

MESA

IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICE

Practices are 1.5 hours; practice time is extremely valuable; coaches need to have a set plan to fill up those 1.5 hours. Coach for the entire 1.5 hours, do not waste a minute, keep your coaches and players busy the entire time. When you work hard and have fun the time flies. Drills need to be fun, fast paced, involve a lot of players, and emulate game situations. Every drill we do, we do for a reason, practices are efficient and practice time is spent developing **SKILLS** and **SCHEMES**. Your skill work should reflect the events that occur in the game, your schemes should be simple but effective and be repeated at practice so that they can be executed in the game. It is all about **FUN, TECHNIQUE** and **REPS**. Be the coach you wanted to have as a player. **SAFETY FIRST** - be alert in case of lightning, beware of excessive heat, give water breaks, check field conditions, check players' equipment and wellbeing. Be **AWARE** of your surroundings and know your **LOCATION** in case of a **911** situation.

- 1) **FUN** - Make it **FUN** for you and for the players and yourself, if you are having **FUN**, the players will have **FUN**. When lacrosse is fun, they want to play more, the more they play, the better they get, the better they get, the more fun it is and the more fun it is the more they will play, and so on.
- 2) **BUILD UP** – start little and get big, start slow and get fast, start simple and get complex, start individually and build up to team concepts. There is a **PROGRESSION** to lacrosse that cannot be ignored. Why work on shooting if your players cannot catch? Why work on sliding when your defense cannot check up? **PART / WHOLE METHOD** involves breaking down the skills and schemes in pieces that can be easily learned.
- 3) **HIGH REPETITIONS** – repetitions are opportunities to improve. Repetitions are the number of times you repeat something. Whoever does it more is usually better at it.
- 4) **NO LINES / NO WAITING TO PLAY / NO STANDING STILL / CONSTANT MOTION** – parents want to see their kids play, not stand in a line. Practice the game, not standing in a line.
- 5) **PROPER TECHNIQUE** – coaches the players from A to Z. Take pride in the way you teach the proper fundamentals of passing, catching, scooping, dodging, shooting and defense. Hold players to these standards and non-negotiables. [See “Teaching Skills” link](#)
- 6) **GAME LIKE CONDITIONS** – you cannot practice in the zoo and then play in the jungle. Your drills should help work your schemes. Everything we drill relates back to our schemes or concepts.
- 7) **HIGH PACE** – Fly around, quick transitions in between drills or segments.
- 8) **HOLD YOUR WHISTLE** - let the drills play out, do not stop the drill every two seconds, let the drill play out, play out the groundball, ride and clear it out, throw in another ball.
- 9) **COMPETE** - Play for Points, see how players play under pressure with a scoreboard

- 10) **ADVANTAGE / DISADVANTAGE** your offense or defense to prepare them for high speed game like conditions.
- 11) **COACHING AIDS** - Whistle, Whiteboard, Big Cones, Little Cones, Tennis Balls, Pinkie Balls, Film, Hula Hoops, Dots, Nubs
- 12) Keep the ball **HOT, ONE CRADLE AND OUT** – force players to PASS the ball. We do not have a lot of passing drills, we make them pass the ball.
- 13) Scrimmage **INTELLIGENTLY** and with a **PURPOSE**. There is value in scrimmaging the right way. Rep out riding, clearing, face off and full field schemes.
- 14) **PLAN YOUR PRACTICES IN CHAPTERS AND CHANNEL YOUR INNER DJ** – there are songs that are floor fillers and there are songs that are floor killers, just like drills at practice. There are great drills that get everyone hyped up and there are drills that are boring. Pick your drills wisely and keep everyone moving. How do the players at the age you are coaching learn the best? You can plan your practice in **CHAPTERS** and build from individual technique to full field team concepts. The challenge is balancing individual skill and team concepts. **TIMING** is also a factor do you like to use set times or mastery learning?

Chapter 1: Pre-Practice

Chapter 2: Competitive Drills

Chapter 3: 6 v 6 Drills

Chapter 4: Ride Clear Drills

Chapter 5: Up and Down Drills

- 15) **MAXIMIZE ALL** the times you are together **WISELY** – Before, during and after practice; before, during, after and in between games **DESIGNATE** a coach to work with the offense and defense, spread out and coach that group with your best effort.
- 16) Every **DRILL** we do, we do for a reason, everything you do at practice should relate to building **SKILLS** or developing your team's **SCHEMES**.
- 12) Scrimmage **INTELLIGENTLY**, with a **PURPOSE** - Ride and Clear scrimmage, Groundball scrimmage, Face Off scrimmage
- 13) **PUMP TIRES**: do not deflate your players, **PUMP** them up!
- 14) Know who is going to be there, use **TEAM SNAP**, plan your practices for the number of players attending. Know who is coming on **GAMEDAY**
- 15) Set **GAMEDAY** lines and **SUBSTITUTIONS** in advance - Alternate starting lines by game – Give players an equal chance with equal playing time.

16) **COMMUNICATE** about what is coming up **NEXT**, making the next play, playing the next game, the next practice: the next field, meeting time, game time and adjustments.

17) **FOCUS** on **COACHING** your **PLAYERS** and **MAKING THE NEXT PLAY** - Adjustments, sub box, pre-game, halftime, next game.

18) Act like an **ADULT**, no foul language or inappropriate behavior - Boys and Girls need positive role models.

19) Always look for **SPORTSMANSHIP LESSONS** to teach boys and girls how to compete with respect and honor the game.

20) Practice **ALL ASPECTS** of the game, skills are first and foremost but we practice offense, defense, riding, clearing, face off and game situations **EQUALLY**.

21) Check players' equipment for **SAFETY**, check each player's stick to make sure it is **STRUNG PROPERLY** and can pass easily and efficiently.

22) **EMPHASIZE** the importance of everyday **SKILLWORK**, the more they do it, the better they will get and the better they get, the more fun it is, the more fun it is the more they do it and the better they will get and the better they get, the more fun it is.