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Practice 7: Face-offs and Drills



By now you and your players are getting a hang of all the drills, so we can cut down on the descriptions in your notes. Still, your players are learning new moves and skills.

First 5 Minutes (Review)

Bring all of the players and coaches together. Begin the practice by reiterating what was conveyed at the end of the last practice and explain the plan for this practice. Address any questions the players may have.

Next 10 Minutes (Warm-up)

Divide the players into several lines on the midfield line facing one of the restraining lines. Go through repetitions of the following between the mid line and the restraining line: 50 percent run with high knees, butt kicks (lifting the legs up high in the back), side shuffle, running backwards; then 75 percent run; and 100 percent run.

Here's another quick stationary stretch:

Stand straight and extend the arms straight out. Do trunk rotations from left to right. One to two sets of 10 will suffice. This stretches the oblique muscles.

During the warm-up, pull the goalies aside and have them work with one or two of the coaches. It is important for the goalies to be properly warmed up and comfortable taking shots before the real action of practice. Also, it is a great opportunity for the goalies to get some one-on-one instruction to help them develop as players.

Next 25 Minutes (Stick Skills)

Perform the following drills:

Standing-Still Passing drill: Assess how much stick skills have improved since the first practice.

Three-Man Weave: Complete as performed in the previous practice.

Next 2 Minutes (Water Break)

Keep your players hydrated with a water break. But have them hustle back to the field. You can consider having this break during Stick Skills.

Next 15 Minutes (Ground Balls)

Repeat drills that were introduced during previous practices. They are as follows:

Single Line.

One v. One (side-by-side)

Two v. One

Face-off Ground Ball Drill: Bring the players in and describe and demonstrate to them the fundamentals of a face-off, including the following: how to take a face-off; infractions that can occur during a face-off; how to play on the wing of the faceoff; and so forth. Also, explain the importance of face-offs and ground balls as they relate to possessions and more offensive opportunities.

After the explanation, split the players in to four equal groups (two on each wing of the midfield line). Begin the drill by having a coach simulate a faceoff and roll the ball out for a ground ball for one side of the wing to compete for the ground ball (you can perform this drill for both wings at the same time). After some repetition, have players volunteer to take faceoffs and play 3 on 3 until the team that recovers the ground ball makes a pass.

Next 2 Minutes (Water Break)

Keep your players hydrated with a water break. But have them hustle back to the field.

Next 15 Minutes (Odd-Man and Even-Man Drills)

This is a good chance to reinforce the ideas demonstrated in the previous practice regarding odd-man situations. Provide a quick review, which includes participation and answers from the players. Then get right into drilling:

Numbers Drill: Run the drill as performed in previous practices. Get a good amount of reps in for the players and make sure to have them alternate between the offensive line and defensive line. Finish the last few minutes of the drill with even-man situations such as 1 v. 1 or 2 v. 2. That will help make the players understand the offensive advantage of having an extra man.

Also, begin to insert a competitive nature to the drill, such as keeping score on an offensive and defensive basis. Keep track of points for when the offense scores and when the defense stops the offense.

Ending Practice

In your team huddle, review what was learned and congratulate the players for their hard work. Also, establish the next practice time with the players and parents, and follow up with an email.