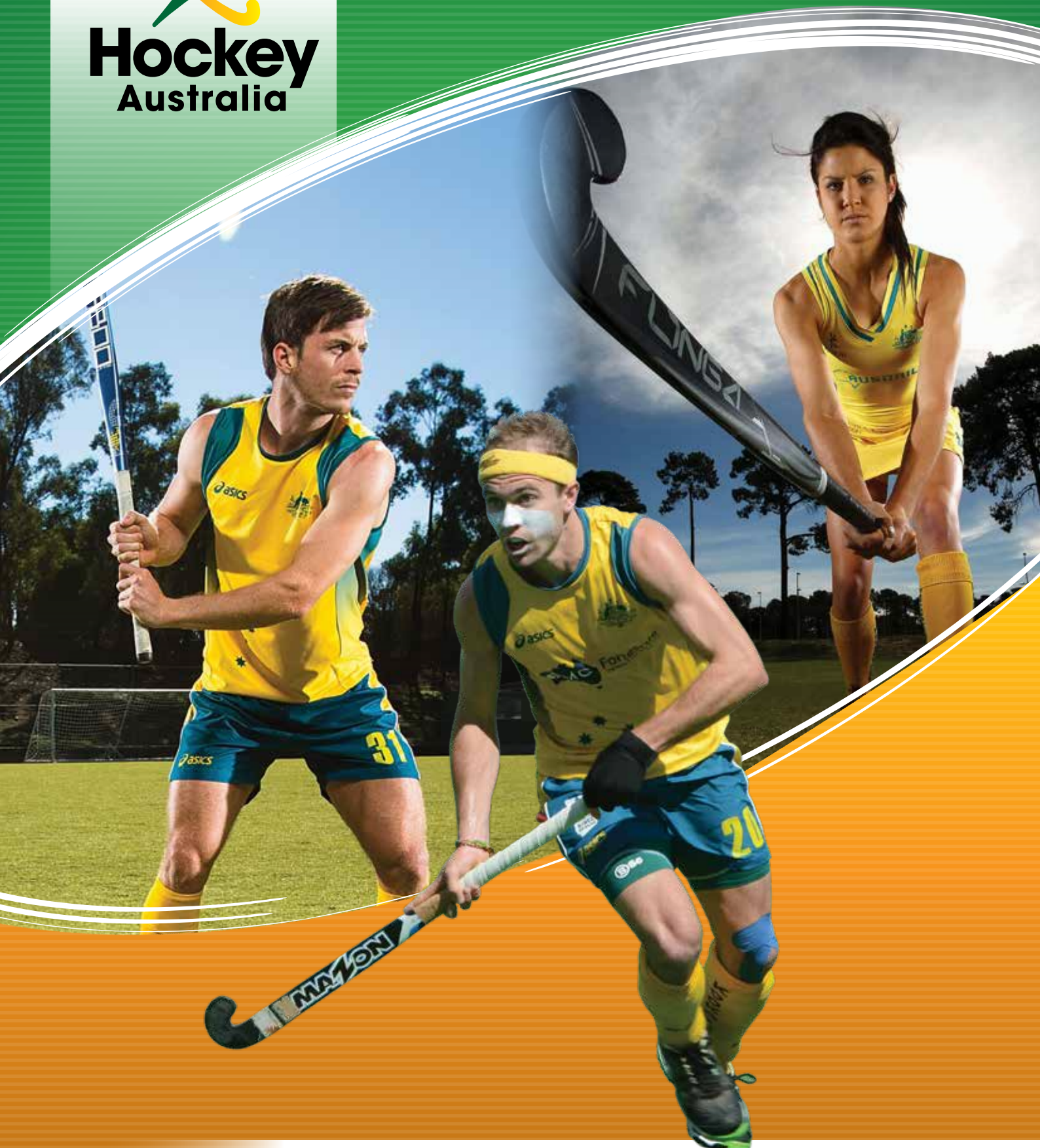




**Hockey**  
Australia



**LEVEL 1 MANUAL**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adrienne Glancy Sport Education Consultant and Instructional Designer

Greg Richards Regional Coaching Director Sunshine Coast

Randall Butler Competition Photos

socialmediagroup.com.au Competition Photos

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## PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

This manual has been compiled as a support resource for facilitators of the Level 1 coaching course. It covers the material that forms the on-ground component of the Level 1 coaching course. The material has been written to facilitate teaching the practical aspects of the Level 1 course to developing coaches.

The material forms part of the competencies that need to be achieved for a coach to be accredited with a Level 1 accreditation. More complete information regarding the Level 1 competencies can be obtained by viewing them on the Hockey Australia Hockey Ed site.



# HOW THE MANUAL IS STRUCTURED

The format of the manual is uniform for all chapters.

Each chapter has the following structure.

- **Technical skills structure**
  - Overview of the skill
  - Technique (divided into grip, ball position and execution)
  - Common errors
  - Practice the skill (includes drills)
- **This manual has an accompanying Hockey Australia DVD, which outlines the technical components of a range of skills relevant for developing players.**
  - Refer to the DVD for a visual demonstration of the skill
- **Symbols (such as tips, key phrases, text boxes)**
- **The manual has a range of call-outs, and text boxes drawing the readers attention to significant cues relating to specific skills**



## HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

Those facilitating the Level 1 course are encouraged to read the manual as a means of checking what needs to be covered in the on-ground component and also as a means of refreshing their technical knowledge of each skill prior to presenting. The manual is not designed to be the definitive guide as to how to coach, as there is always debate as to the optimum method of coaching and performing skills.

# INTRODUCTION: Stick Length

## OVERVIEW

Stick length can affect the stick skill development of players, especially younger players. Players should use a stick of appropriate length and weight. It is recommended that the end of the stick handle when held upright beside the player's body should reach between the hip joint and the hip. Hockey shops often sell sticks to players that are level in length with their navel. The sticks are difficult to manipulate as a result.



## STICK LENGTH

The stick handle when held upright beside the player's body should reach between the hip joint and the hip. The hip joint can be found by the player lifting their knee on the side closest to the stick. The upper thigh hinges at the hip joint.



HA Skills videos:

<http://aussiehockey.com.au/category/skills/>



## HELPFUL TIPS

Buying sticks for players to “grow” into will hinder their ability to master the skills. Players are advised to buy cheaper sticks that they can afford to replace each year if necessary.

# INTRODUCTION: Standard Grips

## OVERVIEW

The standard grip for running with the ball, trapping and pushing is described below. This grip, with the bottom hand one third of the way down the stick, allows the player to be able to see more of the play in front of them and to be able to travel at a higher relative speed with the ball. It also enables them to keep the ball on the stick when they lift their head to scan.



## STANDARD GRIPS

Place stick on the ground with the round side facing upwards. The handle should be pointing to the player's feet. Reach down with the left hand, palm facing the ground, and grip the top of the stick. Pick the stick up.

With the stick face facing the direction of play the left hand is at the top of the stick, the knuckles facing forward. The right hand is placed approximately 1/3 of the distance down the stick from the top.



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## HELPFUL TIPS

Young players with an appropriate length stick do not have any trouble learning to use this grip.

Some elite players use a variety of grips for different skills. This is possibly due to the way in which they were taught. Learning to use the same grip for each of these skills (running with the ball, receiving, and pushing), means less adjustment during play, allowing attention to focus on other areas of the game.

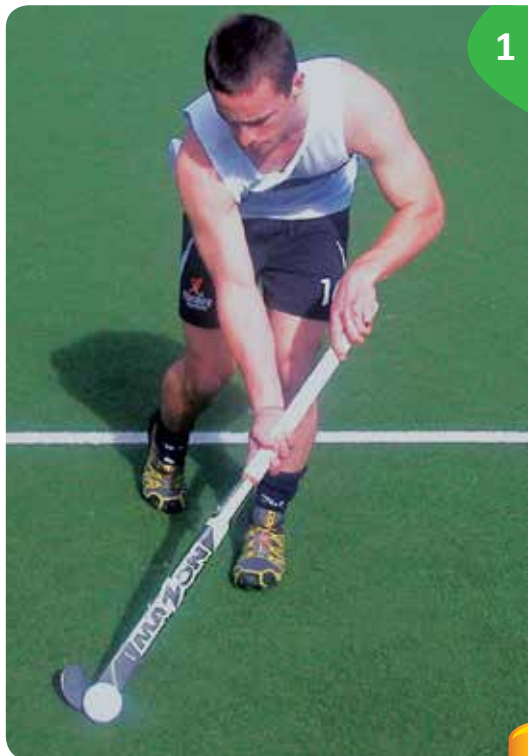


# MOVING THE BALL:

## Open Face Dribble

### OVERVIEW

When moving forward with the ball, the key message is that the ball should remain in contact with the stick. There will however be times in game contexts that a player may recognise a space in front and decide to push the ball into the space and run after it. This should be the exception rather than the rule. Having the stick against the ball as a general rule encourages more sensitive and immediate stick work, and allows the player to focus on what is happening around them as they do not have to keep looking for the ball.



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Grip, Body and Ball position

For the open face dribble, the player uses the standard grip as described in the introduction.

The stick is in contact with the ball. The ball is in front of the player but slightly outside the line of the right foot when running with the ball.



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### HELPFUL TIPS

From a developmental perspective it is advantageous to teach the “finer” skill of having the stick on the ball and then explain contexts in the future when it is possible to run with the stick off the ball.



## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>The player taps the ball to move it forward</b>	Player grips the stick too far down the shaft requiring them to lift the stick off the ball when they look up.	Check that the right hand is holding the stick approximately 1/3 down the shaft.
<b>The head is looking down at the ball when dribbling</b>	The player is not comfortable running with the stick on the ball and regularly looking in the direction they are travelling. The player runs with the stick off the ball.	Allow players the opportunity to run with the ball on their stick and require them to look up regularly.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

Once the player masters running with the ball on the stick then that skill can be combined with other skills when practicing, such as dribble and shoot, or dribble and pass.

1. Running in straight line with ball on stick.
2. Running in straight line with coach holding hand up with different fingers showing. Player to call the number of fingers showing.
3. Same as point 3 but with either arm outstretched to indicate change of direction for player.
4. Player moving in different direction with the stick on the ball and on the fore-stick side.



# MOVING THE BALL: Indian Dribble

## OVERVIEW

The Indian dribble is used to move the ball from side to side across the body. It is used to change the direction of the ball and to eliminate opponents. When learning, players should be encouraged to move forward with a zigzag motion (often players drag flat L-R). Ideally the stick stays on the ball throughout the dribbling motion; that means no noise of stick on ball as the player shifts the ball from side to side.



## COACHING THE SKILL

Grip, Body and Ball position

Turn the left hand so that player can “tell the time” with the stick face pointed away from the player.



## HELPFUL TIPS



Aim to undertake the Indian dribble without any sound to increase the sensitivity of the hands.

Players should be encouraged to practice drags regardless of their foot position. Often drills require players to make a sideways drag every time the player changes feet. The movement looks rhythmic but is not realistic of movement in a game.

With the ball in the normal dribbling position the ball is moved to the left, with the right hand “pushing” the ball in that direction.

At the point the player wants to move the ball back to the right, the right hand loosens on the stick and the left hand turns the stick over the ball. Once the stick face is facing the right, the right hand grip tightens and the ball is pulled back towards the right.



At the point the player wants to stop the drag, the right hand loosens, the left hand turns the stick to bring the stick over the ball, and the right hand tightens again. The stick returns to the starting position.



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# MOVING THE BALL:

## Indian Dribble

### COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Stick “rolling” over the ball or the ball being pulled back into the feet</b>	Incorrect grip - left hand is not in the “tell the time” position prior to commencing the Indian dribble. This means that when they wish to drag the ball back from the left of their body the stick face is not perpendicular to the ball, and the ball is pulled towards the right foot.	Reinforce the standard grip and alter left hand to the “tell the time” position
<b>Player is not able to move the ball in a range of directions on the left side of their body</b>	Incorrect grip - left hand is not in the “tell the time” position. Players may not have been shown that the stick face can be turned to move the ball in a range of directions, e.g., forward while using a reverse grip.	Alter left hand to the “tell the time” position. Practicing turning the stick face to run the ball forward using the reverse grip.
<b>Right hand twisting over the stick towards the left hand side</b>	Incorrect grip – right hand does not release on the stick when turning the stick with the left hand	Releasing the right hand when turning the stick with the left hand. Practice turning the stick onto the reverse with the left hand only on the stick.
<b>Difficulty in eliminating a player</b>	Ball is not moved from left to right at an angle. This makes it difficult to eliminate an opponent as they can only drag the ball flat across their body, allowing the opponent to recover their tackling position.	Move ball from right to left at an angle forward. Set cones at an angle forward with the player dragging the ball L-R parallel to the cones.
<b>Not having total control of the direction of the ball</b>	The ball is not continually in contact with the stick and therefore not able to accurately control the direction of the ball	Keep the stick in constant contact with the ball, move it immediately, and maintain deception over opponents, as there are no clues as to a change of direction

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. Move around changing direction by taking the ball across the body to reverse side then pulling it back from the reverse.
2. Set up two cones at 45 degrees. Player required to drag the ball on the reverse parallel to the cones and bring it back to the fore hand side. This can be combined with a shot at goal.
3. Set up two sets of cones as in 2 opposing each other. A player drags left to right then passes to a player at the other end who then does the same, becoming a continuous passing drill.
4. Set up 5 cones with the player required to make to changes of direction through the cones before moving out of the cones. A shot at goal can be made after dragging through the cones.

# DISTRIBUTION SKILLS:

## Hit

### OVERVIEW

The hit is a powerful means of distributing the ball over both short and longer distances. Due to the speed of execution of a hit, it has the benefit of greater deception than a slap. The hit and the push are the two distribution skills covered in this book. The difference between a hit and a push is that the hands are held together on the stick for a hit and the stick is swung, whereas the hands are apart on the stick for a push, and the stick starts on the ball.



### COACHING THE HIT

#### Grip

With hands together and touching, the V shape created by the thumb & fore-finger are on the top edge of the stick when the stick-face is pointing in the direction of the hit.

The hands are often part way down the stick in a position that allows the player to lift & swing the stick easily. This is especially important for developing players, as they need to grip the stick in a manner that allows them to easily swing the stick.



# DISTRIBUTION SKILLS:

## Hit



*Cock the wrists*

### COACHING THE HIT

#### Body and ball position

The wrists are “cocked” (stick is held 90 degrees to forearm) so that the stick-head is in front of the face.

To commence the back swing, the hands move back around the body to the right side, level with the hips.

The stick head should remain in the air above the height of the right shoulder during the backswing.



The distance of the body from the ball varies from player to player dependent on their height and the length of their stick. Generally the ball is level with the left ankle at impact.

## HELPFUL TIPS



*Transfer weight*

The right foot is back and behind the line of the left foot to aid balance during rotation. The right foot is balanced on the toe or ball of the foot with the majority of the player's body weight being supported by the left foot.

The hands bring the stick around the body in an arc and follow through with the hands finishing past the left hip.

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<http://aussiehockey.com.au/category/skills/>



Some elite players will have variations of this basic template that they have developed over years. If a player can already hit the ball, hard flat, accurately, and with a quick action (time from start to finish of the stroke) then their unique style should be left untouched. If they are unable to attain the desired outcomes in context then they may have to change their technique.

As the player commences their backswing they begin to step towards the ball with their left foot. At impact the left ankle is level with the ball, with the foot facing at a 45° angle to the direction of the hit and the majority of the player's weight finishes on the left foot with the left knee bent.



*Stick around body*

### MECHANICS OF SWING FOR BEGINNERS



*Start with stick vertical, hands level with waist.*



*Take hands around body level with waist.*



*Stop when hands have gone in a 90 degree arc; start downswing from here.*



**DISTRIBUTION SKILLS:****Hit****COMMON ERRORS**

<b>Error</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Solution</b>
<b>Not able to execute the hit</b>	Incorrect grip, sometimes due to playing other sports that use a different grip, e.g., cricket.	Reinforce the shape between the thumb and the forefinger (V shape) at the top of the stick.
<b>Underhand grip</b>	To support the stick as it may be too heavy or too long.	Use a stick appropriate to the player's height – see the introduction section on stick length. Check the V grip
<b>Unable to swing the stick easily</b>	The stick is gripped near the top of the handle making it difficult to swing.	Shorten the grip on the stick by taking the hands together down the stick. Use the correct length stick
<b>Hinging of the wrists</b>	Players do not 'cock' their wrists prior to, or during the back swing	Reinforce a cocked wrist action, where the right forearm is 90 degrees to the stick shaft.
<b>Lack of power generated from wrists</b>	The head of the stick drops down during the backswing, reducing the length of the arc	Reinforce that wrists should remain at 90 degrees to the forearm during the swing.
<b>Ball is topped, squeezed or undercut</b>	The left ankle is not placed level with the ball	Reinforce the position of the left ankle in relation to the ball for a flat hit.
<b>Ball is topped or undercut</b>	The player does not transfer their weight to the left foot or bend the knee, resulting in the body leaning back towards the right foot.	Reinforce moving the player's body weight to the front foot and to bend the left knee during the downswing.
<b>Lack of body rotation</b>	The hands and the stick do not follow around the body at the completion of the swing.	Reinforce allowing the hands to travel around the body in an arc.
<b>Lose of balance on rotation</b>	The right foot is kept in line with the left foot resulting in a loss of balance, with the player being unable to fully rotate.	Correct foot position; the right foot is back and behind the line of the left foot to aid balance during rotation.
<b>Stick head follows the ball</b>	The stick follows the hit in the belief that it aids accuracy, when in fact it reduces power.	Reinforce the stick moving round the body in an arc.



## PRACTICE THE SKILL

Those coaches who have been playing hockey for a long time will have an automated hit that may or may not be a sound example of the modern technique. It is important that the demonstration, matches what they are saying, as modeling the action will be more influential.

When learning the hit or altering a player's hit, using a stationary ball assists the player to have a constant reference point by which to evaluate the various components of the hit in relation to each other, i.e., place the left ankle level with the ball.

It is important that players learn to hit off the right foot, as there are many game contexts in which it is beneficial to be able to hit off either foot to maintain advantage over opponents. It is also beneficial to be able to hit from Right to Left and from Left to Right.

1. Focus on correct grip & having hands down the stick.
2. Focus on the swing (including having hands cocked, i.e., 90 degrees to forearm)
3. Practice by starting in finished position, i.e., ball stationary, left ankle level with the ball, then using correct swing transfer weight to the left foot by bending the left knee.
4. Then practice stepping to the ball.
5. Hit off the right foot while moving. This is beneficial for development, as the player only needs to focus on the right ankle being level with the ball & cocking the wrists.



# DISTRIBUTION SKILLS:

## Push

### OVERVIEW

The push is an accurate and deceptive method of distributing the ball. It is used to pass over shorter distances, and is a good option when releasing the ball when under pressure. During the execution of the push the stick stays in contact with the ball giving the player greater control of the ball and less chance of being dispossessed. The push can be performed with deception. For example it is possible to change the direction of the pass mid-stroke.

Traditionally, players have been encouraged to step forward and push off their left foot for the push but it is recommended that players learn to push off both feet.



*Stick on ball*

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Grip, Body and Ball position

#### EXECUTION

The standard grip is used. The hands are apart on the stick for the execution of the stroke.

In preparing to use the push pass the stick is placed behind the ball and remains in contact with the ball during the execution of the stroke.

When pushing off the left foot, the push is commenced with the ball level with the right foot

## HELPFUL TIPS

*Throw the ball*

With the stick on the ball the player uses a ‘throwing’ action with the right wrist to propel the ball towards the target. To do this the right wrist is bent back before releasing the ball.

The longer the stick is kept on the ball during the “throw”, i.e., the distance the stick is on the ball during the push, the greater the distance of the “throwing” movement and therefore the more powerful the push will be. A simple clue as to whether the stick is on the ball through the complete stroke is the absence of any noise of the stick on the ball.

When pushing off the left foot, the body weight moves from the right to left foot. The knee is bent as the weight is transferred and the ball is released as the left foot lands and takes the body weight. The hands continue around the body.

*Transfer weight*

When pushing off the right foot the ball is carried in the normal ‘running with the ball’ position, and at the point the push commences the right ankle is level with the ball.

The ball is released as the right foot lands and takes the body weight.



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# DISTRIBUTION SKILLS:

## Push

### COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Slapping or hitting noise</b>	The stick starts off the ball or comes off the ball during the execution phase	Reinforce that the ball and stick remain in contact for a more accurate, more powerful and more deceptive pass
<b>Slapping or hitting noise</b>	The player moves the stick away from the ball to try and generate more power	Reinforce the throwing action to generate power and the transfer of body weight
<b>Push pass lacks power</b>	The push pass is not powerful and slow to reach the target	Reinforce transfer of body weight. Cock the wrists prior to releasing the ball.
<b>Push pass is inaccurate</b>	The ball does not go to the intended target	Ensure stick face is facing target when ball is released.

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

With new players it is easier to teach the push by allowing the players to run around with their sticks on the ball and push the ball without focusing on which foot is forward. This means they develop being able to push whenever they wish without having to shift feet.

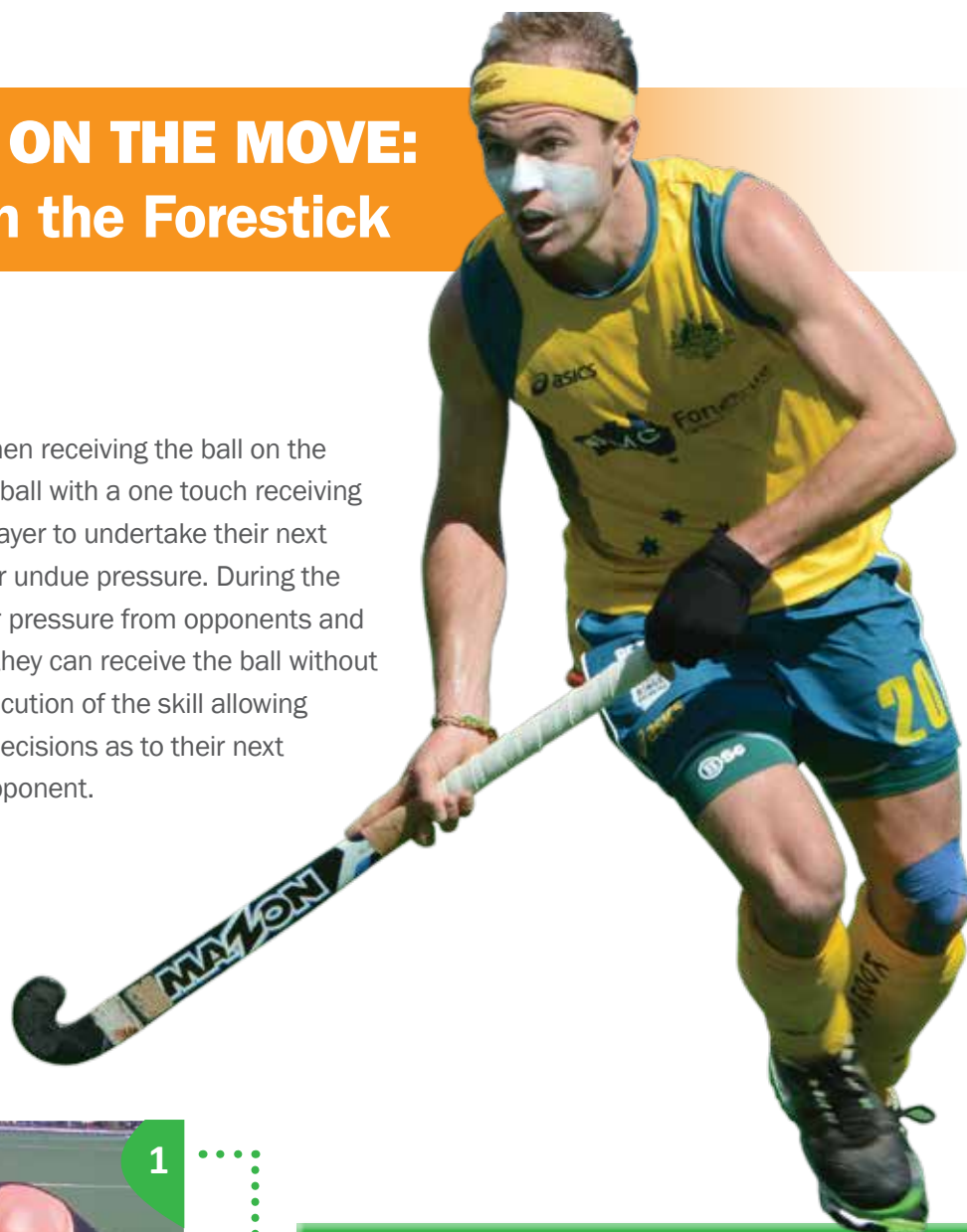
For older players who have learned to only push with the left foot forward it will take a conscious effort for them to change what has become an automatic movement.

1. Have players move in pairs pushing the ball to each other (stick always on ball).
2. Practice moving and pushing at targets set at varying angles to the players body.
3. Players in a triangle pushing the ball to each other. Change the direction of the passes to practice pushing to different directions and receiving moving feet.

# RECEIVING ON THE MOVE: Receiving on the Forestick

## OVERVIEW

The intention of players when receiving the ball on the fore stick, is to control the ball with a one touch receiving technique. This allows a player to undertake their next movement without delay or undue pressure. During the game players will be under pressure from opponents and need to be confident that they can receive the ball without focusing unduly on the execution of the skill allowing them more time to make decisions as to their next move in relation to their opponent.



*Catch the ball*

## COACHING THE SKILL

**Grip - The standard grip is used  
for receiving**  
**Body and ball position**

The player puts their stick on the ground, in line with the ball as the ball approaches.

The stick face is at a 90° angle to the direction of the ball allowing the player to “catch” the ball on the stick without it bouncing off at an angle or lifting in the air.

# RECEIVING ON THE MOVE: Receiving on the Forestick



**COACHING THE SKILL**  
Grip - The standard grip is used  
for receiving.  
Body and ball position

Receiving from the Left on the fore stick.



Receiving from the right on the fore stick.

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## HELPFUL TIPS

With beginner players it is useful for them to learn to receive the ball while moving. As most receiving in games is on the move it introduces the players to the game skill immediately. It also enables the players to be able to receive from any direction dependent on the game context. By learning to receive on the move, the player learns a comfortable body and stick position without the coach having to become too 'technical' over knees or stick angles, which can often happen when taught in a stationary position.

## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Ball bounces off the stick when receiving.</b>	The player doesn't receive the ball with a catching movement but instead pushes at the ball.	Practice catching and throwing the ball with a teammate, focusing on the ball remaining on the stick. Usually the player needs to relax the right wrist.
<b>Ball slides off the stick face at an angle.</b>	At the point of receiving the stick face is not at 90 degrees to the ball direction.	Practice receiving the ball from a range of directions ensuring that the stick face is 90 degrees to the ball direction.
<b>Ball received too close to the feet.</b>	The player receiving doesn't bend their knees and receive the ball away from their feet.	Practice receiving the ball on the move. This ensures that the player bends their knees and receives the ball in a comfortable position.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. In pairs with players moving and pushing to each other.
2. Have players receive a ball from the right side (fore stick) on the move (can be from the coach) and then shoot.
3. Repeat 2 but receiving from the left side.



# RECEIVING ON THE MOVE: Receiving from Behind

## OVERVIEW

To control a ball that is passed to a player, with a one touch receiving technique on the reverse side while moving forward.



## COACHING THE SKILL

Grip, Body and Ball position

When receiving on the reverse moving forward, the same left hand grip is used as for dragging the ball left to right when Indian dribbling.

On the reverse side the player puts their stick in line with the ball prior to receiving.

Allow the ball to hit the stick.





## HELPFUL TIPS

Allow the ball to pass the body before the ball hits the stick to prevent the ball lifting or kicking in the air.



The player receives the ball past their body to prevent the ball “kicking up” and to allow them to continue moving forward with the ball if desired.



Receiving from behind on the left side.



The player receives the ball past their body to prevent the ball “kicking up” and to allow them to continue moving forward with the ball if desired.



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# RECEIVING ON THE MOVE: Receiving from Behind

## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Pulling the stick across the line of the ball direction when receiving.</b>	Adds another complexity to the skill that is unnecessary.	Practice having the stick in line with the ball when the ball is within 5 metres.
<b>Receiving the ball prior to it passing the player's foot.</b>	Player is not comfortable allowing the ball to pass their body as they are not aware of what is in front of them.	Practice receiving the ball while on the move. The passes should be slow to begin and then become firmer as the movement becomes more comfortable.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

One player 5 metres in front of a player in possession facing forward who receives a ball from behind on the reverse side then drags L-R and shoots.



# TACKLING:

## Basic Principles

### OVERVIEW

This section provides a framework to support the development of tackling and then focuses on three skills: stealing the ball, channeling and the block tackle. It also includes a description of David Bell's method of coaching tackling at a more advanced level for players already adept at the basics.

There are many debates that occur in hockey about how to introduce tackling to junior players and the type of tackles that should be taught. One of the authors of this resource has had excellent success through coaching young players to steal the ball in small games. Players tend to run beside each other in these games allowing young players to be able to reach in and take the ball off their opponent legally. Stealing the ball alleviates unnecessary swing tackles and aids young people in understanding the concept of regaining possession, and what is regarded as a legal tackle. Often, young players are coached to poke tackle, which does not always result in regained possession. It is also arguable that it is more difficult to master the poke tackle as defenders are often running side-on to the ball carrier. Experience indicates that young players are just as successful at stealing the ball as they are at poke tackling.



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Grip

The starting position for tackling is with the V of the left hand on the stick face down the front of the stick. This is a neutral position that allows the tackler to move to tackle on either side of the body.

If the opponent goes down the defenders right side, the defender simply rolls their left hand around the stick in a left to right direction ending up in the traditional grip for tackling.

## TACKLING: Stealing



For a running steal or tackle on the right side of the ball carrier the grip changes the grip from the starting position to the standard grip.

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Body and ball position

Players attempting to steal, position themselves beside the ball carrier enabling them to reach in for the ball without hitting the ball carriers stick or body. They carry the stick in a neutral position to protect their feet prior to attempting to steal.

Players run beside their opponent, with their stick protecting their feet until a time when they can reach in and pull the ball towards them on to their stick.



For a running steal on **left side** of the ball carrier's body the stick is held in the neutral position until the tackler is ready to steal the ball.

## HELPFUL TIPS

Keep the stick held in the neutral position to protect the tackler's feet & to disguise when they are going to tackle.



4

Takeover tackle: The tackler “takes” the ball off the ball carrier by placing their stick between the ball and the ball carriers stick. Once in possession they turn to their left and run away with the ball.



**HA Skills videos:**

<http://aussiehockey.com.au/category/skills/>

## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Holding the stick away from the body and feet.</b>	It allows the attacker to know when the tackle is about to be made. It also means that the opponent can pull the ball into the tackler's feet.	Hold the stick in a neutral position to protect the feet and not to give any indication of when the tackle is to be made.
<b>Defender runs in front of the attacker.</b>	Defender moves in front of attacker but exposes themselves to being beaten either side of their body.	Continue to practice running beside the attacker to limit the direction the attacker can travel and to allow the defender to reach in quickly and steal the ball.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. Player in possession walks in a straight line (passively) allowing the defender to practice stealing the ball from either side.
2. As players become competent (do not hit stick or body of player in possession) the ball carrier moves more quickly.
3. Play a small game where a goal can be scored for a correct steal.

# TACKLING: Stealing

## OVERVIEW

Channeling is a skill that can be introduced by comparison with what happens in children's games such as British Bulldogs or Red Rover, where a tackler stands in the middle and attackers attempt to cross to the other side. In this context junior players understand the notion of controlling the speed and direction of the attacker they are attempting to "tag". The coach's role is to make the connection between the children's game and channeling in hockey via the question and answer technique of "Game Sense".

The concept of channeling is allowing space for the ball carrier to run into, with the intention of closing the ball carrier down when they enter that area. The type of tackle selected depends on which side of the body the attacker is channeled to, and how much time and space is available to the attacker.



## COACHING THE SKILL

### Grip

The stick is held in the neutral position. Note both thumbs are held on the front of the handle with the stick head facing out from the player.

## HELPFUL TIPS

Tackling footwork is based around the boxer's stance with the opposite foot forward to the side the opponent is entering, i.e., left foot forward if the opponent is approaching towards the right side of the defender.

## COACHING THE SKILL

### Ball and body position

The body position is side on, at 45° to the direction the ball carrier is running. When channeling to the right of the defenders body, the left foot is forward and the right foot is back. When channeling to the left of the defenders body, the right foot is forward and the left foot is back. Once the attacker has committed to the channeling side then the tackler can move toward them at a 45° angle to further slow the attacker down and to control the options open to the attacker. The type of tackle subsequently used will vary based on the ground and game situation.

HA Skills videos:

<http://aussiehockey.com.au/category/skills/>



2



# TACKLING: Channeling

## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Tackler doesn't move to 45° angle to attacker's direction.</b>	Tackler is not comfortable allowing the attacker space; concerned that they will run away.	Practices in confined area so that attacker cannot simply run, then gradually introduce more space as the tackler becomes more comfortable.
<b>Tackler runs in front of the attacker.</b>	The tackler thinks they have the attacker in control.	Continue to practice the sequence with the coach prompting the tackler to remain in correct channeling position.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

Channeling can be easily explained by playing British Bulldogs (Red Rover in some States & Territories) with the instruction to direct the opponent to the defenders preferred side by exaggerating the space available on the side and letting the opponent enter that space.

1. Play 1 v 1 without sticks and ball (British Bulldogs/Red Rover), with defender practicing slowing down the attacker.
2. Same as 1. but ask the defender to nominate which side they are going to "channel" the attacker. Defender needs to get at an angle of 45 degrees to the attackers direction.
3. Same as 2. with both players having sticks and attacker with a ball. Defender practices channelling without taking the ball.
4. Same as 3. but the defender can attempt to take ball as a result of correct channelling angle.





# TACKLING:

## Block Tackle

### OVERVIEW

The block tackle is used frequently in a game, usually in a confined area with the ball carrier moving towards the defender. It is predominantly used on the right side of the tackler.



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Grip

The stick is held initially in the neutral position until the ball carrier moves to the right of the tackler. The grip is then changed to the forehand grip in preparation for tackling.

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Body and ball position

The tackler positions themselves at a 45° angle to the direction of the ball carrier. This allows space for the opponent to dribble the ball to the tackler's open stick side, and ensures that if the ball carrier wishes to run right then they have to slow down to make the change of direction.



*Left foot forward*

## TACKLING: Block Tackle

As the opponent commits to that direction, the tackler moves closer to the ball carrier to get greater control of the ball carrier's speed and direction. At the point the ball carrier is about to pass the tackler, the tackler places their stick in front of the ball to prevent the ball carrier continuing.

The left foot leads and takes the body weight as the tackle is made. The right foot balances the body.

### HELPFUL TIPS

Tackling footwork is based around the boxer's stance with the opposite foot forward to the side the opponent is entering, i.e., left foot forward if the opponent is approaching towards the right side of the defender.



### COMMON ERRORS

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Error	Reason	Solution
<b>The player easily eliminates the defender</b>	The stick is placed on the ground too early and the ball carrier either takes the ball around the stick or to the other side of the tacklers body	Timing is really important. The tackle should be made when the ball carrier is about to pass the tackler.
<b>The stick swings as the tackle is made</b>	Poor technique	Reinforce the importance of blocking the path of the ball rather than swinging at the ball.
<b>Initial tackle is made but possession not gained</b>	Not enough strength in the tackle so the ball carrier is able to push through the stick	Reinforce good body position with the weight on the left foot and right foot providing balance. The strength in the tackle comes from the legs.
<b>Initial tackle is made but possession not maintained</b>	The stick face is not angled forward to trap the ball so the ball moves away or lifts over the stick	Show and reinforce the correct position of the stick face

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. Emphasize channelling to right side of defender. When the attacker has committed to that side then block tackle.
2. Play a small game where a goal is awarded for a correct block tackle (no body or stick contact).

# TACKLING:

## Advanced Tackling Sequence

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### The tackling sequence framework

For more advanced players the tackling sequence developed by David Bell is very useful. If coaches wish to introduce the sequence to junior players they should be mindful of the conceptual limitations of young players under 13 years of age. For more in-depth information and a visual demonstration of this framework, please refer to the video provided at <[www.aussiehockey.com/au](http://www.aussiehockey.com/au)>.

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Controlling the body movement of the opponent

This follows becoming competent at channeling. An essential part of defending is delaying the tackle and waiting for an appropriate moment to take the ball, such as the ball coming off the stick of the ball carrier, or when the ball carrier is committed to a certain direction.



1



2

*Lead with hip*

### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Footwork

The key to good defending is good footwork. Often the ball carrier will quickly change direction to unbalance the defender. In order for the defender to react without becoming unbalanced they need to learn to pivot off the back foot.

## TACKLING: Advanced Tackling Sequence



### COACHING THE SKILL Footwork

Having channeled the ball carrier at a 45° angle to the direction the ball carrier is travelling, the defender will pivot off the back foot by turning the hip facing the ball carrier at a 45° angle as the ball carrier changes direction.

### COACHING THE SKILL Stick position

The stick position or 'tackling position' is the neutral starting grip for tackling, with the stick held in front of the body facing forward, left hand at the top of the stick, right hand 1/3rd down the stick, with the thumbs facing down the stick.

The head of the stick is low to the ground and the stick is positioned in front of the feet.



*Stick head low*



Presence

## COACHING THE SKILL

### Presence

The tackling presence area refers to the space that the defender needs to be in to make a successful tackle, i.e., within one movement from the ball. The defender takes the space of the ball carrier, to make the player feel uncomfortable. The body is positioned at a 45° angle, (see footwork above) and this will dictate the movement of the ball carrier.

If the defender is too far away from the ball, they are not in the tackling presence area. This gives the attacking player options to move the ball left or right.

## COACHING THE SKILL

### Quick hands

Defenders need quick hands to respond to a change in direction of the ball. The stick position and grip will change dependent on what type of tackle is used, and what side of the body the tackle is made. To enhance the speed of their movement to optimum tackling positions defenders need to be adept at moving their feet to allow them to make effective tackles. In this photo the defender (in white) has intercepted the ball as the attacker (in blue) has attempted to play it past the defenders left foot.



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# TACKLING:

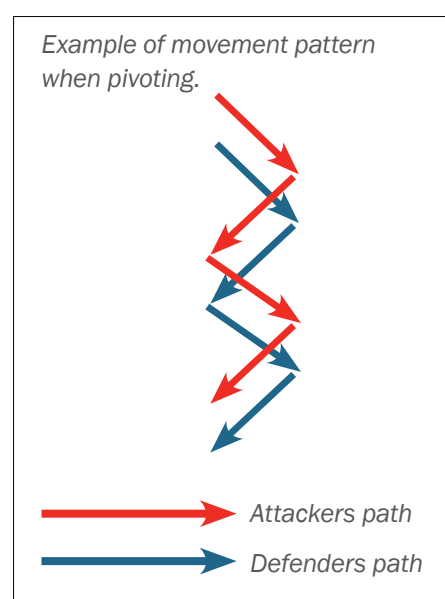
## Advanced Tackling Sequence

### COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Become flat footed when defending</b>	When the ball carrier changes direction, the feet do not pivot enough for the hip to lead at a 45° angle, leaving the defender with feet side by side and on the heels of the feet.	Reinforce the pivot on the ball of the foot to lead with the hip Repetitive shuffling drills, e.g., David Bell's drill
<b>Over rotate when changing direction</b>	When the ball carrier changes direction, the rotation is to a 60° angle, leaving the attacker with too much space.	Reinforce a controlled pivot on the ball of the foot to lead with the hip at a 45° angle
<b>Not in the tackling presence area</b>	Not moved close enough to the ball carrier	Move closer to the player with the ball and position the body at a 45° angle It takes time to be comfortable in this position
<b>Too slow to get to the presence area</b>	Defenders playing against faster attackers have a tendency to give the ball carrier more space. This only allows the attacker greater choice.	Once the attacker is channeled move quickly into the presence area to get closer and limit the space of the ball carrier

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. Standing in boxer's position at a 45-degree angle to the direction of an imaginary attacker.
2. Side shuffle two steps to that side leading with the hip then pivot off the back foot to turn to face the opposite side at 45-degree angle.
3. Side shuffle two steps on that side then pivot to face the opposite side at a 45-degree angle.
4. Repeat steps 1-3 but with a passive attacker moving a ball from side to side at a tempo that allows the defender time to pivot from side to side.
5. Have the attacker move the ball randomly to challenge the defender to be able to pivot reacting to the ball movement of the attacker.
6. Same as in point 5 but with the defender attempting to channel the attacker to one side then move close enough (presence) to force the attackers eyes to the ball.
7. Having achieved 5, attempt to take the ball.



# GOALKEEPING:

## Basic Techniques & Stance

### GOALKEEPING

Goalkeeping has changed significantly with the advent of lighter, safer protective equipment that allows goalkeepers to be more proactive with greater mobility around the defensive circle, yet confident that they will not be injured when playing.

### EQUIPMENT

The goalkeeper pictured below is wearing what is considered standard goalkeeping gear for goalkeepers of all ages and standards. It is the responsibility of coaches to ensure that anyone who plays as a goalkeeper is wearing a complete set of well-fitted equipment. Equipment should be checked on a regular basis to ensure that it is functioning as it was designed.

### OVERVIEW

This is the position a goalkeeper assumes when standing waiting for a shot to be taken



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Basic stance

Feet should be no wider than shoulder width apart. The knees are slightly bent. This is achieved by undertaking a 'starting to sit' movement.

Hands are held just above waist height with the hands facing forwards at about 40° to the goalkeeper's body. Note coaches vary as to whether the hands should be held "higher" rather than "lower" in relation to the hips and body.

# GOALKEEPING:

## Basic Stance & Techniques



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Basic stance & movements

The basic stance viewed from the side to show the goalkeeper in the “sitting position” with weight evenly distributed across both feet, without being on his “toes”.



The goalkeeper should follow the movement sequence below when moving to a ball:

Hip  
Knee  
Foot

The sequence brings the goalkeeper’s head across to the ball.





4

If the goalkeeper is saving a shot with the hand, the sequence is

Hip  
Knee  
Foot  
Elbow  
Forearm  
Hand

to gain maximum extension to the ball.

Goalkeeper's position for a block save. Used when the ball comes quickly at the goalkeeper and they do not have time to kick the ball. The ball would be then cleared with the kicker or if the ball rebounded further and needed to be cleared quickly the stick would be used.



5

Goalkeeper's position for an instep save with the left foot. The goalkeeper's body weight has been transferred to the left foot allowing his head to be over the ball. His left knee is vertically in line with his left foot ensuring that the ball is saved along the ground.



6

# GOALKEEPING: Basic Stance & Techniques

## COACHING THE SKILL

### Basic movements



The standard position for defending a penalty corner hit. The goalkeeper is offset to his right side protecting the right post. The gap to the left of the goalkeeper's feet is where the left post defender stands. Pay particular attention to how the pads vertically align with each other to avoid deflecting the ball into the net if the top pad is tilted backwards towards the net.

Position for a sliding block save along the sideline. The goalkeeper has confronted the attacker with his pad while covering the line inside with his stick.

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## HELPFUL TIPS

A critical key to goalkeeping is that the goalkeeper remains still as the shot is being taken. Any prior movement at the time the shot is taken, such as bouncing on the spot, makes it difficult for the goalkeeper to move in any direction, if necessary, when the shot is taken.

## COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Reaching with the foot for wide saves</b>	Seen as the easiest method to reach balls that are wide of the body.	Follow the movement sequence (hip, knee, foot) to attain greater distance with the foot.
<b>Not able to reach wide balls</b>	The feet are too wide apart, which makes it very difficult to move quickly	Reinforce the correct technique of feet shoulder width apart Incorrect movement sequence
<b>Bending at the hips to reach wide balls</b>	Bending at the hips occurs rather than bending at the knees, this forces the body weight forward making it difficult to move sideways.	Examine the goalkeeper's stance to check that they are bending at the knees, with weight evenly distributed on their feet, rather than bending from the hips, or balancing on their toes.
<b>Overbalancing when moving to the ball</b>	The GK attempts to stand on their toes	Check that the goalkeeper has an optimum stance, with weight evenly distributed on their feet, rather than bending from the hips, or balancing on their toes.
<b>Slow to respond with hands</b>	GK's hands held too high in relation to the body in an uncomfortable position making it difficult to move them quickly.	Reposition hands so facing forwards at about 40° to the goalkeeper's body.

## PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. To improve specific technique weakness the coach provides regular repetitive practice of specific movements apart from the goalkeeper being involved in training with the team.
2. When the goalkeeper is involved with repetitive shooting drills allow enough time between repetitions for the goalkeeper to follow their save and become balanced before returning to the starting position to make the next save.
3. Allow the goalkeeper the opportunity to have a break if they are training as the sole goalkeeper in repetitive shooting drills, as unrealistic levels of fatigue will affect their capacity for sound technique.

Note: For further goalkeeping resources and coaching information go to:  
<http://www.kathleenpartridge.com>

# ELIMINATION SKILLS:

## 1 V 1

### OVERVIEW

The aim of playing a 1 v 1 is to eliminate an opponent. This can be done by the attacker tricking the opponent into moving away from the space that they want to run into. Once accomplished, the attacker changes direction and runs into the space. Young players need to understand the concept of moving around an obstacle in their path. Ideally after eliminating the opponent or moving around the obstacle, the player should return to the path that they were on.



The attacker dribbles the ball (see dribbling skills) and tricks the opponent into moving left at an angle away from the space on the right.



### COACHING THE SKILL

#### Execution

There are many methods that can be used to beat an opponent, and players should be encouraged to be creative and practice a range of different elimination skills. The basic concept that players can be taught is that you move the opponent away from the space you wish to run into. The second concept is that you “trick” the opponent by quickly moving them one way and as they follow quickly change the direction of the ball to get them off balance. Ideally greatest advantage is gained by the 1v1 being executed in the direction of the attackers goal. However there are situations in games where being able to eliminate an opponent but with less risk of losing possession means that the attacker may use a technique other than facing the direction of their goal, e.g., post and turn.

## HELPFUL TIPS

For young players, introducing them to the notion of “tricking” or “deceiving” the opponent aids their ability to understand what to do. This can be done by playing British Bulldogs or Red Rover in pairs without sticks or balls, as this is a game that they are familiar with, and which relies on the principles of tricking or deceiving the opponent. The only caution is to add a rule that there cannot be any body contact.

By using question and answer the players can tell the coach what they were trying to do which will aid transfer to when they use sticks and balls.



As soon as the opponent follows the attacker, the attacker moves the ball at an angle in the opposite direction.

Once the attacker creates space outside the defender they run forward into it, accelerating past the opponent. The attacker should keep their stick on the ball so they can respond immediately to the defender's movement.

Some defenders will remain balanced with the change of direction and will not be beaten. The attacker may have to repeat the change of direction.

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# ELIMINATION SKILLS:

## 1 V 1

### COMMON ERRORS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>Attacker is not able to trick the defender</b>	Beginners often run straight at the defender and then cut in a direction. Unfortunately the defender is not tricked and is usually prepared for the attackers move.	Reinforce the concept of tricking your opponent by getting them to follow the ball then reverse the direction of the ball to unbalance them.
<b>Attacker is not able to trick the defender</b>	Attackers need to keep their stick on the ball as it means they can move the ball immediately without the defender being able to react simultaneously	The ball must stay in contact with the stick at all times
<b>Defender maintains balance and is not able to be tricked</b>	Beginners often do not move quickly enough to make the defender respond in a manner that will cause them to become unbalanced when the attacker moves the ball in the opposite direction.	Use speed when changing direction
<b>The attacker is not able to eliminate the defender</b>	Attackers often do not drag at angles, which affects their ability to eliminate the defender quickly.	The attacker to drag the ball at an angle slightly forward to speed up the elimination process.
<b>The attacker creates more space than is needed</b>	Players often look for more space than they need or create before they attempt to eliminate the defender.	Learning ball protection techniques can assist attackers eliminating into tight spaces.

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

There are a variety of 1 v 1 contexts based on whether the player is attempting to eliminate a player or keep the ball away from an opponent.

1. In pairs attempting to get the opponent off balance and to run into the space behind them. This can be done without having any constraints about where they can run, or can be between two lines of cones to dictate the area to run into.
2. Set 2 cones 5-7 metres apart and the player with the ball attempts to touch the cone opposite with the ball on the stick. The opposing player starts to defend mid-way between the cones. If a goal is scored or the attacker is dispossessed then the other player attacks the opposite cone.
3. In a small game a goal can be awarded for a successful 1 v 1. The player achieving the 1 v 1 should call out so the coach becomes aware that it was a conscious effort.

# ELIMINATION SKILLS: 2 V 1

## OVERVIEW

A 2 v 1 in a game is a situation where there are 2 attacking players against 1 defending player. This is an excellent opportunity for the attackers to eliminate the defender. This can be done by passing around the defender or by one attacker beating the defender 1 against 1. Part of the skill of a 2 v 1 in a game situation is recognizing the opportunity, and being able to execute quickly.

## COACHING ATTACKING SKILLS

The ball carrier moves so that they commit the defender to follow their movement. Once the defender moves, the ball carrier must make a decision to either pass the ball to their teammate or eliminate the defender on their own (see the section 1 v 1).



### EXECUTION – 2 V 1: Passing the ball

To pass the ball, the ball carrier looks as though they are going to eliminate the defender by running past them.



# ELIMINATION SKILLS: 2 V 1

When the defender moves to follow the attacker, the attacker passes to their teammate who runs into the space behind the receiver.

## EXECUTION – 2 V 1: Passing the ball



## EXECUTION – 2 V 1: By dribbling

To eliminate the defender by dribbling past, the attacker looks as though they are going to pass to their teammate.

When the defender moves to cover the pass the attacker runs into the space behind the defender.



*Commit the defender*



As with 1 v 1 if the forward moves quickly any response by the defender has to be quick, therefore increasing the chance of tricking the defender.



## EXECUTION: Using a through pass

Another option is for the ball carrier look as though they are going to pass directly to their teammate.



# ELIMINATION SKILLS:

## 2 V 1

When the defender moves to cover the pass, the ball carrier rolls the ball into space for their teammate to receive the ball in behind the defender.

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**EXECUTION:**  
Using a through pass



### HELPFUL TIPS

One of the keys to tricking the opponent is for the attacker who is receiving to move forward so they are nearly level with the opponent. This engages the defender's attention and also means that when they receive a pass they have already beaten the opponent.

There are many methods that can be used to beat an opponent, and players should be encouraged to be creative and practice.

## COACHING DEFENDING SKILLS

Clearly the defender is at a disadvantage numerically and the expectation is that a well-played 2 v 1 would beat the defender most of the time. The tactic available to the defender in a game is to attempt to delay the execution of the 2v1 by the attackers until such time as one or more teammates become engaged in the play.

### EXECUTION: Prevent the pass

The simplest tactic is for the defender to attempt to prevent the direct pass to the free attacker by the ball carrier.



Channel the ball carrier away from the other attacking player and force the ball carrier to have to beat the defender 1 on 1. This takes time and allows other defenders to get back.

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### EXECUTION: Encourage the 1 v 1



Channel

# ELIMINATION SKILLS:

## 2 V 1

### COMMON ERRORS FOR ATTACKERS/DEFENDERS

Error	Reason	Solution
<b>The receiving forward is square with the ball carrier</b>	Although the defender may be deceived because the ball is received 'square' the defender has the opportunity to recover having not been beaten by the pass.	The receiving forward should move further forward so that the defender cannot recover to tackle
<b>The attacker loses the 1 v 1 situation as other defenders get back</b>	In game situations the 2 v 1 advantage doesn't exist for very long and therefore attackers need to eliminate the defender quickly.	In training, attackers need to practice the drill at game tempo.
<b>The attacker continually gives the ball to the opposition</b>	The attacker is making the incorrect decision in the game situation. If the defender is blocking the path of the pass to the other attacker, the decision should be to dribble	Reinforce good decision making in training drills. The attacker must decide when to pass and when to dribble
<b>The defender is caught between the attackers</b>	The defender has not decided whether to push towards the ball carrier or drop back towards the receiver.	Practice both pushing towards the attackers and dropping back to the receiver

### PRACTICE THE SKILL

1. Form a rectangle running from the 22.9 metre line to the top of the circle approximately 6 meters wide. The two attackers attempt to beat the defender and score.
2. For practicing possession, form a 5 meter square with 2 players keeping the ball off the defender.
3. 2 v 1 can be practiced from the side of the circle or from within the circle with cones indicating the width of the zone.

# GOAL SHOOTING: Positioning and Basic Shots

## OVERVIEW

Goal shooting is utilising the skills that a player already possesses and uses on the pitch, to aim at the goal. For example a push pass or a hit can be used for shooting at goal or 1 v 1 skills can be used to dribble around the goalkeeper.

## COACHING THE SKILLS

The focus for effective goal scoring opportunities should be on being able to receive the ball with a “one touch” receiving technique, preferably facing the goal, so that a shot is possible. Forwards should develop a range of shots that can be used from the varying receiving positions in relation to the goal and the goalkeeper’s position.

Scoring goals is dependent on teammates being able to pass the ball accurately to the player who is in the best position to score.

The majority of goals are scored from within 7 metres of the goal and in front of the goal. It is important for players to understand this, and to practice moving the ball into that position if possible.



## EXECUTION

Demonstrate basic push, slap, or hit on the front stick side and reverse push, upright back stick, upright slap and inside out scoop (shovel shot) from the left of the goal.

**Upright slap shot.** Forward locks their elbows and then slaps through the ball. The height of the shot is determined by the angle of the stick face at contact.

## GOAL SHOOTING: Positioning and Basic Shots



### EXECUTION

**Reverse scoop;** the forward turns the stick under the ball, with the stick remaining on the ball. Using a shoveling action to propel the ball towards the goal. Used when the ball is on the left side of the body.

**Dig shot:** Played with the hands apart and the right elbow locked. The attacker takes a short swing at the ball. The toe of the stick is brought through the ball. The height of the shot is determined by the angle of the stick face.



# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS:

## Basic Principles of Attack

### OVERVIEW

Coaches can choose to utilize a range of different systems and structures to achieve their desired outcomes given the competence of the players in their team. However all systems, and structures will be based on manipulating the concepts outlined below.

### BASIC PRINCIPLES

The following principles are generally considered to be the five key criteria for excellent attacking performance.

**Width:** Attacking teams that play with width generally create more space for attacking. The result of this is the defending team has a greater area of the pitch to cover, making the task of defending more difficult. Teams who are really effective in using width are able to move the ball from one side of the pitch to the other in the continual search for attacking space.

**Depth:** Depth refers to using the full length of the pitch when attacking. This is not to encourage long passing, but to create space to move back into to receive the ball or to move behind the defence to receive the ball. Players should be encouraged to make use of the backline in the attacking circle to maximize depth. When combined with width, depth is a very effective attacking principle.

**Penetration:** Penetration refers to the ability of attacking players to get the ball behind the defence or through a wall of defensive players. An example would be entering the goal circle. Creating situations where there are more attackers than defenders, such as 2 v1 or 3 v 2 is an ideal way to penetrate the circle.

**Speed:** Speed can refer to the individual speed of players or the speed at which a team can move the ball forward to penetrate the defence. Fast players should utilise their abilities in situations such as beating a defender or getting behind the defender. In a 1 v 1 situation, the attacking player aims to trick the defender and accelerate away from them. There are times in a game where moving the ball forward as quickly as possible is advantageous, such as in counter-attack situations and when there are more attacking players than defenders. Speed is not appropriate at all times in a game; sometimes the best decision is to retain possession of the ball, as a teammate is not in a position to receive the ball up the ground, nor is there space to run into.

**Possession:** To score in hockey you need to have possession of the ball. This means the team is either passing the ball to maintain possession or when defending attempting to regain possession. In reality one team does not have possession of the ball for a whole game but teams who provide the ball carrier with passing options are more likely to have the greater share of possession, and as a result create scoring opportunities.

# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS:

## Basic Principles of Defence

### OVERVIEW

Irrespective of what specific system a team uses their defence is based upon the following general principles. Variations occur team to team dependent on the philosophy of the coach towards the balance of attack to defence, that is, how many players are required to be in specific areas of the ground when the opponents have possession.

### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DEFENDING

**Delay (controlling the speed of attack)** Being able to delay the movement of opponents allows teams to either control the space into which the opponents can play or the speed at which they are attacking as they move towards their goal. The basis of most delaying tactics is to both control where the ball carrier can run or pass, forcing them to maintain possession while the defending team becomes better organized to repel the attack and eventually regain possession.

**Depth (ensuring a single play will not eliminate the defence)**

The most common method of ensuring that a single pass into the critical area in the circle cannot eliminate a defence is by using a “free man” whose role is to stand on the most direct line between the ball and the goal. The other method is to ensure that defenders on the side away from the ball “zone” off their opponent and provide cover behind the defenders engaged on the ball side. How depth is created by a defense is dependent upon what defensive style they utilize as outlined below.

**Defensive style (man to man, zone, or a combination)** Coaches determine their defensive style based upon whether they will utilize a man to man defence, a predominantly zone defence or a combination of both. Coaches also have to determine what defensive style they utilize dependent on the age and stage of development of their players. Younger players find it difficult both physically and mentally to commit to a man to man defense for the entirety of a game. In which case explaining the situations they either need to mark man to man, or use a zone defensive position that will assist them to make appropriate defensive decisions.

As part of their defensive style coaches will need to decide what the defensive role of all players is, and particularly in what circumstances they wish their attackers to come into deep defence.

**Control (dictating where the ball can be moved)** Rather than have opponents run wherever they choose when they have the ball, teams usually develop strategies for directing opponents into certain areas of the ground. This is usually achieved by team members placing themselves along lines that prevent opponents from either carrying the ball into the centre of the ground, or passing the ball through the centre. By doing this opponents are directed to remain up the sides of the ground eventually running into well-positioned defenders.



# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS:

## Small-Sided Games

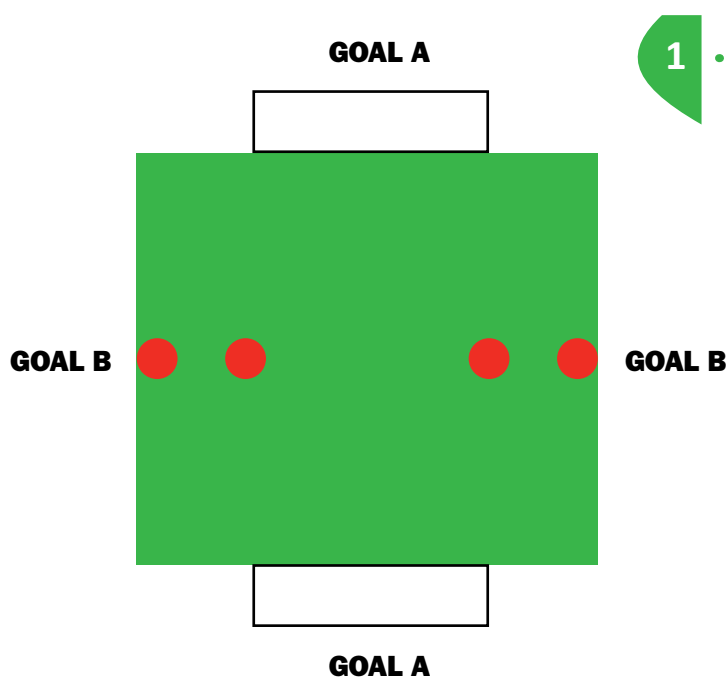
### OVERVIEW

Small or designer games allow small groups of players to have fun, but also to practice various skills in controlled contexts. Small-sided games are ideal ways to reinforce game understanding. A few examples are provided.

The desired outcomes can be achieved by manipulating the numbers on teams, and the size of the ground. The less skilled players need more time and space. Greater player involvement can be achieved by limiting the numbers on each team. During the initial stages of learning, 2 v 2 is often ideal. As players become more adept at the skills then 3 v 3 and 4 v 4 can be used.

### SMALL SIDED GAMES

In this context the coach can allow the teams to score goals by the usual method, in addition to scoring goals for performing specified skills during the game, for example exploiting 1 v 1, stealing, pushing off the right foot.



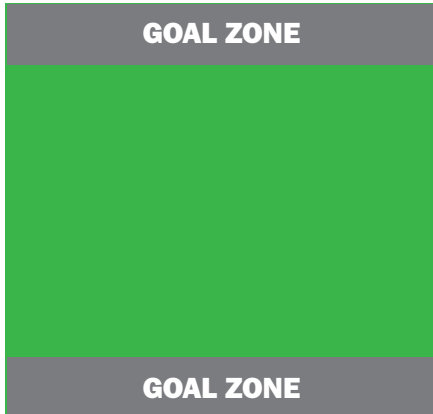
Players score 1 goal if they score in Goal A (rules as normal). In addition, players score a goal if the ball goes through Goal B.

#### WIDTH: Game example

To reinforce the attacking principle of width the following small-sided game can be used.

By adding goals wide on the pitch, players are encouraged to play with width. Coaches can apply and adapt the rules to suit the individual situation. For example, if the training session focused on passing the ball, it is possible to reinforce this during the game. In this situation, awarding a team 2 goals every time the ball is passed through Goal B, encourages passing over dribbling.

# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS: Small-Sided Games



2

## PENETRATION: Game example

Players must receive the ball in the Goal Zone at the end of the pitch to score 1 goal. Only attacking players are permitted to enter the Goal Zone.

To reinforce the idea of penetrating the defence, or passing the ball to a player behind the defence, this small-sided game can be used.

This game encourages players to move forwards towards the attacking area of the pitch. As the game requires a pass to score a goal, the attacking players must move in behind the defenders to receive the pass.

This game will also reinforce the concept of depth as attacking players utilise the area behind the defenders.

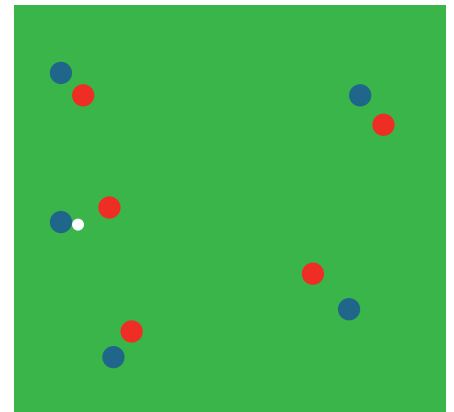
## POSSESSION: Game example

To reinforce the attacking principle of possession, this game rewards a team for making passes and keeping possession of the ball.

It is an opportunity to understand that if you keep the ball away from your opponent they are not able to score. It can also be used to highlight the importance of regaining possession.

3

● TEAM 1 ● TEAM 2



In this game, the team must make 5 consecutive passes to score 1 goal. On scoring a goal, possession will be given to the other team. This game can be made easier by increasing the size of the playing area. Other adaptations can also be made such as numbers of players on each team, number of passes to score a goal and rules regarding tackling.

# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS:

## Penalty Corners - Defence

### OVERVIEW

Penalty corners have become a significant part of the modern game. Teams regularly score from both direct shots and from well rehearsed variations. Equally teams have become adept at defending penalty corners with goalkeepers often being the key player in defensive formations. Junior players should be introduced to the key basic elements of both attacking and defensive penalty corners.

### COACHING THE SKILL: 1:3

An introduction to the 1:3 system of defending a penalty corner



This system allows the defence to put pressure on the battery but also allows cover through the circle if the attackers attempt variations, e.g, lay-off to left (as in the photo) or deflections at the spot. This is a sound basic system to use with junior teams.

This system is used when the opposition is likely to use a lay-off to the left. In this example both runners are only slightly past the spot. This could be due either to a very fast push-out or the defenders have chosen to do a “short” 2 v 2 thinking that a flick would be taken. One weakness of this system is that a deflection is always possible at the spot.

### EXECUTION: 2:2



# STRUCTURE & CONCEPTS:

## Penalty Corners - Attack

### OVERVIEW

A successful attacking penalty corner results from the attacking team being able to perform three separate skills in sequence. Pushing the ball (injecting) accurately and quickly to the edge of the circle, trapping the ball to allow either the trapper, if using an upright trap, to pass or shoot, or trapping the ball for another player to hit, flick towards goal or to pass the ball for a variation.

The skills required to shoot or pass from an attacking penalty corner have been covered earlier in this guide. The two distinct penalty corner skills are pushing the ball in (injecting) and trapping.

**The Push/Drag:** Most players assume a position to enable them to drag the ball along the line of the direction of the ball. This reduces the number of variables that might effect execution. However some players are able to start the motion of the ball in a slight arc prior to accelerating the ball speed “flicking” their wrist through the ball. If a player can already achieve speed and accuracy using a different technique then they do not require alterations to be made. If teaching beginners then setting up to drag/push along the line of the intended pass is advised. Most players step forward as they begin the push-in.



**The Trap:** In Australia the two most commonly used grips for trapping in are illustrated below. The difference between the techniques is whether the left hand is placed on the head of the stick, as in the first example, or whether it is joined with the right hand up the shaft of the stick, as in the second example. With both techniques the trappers assume a crouched position with their head in line with the ball, after the direction of the push-in has been established. The stick is placed behind the line of the ball, touching the ground well before the ball reaches the trapper. For a controlled trap to occur the face of the stick needs to be at 90 degrees to the direction of the ball in order that the ball does not deflect, and at the point of impact the stick is tilted forward to “kill” the movement of the ball.



## OTHER INFORMATION

Hockey Australia Coaching Resources [www.aussiehockey.com.au](http://www.aussiehockey.com.au)

Australian Sports Commission Coaching Resources <http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches>

Goalkeeping Kathleen Partridge OAM <http://www.kathleenpartridge.com>

Game Sense <http://www.activehealth.uow.edu.au/gamesense/index.html>  
[http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/videos/coaching\\_children/game\\_sense\\_-\\_part\\_1](http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/coaches/videos/coaching_children/game_sense_-_part_1)

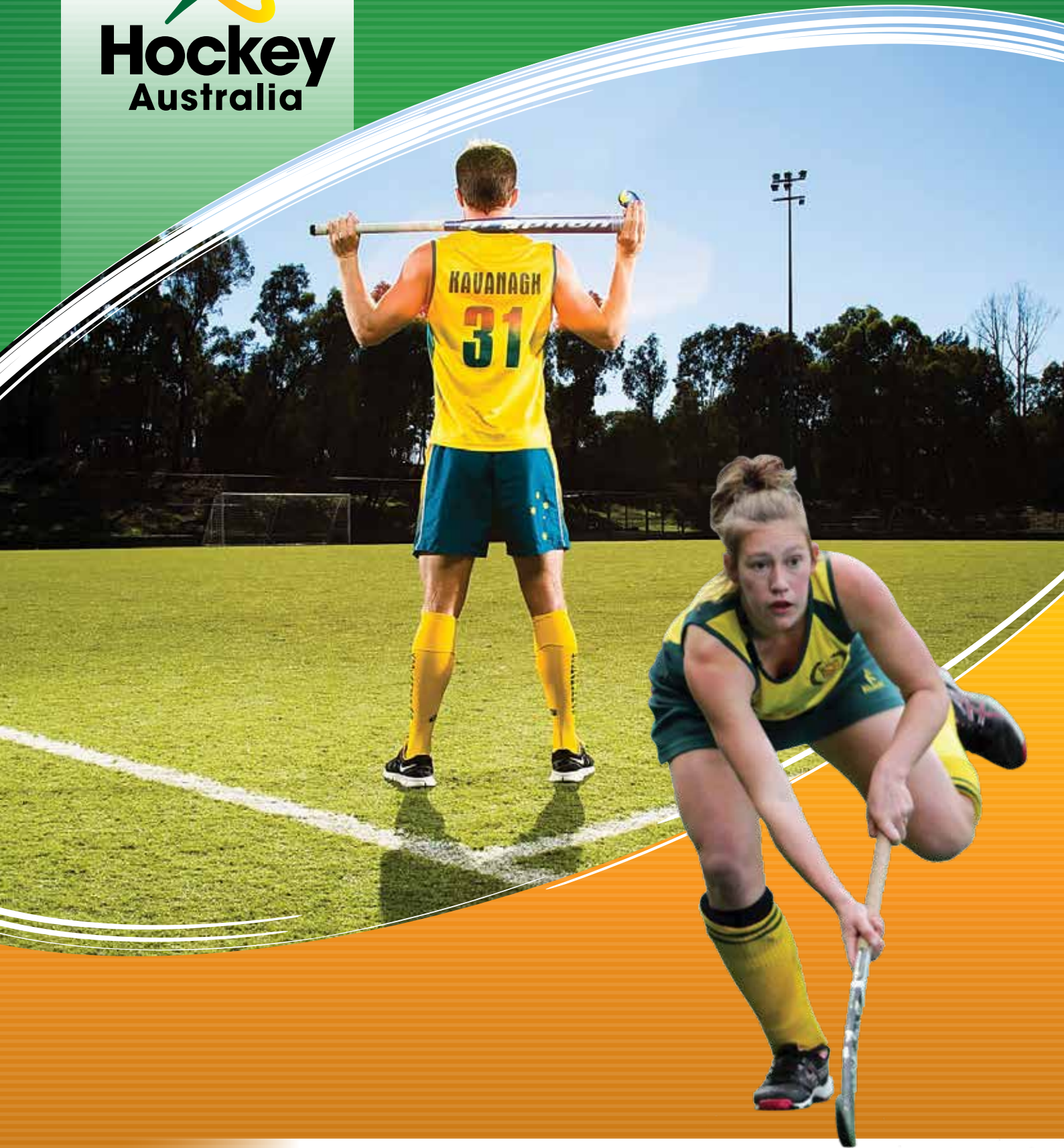
# NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.





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