

# **Coaching Girls Lacrosse: Intermediate Concepts & Drills Grades 5 - 8**

**Drill Focus: Defense**

**Achieve Lacrosse Coaches Education  
Thursday, February 10, 2022**

# AGENDA

- Basic skills and drills
  - Stickwork, stick protection
  - Checking
- Defensive concepts
  - I v I defensive
  - Double teams
- Settled offense
  - Ball/help/slide
  - Communication
  - Covering cutters
- Drills

# STICKWORK

- Big hands vs. little hands
  - Big hands
    - Traditional hand placement – bottom hand at the bottom of the stick, top hand  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up the stick
  - Little hands
    - Hands are ‘choked up’ – the bottom and top hands are about 5-6 inches from the bottom and top of the stick respectively
    - Using ‘little hands’ is important for protecting and controlling the stick in high pressure situations (i.e. on the draw circle or in the CSA)

# STICK PROTECTION

- Stick protection
  - Protection is the simple act of cradling on all sides of your body
    - For example: strong side, offside, back behind, down in front, high, mid, low
  - Be comfortable moving the stick through your hands and handling the stick no matter where your hands are placed
  - Use the body! Rotate hips, torso, and shoulders to protect your stick
  - Always keep your head up and feet moving

# STICKWORK DRILLS

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- Crisscross shuttle (6 line)
- Around the world passing
- Never-ending shuttle
- Figure 8 Shuttle
- 3-person protection drill
- Stationary protection drill

# CHECKING

- According to US Lacrosse, checking is an attempt to dislodge the ball from an opponent's crosse by using controlled crosse to crosse contact.
- Checking positioning
  - Top hand no more than 2/3rds of the way down the stick
  - Arms away from the body to establish personal space and good positioning
  - Wrists, not the arms, initiate the check
  - Checks should be conducted in a short, choppy, downward and outward motion with sharp recoil that is made away from the opponent's head or body

# CHECKING RULES OF THUMB

- Always maintain good defensive body position
  - NEVER give up your positioning or lose your balance to make a check
- Be patient; wait for the stick to be exposed
  - Do NOT hunt for the stick, wait for it to be presented
- Checks should always be controlled and safe
  - No wind-ups, tomahawks, or retaliation



# CHECKING FOULS

- Empty Stick Check
  - Check or hold an opponent's stick when it's not in contact with the ball. Incidental contact while making a play for the ball is not an empty check.
- Held Stick Check
  - A check that is made with limited or no immediate release or recoil

# CARDABLE CHECKING FOULS

- **Slash**
  - A reckless and/or dangerous swing of the crosse at an opponent's crosse or body, whether or not the opponent's crosse or body is struck.
- **Check to the Head**
  - No player's stick may hit or cause her opponent's stick to hit her own head
- **Rough Check/Illegal Check on the Body**
  - Roughly or recklessly check another player's stick. It is illegal to use the stick in a dangerous or intimidating manner, such as directly poking or waving a stick near opponent's face.

# MODIFIED vs. FULL CHECKING

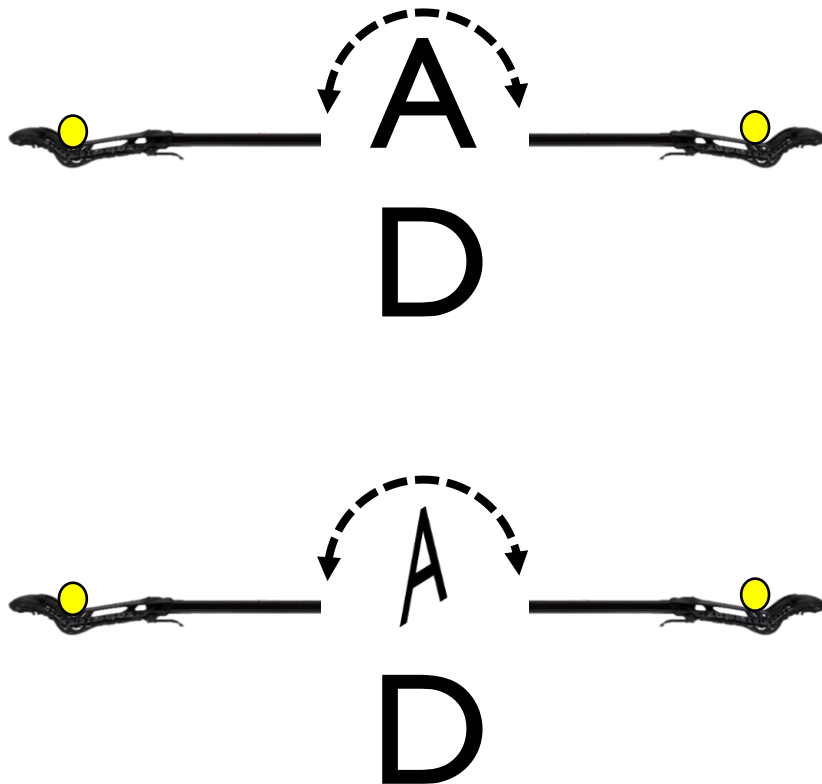
- Modified checking
  - Modified checking rules allows a player to use her stick to make controlled contact to the ball carrier's stick if the contact (and checking motion) is below the shoulder and away from the body.
- Full checking
  - Checks can occur regardless of the location of the opponent's stick (so long as the check is made in a short, choppy, downward motion with sharp recoil away from the opponent's head or body)

# CHECKING DRILLS

# CHECKING DRILLS

- Windmill Drill
- Tunnel Drill
- Wave Drill

# WINDMILL DRILL

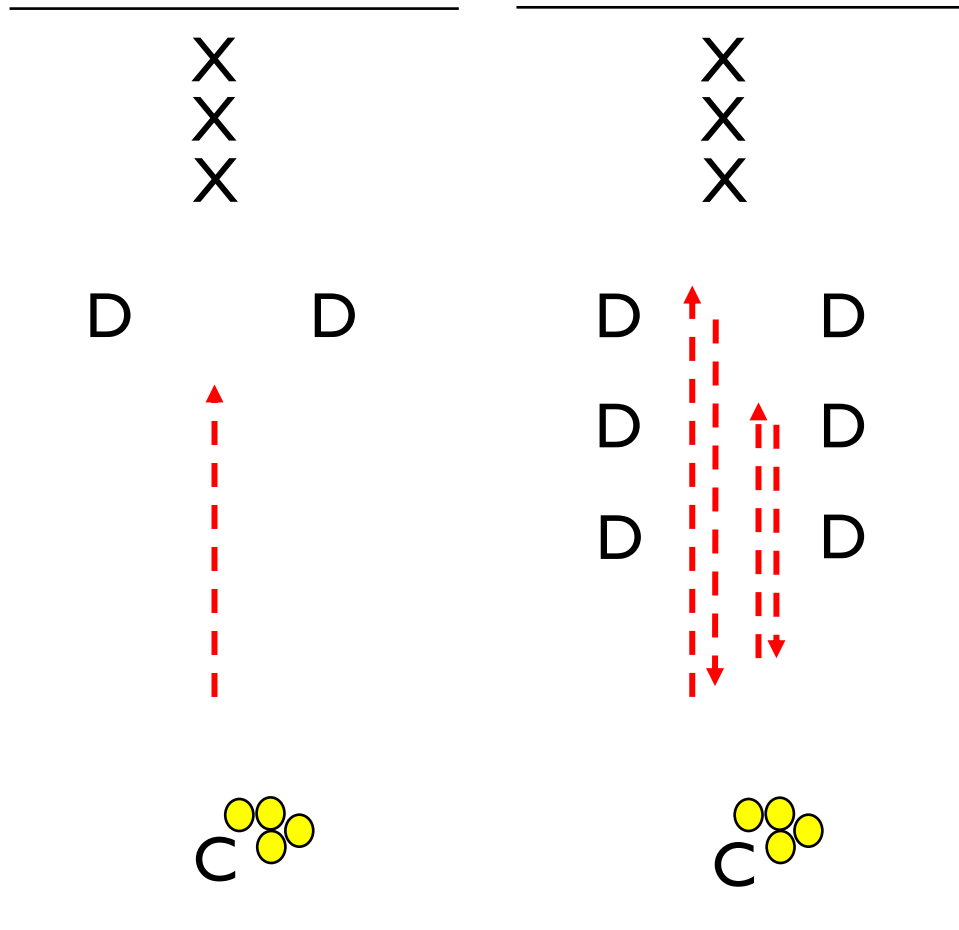


- The Windmill Drill is a stationary checking drill.
- The attacker is standing stationary with her stick extended and exposed. (She can either stand square or perpendicular to the defender.)
  - If the attacker is square, she should be switching hands from right to left as she extends her stick out.
  - If the attacker is perpendicular, she should be working on her cradle from front to back.
- The defender, who is jogging in place, works on throwing checks to either side.
  - The focus is feet moving, arms away, maintaining balance and an athletic stance while throwing short, choppy checks.

# WINDMILL DRILL



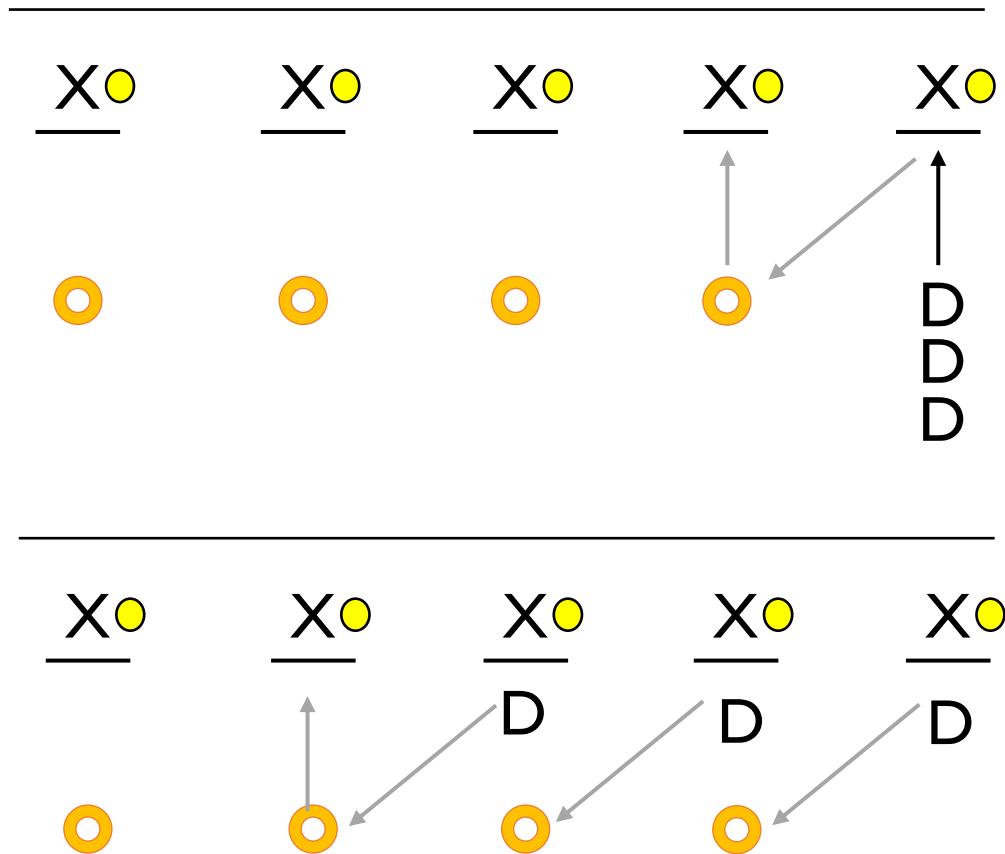
# TUNNEL DRILL



- The Tunnel Drill works on checking on the ground ball pick up.
- Start with a line of players approximately 20 yards from the coach.
- The attacker runs to pick up a ground ball rolled by the coach. When the attacker is in line with the defenders, the defenders can move with her.
  - The defenders are working on checking the attacker's stick on the ground ball pick up without committing an empty stick check.
- The drill can also be executed with a 'tunnel' of defenders. The first attacker in the line gets two ground balls from the coach and the defenders are working on checking the attacker's stick on the pick up.



# WAVE DRILL



- The Wave Drill starts with a line of stationary attackers parallel to and 5 yards away from the sideline. Each have a ball and should hold their stick in an ‘exposed’ position.
- On the whistle, the first defender sprints up to the first attacker. She breaks down her steps and waits in front of the attacker in foot fire.
- On the subsequent whistle, the defender throws a check, then drop steps, slide shuffles to the next cone (on the diagonal) and then sprints up to the next defender. She waits in foot fire until the next whistle.
  - Each whistle releases the next defender.