

Appendix A

Age Related Skills and Concepts & Certification

The following is a list of the Lacrosse skills in the order they should be presented and the certification required to teach them. However, it must be remembered that this is only a guide and that age, growth and development factors, years of experience and coaching all affect the rate of learning. Beginners, regardless of age, must go through some version of the following steps. However, a 12 yr. old may only take a year to learn the first stage, an eight year old two years and a six year old three years. (All skills should be demonstrated, taught and practiced using both hands)

Community Initiation for First year of play (Mini-Tykes)

1. Holding the stick Ball control Cradling	Sample Activities & Advanced Skills
	Start beginners with tossing the ball in the air and letting it bounce before catching; then toss in the air and catch. Cradling -- stationary with wrist flexion, handle down and head up. Cradle while walking, jogging and then running.
2. Pick-ups: scoop, trap & scoop;	Pick up a rolling ball from different angles.
3. Catching	Hand toss, roll or bounce the ball to the receiver if there is a problem with hand eye coordination.
4. Throwing	Players can throw to an assistant coach, at a goal or target and off the boards.
5. Give & Go	Throw to an assistant standing at the point position, look for a return bounce pass and then shoot.
6. Checking	Use follow the leader games, mirror games and keep out games to teach players to first stay with their checks and then to maintain proper position.
7. Three player motion offense (crease, corner & point)	Use an assistant coach on the weak side to receive and pass the ball. This activity is an advanced give and go game or drill that programs the use of the weak side.
8. Throwing and Catching with peers.	Start with letting the ball bounce and then progress to soft lob passes.
9. Changing the stick from one hand to the other while jogging with the ball.	

Community Initiation for Years 2 to 4 (Tykes)

See the Community-Coach Initiation Lacrosse Manual for minor games and practice plans on teaching the FUNdamentals.

Scrimmages and games are :

- directed when coaches use drills to teach the skills
- undirected when coaches use minor games that teach and when they give players time to experiment and use their creativity.

Do not use goaltenders until the goaltending skills have been taught.

1. Dodging	Teach using a weight shift to change direction.
2. Checking – one-on-one keep-out games or drills	Introduce the idea of using body position to keep players from going where they want to go.
3. Face-offs	Introduce as an activity where all players are playing the face-off game.
4. Introduce the concept of combining the pass and catch with the give and go.	Use two players to give and go from the 10 second line to the goal.
5. Defence – add two defenders to drill # 4.	Introduce the concept of two players maintaining a “keep-out” position while the offensive players are playing catch.
6. Goaltending – the players are working in pairs.	Teach using a weight shift to change direction.
7. Motion Offense – use three players only. (crease, corner and point positions)	This drill introduces the concept of one player getting ready for his/her turn to receive while the other two execute their give-and-go.
8. The break-out. Give and go down the floor.	The players only run when they don't have the ball and then stop to catch. The receiver cradles and protects the ball while waiting for the partner to get into position
9. Playing defense in a scrimmage Situation.	Add the defense to activities 7 and 8.
The Game – Coaches should be on the floor to this point.	For players to understand the concept of playing a regular game, they must be taught how to link the minor games of give and go, catch and shoot, keep-out etc.

Community Development for Years 3 to 6 (Novice to PeeWees)

Once again, the following stages are the approximate time the skills and concepts would be introduced to Novice to PeeWee players who started lacrosse at age 5. It is more important, however, to use player readiness as the guide rather than player age. **Older players starting the game will go through all the steps but at a faster rate; house league players and B level players may take more time but should eventually be taught all the skills.**

Introduce the Skills and Fundamentals of the previous sections
concurrently with the Team Offensive **and** Team Defensive Concepts.

Offence

1. Introduce the concept of maintaining a balanced floor with the stick to the centre.
2. Introduce the give and go as a way to create offensive opportunities.
3. Introduce working the ball up the floor with short passes.
4. Introduce the Motion Offence to play keep-a-way when a man short.
5. Introduce loose ball situations and how the team is to react.
6. Introduce formal line changes.
7. Introduce goaltender initiated offence from a shot.
8. Introduce basic offensive terminology: creaseman, cornerman/shooter
9. Introduce the games within the game that can be played when players don't have the ball. engaging, picks, floor balance, creating space etc.

Defence

1. Start goalie training with all interested players.
2. Develop one-on-one positional play of defense and the appropriate use of the stick.
3. Introduce appropriate checking distances (sagging).
4. Introduce man-to-man defence as a game within a game i.e. a personal challenge to "play keep-out" to protect the goalkeeper.
5. Develop the habit of identifying ones check before each face-off.
6. Develop the habit of withdrawing to centre and finding the number of the person to be checked as soon as possession is lost.
7. Emphasize man to man defence with the stress on body and stick positioning.

Competitive Introduction for years 5 to 7 (PeeWee A & Bantam)

Offence

1. Develop the Motion Offence stressing floor balance, position and movement.
2. Introduce short pass breakout patterns.
3. Introduce 2 on 1 and 3 on 2, situations.
4. Introduce power play and man short offence.
5. Introduce the team concept of the triple threat position and engaging the defensive player.
6. Introduce the one-on-one to beat a man and draw a man.
7. Develop the break-out from loose ball situation and include the line changes.
8. Develop the team involvement in face-offs.
9. Develop the offensive opportunities from the give-and-go.
10. Develop the goaltender initiated fast break.
11. Introduce pick plays.
12. Introduce the concept of shooting away from the goalie rather than at the corners and passing away from the defense instead of to the stick.

Defence

1. Teach the concepts of the sagging man-to-man defence using the 3 on 2 situation.
2. Develop the full sagging man-to-man defense.
3. Develop overplaying the stick side
4. Develop the commitment for getting back quickly and calling out checks in preparation for applying pressure.
5. Introduce defending the give and go and increasing the level of concentration.
6. Develop the one-on-one checking skills for keeping players out of the prime scoring zone.
7. Develop the man short defensive skills, all players.
8. Introduce defending screens and picks

Competitive Introduction for Years 6 to 12 (Bantam to Midget ages)

Offence

1. Introduce the pick as a team concept.
2. Develop the full Motion Offence including all the pick plays.
3. Speed up the short pass breakout in order to create an odd man situation in the offensive zone.
4. Develop 2 on 1 & 3 on 2 situations as they occur in the Motion Offense.
5. Develop power play and man short offence.
6. Emphasize the triple threat position in developing one-on-one opportunities within the pattern of the motion offence.
7. Refine all aspects of team play to increase speed and intensity of play.

Defence

1. Develop defending the Motion Offence.
As the offence becomes more sophisticated the defenders must become more alert and focussed.
2. Refine overplaying the stick side by emphasizing switching hands to match the stick being checked.
3. Develop goalie and player skills to defend against different shots, different styles of shooting and shots from different spots.
4. Introduce defending the 2 on 1, and 3 on 2 fast break situations.
5. Develop aggressive defending of picks and screens.
6. Develop the man short defensive specialists and strategies.
7. Develop team pressure defenses designed to disrupt offensive flow.
8. Develop strategies for defending the surprises when face-offs and loose balls are lost.

Competitive Development for Years 9 to 12 (Midget to Jr. ages)

Note: Only elite Midget players will be ready for Stage Four with many players not being ready until they are intermediate or Junior B. Coaches should therefore be constantly alert to the needs of the players: not all skills are learned at the same rate by all players and some skills could be taught earlier. Use the following Age Related Concepts as a suggestion for what is to be taught rather than the precise order.

Offence

Motion in the offense should now be made automatic and the concept of using the Motion Offence as a coaching tool can now be introduced.

1. Introduce the concept of using the Motion Offence to:
 - Complete the warm-up at the beginning of the game;
 - Develop team coordination;
 - Control the ball for preserving a win or for the last shot of the period;
 - Set up a specific shooter;
 - Disguise practised scoring plays;
 - Practise and drill all individual skills
2. Introduce the concept of exploiting team and player strengths and eliminating weaknesses and for following game plans.
3. Develop the concept of developing automatic reactions for the execution of:
 - fundamentally sound skills;
 - screens, picks and the pick and roll;
 - strategies for all aspects of the game i.e. fast break, face-off routines; man short etc.

Defence

The skills of getting and maintaining defensive position should now be made automatic and a first priority in all checking situations.

1. Develop defending the 4 on 3 and 5 on 4 in fast break situations.
2. Use team tactics to apply pressure to get the ball.
3. Refine defending all pick plays.
4. Design or adapt all defensive situations to take advantage of team strengths
 - The power play defence & getting possession.
 - The man short defence.
 - Face-offs and loose balls.
 - Fast break situations.
5. Develop the aggressive one-on-one coverage of every player at all times. i.e. Stop both the right handed and left handed moves.
6. Refine the sagging man-to-man defence into a trapping or double teaming defense.
7. Introduce a full floor press to force turn-overs and rushed shots