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Level 2
Coaching Assignment**

Prepare a paper that would enable you to talk for 20 mins on five (5) important advanced skills. Explain why these skills are important to the athlete and in what circumstances these skills can be used.

January 2005

Five Advanced Skills

Hockey is as a sport has changed significantly over the last few decades. Many new skills have taken over the game at every level of the sport. Words such as tomas and drag flicks now dominate every day hockey discussions. It is important that as coaches we continue to encourage the improvement of our players. The basic skills are always the foundation of our game but if players are to improve and to go on to higher honours we must also teach them the advanced skills of the game. I have highlighted five advanced skills that are commonly used in today's game. I will explain why these skills are important to the athlete and in what circumstances these skills can be used.

1. Reverse Stick Trapping/Receiving

Reverse stick trapping or receiving is a skill that is extremely important and necessary for the modern day game of hockey. Coaches should be encouraging players to receive the ball on both sides of their body.

Why?

- The ability to receive the ball on the reverse allows players to receive the ball out in front of their feet. When receiving the ball on the reverse a player's vision is aided due to the player receiving the ball with the play ahead of them.
- Receiving the ball on the reverse encourages players to receive the ball mobile and on the move. Players should always aim to receive the ball while moving as

they can receive the ball out in front which will enable them to make quality decisions with their next phase of play.

- Reverse stick trapping is also important for intercepting. Players need to be able to intercept the ball on both sides of their body.

When?

- Reverse stick receiving is especially important for attacking players when they decide to receive going forward. Strikers and midfielders should always be encouraged to be competent at leading to receive on their reverse. The ability to receive effectively on both sides of the body will make it more difficult for opposition players.
- The skill of reverse stick trapping is important on the field in congested areas as well as in space. Always encourage players to trap the ball right on the end of the stick – don't let it bounce off. Good reverse stick trappers have close control of the ball.
- Reverse stick receiving is also critical for players in pivotal roles such as centre half, screen or defensive midfield roles. The ability to trap the ball around the body allows for these pivotal players to assess situations quickly and decide passing options. Once again it also encourages these players to receive going forward and on the move.

2. Toma Hawk

The toma hawk is a reverse stick goal shot. The shot can be played by stepping off either the right or left feet. The shot can be produced by hitting a low off the edge shot or by hitting the ball off the toe of the stick (upright toma).

Why?

- Players need many shots in their repertoire. The toma hawk is a necessary element of goal shooting in the game of hockey today.
- The toma hawk allows players to be able to shoot from either side of their body and at any time.
- It is an unpredictable shot, it is difficult for goal keepers to defend.

When?

- The toma hawk can be used when players are forced to travel across the circle by defenders. In the past, defenders were taught to 'channel' players onto their reverse so that they could not get a shot away but now with the skill of the tomahawk quality shots can still be produced from this side of the body.
- The toma hawk can be used by attackers by dragging the ball right to left and then protecting the ball by shooting on the reverse side.
- The toma hawk is a goal shot that can be used as a long handled reverse stick hit from any area of the circle or a shorter handled more upright swing. Toma hawks are handy when rebounding in general field play and on penalty corners.

3. Overheads

An overhead is the flicking or scooping of the ball in the air over varying distances. The skill has become increasingly popular over the last few years in both men's and women's hockey.

Why?

- The overhead can be used in defensive situations to relieve pressure.
- Overheads are also used as an attacking tool to get in behind defences.
- The overhead can eliminate many players if effectively performed.

When?

- Defenders often have a set play on 16 yard hits and sideline free hits to set themselves up to throw an overhead. Two players stand over the ball, one player rolls the ball a yard, the other stops the ball and the original player will throw the overhead. This set play allows the attackers to get ready for the overhead and the overhead is easier to perform when the ball is stationary.
- Cross field overheads have also become popular over the last few years. Cross field overheads are used to eliminate presses and to find space on the other side of the field. These overheads are especially effective when teams press large numbers to one side of the ball.
- Smaller overheads can be used in attack. These overheads are thrown into space often for strikers and midfielders to run on to.

4. PC Trapping

PC Trapping is the skill of stick trapping on penalty corners.

Why?

- The stick trap on penalty corners is used as a quick and effective stop for set play variations.
- Players should be encouraged to learn skills for penalty corner set plays. The art of stick trapping is a beneficial skill for players to have. In elite teams players have been selected over another player due to their ability to perform set play skills.

When?

- Stick trapping is only used in penalty corners situations. Set play variations may require two stick trappers on the top of the circle to create more options.
- Stick trapping is a skill that requires lots of practice. The stick trap is an extremely important facet of the penalty corner set play. The trapper needs to be able to stop the ball effectively and then position the ball to where the hitter or flicker requires the ball to be.
- The stick trapper is usually positioned in the centre of the top of the circle.
- Stick trappers should practice trapping the ball pushed out from both sides of the goal.

5. Jinks

A jink is a small lift of the ball over a player's stick or into space.

Why?

- Jinks are extremely popular in today's game. The low tackling that is dominating the game is creating difficulties for players to eliminate defenders. The jink creates an extra option along with drags, faints and dummies.

When?

- Jinks are used to lift the ball over defenders sticks into the space in behind. Players should be encouraged to jink the ball into the space and then accelerate into the space behind in order to eliminate the defender.
- Jinks can be used when carrying the ball on the fore stick or reverse stick. They can be used in combination with drags and stick faints to effectively eliminate defenders.
- Jinking the ball is especially encouraged against low tacklers and slower defenders. Attackers should be recognising space in behind defenders and using skills such as jinks to get to this space.