

South African Hockey Association

Level 1 Coaches Hockey Manual

The South African Hockey Association, in conjunction with the Koninklijke Nederlandse Hockey Bond (KNHB) has developed the Level 1 Coaches Manual to help facilitate the coaching of hockey players between the ages of 12 and 18 years old.

The course is designed to assist coaches in the advancement of player's knowledge and ability in the 11 a side game. The course is eight hours in duration and provides information on coaching concepts, training session and program design, communication and presentation style, advanced technical skills, technical fault analysis, set pieces and tactical concepts for 11-side hockey.

Coaches will receive input with regards to:

- Development characteristics of players in this age group
- Information on designing and developing a year plan
- Design, write up and conduct hockey coaching activities
- Creating a safe and fair playing environment
- Skill and game development plan for players in the age groups 6 – 18 years old
- Match observation and analysis

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PART 1: COACHING CONCEPTS AND ROLES

1. Player Development Characteristics and Training Tips

The following is a description of important characteristics of the age groups concerned. This is the general characteristic and it may deviate from person to person.

Below are the training tips and points of interest for the different age groups.

Development Level 1 (8 – 9 years)

Age Characteristics:

- There is one big movement compulsion
- Lack of coordination limits development of movement techniques
- Large difference between players in their dexterity (handling) of the stick and ball
- Children think very concrete in black/white
- They will be playful and spontaneous
- Learn from successful experiences and observing
- Very individualised

Training Tips:

- Spend lots of time on basic techniques
- Encourage lots of ball contact and variations
- Everything must be done in movement
- Pay special attention to coordination
- Exercises must be in game forms
- Play in restricted space
- Offer tactical principles
- Encourage players to learn rules whilst playing
- Change groups to encourage them to play with different people
- Simple teamwork
- Use their imagination to teach a skill
- Give rewards and compliments

Development level 2 (10 - 11 years)

Age Characteristics:

- Exhibit more control over movement
- This is the ideal age for learning skills
- They process information through the use of their senses (Observing and trying)
- Exhibit short attention span on tasks
- Successful experience more aimed at team game perception

Training Tips:

- To refine and extend the technique (Increase the difficulty of the drills)
- Create lots of movement and keep players active
- Increase learning tempo to as high as possible
- Tactical learning opportunities must be created
- Rotate players' positions when playing games
- Include many game forms and teamwork
- Increase the number of match situations
- Provide variations

Development Level 3 (12/13 years)

Age Characteristics:

- Physically the player is more developed and stronger
- Players have an increased capacity to learn technical skills
- Players have increased technical and tactical insight
- They ask questions and challenge coaches
- Players have the ability to think of a solution
- Require tactical understanding during competition

Training Tips:

- Increase physical demand of the training drills and exercise intensity
- Concentrate on individual differences and abilities – Set challenges
- Be well positioned and didactically well organised
- Give clear explanations to questions
- Allow the players to think of variations on technical exercises and complex situations

Development Level 4 (14/15 years)

Age Characteristics:

- Physically the player is more developed and stronger
- Clumsiness in motor learning (particularly boys), reduce the technical learning capacity
- Players have increased technical and tactical insight
- Increased involvement and competitiveness

Training Tips:

- Increase physical demand of the training drills and exercise intensity
- Take into account differences in physical development of the players
- Players' increased strength enables more advanced skills and special techniques to be acquired
- Learning tempo varies between individuals and groups
- Place emphasis on team tactical aspects
- Create a positive, motivated environment

Development Level 5 (16/17 years)

Age Characteristics:

- There is refinement of motor learning at this age
- Quality of technical skills increases
- Players have increased tactical insight (individual and group)
- Motivation varies from recreational play to top competitive play
- Players have preference for different roles in the team (positional)

Training Tips:

- Most effective training is achieved by the personal approach
- Give regular feedback on individual technical qualities
- Encourage the use of complex tactical aspects (extend the players individually and as a group)
- Create a positive, motivated environment which extends all players

At training sessions for youth player there are a number of aspects that will need attention from the coach:

- Carry the responsibility to develop and educate players
- Ensure safety of the players
- Stimulate independency
- Encourage a great group environment
- Create an enjoyable coaching environment
- Systematically develop the players' performance through the different age groups
- Develop the knowledge of the rules of hockey
- Develop respect within the group
- Stimulate sportsmanlike behaviour with regard to team mates, opponents, officials and coaches
- Organise social activities
- Care for hospitality towards parents
- Maintain contact with coaching development officers and local coaching coordinators
- Expand your own knowledge through self development by using coaching aids and the internet

2. Design and Implementation of Progressive Coaching Sessions.

Planning a Training Session

To ensure that the players train effectively, it is necessary to set up a training plan in advance, for each training session and for the season.

Conditions

The training plan must embrace a number of conditions:

- There must be one key goal to the training
- Attention must be given to factors such as: techniques, tactics and rules of the game, conditioning and game mentality
- Sufficient attention must be given to safety of the players
- There must be an understanding that players will advance at different rates and training sessions must be adapted to include all players
- Intensity of the training must range between high concentration intensity and pleasure
- There must be a consistency of progression throughout the sessions and the year plan

Designing a Training Session

To achieve the aim of a training session each session must consist of three components:

1. **The Introduction** (Warm-up)

The warm-up sets the tone for training. Optimal training intensity should be reached by the end of this component. The warm-up must also have a physiological aim.

The warm-up must be based on:

- The player's situation: the technical, tactical and conditioning levels of players
- Physiological situation: the enthusiasm and motivation of the hockey group
- External situation: other factors, such as weather conditions and facilities
- Theme: It must serve as an introduction to the core of the training session

The time available for the warm-up is short so it is recommended that drills used are simple and easy to explain.

2. **The Core**

Attention is given to the learning and practicing of techniques and specific skills, as well as learning and practicing elementary tactical aspects.

The choices regarding content and activities in this part of the training, is determined by objectives and goals that have been previously set.

When the key objective is technique, the core will include one or more phases of the technical learning process. In most cases only two phases of the learning process will be achieved. Thus it is important to make a distinction in the core part of the training session:

- Core 1: the learning and/or practising part
- Core 2: the application - game part of the training

The core part of the session must always end with a game application drill or mini game and should be the climax of the training session. The game can have adapted rules to ensure high intensity and maximum involvement.

3. **The Ending** (Cool Down)

The end part of the training must encourage the gradual decrease of intensity to rest level.

Summary

1. Introduction

- Warm-up

2. Core

- A. The learning and practising part with technique and tactical training
 - Learning and refining of techniques
 - Progressive skill development to full pace and maximal difficulty
 - Learning of tactical principles
 - Train tactical principles / situations, individually and as a group
- B. Application of small game situations and adapted games
 - Technical and tactical aspects
 - Conditioning and mental aspects

3. The ending

- Cool down

The training objectives for the long and short term process must be continually evaluated and adaptations made if necessary.

3. Design and Presenting Training Sessions that Create Safe and Fair Sporting Environment

To create a successful training environment the aims and goals of the coach and the team must be taken into consideration. Evaluation is of substantial importance and there must always be room in every training session for initiative, improvisation and alternative ideas from the team.

1. Implementation of the training

- a. The coach must pay attention to the player's clothing and equipment
 - Appropriate clothes and protection gear must be worn at all times
 - Appropriate footwear and stick must be used
 - No jewellery or watches

- b. The behaviour of the coach
 - Stimulating and enthusiastic
 - Communication and explanations must be clear
 - Establishes himself as a role model to the group
 - Gain respect from the group
 - Give appropriate verbal responses
 - Project positive body language
 - Set a good example
 - Give complements when necessary
 - Warm – pleasant – good humoured personality

- c. Organisation
 - The coaches' positioning in relationship to the group
 - Simple organisation ensures maximal activity
 - Safety measures e.g. no hitting of balls during ball collections
 - Practical use of the beacons and existing lines
 - Players work in small groups to increase contact time
 - Responsibility towards the rules of the game and fair play
 - All players to be responsible for the packing away of the equipment

- d. Instruction and corrections during training
 - Regular feedback is necessary during training
 - Be sure to explain 'Why'
 - High work rate will increase performance
 - Allow all players to try the exercise first
 - When a skill or drill is done incorrectly, give individual corrective feedback or if it is a problem for all players, stop the group
 - Pay equal attention to the skilled and the non-skilled player

Training Principles

The organisation of the training will partly determine the success of it. Simple organisation is the best, concentrating on safety and enjoyment.

At training it is important that the explanation is concise, includes demonstrations and gives the players the opportunity to try the movement on their own.

Adaptation and Progression

Skill training must have variation and be adapted to encourage progressive learning throughout

A DAPT	By using these four principles an exercise can be made easier or more difficult.
D IRECTION	Changing direction will increase the difficulty of the skill. Start doing the skill in a straight line and then add direction changes once the skill has been mastered.
A REA/ D ISTANCE	Keep distance between players so that they can master the skills and as the players progress, move the players closer together so that the area is smaller and the skill more difficult to control.
P RESSURE	Practise the skills around beacons and as the players progress add an opponent.
T EMPO	Start slowly then built up momentum of the skill.

Evaluation is important when monitoring long term progress. There must always be space for initiative, improvisation and adaptation during training.

Evaluation of the training

Regular evaluation will determine whether the content, presentation and intensity of training has been successful.

Information about the training session can be gained by asking the children:

- What did you learn?
- What was good?
- Did you get tired?

Fair Play and Sportsmanship

Encouraging fair play and sportsmanship has become an integral part of the coach's responsibility.

Aspects that can inhibit fair play and sportsmanship:

1. Lack of knowledge of the rules
2. Lack of respect towards umpire
3. Lack of accepted hockey etiquette
4. Poor leadership from coach and captain
5. Placing results above performance
6. Individual accountability
7. The behaviour of the bench and spectators
8. Poor examples set by senior players and coaches
9. Over aggressive behaviour by players, coaches and parents

To enhance fair play and sportsmanship the coach must take on the following responsibilities:

- Insist that the team behaves appropriately before, during and after the game.
- Refrain from criticizing umpires. Every decision of the umpire must be accepted without appealing and without comment. Problems can be addressed after the game.
- Be positive, constructive and encouraging with feedback.
- Temporarily substitute a player who misbehaves.

4. Communication and Presentation Styles

4.1 What is Communication?

This is a process where a sender carries information to a recipient, and the reaction of the recipient on this information. Therefore communication is very important for both training and coaching.

The message can be verbal (using words) or non-verbal (using gestures, body language, and eye-contact). If a coach explains an exercise, we refer to it as one-way movement in the communication channel. We only talk of two-way communication if the recipient reacts, answers, or gives feedback. Direct two-way communication usually takes place via oral communication, i.e. during training sessions, and also during and after matches.

4.2 Problems Occurring with Communication

The basic problem in communication is that it is sometimes difficult for the recipient to understand exactly what the sender means, even if the sender is conveying the message himself. Often information is either not conveyed clearly or comes across differently. Communication can be greatly improved if the coach puts preventative measures in place for failed communications or be aware of the causes of failed communication.

Causes of Failed Communication:

1. **Verbal communication** is vague or incomplete. Listening to the instructions which the coach shouts from the sideline.
 - “Look” (Who? At whom or to what?)
 - “Create space” (Who? Where?)
 - “Wake-up” (Why? Who?)

Often observations are only meant as encouragement or sometimes the coach gives a direction to the player during a match to ensure they learn something from the instance. But what would he mean by the following:

- “Anticipate”
- “Look”
- “Create Space”
- “Use the space”

In such instances the coach is often not sufficiently clear or understood.

2. **Non-verbal communication** is interpreted differently than what was originally meant, or little attention is paid to it.

Gestures, body language, distance to each other and projection of voice gives very strong indication about the communication. We are not always aware of these indicators. Been aware of players body language can give a coach a good indication if for instance the team talk is to long.

- Shifting around on the chair
- Not looking at the coach
- Tapping the stick against the table, chair or ground.

The intention of good non-verbal communication is:

- To lend support to that which is been communicated, so that the information improves and is livelier; with the help of mimicking and hand gestures one can reinforce the message

Be aware that not everyone interprets the non-verbal indicators in the same way

3. **The sender** communicates the information poorly.

Good communication asks for clear and meaningful expressions. For example, a coach can mumble, can give too much information at once, not check if he is understood or not take into account the concentration span which the group of players can manage.

4. **The recipient** (player) does not understand the information.

- Due to lack of concentration – busy thinking of something else;
- Listens only - does not look at the coach and therefore misses important information;
- Finds the coach annoying and has preconceptions that he is not worth listening to.

5. **“Noise”** during transferring of the information.

“Noise” is interference from the outside that takes the attention away from the communication. As a result of the interference a large piece of the information is missed, for example:

- Another team enters the field while the coach is explaining something important;
- During the break, there is cheering on another field;
- There are too many things to look at.

4.3 Feedback: An Important Aid

The most effective way to control whether a team understands instructions given is through feedback – allow the players to give feedback or ask them questions.

Feedback can be obtained by:

- An open question: “Do you have any questions on what I’ve just told you?”
- A closed question: “Is this set-up clear?”
- A control-question: “Frits, can you tell me who takes the free hit and from where?”
- An open, but directed question: “What do you want to know about free hits?”
- A yes/no question (closed): “Do you want to play a mini-game?”

What should one consider when asking questions?

1. Do not ask too many questions at once – usually most of the questions will not be answered.
2. Do not ask questions with too wide a scope – the person answering the question will have too many things to talk about and could wander off the subject, not really answering the question fully.

Conclusions and posing questions

The coach should give a concise summary at the end of the talk and should ask for questions about uncertainties. The players can also give a summary, e.g. “If I understand correctly...”

Give feedback or ask for feedback as soon as possible

In general the coach should keep talks as short as possible. When dealing with a difficult concept, check that everyone understands the concept/term and give the listeners time to ask questions.

SUMMARY:

When speaking

- Only speak when you have players’ attention
- Keep it short (2-3 minutes)
- Do not give too much information at a time
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Confirm that players understand what you are talking about

When instructing:

- Stress the essence of the message
- Explain the instructions step by step
- Confirm that everyone understands every step
- When doing a practical example, do not talk for longer than 1 minute

When motivating:

- State ‘why’
- Link back to previous experiences (let players think back to...)
- Show enthusiasm

When correcting:

- Stay positive
- Clearly make one central point
- Show appreciation for input from others

When stimulating:

- Encourage and compliment
- Join in activities

4.4 The Communication Role of the Coach in a Match Situation

Direct Coaching

A: Pre-match discussion

- Give a few tactical team directed instructions (limited and simple)
 - “Which set-up?”(K-4-3-3)
 - “When attacking, the strikers must...” (directions for each specific line e.g. strikers)
 - “During an attacking / defensive short corner...” (directions for a specific attacking or defensive group)
- Give a few individuals instructions (concrete and non-threatening)
 - Technique: “Try to get every ball on your front stick and then...”
 - Tactics: “Do not take any chances in the circle, rather...”
- Some coaches give a single tip or encouragement when the team is set-up on the field just before the start of the match (or half) – this can work really well

B: The coach observes during the match.

- Assess and manage the tactical patterns of the team; do the players keep to their tasks?
- Check the team and individually directed instructions
- Identify noticeable areas of the oppositions attacking and defensive play (strong and weak points)

C: The coach acts and communicates during the match.

- Stimulate and encourage
- Give instructions to substituting players
- Call clear, direct instructions to players: “Keep your stick low”
- Make substitutes and adjust player’s functions during the match (e.g. when the short corner does not work)
- Tactical use of rules to substitute players

D: The coach roles during halftime.

- Allow for player input, but do not let them vent or react negatively towards each other
- Ensure that everyone dehydrates
- Give 2 team-directed instructions about the opponents
- Refer to points from the team talk before the match started
- Give a few individual directions
- Ensure that players start the second half well-motivated

E: The coach acts directly after the match.

- Give realistic comments on the outcome: “Congratulations”, “Sorry”, “Well done”
- Give positive comments on the inputs: teamwork, the opponents and the umpires
- Make notes: “Hitting a long ball is faster than when somebody runs with the ball; we have to work on that during training.”

F: The coach evaluates the match.

- Point out technical points: “Our strikers takes too long to react in the circle which allows the opponents to clear the ball” or “Our defenders struggled to release pressure out the back, which means that the defenders must work on hitting or pushing the ball away from the circle faster”
- Identify what aspects from the game will be incorporated in the next training sessions

5. Warm-up and Cool Down

Warm-up:

This is an integral part of preparation for training sessions and matches. A good warm-up prepares the player for a high intensity session and can prevent sport injuries from occurring. During the warm-up the players need to start focussing on the game and the tactical aspects of the team talk.

Substitute players not in the starting line-up must make sure that they remain warm.

A good warm-up has the following components:

Direct preparation for a match happens during warm-up. The preparation consists of two components:

- **A physical part:**
 - Warm-up exercises and stretching
 - ❖ Running for 5 minutes
 - ❖ Simple loosening movements for arms, legs and back.
 - ❖ Stretching for approximately 8-10 minutes: The importance of the stretching is to prevent injuries and muscle soreness.
 - Execution of acceleration runs, agility drills, ladder drills, sprints, etc.
 - Stick and ball drills
- **A mental part:**
 - The team talk prior to the warm-up/match – lead by the coach
 - Meetings with individuals or small groups
 - Observation of the playing environment and opposition
 - Concentration and mental visualisation

Stretching is unnecessary for very young players, as the muscles of children are naturally suppler than those of older players. Children between the ages of 7-12 years can limit their warm up to playing with the ball (hitting, running, etc.). The coach should not expect children of 12-14 years to inspect the field or to observe the opponents.

Players older than 12 can incorporate warm-up exercises and stretching into their match preparation, but adjusted to suit their need (not too much/difficult). Older children can also discuss simple tactics and prepare themselves mentally before matches.

“The match starts before the umpire’s first whistle” Players must prepare themselves for the match prior to going on the field. Avoid chatting to each other or spectators.

Cool-Down:

Cooling down is important to help slow the body down to rest level after training sessions and games. It also helps with the prevention of the build up of lactic acid.

A good cool-down has the following components:

- Jogging at a low intensity for 5 minutes
- Stretching; as with the warm-up
- Warm shower

6. Skill Development Plan – Specific to Age Groups

Central Theme: The players will learn how to handle the stick and ball so that they can play safely, cleverly and in a fun environment.

A child learns new movements and techniques systematically and progressively. A specific training plan is needed to help their development. This training plan joins in with the characteristics of the different age groups and it also teaches children to play and develop together.

Mini Hockey Plan

Basic Skills of Hockey		
0: 1		1st year: Age 6
1: 1		
3: 3		2nd year: Age 7
6: 6		3rd year: Age 8
6: 6 or 8: 8		4 th year: Age 9 - 10
8: 8 or 11: 11		5 th year: Age 11 - 12

On basis of the above diagram and considering the age characteristics of each group, the following game development program is recommended.

The plan has the following structure:

- A. 6 year old: 0:1 and 1:1 hockey
- B. 7 year old: 3:3 hockey
- C. 8 to 10 year olds: 6:6 and 8:8 hockey
- D. Older children: 11:11 hockey

In the mini hockey plan training has been defined up to and including eleven-a-side hockey. Training has been adapted to the development stages of the children, both in technical, tactical and in the social respect.

The objective of the mini hockey is to create an environment that is:

- Pleasant
- Safe
- Dynamic
- Adapted to the development level of the specific group
- Inclusive and promotes learning together about hockey
- Progressing the game step by step to eleven-a-side hockey

Mini Hockey gains its value from the fact that smaller fields are used, with fewer players. The players are involved more intensively in the game and it enhances the enjoyment of the players. The game is also played with adapted rules.

The mini hockey plan consists of 5 steps as it develops through the age groups:

Step 1:	1:1
Step 2:	3:3
Step 3:	6:6
Step 4:	8:8
Step 5:	11:11

7. Designing Progressive Hockey Programs within an Age Group

Step 1: (1:0 and 1:1) – 6 Year Olds

In step 1 attention is given to:

- Elementary techniques, aimed at the safe handling of the stick and ball, so that 1:1 situations can be mastered without injury or danger.
- Elementary, individual tactic include:
 - Receiving techniques
 - Keeping possession
 - 1vs.1 attack and defence

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Grip: Two adult fist apart (Double V grip)</p> <p>Moving with the Ball Dribble with the ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In straight line • Dribble from a stationary position • Dodges will be done in front of still/moving obstacles <p>Elimination Skills: Dodges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribble with the ball close to the stick • 1 vs. 1 situations <p>Defending Skills: Tackling</p> <p>Competition to get the Ball:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 vs. 1 • Run towards a ball that is lying still <p>Combination Play: Passing and Receiving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling and passing to a stationary person over a short distance <p>Scoring: To Score a Goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a stationary ball • Dribble with the ball, slow down and shoot • Receive a pass and shoot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the ball in a position so that you can see the surroundings and the ball (Vision) • Keep the stick on the ball when approached by a defender • Dribble into open space • Accelerate when you are in the space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the stick on the ball when approached by a defender • Dribble into open space • Accelerate when you are in the space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a low stick and body position • Stronger when both hands are on the stick • Get the ball back when in a favourable tackling position • The player that lifts the stick first will lose the ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look first to see if your team mate is in a ready position to receive • Show the ball carrier that you want/can receive the ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First look up and then shoot at goal • focus on the goal box

<p>Goalkeeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To run/move with leg guards• Stop the ball with two legs• Kicking stationary ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First take a good position with regards to the ball• Kick/clear the ball away to the side of the circle
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Step 2: (3:3) – 7 Year Olds

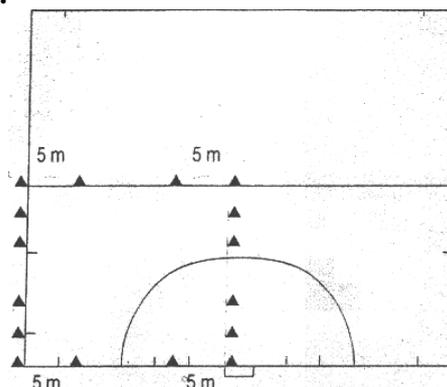
In step 2, attention is given to the introduction of teamwork. Teamwork will develop with the training of 3:3 on a small field.

Step 1 and 2 are called the SECURITY PHASE. The aim of this phase is to train the children how to handle the stick and ball in a safe way in a group of six players.

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move the ball from side to side • To move the ball forwards/backwards <p>Moving with the Ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of direction • Variation of speed • To dribble left/right sideways • To dribble forward/backwards <p>Approach a Ball: (Receive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling or stationary ball • Continuation action: to pass or dodge • Moving 1vs. 1 (1:1) <p>Combination Play: (Pass and Receive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary /Moving Ball • Change pace of pass • Short/long distance • Receiving from left/right <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From individual actions • From combinations (Receiving and shooting) <p>Goalkeeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move with the leg guards on, and change direction • Stop ball with two legs • Kicking of a stationary ball <p>Match Emphasis:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball control • Hand speed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good vision • To dribble to the left is easier than to dribble to the right • Look and react to other players by slowing down or accelerating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 vs. 1 • Assess distance and speed • Assessment of opponent and team-mate positioning <p>Combine with 2 players: 2:0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pass left is easier • Look (track) at the ball until it touches the stick • Receiving from the left is easier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary stance when saving the ball <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match 3:3 Formation 1-2

3 vs. 3 (1/8 Field)

What does the field look like?



Three-a-side Hockey

Children from 7 years old can play in the 3 against 3 game situations. Players should be encouraged to play in a competition as soon as they can handle a stick and ball safely.

Playing Field

The dimensions of the field for three a side hockey is 23 by 23 meters. It is the area between the baseline and the 23 meter line or the 23 meter line and the half way line of a normal hockey field.

The playing direction is therefore the width of the normal field. A smooth surface is recommended.

Goal Box

The goal boxes are made out of beacons. Every team has two goal boxes. The width of each goal box is 2 meters. The goal boxes are placed 4 meters from the sideline.

5-Meter line

For practical reasons, a 5-meter line is used instead of circles.

The Ball

A normal hockey ball is used.

Teams

A team consists of maximum of three field players. There is no goalkeeper. Substitutions are allowed.

The substitution rule gives the coach the opportunity to give every player the chance to play and it gives a player the time to rest if necessary.

Match Duration and Leagues

The duration of a match is 2 x 15 minutes with a half time of 5 minutes. It is a good idea to have two games going at the same time. Team 1 of school/club A will play against Team 1 of school/club B and team 2 of A will play against team 2 of B. After this game you can change the teams. You will have team 1A play against 2B and 2A will play against 1B. This will give every player the chance to play and have fun!

Step 3: (6:6) – 8 year olds

Once players have progressed through steps 1 and 2 they are ready for step 3. Six-a-side is played on a ¼ of a field, between the 23-meter line and the center line.

In the six a side phase special attention must be given to the following skills:

- Teamwork in a larger area
- Hitting and pushing of a stationary ball
- Passing techniques
- Individual techniques and tactical teamwork on the field.

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move the ball from side to side • To move the ball forwards/backwards • To move the ball left and right • Make letter shapes with the stick and ball • Make figure shapes with the stick and ball <p>Moving with the Ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change of direction • Vary speed – Accelerate/slow down • To accelerate left/right sideways • To accelerate forward/backwards • Turn out • From dribble dodge to right/left: On signal Other players Defenders <p>Elimination Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1= Approach defender with speed • 2= Carry out dodging action • 3= As soon as beyond, accelerate • 4= When the defender catches up with the ball carrier: cut him off <p>Combination Play: (Pass and Receive)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on accuracy • Progress from bunt to hitting • Passing the ball to the right • Passing the ball left and receive it on the front stick • Receiving the ball and keep dribbling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep close stick contact with to the ball • Left: Turning hand • Right: Support Hand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running without the ball is quicker than dribbling with the ball • Assessment of opponent and team-mate positioning • Keep close stick and ball contact, step sideways (dodge) and then straighten your run • Eye–hand-stick coordination; overview regarding the ball, the field and the players <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To combine: 2:0 and 2:1 • The accuracy of the pass is more important than the speed of the delivery • Look up before passing the ball (Awareness of team mate) • Be ready to receive the ball • Passing diagonally right in front of the receiver. Receiving of the ball is in front and slightly to the right of the body • Passing diagonally left at the feet of the receiving player. Receiving of the ball will be behind and slightly to the right of the receiver • The defender is weak off his left foot • Positional Play 3:1 - Two options to either side • Positional Play 4:2 - Two options to the sides and one option in depth

<p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From individual actions • From passing combinations • Diagonal hit from left of circle • Diagonal hit from right of circle <p>Goalkeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To run/move with leg guards • Stop ball with two legs • Kicking a stationary ball • Defending a short corner • Kick moving ball away to the sides <p>Match Emphasis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing option of teams: 3-3; 4-4; 5-5 or 6-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a 3 – 1 situation • From a 3 – 3 situation • Decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goalkeeper makes the goal smaller by moving off the goal line <p>Match 6:6 emphasis on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task sharing in the Formation K-2-3 and K-2-1-2 • Attacking actions concerning the strikers • To get connection between the front and back lines • Encourage the use of the width of the field • When in attack: continue and possibly score • When in defence play to get the ball back
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Tactical Situations

Six-a-side hockey can be played in two different system variations:

It can be played in 2 lines (figure 1a) or 3 lines (figure 1b). Both systems encourage width and depth across the field.

The Starting line-up:

GK-2-3			GK-2-1-2	
Left striker	Center Striker	Right Striker	Left striker	Right Striker
			Midfielder	
Left defender		Right Defender	Left defender	Right Defender
	Goalkeeper		Goalkeeper	

Figure 1a

Figure 1b

Tactical strategy will be determined by the team in possession of the ball. Players will need to learn how to react tactically as the ball possession changes from one team to the other.

Players need to be given the opportunity to rotate through all positions to become aware of the tactical requirements of attackers and defenders. It is important that the tactical principles of defending and attacking must be learned in the six a side game format. This will enhance understanding of the eleven-a- side tactics.

These two options of playing always insure that there is cover defence from the non-ball side defenders. When in ball possession the left and right strikers provide the attacking width. When the team does not have ball possession the strikers will back off so that they are behind the ball giving defensive width.

Two examples of K-2-3

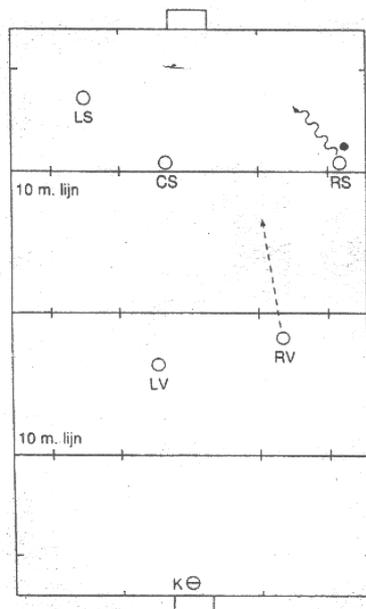


Figure 2 – Attacking options.

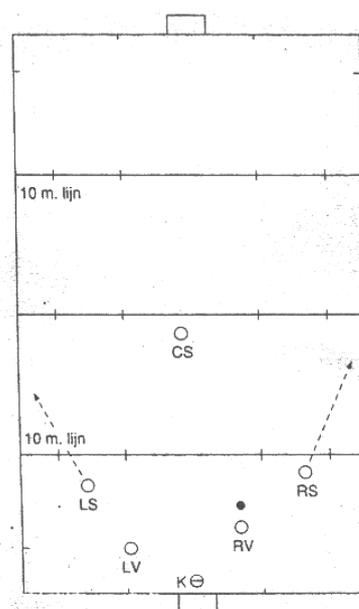
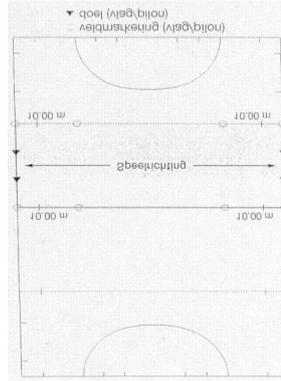


Figure 3 – Defending options.

6 vs. 6 (1/4 Field)

What does the field look like?



Six-a-side Hockey

This format is suitable for boys and girls between the ages of 8 - 9. This game encourages adaptation to changing game circumstances as the game changes from attack to defence.

Playing Field

The dimensions for the field are a quarter of a normal hockey field. Usually the part of the field between the 23-meter line and the half way line is used but a second option is to set out a field using the dimensions 23 x 55 meters.

The playing surface can be:

- Artificial Field
- Grass
- Hardened surface

Try and use the field with the smoothest surface.

Goal Box

The goal boxes are made out of beacons, every team has one goal box. They are placed on the back line in the middle. The width is 3.66 meters (the width of a normal goal box). A backboard can be placed at the back of the goals to serve as a motivator when they hear the sound of the goal being scored.

10-Meter line

From a practical point of view, a 10-meter line is used instead of a circle.

The Ball

A normal hockey ball is used.

Teams

A team consists of a maximum of five field players and one goalkeeper. Substitutions are allowed. The substitution rule gives the coach the opportunity to give every player the chance to play as well as allowing time to rest. It is vital that the goalkeeper has the correct equipment (helmet, leg guards, chest pad and kickers). Substitution can also give the coach the chance to deal with a small injury.

Match Duration

The duration of the match is 2 x 25 minutes with a half time of 5 minutes. Time must be allowed at the end of the game to give feedback to the players.

The Toss

The captains will toss: The winner of the toss can choose the ball or the direction that they want to play first.

Step 4: (8:8) 9 - 10 Year Olds

This step will take place over a period of two years (Phase 1 and Phase 2).

The eight a side hockey has arisen as an intermediate phase between six-a-side and eleven-a-side hockey, and has been related to the development stage of the child. In practice it appears, those children between the ages of 10 and 11 do not need to play eleven-a-side hockey because:

- They do not have the strength to hit the ball over a long distance
- They have no insight in the necessary tactical load and cooperation in a large group on a larger field

Phase 1:

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move the ball from left to right • To move the ball from front to back • Move the ball with increasing tempo <p>Dribbling with the Ball:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To accelerate and slow down • At high speed • To dodge to the right and left • To pass left and right while moving <p>Combination Play: Pass and Receive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To front stick pass to the left and right • Reverse stick passing – backward and forwards • Judge distance and speed of passes • Over increased distances • Target pushing and hitting for accuracy • Front stick receiving and then moving to the left and right • Receive a diagonal pass and accelerate • Reverse stick receiving • Receiving, accelerating and passing on the move <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From individual scoring skills • From combination and passing plays • From free hits 	<p>1 vs. 1 (elimination)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass the ball past the left foot of the defender (Herring Bone) • Defender approaching from behind • Pass the ball past the strong side (front stick) of the defender • Add fakes and dummies • Defend with stick close to the ground <p>To Combine: 2:0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving on the front stick is easier than receiving on the reverse stick • Create and hold space to facilitate passing <p>Positional Play 2:1 and 3:2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task sharing: role of attackers and defenders • Vision and awareness before passing • Receiving in a way that early, quick passing is facilitated • Stationary free hit situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A controlled hit leads to safety and increased accuracy • Awareness of the goalkeeper’s positioning • Task sharing: rotate attackers and defenders

<p>Goalkeeping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop ball with two feet and kick-clear it to the side • Move towards the ball and clear it away to the side <p>Match Situations:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearing the ball quickly gives the attacking team less chance to score a rebound • Movement off the baseline decreases the attackers scoring angle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task sharing – positional rotation • Attacking and defending teamwork • Creating space and width
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Phase 2:

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To move the ball from the front stick to the reverse stick • To move the ball from left to the front, back and to the right • Increase the tempo • Include fakes and dummies • Flip the ball from the ground • Flip the ball and catch it on the stick • One handed stretch action: front stick, backhand and the jab <p>Moving with the Ball:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the left and right • To dodge and pass including reverse stick skills • Increase the tempo of elimination skills • Change direction • Dribbling with the ball, slowing down, turn out • Passing past the strong and weak side of the defender • Tackle back on the front stick <p>Combination Play: Pass and Receive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing backwards, forward, left and right • Pushing and hitting over increasing distances • Powerful and accurate hitting of a stationary ball • Receiving of the ball and passing immediately • Playing in a triangular shape • Passing to the right with the reverse stick • Leading to receive • Running in the width and depth with and without rotations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To keep ball possession with increased control <p>1 : 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ball carrier must carry the ball on the strong stick side • Accelerate once you have passed the defender • Eliminate outside the reach of the defender (turn away, reverse action) <p>The rules for keeping the ball away from a defender:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the ball moving • Turn actively away from the defender with a wide arc, so that the ball remains out of defensive reach <p>To Combine 2:0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a support lead after giving a good pass; this gives team mates a passing option and increases the chance to succeed in attack • Handling tempo must be adapted according to the technical abilities and attention on dangerous play <p>Positional Play 2:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead towards the ball to receive it • Create space for yourself to move into by dummying to one side and moving to the

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving the ball from different directions • Passing over a flat stick (slightly raising the ball) • Receiving raised balls on the front and reverse stick <p>Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From individual goal scoring skills • From a pass and combinations plays • Whilst moving with the ball • Under pressure (with a player running back to tackle the ball carrier) • From a lifted pass • From a short corner situation • From a free hit <p>Goalkeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving off the goal line • Stop ball and kick it to the side • Work the ball away with the stick • Take part in the following games: 5-4; 6-5; 7-5 etc. <p>Penalty Corners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good push out • Attacking principles • Defending principles • Hitter <p>Match Situations:</p>	<p>other</p> <p>To Combine: 3:0 and 3:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always have 2 possible passing options • Indicate clearly where you want to receive the ball • Receive on the front stick side whenever possible <p>Positional Play 3:2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play to the reverse stick side of the defender whenever possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the position of the goalkeeper • Variation in the attacking options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing off the goal line to decrease the scoring angle • Force the attacker to the side of the circle to decrease the chance of scoring • Organisation of the defence <p>Match 4:4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphases on playing wide (one goal/two goals) <p>Match 8:8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation: K-3-1-3 • When running with the ball attack the space • Keep attacking pressure when taking free hits – Play the ball forward • Cooperation between the defending and attacking triangle
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Eight-a-side hockey is played on half a field. The K-1-3-3 is the preferred formation (Fig 4) and consists of three different lines of players:

- A first line of three players consists of three strikers: left striker, center striker and right striker;
- A second row of four defensive players: left defender, central defender, right defender and a free defender;
- A goalkeeper.

An adaptation that can be made is to play the free defender in front of the central defender (Fig 5). Thus the formation changes from K-1-3-3 to K-3-1-3.

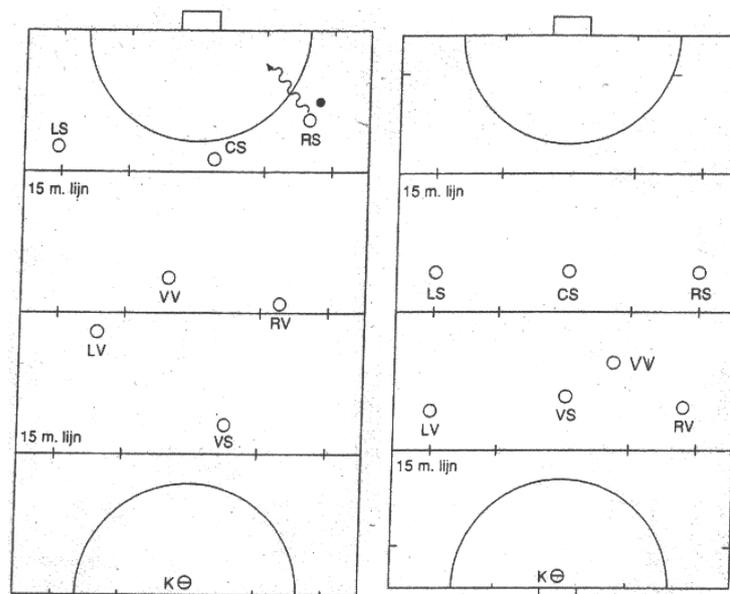


Figure 4.

Figure 5.

When in ball possession, the ball side defender's role is to make connections with the striker line, while the players on the non ball side (help side) must drop and provide cover defence.

The K-3-1-3 will highlight the functioning of the central defender and the free defender. When the team does not have ball possession the free defender will help the midfield disrupt the attack of the opposition. The central defender has to fill the middle of the field to help with the defending.

When the team does have possession of the ball, the free defender links up with the first line (strikers) and supports them with attacking combinations.

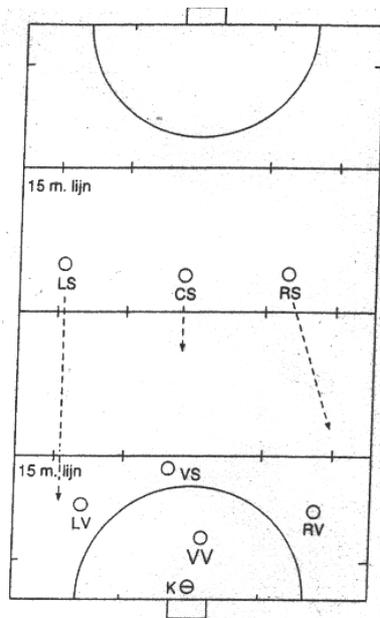


Figure 6

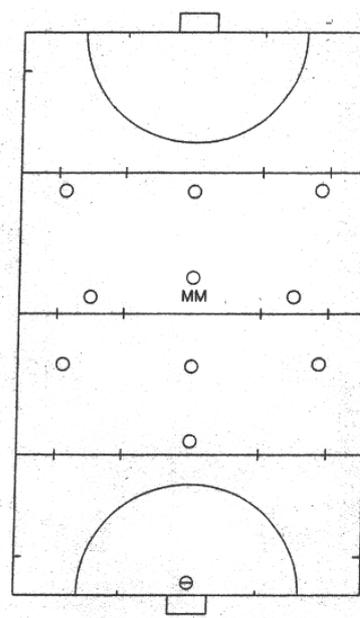


Figure 7

An important task of the free defender when they don't have possession is to give backup cover to the remaining defenders.

Another variation is the K-1-3-3 (Fig 6). This formation is played with a goalkeeper, the free defender (Sweeper), three defenders and three attackers. The free defender gives cover to the defenders.

Teaching players to stretch the field (width), will create space in the depth of the field. The attacking and defending penalty corners will add new elements to team coaching.

The field is small and the tactical task load and variations are simple, hence the players will always be involved in the game and will be involved in the game with and without the ball. All players must get the chance to play in all the different positions which will increase their knowledge of the game.

The progression from the six to the eight-a-side hockey ensures that they progressively learn the technical and tactical side of hockey. They also learn how to function as a team and thus the foundations are laid for the much more difficult eleven a side game.

Important Characteristics of a Training Session

The players in this category require sound technical feedback. This is the most important age group for personal development and it is at this stage that the foundation is laid for a possible career in hockey.

Technique:

- The motor learning capacity of the player improves fast, so technical skills are learned thoroughly and rapidly
- Players will advance from basic skills to being able to execute them in a more advanced environment
- This stage of development is the perfect phase to learn technical skills
- The foundation is laid for the hockey specific technique control
- Basic techniques are initially performed at a relatively high tempo, and then attention must be turned to refinement and advancement of the technique

Tactic:

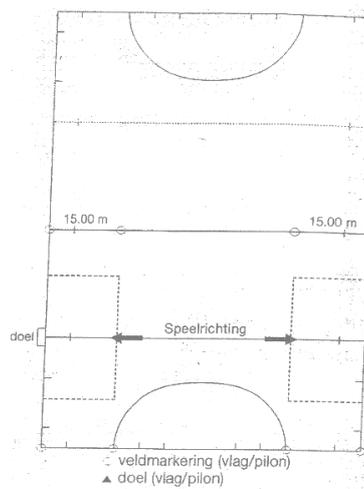
- These children think very rationally and work with concrete instructions
- Observation is the basis for information processing and this aspect aids the motor learning process
- Understanding tactical aspects of the game is important
- All players must learn how to play different positions in the starting line up

Learning Condition:

- Coaching sessions must place emphasis on progression of skill
- Attention must be placed on making the exercises more difficult to enhance agility and coordination aspects

1.1 8 vs. 8 (1/2Field)

What does the field look like?



What are the game rules?

Eight a side Hockey

The game rules of six and eight-a-side hockey are the same

Playing Field

The dimensions for the field are half a normal hockey field. Use the part of the field between the baseline and the half way line.

Goal Box

Every team has one goal box (normal goal boxes). If there are no goal boxes available beacons can be used as a substitute.

The Goal Area

The goal area is a circle ahead of the goal box.

Teams

A team consists of a maximum of seven field players and one goalkeeper. Substitutions are encouraged.

Match Duration

The duration of the match will be 2 x 30 minutes with a half time of 5 minutes.

Step 5: (11:11) 11 - 18 Year Olds

The final step in the game progression is the move from eight-a-side to eleven-a-side (11:11). The difference in the two games lies with an additional line of players: three forwards, three midfielders, three defenders, an additional free defender and the goalkeeper. (K-1-3-3-3).

Phase 1:

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of stick and ball movements to all sides of the body <p>Moving with the Ball:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slalom/ Indian dribbling • One handed dribbling • Accelerate/slow down • Changing direction/turn outs • Elimination of a defender • Avoiding defenders and attacking space • Dummies – Body and stick fakes <p>Combination Play: Refinement of receiving techniques: front and reverse stick receiving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing and receiving • Push and hit one-two combinations • Passing width: to the left/right • Passing with depth: ahead and behind • Receiving balls from the left and right • Diagonal balls from behind <p>Dummy movements prior to passing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse pass after a fake • Front stick pass after a reverse fake <p>Scoring: Low and high</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From a one-two passing combination • From a 2 vs. 1 situation • From a positional interchange • From a 1-1 with the goalkeeper • Receiving front/reverse stick and score • Quick scoring under pressure • To adjust and score <p>Goalkeeping</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To close down and communicate with the defenders • Reaction to high and low balls 	<p>The smaller the space, the more hand and body speed is required</p> <p>1:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attacking: Keeping possession in the 1:1 situation • Defensive: Defending on the front and reverse stick side • To accelerate after cutting off the opponent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support leads determine success of the combinations • Positional play 2-1 and 3-2 • Mini games 4-4 and 5-5 • Each position has attacking and defensive aspects that must be mastered <p>Attack situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solo attack to shoot • Pass- receive and solo attack to shoot • Combination of passes to shoot <p>Positional Play 3-2 and reduce to 2-1 Mini games 2-2 and 4-4</p> <p>Interaction and cooperation with defenders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and support • Ball side/ Help side defence

Penalty Corners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good push out • Attacking principles • Defending principles • Hitter 	Defending penalty corners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensive organisation Attacking Short Corners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct hitting • Variation to the right
Game Situations:	Match 11-11: Formation K-4-3-3

Phase 2

TECHNICAL EMPHASIS	TACTICAL CONCEPTS
<p>Stick Ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a number of directions and angles • Individual tricks, dummies and lifts with the stick <p>Moving with the Ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dribbling and passing combined • Aerial dribbling <p>Combination Skills: Refinement of advanced receiving and passing techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The slap/reverse stick pass • Receiving on the backhand; high or low • High tempo passing combinations • Receive and early, quick passes • High ball (flick or overhead) • Receiving of the high ball <p>Dummy movements prior to passing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse pass after a fake • Front stick pass after a reverse fake • Passing after fake body movement <p>Positional interchange:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth and width • Short and long leads <p>Change of point of attack. Receiving a pass from behind followed by a turn out and acceleration in a new attacking direction.</p>	<p>Individual dribbling skills without been selfish. Passing is more important than individual dribbling actions</p> <p>Anticipation and timing of leads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the correct direction • At the correct game tempo • Into the correct space <p>First touch control and tempo increase</p> <p>Defensive Teamwork</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double defence

<p>Scoring and Goalkeeping: To score whilst moving with the ball</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the edge of the circle, left, right and center • The 7 yard area: aerial and flat balls • Hit and move for rebounds • 1-1 with the goalkeeper • Circle positional play and finishing on target • Out number defenders in the circle and score <p>Match Situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penalty corners • Free hit; outside the circle, general play and long hits • 16 yard out letting • Defending 16 yards (defensive press) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positional Play 2-1 and 3-2 followed by finishing at goal, play until you can score • Mini games in the circle where one team out numbers the other (6-5; 7-5+1) play till you score <p>Attacking Penalty Corners: variation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass to the left • Combination through the centre <p>Match: 11-11: formation K-4-3-3</p>
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Eleven-a-side Hockey

The K-1-3-3-3 formation is the most commonly used system in eleven-a-side hockey. This system ensures that:

- There is a good balance of players across the width and depth of the field
- Ensures good attacking and defensive numbers
- Allows for easy transfer from attack to defence and visa versa

In this system there are two clear axes recognisable:

- The vertical or length axis
- The horizontal or width axis

The central mid-fielder is the most important player in the team, serving as the pivot between attacking and defensive play.

The K-1-3-3-3 system consists of four positional lines:

- The striker line
- The mid-fielders
- The defenders
- The goalkeeper

8. Observation and Analysis

It is a difficult task to assess the quality of a game and the performances of each player. Every coach has a different outlook on the game, usually based on what he has learnt from others or own experiences.

One coach may give more attention to technical training, while the other may place more emphasis on tactical aspects.

Match Analysis

In order to analyse a game it is important that clear tactical instructions are given to the team. These need to be evaluated at half time and at the end of the game.

Golden rule: "If you pay attention to everything, you will miss the important things". Coaches must restrict the number of aspects they evaluate. Just focus on a few key aspects each match. These aspects may change from game to game.

Examples of points to analyse during the match:

Own Team:

- Assess if tactical tasks set to the team have been carried out, for example maintaining formation
- The strong/weak points of your team
- How are the attacking and defending lines functioning in your team?
- Are individuals performing their individual tasks
- Assess set pieces: Are the team disciplined at performing trained set pieces?
- Physical Aspects: Mobility, agility and speed
- Technical aspects: Passing and receiving skills, dribbling skills, defending skills and scoring skills

Opposition Team:

- The strong/weak points of the opposition
- How does the attacking and defending lines of the opposition function?
- Are there areas not covered by the opposition that could be exploited?
- Set Pieces - How does the opposition take the free hit and the attacking short corner? How does the opposition defend the short corner? How does the opposition set up of the defending and their attacking formation?
- Physical Aspects: Mobility, agility and speed
- Technical aspects: Passing and receiving skills, dribbling skills, defending skills and scoring skills

Match analysis is used to improve skills and correct technical and tactical problems as well as adapt team strategy at half time if necessary.