

Middle School Lacrosse

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Agenda

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- **Key Objectives**
- **Coaching and Character**
- **Team Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Play Time Allocation**
- **Codes of Conduct**
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- **Offensive Concepts**
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Coaching Philosophy

- Promote and Grow the Game
- Fun and Safe Environment
- Middle School Lacrosse is a great Character Building Program
- Teach Sportsmanship
- Teamwork
- RESPECT (R.O.O.T.S.)
- Inclusiveness

Coaching Philosophy

10 Ways you can show your players that you BELIEVE

1. Remind the player about how they have grown/improved
2. If they quit something, ASK THEM WHY
3. Encourage HEALTHY RISK TAKING
4. Encourage the player to TRY NEW THINGS
5. Encourage them to do things on THEIR OWN (Wall ball)
6. Talk to them after a success
7. Offer to Help
8. Praise them when they ask for help
9. Use Failures as Teaching points (stand to their side)
10. Talk about the future in positive ways

Key Objectives

- **Teach the Game**
 - ❑ Core Skills and Objectives

- **Teach Character and Life Lessons**
 - ❑ Set the tone early and amplify during the season (i.e. no bullying, no running mouth at refs, opponents, etc...)

- **Have Fun**
 - ❑ It Requires thought and planning (i.e. Choice throwing and catching, Fox & The Hound, have players name man-up plays, rides, clears, GB Competition, Jail break 6v6)

- **Compete**
 - ❑ Increasingly relevant at older ages but still secondary

Coaching and Character

- Motivate through positivity rather than intimidation , fear, or shame
- Remain positive even through losing streaks; Recognize that this is when you can have the most impact on a kid
- Coach for mastery rather than victory
- Recognize that mistakes are important and inevitable part of learning
- Set standards for continuous learning (reiterate concepts)
- Trust your Coaches – no titles
- Humility – Affirm the greatness of others; apologize when you are wrong
- Demonstrate personal integrity and would rather lose than win by dishonoring the game. Dishonoring the game is worse than defeat.
- *Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation. Your character is what you really are while your reputation is merely what others think you are – **John Wooden***

Team Roles & Responsibilities (Technical Coach)

- Develop Practice Plans (familiarize with HS plans and terminology)
- Implement Practice Plans (can change on the fly)
- Design Drills
- Address weaknesses
- Get feedback from players after implementing something new (i.e. Carolina feedback from Attack)
- Game Plan / Strategy (trust what you practiced, keep it simple; match-ups; adjustments; throw out if it is a total disaster – i.e. punt returner on a clear)
- In-Game Player Coaching / Correction
- Player Skill Development – Emphasize Fundamentals all the time
- Assigning Positions and depth chart
- Manage Practice (keep it moving; less talking more doing)

Team Roles & Responsibilities (Parent Coach)

- Communicate with Parents (Team Mom)
- Overseeing Playing Time / Substitutions
- Oversee Health & Safety
- Basic Techniques for parents to teach beginner kids at practice
 - ❑ Teach parent coaches basic throw and catch proper mechanics and follow-through.
 - ❑ Monitor a stick skills station (throw to the helmet, no side arm, run to the pass – run to the catch)
 - ❑ GB technique – Step to the Ball; bend knees; back hand down to the ground; scoop through; get out of trouble
 - ❑ 2 Long Poles – Teach Hockey Footy Drill
 - ❑ 2v1 GB station
 - ❑ Small Group “Scoop, Chase, Outlet” station
 - ❑ Speed Ladder Training

Playtime Allocation

- Middle School Grades 6 – 8: Generally Speaking equal play time unless severely lacking in Aptitude, Attitude, Attendance
- Attempt Equal Play Time last half of a quarter ; try and win competitive games
- If game is a blow out either way, remove all starters last $\frac{1}{2}$ of the last quarter
- Two goalies – general rule, split each $\frac{1}{2}$; if competitive games, coaches discretion but try to have weaker goalie play some minutes
- Leverage man-down defense to play a few back-ups
- Use FO wing play as playtime opportunity for GB grinders

Coach Code of Conduct

- I will never criticize, belittle, antagonize, berate or otherwise incite an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture
- I will be ever conscious of not running up the score. If my team has a commanding lead, and the outcome of the game is not in doubt, every effort shall be made to let all players play.
- I will not permit an ineligible player, a player without proper equipment or the appropriate medical clearance to participate in practice, scrimmage or games.
- Coaches own the mistakes, players own the effort

Player Code of Conduct

- I will respect my teammates, coaches, referees, and opponents at all times. This means:
 - I will never criticize, belittle, antagonize, berate or otherwise incite an opposing team, its players, coaches, or fans by word of mouth or by gesture
 - I will not dispute or argue the decision of a coach or official
 - I will strive to learn from my coaches

- I will support and encourage my teammates. I will strive to set a positive example.
- I will arrive at practices/games on time.
- I will agree to maintain my studies and respect my teachers
- I will be fully accountable for my behavior and its outcome.

Tips for Effective Practices

- PRACTICE PLAN!
 - ❑ Coaches should have a written practice plan for each and every practice. Determine what drills to use and how much time to spend on each. Make sure your plans are consistent with your goals and key objectives.
- 10 minutes each segment
- Small group stations – group players by like skills
- Recruit 8th grade leaders / captains to help manage stations if coach-to-player ratio is spread wide (Ideal ratio is 1:10)
- Stick Work
- Ground Ball Work
- Individual Work (Shoot Drills, Dodging Drills, Stances, Ball Approach)
- Team Concepts (Offense & Defense)
- Team Concepts (Riding, Clearing, FO/Wing Play)
- Transition / Unsettled (Odd-Man)
- 1v1,2v2,3v3,4v4 Buildup
- Whistles - Live Play!

Sample Practice Plan

Practice Plan MM/DD/YYYY					
Warm-up/Dynamic Stretching					
4:00pm	4:10pm	Warm-Up / Dynamic Stretching			
*Stick Skills					
4:10pm	4:15pm	3 man speed drill			
4:15pm	4:20pm	Seawolves 4 corner crossing drill			
4:20pm	4:30pm	Spike Out Drill			
4:30pm	4:40pm	Siena Full Field Clearing / Shooting			
4:40pm	4:45pm	Berkman Bank: Rapid Fire Shooting			
		<i>Water</i>			
**O & D Split					
<i>Offense</i>	<i>Teach Spacing thru Triangles- Dodge/Follow/Float</i>				
4:50pm	5:10pm	<i>3v0, 4v0, 3v2, 4v3</i>			
<i>Defense</i>					
4:50pm	4:55pm	<i>Approach Drills</i>			
		<i>Get there with the pass</i>			
		<i>Under Control have stick out in Gloves</i>			
		<i>Chop your feet last 10% of distance</i>			
		<i>1st move baby steps / drop step</i>			
4:55pm	5:05pm	<i>GB Drills</i>			
		<i>UVA - Hockey Footey</i>			
		<i>ND - Fire Escape</i>			
5:05pm	5:10pm	<i>Slides</i>			
		<i>4v1 - Simulate Triangle Motion O; slide confrontationally</i>			
Transition / Unsettled Odd man					
5:10pm	5:30pm	<i>3v2, 4v3, 5v4</i>			
Build Up or 6v6					
5:30pm	5:45pm	<i>1v1, 2v2, 3v3, 4v4</i>			
***West Genny					
5:45pm	6:00pm	<i>60 yards 3v2</i>			
* Break out Goalies					
** Replace with Riding / Clearing					
*** Replace with Man-Up and Man-down					

Defense Concepts

- Three Rules of Defense
 - 1) Always Stay between your man and the goal
 - 2) Feet First; Stick Second – Use your stick to keep your feet in position
 - 3) Always Protect the Hole – roughly within an 8-10 yard radius in front of the goal. Probably over 80 percent of scoring in youth games occur in that area.

- On Ball – be fundamentally solid but aggressive. Defend area of field is first responsibility. Takeaway second
- Adjacent – Sticks up in passing lanes be prepared to support slide if adjacent slide package.
- 2 Passes away – Support crease.
- Crease – Cover your Man 1st or slide.
- COMMUNICATE! (Give the coaches a headache!)
- One rule Defensive middies must follow is that they should always be as low as the ball when it is in front of the net and close to the crease when it is behind goal line extended (“pinch down – look away”).

Goalie Concepts

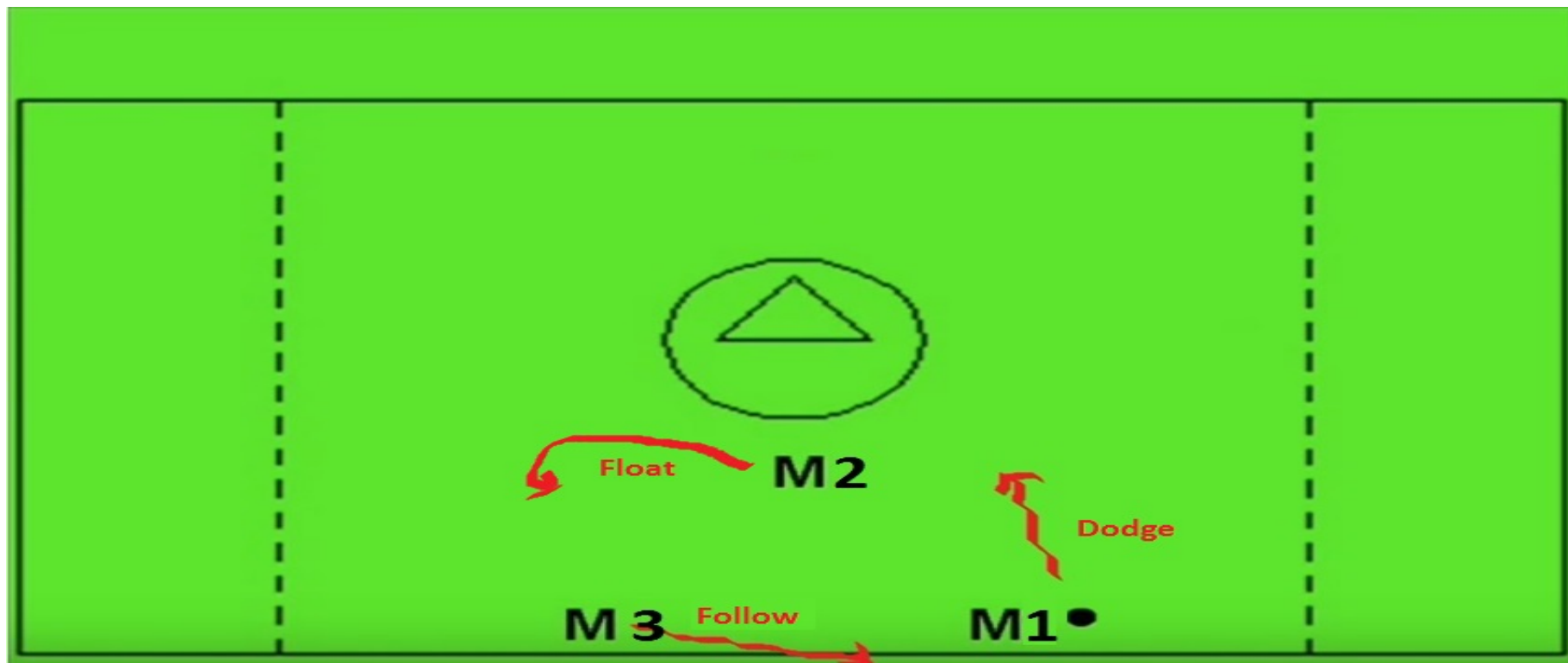
- Become a better lacrosse player; pick up a short stick and work on your stick skills
- Ensure Goalie stick has a good pocket; not shallow; nice bag in the bottom
- Make saves and clear the ball
- Good Athletic Stance (i.e. linebacker) – having bent knees puts weight on balls of your feet so you are ready to move with a quick reaction

- Lax Evo - Brian Dougherty's Goalie Training Part 1 Part 2
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amOws6tNXfk>
- 3 parts of the body to make a save - Top Hand, Eyes, Feet
- Step wider than the Ball with your lead foot
- Stand Tall calm and poised - 80% of shots come high
- Attack the Space and not the ball
- Goalies are the barometer of the Defense; Lead Communicator

Offense Concepts

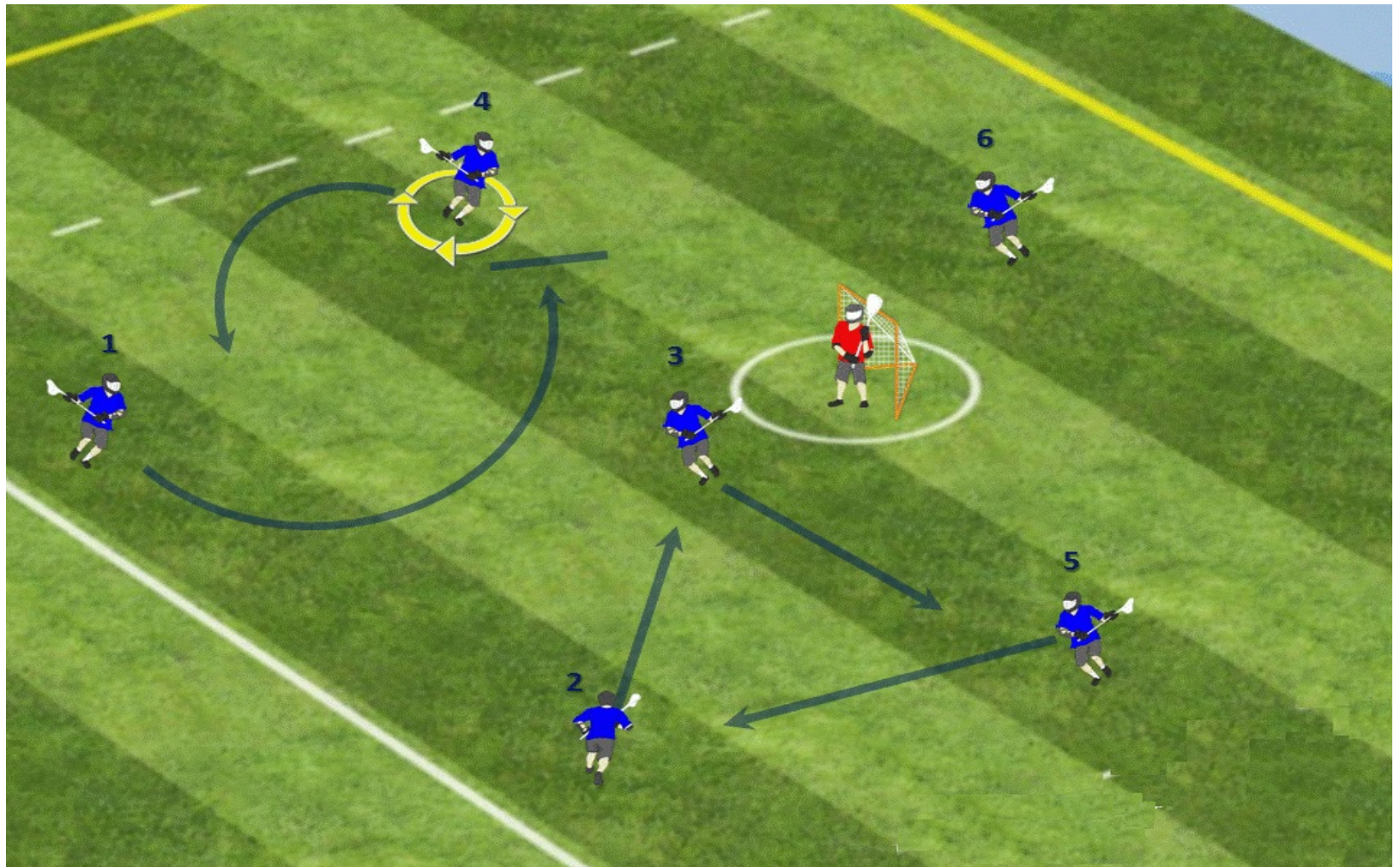
- Can't do anything if we can't throw and catch
- Teach Spacing through Triangle Based Offensive drills – Dodge, Follow, Float:
 - ✓ 3v0 (3 middies only; dodge, pass, pass)
 - ✓ 4v0 (3 middies + 1 X attack)
 - ✓ 3v2 (simulate crease slide to a double team)
 - ✓ 4v3 (add in attack at X; dodge, pass, pass backside to the Float)
- Off-Ball – Teach off ball players to keep moving their feet, clear out, create space, set off ball screens, or on-ball picks
- Use East/West Picks sparingly up top; Recommend using North/South instead; Pass-down; pick-down
- If you want the ball – Move your feet!; clear through or V-cut to get open
- Keep it simple and emphasize the basics; don't need complicated plays
- After setting up basic structure – Give them Freedom to operate – Let Lacrosse Happen!

3v0 Dodge, Follow, Float Midfield Motion



1. Great 1st look of how motions are run for young kids
2. Continuously run this drill over and over
3. Mirrored motion can be run from both left and right sides
4. M1 dodges, step back throw back or rollback to M3
5. M3 surveys field, steps in and either passes back to M1 or relay to M2
6. M2 floats to sniper position (about 8 yds up from GLE and out from GLE. Has options of either going to the goal /shoots or carry the ball up top right – pass to M3 start over

Basic Pairs – Pass Down Pick Down



Riding & Clearing

The diagram illustrates a 'Basic L Clear' in a three-panel arena. The arena is divided into three vertical panels. The left panel contains a circle with a left-pointing triangle. The middle panel contains a circle with a right-pointing triangle. The right panel contains a circle with a right-pointing triangle and a yellow dot. The diagram shows the path of a horse and rider, indicated by numbered teal circles (1-8) and letters (A, M, D) in black circles. The path starts at point 1 in the left panel, moves to point 2, then to point 3. It then moves to point 4 in the middle panel, then to point 5, then to point 6, then to point 7, then to point 8. The path ends at point 9 in the right panel. The letters A, M, and D are placed at various points along the path. A red progress bar is visible at the bottom of the diagram, indicating the current position of the video.

6. Clearing: The Basic L Clear

Clearing Points

- Key Clearing Points:
- Goalie – 1st priority is quick outlet pass over the top to middies or LSM to create transition
- If we can't create transition then we break & settle into picture above
- Settled L clear; 7 vs 6. We have a man advantage
- LSM defenseman – your job is to run to the box on the L-clear; from there we will sub in a SS
- Goalie chooses a side to make the pass (preferably “strong” side)
- After goalie passes to one of the Dpoles on the side, THEN.....
- Far side (weak side) middie's job is to be the middie back and stay onside
- Nearest side middie (strong side) job is to extend up the field
- Middle-Near side middie covers where Nearest-side middie spot at midfield line
- Middle-Far side middie break back toward the goal in the middle and hunt the ball
- When it doubt, find the 2-on-1

Riding Points

Key Riding Points:

- Attack and Middies MUST Ride to the mid line. If players don't ride to the mid line; they come out of game
- Attackman - this is your time to beat up on Dpoles since they have been beating you up all game long; play tough and ride hard
- No jumping; no one-handed swings; always keep two hands on sticks and play riding defense with your feet;
- Take good angles and force roll-backs
- Force Clearing team to make the longest pass possible
- Goal of the ride is to Force Failure to Advance or Score a "Riding Goal" Meaning that if we ride hard and turn the ball over and we score – that's a "Riding Goal" for us

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Questions & Answers

