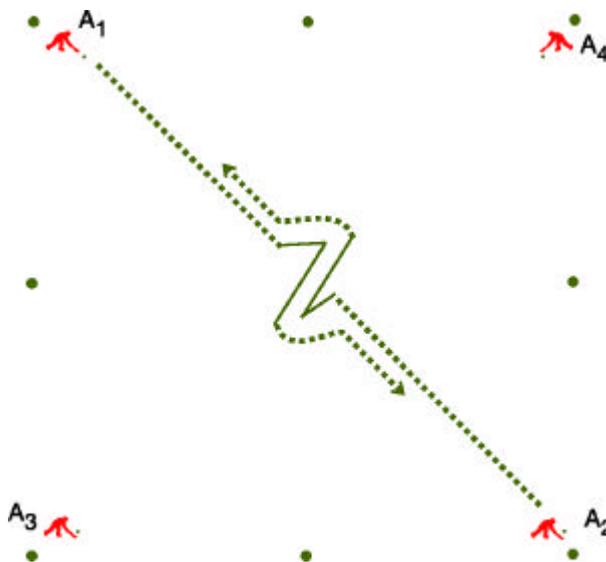


2. Slalom/Indian dribble

A1 dribbles through cones and shoots.

Then receives a pass from A7 for a close in shot.

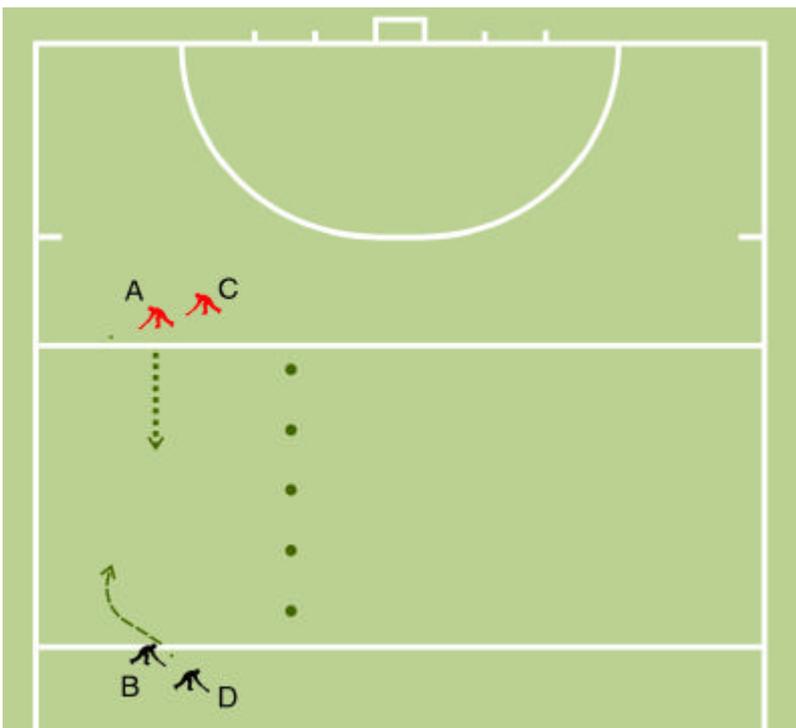
Then A4 repeats A1's actions, receiving a pass from A8 for a close in shot.



3. A1 and A2 dribble towards each other, perform the same elimination skill and cut out.

Then A3 and A4 go.

The following group of practices can be used for either individual defending or attacking.



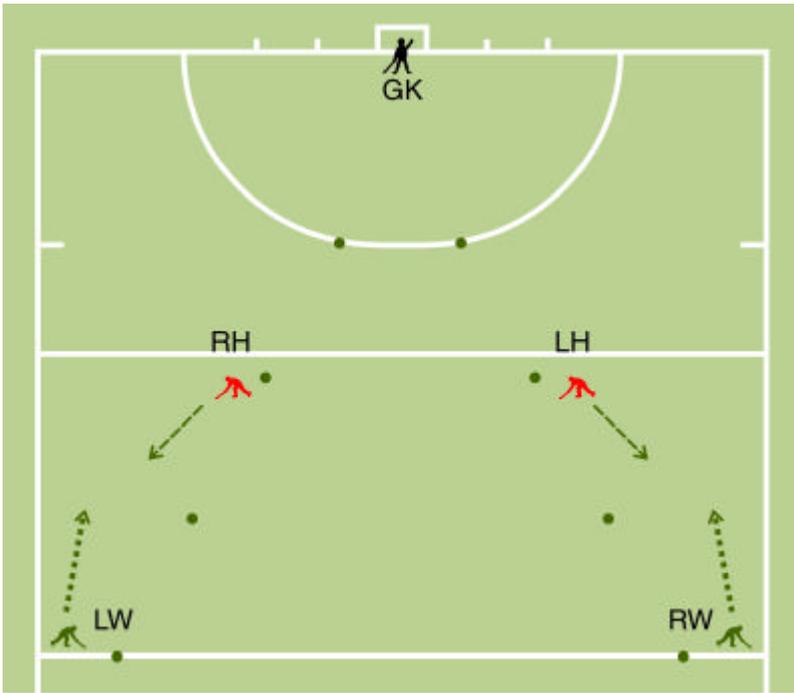
4. Continuous 1v1.

A starts with ball and dribbles towards B, who closes A down. A is trying to beat B and get ball in control over the end line that B started from.

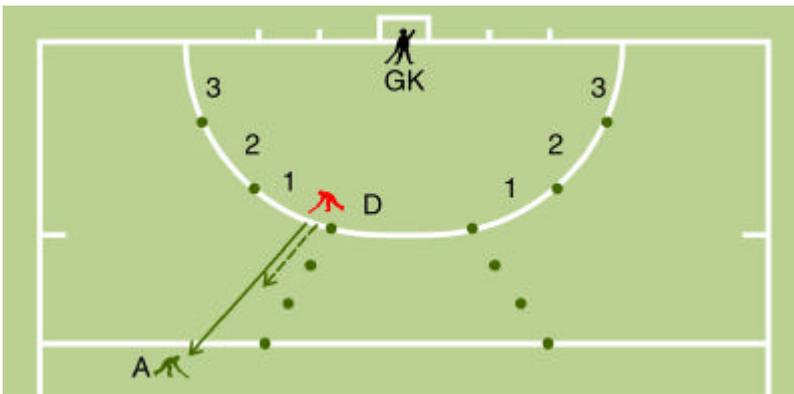
B is trying to dispossess A and score over A's line, with A tackling back.

If the ball goes out over a side line the restart is a dribble in.

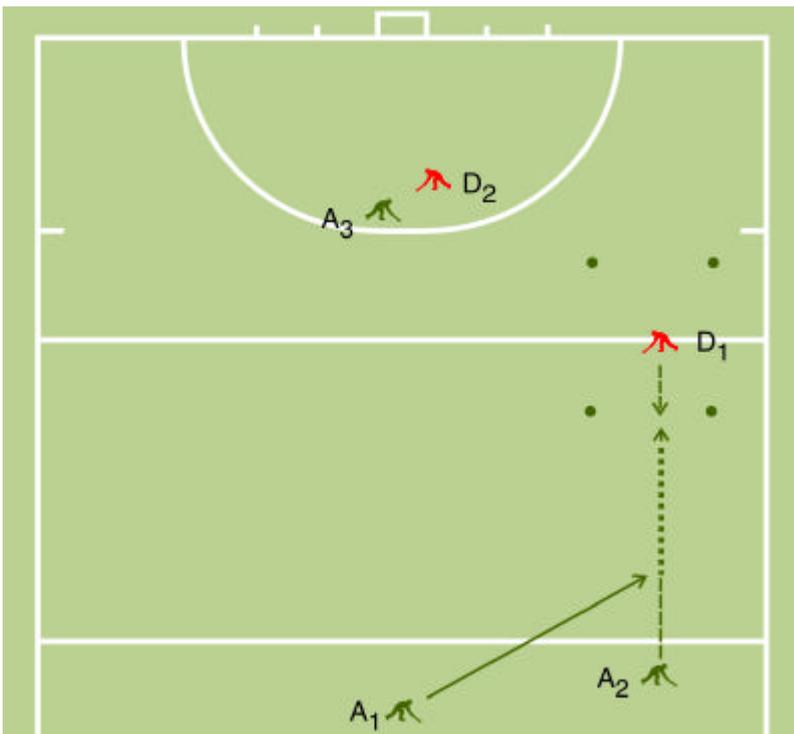
If there is a score the loser runs to the other end of the grid then D and C go etc.



5. Wing half/full back/inside forward closes down and forces outside because no cover defender in place. Attacker goes 1 on 1 for shot.

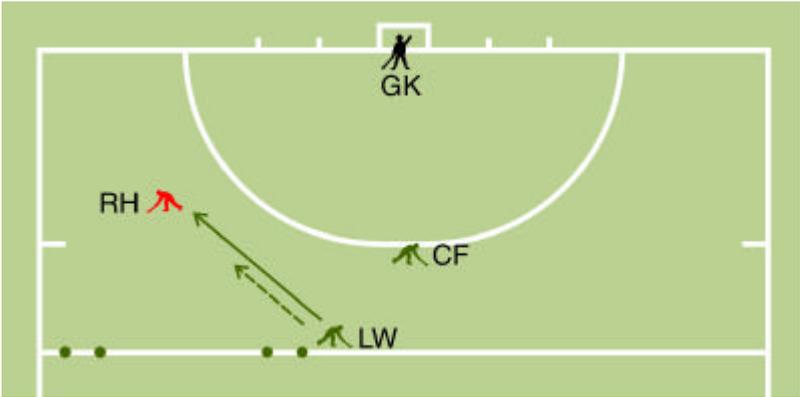


6. Defender passes the ball to attacker. Attackers go 1 on 1 and try to penetrate the circle. Defenders' priority, stop player getting through gate 1, then gate 2, then gate 3. Defender engages as far away from circle edge as possible. Work both sides of the circle. Note on left hand defensive side no cover defender in place, so force outside.

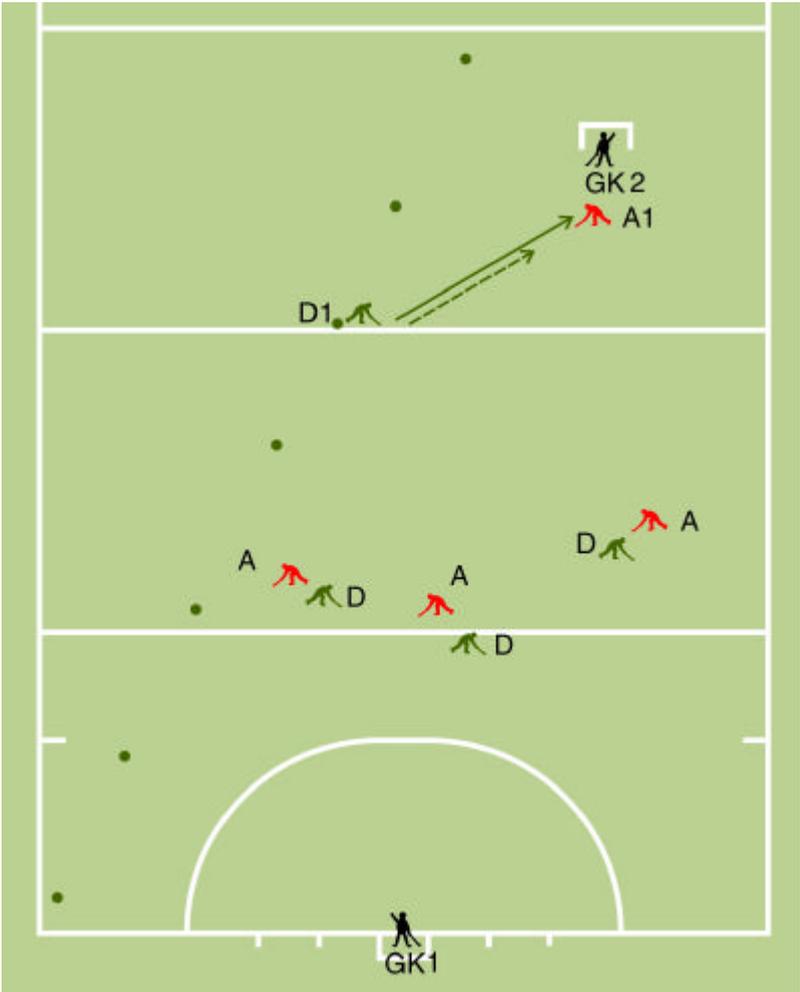


7. A1 to A2 in stride. A2 tries to beat D1 in box and cross for A3 in circle. If D1 wins it he passes to A1 who then passes to A3.

Attackers defending



8. LW feeds RH then closes down
 LW tries to stop RH dribbling through goals and attempts to dispossess. If LW wins ball he passes to CF, gets ball back and shoots. Same on right hand side.



9. This drill could simulate CF closing LB or RW closing LH.
 D1 passes to A1 then closes down. A1 passes to As to attack GK1. If Ds win ball they counter attack.

8. PENALTY CORNER

All outfield players should master at least one of these secondary skills, and teams should be trying to develop several players as threats at the top of the circle.

1. **Injection**
2. **Trap**
3. **Drag flick**
4. **Hit**

1. **Injection**

The technique shown is the most commonly used one on artificial turf. However, the ball can be hit in with either a clip hit or a normal hit, or pushed in with a standard push.

Two ways of aiming:

- By getting side on and lining up on the trapper.
- By standing behind the ball and picking out a mark on the pitch about half a metre in front of the ball in line with the trapper, and playing the ball over this mark that is within the peripheral vision.

No preliminary movement that will indicate to the defenders when the ball is about to be injected so they cannot anticipate when to run out.

Feet, hips and shoulders parallel to the target line.

Ball is in the hook of the stick level with or slightly behind the right foot.

Right foot behind the line.

Drag the ball in a straight line to the trapper.

2. **Trap**

Different types of trap are shown, but they all have the same principles in common.

Stick horizontal with the toe touching the ground.

Ball normally trapped on the shaft.

Ball trapped outside then moved into the circle for the strike at goal.

Ball trapped outside the circle for the drag flick.

3. **Drag flick**

Timing is crucial. The contact with the ball needs to occur as soon as possible following the trap.

Basic grip but with left hand rotated to the left.

The ball is trapped outside the circle and dragged in.

Using a four step approach - right foot leads off, then left, right foot crosses behind left, then left, and collect ball. An extra step can be added which would mean starting with the left foot leading.

Ball is picked up on the shaft of the stick - hands low to the ground.

Right foot lands and gets as far past the ball as is comfortable.

Upper body is parallel to the ground and rotates to the left during execution.

Left foot takes as long a stride as possible with the foot pointing forwards.

The stick maintains contact with the ball for as long as possible.

4. **Hit**

Double 'V' grip.

Timing is crucial. The contact with the ball needs to occur as soon as possible following the trap and as soon as the ball is in the circle.

The ball is trapped outside the circle and rolled in.

Use the four or five step approach as described in the drag flick.

All other aspects of technique are as the in the hit in the passing section.

Practices for penalty corners

Repetition of the skill, either singly or in units of twos and threes.

9. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

The core skills information contained in this booklet and accompanying DVD provides technical information on how to coach the basic skills of hockey and develop them to be applied in game situations.

In order to develop players to reach their full potential, it is also important for coaches to recognise how young players develop physical, psychological and emotional characteristics as they grow and mature. These will have a significant impact upon their ability to learn hockey skills, perform them, and apply them in game situations.

Coaches are encouraged to recognise how young players develop the physical and psychological capabilities necessary to perform a particular skill or task, and find ways of simplifying the complex activities of the game to suit a young player's physical and psychological abilities at any given period of their development. Asking a youngster to perform a task beyond their physical and mental capabilities most often results in failure, and brings only frustration and de-motivation for both player and coach. If this is not addressed, it will drastically affect the chances of retaining the player's interest in hockey as a lifelong participant.

In common with many other sports, hockey began a Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) project in late 2003. LTAD is based upon a staged developmental process advanced by Dr Istvan Balyi which links more closely the coaching and development of players to their physical and psychological growth. For hockey in England, LTAD is seen as a potential catalyst for adopting a more consistent approach to player development, encouraging best practice by all those involved in developing young hockey players. It is intended to devise a model for the development of young hockey players that will achieve nationwide adoption, bringing an integrated, systematic approach to player development that enables players to reach their full potential, and fosters long term participation. The model will identify the needs of young players at each stage of their growth and development, and match this with associated guidance that everyone involved in player development can use.

As work-in-progress at the time of going to press, it is inappropriate to include early drafts of hockey's LTAD work here. However, much of the research underpinning LTAD is based upon accepted evidence of how young people develop physical, psychological and emotional characteristics, and their relationship to physical activity. A summary is given below as an introduction to the subject for coaches.

Growth and development and their effect on coaching

Young people all follow the same pattern of growth and development, although there will be significant differences between individuals in the timing and magnitude of these changes (Armstrong & Welsman, 1997). In relation to physical activity, there will be 4 key phases of growth and development:

1. Late childhood.
2. Adolescence - early puberty.
3. Adolescence - late puberty.
4. Early adulthood.

The following tables identify, for each of the key phases of growth and development listed above:

- a. the main physical, psychological and emotional characteristics that young people develop.
- b. the implications of this to their performance capabilities in sport.
- c. the implications to coaching practice.

1. Late Childhood

Table 1a: Physical development characteristics in late childhood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Larger muscle groups are more developed than smaller ones.	The child is more skilful in gross movements involving large muscle groups rather than precise coordinated movements involving the interaction of many smaller muscles.	General basic skill should be developed during this phase rather than intricate stick skills. As a 'right handed' sport it is important to maintain balance throughout a players' development to avoid developing a dominant response that may result in injury in the long term e.g. ability to push off from either left or right legs equally well developed.
The size of the heart is increasing in relation to the rest of the body. The cardiovascular system is still developing.	Endurance capacity of the young participants, however, is more than adequate for most activities (children are little aerobic machines).	Short duration, high intensity (anaerobic) activities need to be planned with adequate rest. Endurance must be developed through playing and games as children do not have the attention span for continuous work.
Ligamentous structures are becoming stronger, but the ends of the bones are still cartilaginous and continue to calcify.	The body is very susceptible to injuries through excessive stress or heavy pressure.	Slow progression in hopping or bounding activities. Use only own body weight or medicine ball exercises.
Basic motor patterns become more refined towards the end of phase and the balance mechanism in the inner ear is gradually maturing.	There is great improvement in speed, agility, balance, coordination and flexibility toward the end of this phase.	Specific activities and games should emphasise coordination and learning through repeating movement (developing kinesthetic sense).
During this phase, girls develop coordination skills faster than boys but generally there are no differences between boys and girls.	Sex differences are not of any great consequence at this stage in development.	Training and playing together can be emphasised at this age and phase.

Table 1b: Psychological development characteristics in late childhood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Attention span is short and children are very much action oriented. Memory is developing in a progressive way.	Young players cannot sit and listen for long periods of time.	Use short, clear and simple instructions. Children want to move and participate in action.
Children in this phase have very limited reasoning ability. Later in the phase there is a growing capacity for more abstract thought.	Children are generally leader oriented - love to be led!	Coaches should adopt a "follow me" or "follow the leader" approach and ensure that all activities are fun and well planned.
The repetition of activities is greatly enjoyed. Young players improve their abilities through experience.	Children do not learn the skills correctly just by trial and error.	Coaches must be able to provide a correct demonstration of the basic skills required at this level.
Imagination is blossoming.	Experimentation and creativity should be encouraged.	While playing and practicing encourage input (opinion) from the children. They love to try new things and are ready to try almost anything.

Table 1c: Emotional development characteristics in late childhood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
The child's self concept is developing at this phase by experiences and comments from others.	Youngsters perceive these experiences as a form of self evaluation. "I am a good person if I do well, I'm a bad person if I do poorly".	On a regular basis they need positive reinforcement from the coach. This will provide strong motivation to continue with the activity.
Children like to be the centre of focus and attention.	When situations become threatening, they quickly lose confidence.	Select technical and tactical activities in which success is virtually guaranteed. Progress from simple to complex gradually.
The influence of peers becomes a very strong driving force behind all activities.	Acceptance into the peer group often depends upon one's abilities in physical skills and activities.	At this phase the coach must be capable of properly assessing the basic skills and providing a varied repertoire of practical opportunities for technical and tactical development and improvement.
The child begins to understand the need for rules and structure.	They can understand and play simple games with simple rules and will tend to question rules and expect thoughtful answers.	Participation and fun to be emphasised versus winning. Focus on the processes not on the outcome and have lots of FUN!

2. Early Puberty

Table 2a: Physical development characteristics in early puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Significant proportional changes occur in bone, muscle and fat tissue.	During growth spurts adaptation is influenced by sudden changes of body proportions.	Monitor training carefully and individualise the content of training to ensure adaptation. Children undergoing growth spurts can sometimes seem uncoordinated until their body adapts.
Girls begin their growth spurt between 12½-14 years and boys between the ages of 12½-15 years. Girls attain a maximum rate of growth at an average age of 11, boys at an average age of 14 years.	Early in this phase, girls are faster and stronger than boys, later in the phase boys are becoming faster and stronger than girls.	Chronological age may not be the most appropriate way to group players.
Primary and secondary sex characteristics manifest themselves during this period. The normal range for onset of menarche for girls can be anywhere from 10-16 years.	After the onset of menarche, iron levels of girls should be monitored regularly.	Situations when fear, guilt or anxiety brought about by sexual development should be avoided.
Smaller muscle groups are becoming more developed.	Speed, agility and coordination are still improving rapidly during this stage.	With the improvement of fine motor movement all basic technical skills can be introduced and mastered. Players should learn how to train during this phase, understanding the need to develop physical, technical, and tactical capacities.
During this developmental phase the various parts of the body do not grow at the same rate. The growth rate of the legs and arms will reach a peak prior to that of the trunk.	A change in the centre of gravity, length of limbs and core strength will determine the content of training.	Some of the already learned skills have to be refined (re-learned) again, since the growth of limbs will impact on the technique.
A significant increase in red blood cells occurs during this phase, especially in boys due to the male hormone testosterone.	The oxygen transportation system is still developing and aerobic endurance is continuing to increase.	The increase in body mass requires more structured aerobic training. Only short duration of high intensity (anaerobic) activities are recommended.
The central nervous system (CNS) is almost fully developed.	Agility, balance and coordination is fully trainable.	Use the warm up to further development of CNS activities such as agility and coordination.

Table 2b: Psychological development characteristics in early puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Abstract thinking becomes more firmly established.	Decision making through more complex technical training should be introduced.	Decision making on tactical and strategic solutions should be introduced, based upon the skill level of the player.
Young players develop a new form of egocentric thought. Much emphasis is placed upon self-identity.	This may result in a strong fear of failure.	Create optimum learning environment, match skill and drill levels. Introduce simple coping strategies, concentration skills and mental imagery.
Young players are eager to perfect their skills.	Individual specific direction and structure in the learning process is required. A variety of methods to measure success are important to maintain motivation.	Positive reinforcement is imperative. The difference between physical and mental development can vary to a great extent, the coach must be particularly careful not to pick the early developers and neglect or de-select the late developers. The coach's ability to demonstrate specific skills is important. Audiovisual material and video feedback may help to create a mental image.

Table 2c: Emotional development characteristics in early puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
There is a tremendous influence on behaviour from peer groups.	Values and attitudes are being created and reinforced by the group.	The coach should exercise strong direction and supervision. A role model for young players at this phase is very important.
During this phase players are capable of cooperating and accepting some responsibility.	Some players may be less responsible mainly due to a fear of failure.	Coach must have an open communication with the players.
Tension generally exists between adults and adolescents.	Communication channels should be kept open by the adult, as all teenagers need help even though they do not recognise the need, or seem grateful for the help.	Coach is usually better accepted than other adults and should always attempt to foster two-way communication. Young players should have an input into decision making processes.

It is important that young players at this developmental level be able to display tenderness, admiration and appreciation.	Deprivation of these qualities often leads to exaggerated and/or unacceptable behaviour.	Early maturers often become leaders and excel in physical performance. Coaches must not show favouritism as this can have negative effects on other participants' development.
Physical, mental and emotional maturity do not necessarily develop at the same rate.	Feelings of confusion or anxiety may exist as a result.	The coach's communication skills and understanding are important in these regards.
There is a desire to have friends of the opposite sex.	Social activities are important events for this age group.	Co-educational activities are recommended.

3. Late Puberty

Table 3a: Physical development characteristics in late puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
The circulatory and respiratory system reach maturity.	These systems are generally capable of giving maximum physical output.	Aerobic and anaerobic systems can be trained for maximum output. Full sport specific energy system training should be implemented.
Increase in height and weight gradually lessen. Stabilisation occurs in the muscular system.	Muscles have grown to their mature size but muscular strength continues to increase reaching its peak in the late twenties.	Strength training using own weight exercises can be used to improve overall strength development. Neuromuscular training should be optimised during this phase.
Skeletal maturation continues in males and females.	Connective tissues are still strengthening.	Continue to utilise progressive overloading principles in training.
By age 17, girls have generally reached adult proportions, whereas boys do not reach such proportions until several years later.	Proportionally girls gain more weight than boys during this phase.	Endurance (aerobic) training for girls to be optimised. Coaches should be aware of how to deal with weight gain and its impact on performance and figure. Players should learn how to apply what they have learnt competitively including all technical and tactical components.

Table 3b: Psychological development characteristics in late puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Generally, by age 16, the brain has reached its adult size but continues to mature neurologically for several more years.	Players can cope with multiple strategies and tactics, particularly near the end of the phase.	Coaches should ensure the refinement of all technical and tactical skills within more complex game situations.
Critical thinking is developing well during this phase.	The capacity of self-analysis and correction is developing.	Decision making should be developed further through technical and tactical development.

Table 3c: Emotional development characteristics in late puberty and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Peer group influence is still a powerful force.	Independent decision making and leadership skills are becoming more developed.	Players should be given the opportunity to develop through participation in appropriate leadership or responsible roles, (e.g. team captain, athlete representative, etc.) but strong direction and discipline must be maintained.
Players are searching for a stable, balanced self-image.	Self is still very susceptible to successes and failures. Coping techniques are useful.	Positive evaluation of performances and positive reinforcement are imperative.
Activities and interaction with the opposite sex play strong roles during this phase.	Male players must be aware that female athletes now face a problem of femininity versus sport development. Female players must be aware that male athletes now face a problem of relating performance to masculinity.	Facilitate the recognition of the former issues through education and club programmes.

4. Early Adulthood

Table 4a: Physical development characteristics in early adulthood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Physiologically the body reaches maturity during this phase.	All physiological systems are fully trainable.	Physical training programs should employ the most up to date techniques and sport science information to facilitate maximum adaptation and minimise injuries. Ensure that all muscle groups and body alignments are well balanced, complemented with optimum flexibility ranges. For elite athletes, state of the art testing and monitoring programmes should be used. Overtraining and overstress should be carefully monitored.
Final skeletal maturation in females occurs at about 19-20 years and in males about three years later.		Regular medical monitoring should be organised for elite athletes with additional blood tests for female players to check for anaemia.

Table 4b: Psychological development characteristics in early adulthood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
Neurologically the brain matures about 19-20 years of age.	Players are capable of self-analysing and correcting and refining skills. Athletes can analyse and conceptualise all facets of their sport.	Winning becomes the major objective.
	Well developed information processing skills improve the players' ability to visualise verbal instructions.	Principles of adult learning should be implemented at this level.
There is a complete understanding and acceptance of the need for rules, regulations and structure.	However, the young adult must perceive the rules and structure as being clearly defined and fair.	Involve the players in decision making and planning of team or group activities.

Table 4c: Emotional development characteristics in early adulthood and their implications.

Basic characteristics	Consequences to performance capabilities and limitations	Implications to the coach
There is a need to be self directed and independent.	The players are ready to assume responsibility and accept the consequences of their actions.	Goal setting should be strongly emphasised to give definite direction and purpose to the athletes' overall programme.
Self-actualisation and self-expression are important.		The athletes need to be treated as adults, with respect. Direction and structure provided by the coach is still important.
Major decision on career, education and lifestyle are priority at some point in this phase.	Major changes in interests, hobbies and physical activities occur during this phase.	Professional guidance should be advised to consider off-season and educational pursuits.
Interactions with the opposite sex continue to be a strong priority with lasting relationships developing.		Athletes must have ample opportunities for independent social interaction.

References

- Armstrong N and Welsman J (1997): *Young people and physical activity*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Balyi I (2002): *A step by step planner for annual training, competition and recovery programmes*. ATP, Victoria, Canada.

