PASSING, RECEIVING, AND SHOOTING GAMES

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

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

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

1. AGAINST THE WALL

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

Use also the reverse stick or alternate one pass with the forehand and the next one with the reverse stick. Insist that the youngsters use different surfaces (curve and the edges) of the stick when passing. Have them repeat the activity, trying to establish a personal record time.
Have them practice with the forehand and the reverse stick or alternate using both techniques. As another variation, see how many passes they can execute within a time limit, seconds or one minute (this requires concentration!) without coming closer than 5 meters towards the wall.

**Variation:**
- Players assume a side position in relation to the wall, standing about 4 meters away from it. They dribble the ball parallel to the wall and pass it along the ground against it for picking up the rebounded ball on the run a few meters later. This way the children simulate a “triangulation,” initiated with a forehand or reverse stick pass against the wall. They should practice running in a direction so that the wall is to their left and then to right side.

- One pair, standing in a 10m wide cone goal 4 meters in front of a wall. In this “rebound game” one player passes the stationary ball with speed in such an angle against the wall, that it rebounds out of the reach from the second player through the 10m wide cone goal.

- Ask the players to invent other exercises for improving their ball sense and acrobatic skills!

2. **GOING FOR DISTANCE AND ACCURACY**

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

“The natural order accounts for progressive development through time.”
3. ACCURATE PASSING AND CONTROL

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

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

Variation:

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

**WITH THE FRONT STICK:**

**HANDS SEPARATED ON THE STICK:**

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

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

- sweeping the ball with the upper part of the curve which is always on the ground,
- drag push along the ground with the ball placed inside the inclined curve behind the right foot, which is in front (as pass or for injecting the ball at a penalty corner). The handle of the stick points into the desired direction of the pass (to the receiver).
• flick in a side-on position with the left shoulder pointing into the desired direction of the high pass. The ball is placed slightly on the right side of the body in front of the left foot (top players also manage to flick the ball with the right foot in front),

• scoop the ball during a dribble above a defender. The ball is placed in any position in front of the body,

• drag flick with right-left-right-left steps overrunning the ball (in p.c)

HANDS SEPARATED OR WITH ONE HAND ONLY ON THE STICK:

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

HANDS TOGETHER:

• hit the ball along the ground with a drive (normal, topspin, slice, chop or "Asian" hit) with the left and sometimes also with the right foot in front,

• sweep hit (with lifting the stick from the ground),

• sweep hit (without lifting the curve from the ground).

“Poor performance at short term doesn’t mean that the long term objectives can not be accomplished.”
The speed of execution, the possibility to disguise the direction of the pass and its high percentage of success makes the sweep the most common technique used for passing the ball to a team mate and also for scoring goals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

WITH ONE HAND ONLY:
+ passing deflection with the stick placed almost completely on the ground. (diving or with the feet on the ground).

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

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

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

“The traditional coaching which was very much coach orientated concentrated merely on technical aspects, putting aside aspects related to motivation and knowledge.”
5. PASSING A STATIONARY BALL AND RECEIVING IT (1 ON 1)
Pair up the players and mark off playing fields (see illustration) for them with cones. Every two players share a ball. The ends of each field should form goal areas (12 meters wide). The players each stand in their own goal area, which they must defend. Player 1 tries to pass the ball along the ground from his goal line toward the opposite goal. To avoid Player 1’s scoring a goal, Player 2, the defender, learns to read the direction and speed of the opponent’s pass and then use the maximum surface of his stick for controlling the ball. Then they reverse the action to pass the ball back to the original line. Lifted passes don’t score. For any infringement (touching the ball with the feet or the rounded curve or leaving the goal line before the pass was played) a penalty is awarded from the center of the playing area. The first player to score four goals wins the event.

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

*Have the children practice passing and receiving 2 on 2 in a wider field (18 meters). Pass the ball across the opponent's goal line from the spot where it was controlled. Depending on how much explosive power the four players have, you can mark off the goal areas to measure up to 18 meters wide and the distance between them can be increased to 15 to 20 meters in length.
A perfect control of the ball - either it is passed from teammate to teammate or intercepted - is of paramount importance as it assures the possession of the ball and the continuation of the attack. Statistics have shown that between 20 and 25% of all losses of the possession of the ball result from poor control! This high percentage is also a consequence of other errors, which occur immediately before the ball is controlled like - no visual agreement between the passer and the receiver, - the receiver doesn't make himself available in the right moment when the passer is "ready" (poor "timing"), - the receiver wait for the ball instead of running to it, or poor passing skills (the ball was passed too softly, inaccurate or executed too late or too early). That is why the quality of the reception and the control of the ball is mainly a product of the quality of the pass.
For a player to control the ball in the particular game situation, even a youngster, he should learn and apply commonsense principles to a variety of techniques. Teach your young players the following:

1. Watch the ball carefully until it touches your feet or body. Also pay attention to the position and movement of your teammates and opponents before and after the execution of the control. The more experienced and confident you are, the more you can assimilate and process other relevant information while focusing on the ball.

2. Use the maximum surface of your stick and not only the curve whilst controlling the ball.

3. Try to position your body in line with the ball as soon as possible. If you’re an attacker, for example, it is relatively easy to receive the ball as you face the proper goal, but often this isn’t effective for creating a goal opportunity: it’s too slow, and it limits your ability to play the ball quickly into the opponent’s penalty area. Therefore you should learn to receive and control balls from a side position as well, which allows you to perceive your teammates’ and the defenders’ position and movements in the space between you and the goal.

4. Make a cushion for the ball through not gripping the stick too firmly. Keep your arms slightly bent. Relax and incline the surface of the stick slightly forward. This helps your control. Receive the ball in a balanced position at the point of collection. Being balanced well makes for having successful control with subsequent movements. And it allows a receiver to deceive any opponent nearby with a body feint.

5. Position the ball during the control for the next play. If you are the receiver, you should already know what to do next before the ball is controlled. You must select what technique you’ll use for the control of the next move: a dribble, a shot, or a pass. It’s paramount to be able to execute an intentional or purposeful control for continuing with the attack. Learning this principle of ball control well helps any player to perform considerably better.

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

“The culmination of a good pass is the perfect control of the ball.”
6. DISGUISSING THE PASS

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

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

“Coaches concern more about the contents of the training sessions than about their teaching style.”
7. PASSING TWICE AROUND THE SQUARE

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

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

Variation:

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

“Successful coaching at youth level is gauged by the percentage of under18 players being able to join the representative senior squad.”
8. QUICK GOALS

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

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

9. SHOOTING CIRCUIT

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

* The attacker dribbles the ball on the left flank going clockwise, finishing the individual attack with a shot from the inside left position.

- Half way to the opposite goal area, the attacker must beat an imaginary defender—a cone goal—on either side before practicing shooting.

- Several pairs compete simultaneously in opposite directions first counter-clockwise. One is in possession of the ball and the other one is the “goalkeeper” situated just 4 meters in front of him. When the attacker touches the ball, the “goalkeeper” tries to position himself as quickly as possible at the goal in front of him before the attacker is able to shoot from a point within that shooting area of 3 meters. After the first attack, both players change functions and practice on the other side of the circuit. Whoever scores more goals against his opponent within 5 minutes wins.

- Instead of running counter-clockwise and shooting from a right-inside position, the players now reverse the direction and practice shooting from a left-inside position.

- Only for more advanced players. Here the defender places himself 3 meters (after some experience with this game, you can decrease the distance to 1 meters) behind the attacker to his right side. When the attacker starts, the defender reacts and follows him with the objective to clear or take the ball before it can be shot from a point inside the shooting zone toward the next undefended goal.
100 10. PRECISE CENTERS FROM BOTH SIDES

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

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

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

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

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

![Illustration of passing across a wide zone](image)

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

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

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

13. PLAYING 3 ON 3 ACROSS THE OPPOSING END LINE

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

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

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

14. SCORING AGAINST ONE DEFENDER

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

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

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

1. Which you believe is the best way to receive the ball?
   Ideally, the ball should rebound into a position that allows me to execute a quick shot toward the goal.

2. How you best play out the defender?
   It’s more convenient to do it on his reverse stick side, with a well-tempered pass past him, with a tunnel between his spread legs, or when he is stationary and in a frontal position.
3. As defender which is the most efficient way to defend this situation? To close down the attacker and force him to go towards my forehand side.

15. SCORING WITH 2 ON 1

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

Variation:

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

“With frequency the best scoring opportunities appear by accident.”
16. TWICE 1-ON-1 WITH SCORING

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

17. ACCURATE PASSING

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

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

1st level

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

2nd level

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

3rd level

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

4th level

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

5th level

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

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

Photo: A.Wälthi
1. TOUCH THE KNEE OF THE OPPONENT

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

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

2. TOUCH THE LINE FIRST

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

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

Variation:

- The players stand to the left of the line about 1.5m away, ready to execute a quick and correct tackle to the right side. The players must learn to make quick crossover steps to extend their reach in order to touch the line.
- The same, but now the line on their left side has to be touched with a reverse stick tackle, trying to use the bring the whole flat side of the stick which parallel to the ground and as close as possible to it.
PART 2, CHAPTER 3

2nd level with a stationary ball

3. TOUCH THE LOOSE BALL FIRST

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ray Kroc
Variation to learn to recover after the first unsuccessful tackle:

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

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

3rd level with a moving ball

5. TACKLING AGAINST A PASSIVE ATTACKER

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

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

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

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

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

Tackling in retreat against a passive attacker should be taught while having the attacker on defender’s left (and also on the right) side. It’s best to practice this activity first without a ball and then with it to help improve the basic position, the channeling of the opponent, and the retreat side-on-side with the attacker.
6. INTERCEPTING PASSES
Gather the players in groups of fours. Two players face each other at a distance of 15 meters, passing the ball between them on a line. Three defenders, at either side of the running line of the ball and always about 2 meters away from it, try to intercept the pass. The interception should be practiced from different positions (i.e., with the left or right shoulder of the defenders pointing to the ball carrier, with the defenders facing the passers).

“Learning starts when the coach transfers to his players the decisions which up to that moment were taken by himself.”
4th level with a moving ball and an active opponent

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

7. FIVE TACKLES

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

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

“Don’t give up too early! It’s happening quite often that the last key of the key ring opens the door.”
CORRECT AND INCORRECT TACKLING WITH ONE AND TWO HANDS ON THE HANDLE. SEE ALSO THE WRONG POSITION OF THE RIGHT FOOT.
8. PRESSING DEFENSE 1 ON 1

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

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

9. THE CAGE

Group the youngsters in sets of five and set up several 10-meter squares. Four of the players are attacker positioned outside the square, each with a ball. To score a point, each of the four attackers must manage to run with the ball under control through the square. The defender remains inside the square throughout the game. Call on the attackers, one after another, until they all have attacked twice. After the player inside the square has defended one on one for these eight times, players switch positions until everyone has been a defender. The player who allows fewest goals to be scored wins. As teacher or coach, you should educate the attackers waiting their turn on the sidelines around the square to spot any mistakes on the part of the defender.
10. TACKLING IN RETREAT 1 ON 1 WITH SUBSTITUTIONS

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

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

“To cure a disease, it’s not sufficient to undergo a diagnosis. It’s imperative to look for the roots of the problem and to apply the pertinent remedies.”
11. GAME WITH 4 GOALS

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

When the attacker starts to dribble the ball out of his goal, the defender in the opposite goal area should react immediately, leaving it and trying to prevent the opponent from dribbling the ball through neither of the two goals you assigned him (the goal behind and the other one to his right (or left) side). If the ball runs out of the playing area or if a goal is scored, the game resumes, but with the players switching roles.

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

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

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

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

“The difference between good and excellent is a little more effort.”
12. **1 ON 1 ON THE MINI-HOCKEY FIELD**

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

![Mini Hockey Field](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

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

13. **ALL GAMES 1:2, 2:2, 2:3, 3:2, 3:3, etc**
(see the programs of the simplified games 2:2, 3:3 and 4:4)

14. **MINI HOCKEY 3:3 on 4 goals** as well as the preparatory or corrective exercises/games for Mini Hockey (and here the different games 3:1 and 3:2).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Séneca
Generally in the first year of hockey training more or less **50% of the beginner's program is made up by multilateral activities** in order to let the young players gain through a rich variety of stimuli experiences in motor learning. This will enable them later to learn the specific hockey techniques much quicker.

Following the different levels of formation in the HOCKEY DEVELOPMENT MODEL the percentage of general-purpose exercises/games diminish in favor of a hockey-specific based program.

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical capacities to train</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>Max. strength</td>
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<td>W</td>
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<td>Aerobic resistance</td>
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<td>Anaerobic resistance</td>
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<td>Speed of reaction</td>
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<td>W</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
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<td>Flexibility</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Explanations:
- M=male, W=female
- M/W initiation with care (one or twice a week)
- MM/WW training between 2 until 5 times a week
- MMM/WWW performance training from this age onwards continuous training
MUSICAL BEACONS
Ten players jog around the demarcated area and on command race for one of the 9 cones with the player not getting a cone losing a point.

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

“Listening is forgetting, seeing is understanding and practising is assimilating.”
Chinese proverb
LEVEL-1 COMPETITIONS

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

HOCKEY DECATHLON

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

1. THE TUNNEL

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

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

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

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

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

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

Training objectives:

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

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

L. Moorhouse/L. Cross
3. PASSING AND TRAPPING

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

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

Training objectives:

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

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

D. Millmann
4. AROUND THE SQUARE

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

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

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

Training objectives:

1. To dribble the ball at speed without losing control of it in spite of several changes of direction.

2. Use the appropriate technique of dribbling when dribbling on a straight line (forehand) and when changing direction close to a cone (only one touch with the reverse stick).

3. When changing the direction of the dribble, first lower the center of gravity and then push the body with a full extension of the outside leg into the new direction. At the same time the ball is played either with the reverse or the open stick.

“You learn best by doing rather than just listening” — D. Millmann
5. THE TACKLE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Training objectives

1. To run quickly on to the ball with only the right hand gripping the center of the stick in order to gain the best position to play the ball first.

2. To dribble and keep possession of the ball against an opponent defending from behind.

3. To defend from behind or from a sideways position in relation to the attacker.

4. To score in spite of the presence of an opponent.

5. To ensure a quick transition from attacking to defending and vice-versa.

6. To execute an accurate pass when a penalty stroke is awarded.

7. Not to dribble the ball into the range of the defender.
7. QUICK GOALS

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

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

Training objectives

1. To accelerate from a stationary position with the ball.

2. To combine two basic technical moves, such as the dribble in front of the body and executing a push or slap in a side-on position (for advanced players also in a frontal position), quickly and with good synchronization of movements.

3. To execute the push or slap not only quickly and accurately, but also with explosive power so that the ball travels through the goal first, faster than that of the opponent.

4. To lower the center of gravity before passing the ball so as to make sure better accuracy and also more speed.
8. REVERSE STICK PASSING
After dribbling the ball for 10m, the player must push it on the move through a wide goal (1-1.5m). Goals scored with the stationary ball are not considered valid. After the pass, the player returns to his starting point and waits 5m behind the second goal to receive the next pass of the second player who does the same as the first one.

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

Training objectives:

1. To ensure accuracy when passing with the reverse stick.

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

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

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

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

Training objectives:

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

“If at first you don’t succeed you are doing about average.”
10. GAME WITH FOUR GOALS

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

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

Training objectives:

1. While dribbling the ball, look up to be able to observe and analyze the opponent’s position and play.

2. To learn not to dribble the ball into the reach of the defender.

3. By dribbling the ball to one side, to force the defender to move into that direction, and then enter the space thus created with a sudden change of speed and direction.

4. To improve the technique of changing speed and direction with the ball.

5. As defenders, to learn to force the attacker to dribble the ball into a desired space.

“With his exercises and games the coach should guarantee a simplification which enables the player to transfer to the real game.”
Rules modifications for more advanced players:

1ST. TEST:
See the variation of “THE TUNNEL”. The winner is the player who, in 30 seconds, passes the ball most times through the separated legs and across two parallel lines which form a 2m wide zone. The ball has to be touched alternately with forehand and reverse, without being played inside the 2m zone.

4TH. TEST:
Two players start at the same time. The one who is in control of the ball must dribble it along a triangular route keeping to the outside. Meanwhile, his opponent without the ball must run around the field marked by the four cones with the aim of chasing the attacker and touching his ball before he can dribble it into the cone goal.

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

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

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

Confucius
8TH. TEST:

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

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

9TH. TEST:

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

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

“The only way to make successful athletes is through struggle. The best comes from difficulties.”
Organizing the Decathlon

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

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

1. In each test a player meets a different opponent. Players draw lots to choose the pairings for each of the 10 tests. The winner of the decathlon challenge is the player who wins the most tests. If there is a draw between two or more players, use Test 10 or Test 2 as a tiebreaker.

2. In each test a player meets the same opponent. The coach or teacher checks on the pairs to ensure that two players of very similar technical, tactical, physical, and constitutional level face each other in all 10 tests. The winner of the decathlon challenge is the player who wins the most tests against his personal opponent.

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

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

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

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

1. First prepare the playing area and select two players for demonstration. Then explain step by step the rules of the game (test), slowly demonstrating how the game develops, until all players are clear about the rules. Ask several questions to the players to be sure that the rules are understood and everybody knows how to win the test. Finally, a full demonstration of the test takes place.

2. Give all players the opportunity to practice with a chosen partner for three to five minutes to gain experience in the game (test).

3. After the practice, the beginners should explain in a short dialogue with you their first experiences for winning the test.

4. As coach, you should select who is playing against whom and where (what playing area) their first competition will occur.

5. The first competition takes place.

6. Discuss why one player won and the other lost the first game or test. Discover together the reasons for the win or loss.

7. Use a couple of corrective exercises to isolate an important aspect of the test (for instance the technique and tactics of tackling in the 1-on-1situation, different dribbling techniques) that adversely affected the performance of the players. Then help the children practice that aspect.

8. Second competition takes place (the winners play against the winners, and the losers play the consolation round).

9. Together with the young players, work out the necessary skills and capacities to win the test. The aim is for all players to have a complete understanding of what to do in every moment of undergoing the competition test (game). That is why one or two more corrective exercises should be practiced to help to overcome any deficiencies observed in the beginners. Sometimes taking one step backward can be the best way to advance.

10. Third competition takes place to establish the most skillful players in this test.

**2-ON-2 TRIATHLON**

The triathlon competition focuses on different basic, collective situations of the hockey game. Players experiment not only with how to pass, dribble, receive, or tackle but also with when, where, and why to do it, always considering the play of another teammate as well as one or two defenders. By practicing the three simplified games here, players learn to read the situations and react accordingly, despite the increasing complexity of the games. The following figure shows how a triathlon competition can be organized. In this example the different teams designated as Europe compete against the teams designated as Africa until a winner is decided. You can use the blank spaces next to each triathlon game to record scores.
COMPETITION FOR TEAMS FORMED BY 2 PLAYERS:

**EUROPE AGAINST AFRICA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>ITALY</th>
<th>GERMANY</th>
<th>BELGIUM</th>
<th>WALES</th>
<th>ENGLAND</th>
<th>SPAIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Names of players</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teams</th>
<th>STH AFRICA</th>
<th>KENYA</th>
<th>ZIMBABWE</th>
<th>GHANA</th>
<th>TANZANIA</th>
<th>EGYPT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Names of players</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITA – KEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER – ZIM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL – EGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAL – GHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP – TAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG – RSA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITA – ZIM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER - EGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL - GHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAL - TAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP - RSA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG - KEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Match</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITA - EGY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GER - GHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEL - TAN</td>
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<td>GAL - RSA</td>
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<td>ESP - KEN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG - ZIM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FINAL RESULT:**
(sum of victories)

EUROPE against AFRICA

____ : ____

TECHNICAL DELEGATE:
2 on 1 with counterattack

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

2 on 2 with four intersecting goals

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

2 on 2 with two wide goals

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

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

"Because o the fact that today we are all getting used more and more to instant food, instant photos, instant transmission of information and soon, people also start to expect instant success."  
Zig Ziglar
The basic game situations of Level 1 provide children with a solid foundation. Having played and practiced these games, the young players have had adequate stimuli to make their training both effective and enjoyable: they are starting out on the right foot. Coaches can continue to build on this foundation by exposing their players to the simplified games in the next chapter—Level 2.

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

David Hemery in ‘the Pursuit of sporting excellence’
Games for Mini - Hockey
Level 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Unlocking and developing systematically a hockey player's game intelligence is still beyond the knowledge of many coaches and teachers. Unfortunately there is no literature yet about developing this important aspect either in hockey or in other sports and few coaches are prepared to modify their coaching style which is an important prerequisite for being able to stimulate game intelligence.

The continuous commands and instructions given by most coaches before, during and after the match prevent most of the players from using their intelligence. Instead of confronting the players in training with a great variety of problems to be resolved, they receive day by day the solutions to the problems from the coach to which they have to obey. This rigid and authoritarian coaching style doesn't develop intelligent players with awareness and responsibility.
To get more intelligent players on the pitch in the future, coaches need to stimulate more and instruct less. Instead of being instructors on the hockey pitch, they should become consultants, guides or organizers of information, knowing how to complement the teaching of technical skills with the accumulation of game specific knowledge, thus achieving significant learning!

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

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

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

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

„Game intelligence helps performers translate their technical abilities and physical fitness into an effective performance.“
How does a hockey player's intelligence manifest itself on the field?

An intelligent player:

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

"There is no greater power on the field than the players' intelligence."
- only does what is within his capabilities.

- is a player who contributes all his qualities for the good of his team. A hockey player who doesn't use his intelligence to serve his teammates around him will never succeed in the game because he will then tend to perceive only a portion of the whole game, seeing plays completely isolated and not in context with the whole. This type of player doesn't see everything that is taking place on the pitch.

- frequently asks questions and quickly learns from his mistakes. He is good at memorizing a great variety of plays and reproducing them.

- knows how to play hockey, especially without the ball, constantly making himself available for his teammates to which he offers possible solutions to many situations that arise on the pitch.

- knows how to pace himself throughout a game. His experience allows him to make appropriate decisions such as when to run or when it is a waste of energy.

- is not affected by stress, knowing that a high level of stress tends to narrow his focus and perception capacity and also influences his decision making negatively. This explains why sometimes key players do not make positive contributions in decisive matches. The pressure nullifies their usually intelligent play.

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

Eduardo de la Torre (1998)
Toward a different style of teaching and coaching young players

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

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

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

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

Unfortunately, the decision making all too often remains with the coach, who continues to confront young players with stereotyped practices that don't demand an active participation of the right hemisphere of the brain (Thorpe, Bunker, Almond 1988). Instead of continuing to concentrate on predictable practices, which doesn't help the players learn to cope with the unpredictability of game play, youth coaches should present the game to children as early as possible in order to allow them to enjoy and understand it. They will thereby stimulate such important capacities as vision, creativity, imagination, decision making, and anticipation.
Acquiring these and other important playing capacities doesn't come from practicing just isolated skills, but rather through also participating in simple game situations in which players can learn to respond to the cognitive and physical demands of the game. The coach continuously modifies the rules and the conditions of the simplified game to ensure that all players gain an insight into the game they play. Assuredly, the simplified game preserves the contextual nature of the full game, but without placing too great a technical demand on players still in the early stage of their playing careers.

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

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

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

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

Brenda Read
153 page above