

# **Coaching Girls Lacrosse: PRACTICE PLANNING**

# PRE-PRACTICE PREPARATION

- Having a practice plan allows a coach to be organized
  - Important to keep the practice moving quickly
  - Knowing the order of drills helps eliminate down time and allows coaches to reinforce concepts throughout practice
  - Organization leads to productivity by keeping the players active and engaged
- Reuse drills or plans
  - Don't shy away from similar practice plans
  - Players can be more engaged when they know what to expect or how to execute a drill or play a game
  - Identify favorite drills and utilize when players seem to be lagging or disengaged

# PRACTICE CHALLENGES

- Skill disparity
  - It is important to find the balance between challenging the highly-skilled players and developing the beginners
  - The best players are those that can make the players around them better
  - Constantly mix up positions so that everyone understands the importance of every role and players are equally uncomfortable
- Drill selection
  - Choose drills where balls start in players sticks
  - Coach-to-player drills can sometimes be more effective than player-to-player (especially for players who are still developing)

# PRACTICE CHALLENGES

- Short attention spans
  - Try to limit the drills where players are standing in a long line
  - Develop leadership skills and encourage participation
    - Lead the dynamic warm up/stretch or stickwork
    - Have players choose drills or plan practices
    - Game captain, practice captain
- Drill selection
  - Keep drills short
    - General rule of thumb: on average, players can stay engaged on a task for about one minute per one year of their age
  - Making drills competitive will help keep players engaged
  - Include fitness drills, non-lacrosse related drills, or lacrosse “games”

# PRACTICE FORMAT

- Dynamic warm-up/stretch
- Fitness/stickwork
  - Independent
  - Combined
- Drills/skills
  - Half-field – Stations conducted at a cage or in space
  - Short-field – cross field or bring the cages in to the 30s
  - Full-field – Numbers depending
- Scrimmaging
- Shooting/fitness

# 10 WEEKS OF PRACTICE PLANS

- Weeks 1 & 2
  - Keep the practice fun and engaging
  - Teach the game by incorporating other sports
  - Let the game be the teacher (it won't be pretty but let them play!)
- Teaching topics
  - Positions/rules review
  - Handling the stick and cradling on the move
  - Throwing/catching (from knees, coach-player)
  - Ground balls
  - Shooting
  - Draws

# 10 WEEKS OF PRACTICE PLANS

- Weeks 3 & 4
  - Start to incorporate more player-to-player interactions
  - Teach position-specific skills
  - Let the game be the teacher (it won't be pretty but let them play!)
- Teaching topics
  - Stickwork/stick tricks
  - Throwing/catching (player-player)
  - IvI Defense
  - Shooting on the run
  - Teach dodges

# 10 WEEKS OF PRACTICE PLANS

- Week 5, 6 & 7
  - Teach concepts that include more than one player (or more than once focus)
  - Introduce 'full-field' drills to teach the game
- Teaching topics
  - Competitive ground balls
  - Offensive spacing
  - Double teams/crashing
  - Long passes
  - Midfield transitions



# 10 WEEKS OF PRACTICE PLANS

- Weeks 8, 9 & 10
  - Review
  - Competitions
  - Players' favorite drills
- Teaching topics
  - Stickwork!!
  - Shooting on the run
  - Scrimmaging – move players to all positions