



BRIGHTON BENGALS
YOUTH LACROSSE
COACHING TOOLKIT

THE "FUN" DAMENTALS



v2, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

| | <u>Page Number</u> |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. OVERVIEW | |
| i. Safety | 3 |
| ii. Fields | 3 |
| iii. Expectations | 3 |
| iv. Ten Top Tips | 3 |
| v. HS Curriculum Connectivity | 4 |
| 2. BRIGHTON LACROSSE PLAYERS | |
| i. Evaluating Personnel | 5 |
| ii. Expectations for incoming Brighton Freshmen Lacrosse Players | 6 |
| 3. COACHING NEW (AND EXPERIENCED) PLAYERS | |
| i. Brighton Fundamentals | 8 |
| ii. The Seven Fundamentals of Brighton Lacrosse | 8 |
| iii. Wall Ball | 13 |
| iv. Basic Situations | 13 |
| 4. MORE DRILLS TO REINFORCE FUNDAMENTALS | 15 |



SECTION 1 - OVERVIEW:

This document is designed to give youth coaches an overview of our program, our systems and our core fundamentals, as well as equip them with drills and schemes to break down any barriers of entry into coaching lacrosse. In other words, we want to make it easy for any parent to volunteer to coach, even if they have never played or coached before.

WE NEED YOU!

Additionally, this document is designed around the basic principles that we use at the high school level. With a structured approach to player development, we expect to clarify our purpose, our teachings and our techniques. We hope this clarification leads to player and coaching consistency among our various youth levels.

Ultimately, we hope the players have a positive experience and learn key lessons of teamwork, sportsmanship, work ethic, and character that they can take with them the rest of their lives and share the love of lacrosse that we have.

i. SAFETY:

- Equipment - Coaches are responsible to ensure all players are properly equipped at all times.
 - Attack/Middie/Defense – Properly fitted helmet, gloves, arm pads, shoulder pads, and mouthpiece
 - Goalies – Properly fitted helmet, gloves, chest protector, throat guard, cup, and mouthpiece.
- Compliance –
 - Basic understanding of CPR/First aid training

ii. FIELDS:

- Playing on Brighton Fields is a privilege not a right. All players, parents, and coaches are expected to help maintain the integrity of the town facilities and fields
 - Players are encouraged to use non-disposable water bottles
 - Players & coaches are expected to ensure fields are clean after practices & games
- Turf Rules
 - Chewing gum and food is not permitted on the turf fields
 - Please do not walk on track surfaces while wearing cleats

iii. COACHING EXPECTATIONS:

- Every coach is expected to:
 - Understand and be able to teach the fundamentals of Brighton Lacrosse
 - Create a dynamic practice plan for every practice
 - Arrive prior to practice start time
 - Stay on field until last player is picked up

iv. TOP TEN TIPS:

1. Youth lacrosse is about teaching...not winning. If any parent has a problem with that please have them talk to the Brighton High School Varsity Head Coach
2. Engage parents – There can never be too many practice coaches. Dads, moms, injured older players...get them all. They can help run drills and ensure every player gets more attention. And then there are team moms/dads...who make things happen...communication, organization, and mobilization.
3. Organize practices – Ensure you have a schedule and you keep to it. Idle players kill practices.
 - i. Run the fun stuff that kids love at the beginning of practice so any late arrivals will miss it.
 - ii. Water breaks - Nothing comes off but helmets and gloves. Water breaks are no more than two minutes.
 - iii. Everything is done at full speed. The most important lesson in youth lacrosse is that anything less than full speed is inadequate.
 - iv. If you're bored, they're REALLY bored: 'nuff said.



4. Stress fundamentals – First focus on stickwork, cradling, stick protection, and dodging. Then teach defense next. It is the easiest way to instill discipline and teamwork. Offense should be simple and relevant to what the next level is doing. If these players need to learn new schemes with each new year and new team, then their growth will be stunted. Ensure connectivity with what they learned last year to what they will learn next year.
5. Emphasize Teamwork – If there are renegade players who refuse to pass, the bench is the greatest disciplinarian. Play everyone.
6. Line drills should only be used for a very brief warm ups and never should there be more than 6 players total (3 on one side, 3 on the other side) in any line. Maximize touches
7. Resist the temptation to put all your skilled players at Attack. If a team can't clear the ball, they can't score.
8. Teach Face-Offs – possessions are key in lacrosse. Teams that can face-off, win GBs, and clear are successful.
9. Cultivate goalies – Even if you have a player who wants to play goalie, rotate all your players through that position (even your best offensive player). Verbally reinforce how important that position is. And always talk positive about the position. Make goalies “Hollywood” celebrities.
10. Praise in public and criticize in private – this is very important in getting a positive response from a player.

v. HS CURRICULUM CONNECTIVITY:

- Coaches are expected to coach age appropriate versions of what the Brighton HS program is running
- CURRICULUM COORDINATOR
 - Annually there will be a HS Board member assigned as a “Curriculum Coordinator Lead”
 - This person will have a good understanding of what is coached at the High School level
 - This person will be a point of contact for the youth coaches to ask questions
 - This person will monitor (at a high level) the youth teams to ensure basic compliance
- COACHING CLINICS
 - Optional live boys clinics may be scheduled during the year, hosted by the Varsity Head Coach
 - All Coaches should familiarize themselves with this document prior to the clinics so they can ask questions
 - Sample Boys Clinic #1
 - Understanding & teaching our fundamentals
 - Sample practice plan & drills
 - Goalies
 - Face-offs
 - Sample Boys Clinic #2
 - Basic offensive & defensive sets
 - Riding / clearing
 - Man-up / Man-down
- VARSITY PLAYERS
 - “Pay It Forward”: All Brighton High School Varsity players will be expected to volunteer their time to the Youth program.
 - Examples will be volunteering at Brighton Lacrosse Day, tryouts, practice, games, etc.
 - They will be instructed to be respectful, positive, and engaged.
 - They will also answer to the Head coach of that youth team for proper utilization.



SECTION II: BRIGHTON LACROSSE PLAYERS

We know not every youth player will play high school lacrosse. Yet the youth curriculum is designed to supply a road map for coaches and players to follow to prepare youth players for the expectations of the varsity coach to give every player the best opportunity to play at the next level if they so desire.

The required skills have been summarized and broken out over the K-8 youth program to assist coaches with their practice plans. A separate K-2 curriculum has been created. This document focuses on 3rd-8th grades.

It is important to note: Winning & losing is secondary to individual and team skill development. There must be a proper balance between playing games and working on skills. Too many clinics can be boring to the players, while playing too many games does not allow players to work on areas of need and taking risks. Will a player work on their weak hand if a game is on the line?

Approach for coaches:

- Keep the atmosphere fun!!
- Maximize touches
- Minimize standing around
- Balance teaching with fun drills
- Change the drills
- Create healthy competition (i.e. relay races)
- Allow players to fail - failures are teachable moments and players are typically more open to teaching after failing

This document is merely a guide for planning and communication purposes, it should never be meant to discourage a new player from attempting to play lacrosse for the first time at any level. At Brighton we welcome student athletes to play lacrosse at any age. More important than skill is desire.

Desired Attributes of a great player: Resilient, team player, gives effort at all times, coachable, fundamentally skilled.

i. EVALUATING PERSONEL:

- **MIDFIELDERS**
 - You are looking for the most athletic kids on the team to play midfield.
 - Well-conditioned and don't get tired easily.
 - They must have the ability to run up and down the field and play both offense and defense equally well.
- **ATTACK**
 - You are looking for the quickest or strongest/most balanced players that have very good stick skills.
 - A combination of quick feet and quick/soft hands is a lethal combination.
- **DEFENSE:**
 - Athletic and the taller the better.
 - Ability to run the field and clear the ball
 - Give every player a shot at this position and see who excels and loves to play it. Some player just have a knack to play defense and you won't know till you try them there.
 - Avoid putting all the big slow players on defense. Leaving all the fast athletic players on offense is an imbalanced team and will lead to imbalance on the scoreboard and team morale.
 - There is no such thing as a crease defenseman (those days are over). Every defenseman must be able to cover the ball and play solid 1 v1 defense.



- **GOALIE:**
 - Find a player that is not afraid of the ball and who like to take control of the game
 - This should never be the player that can't play any of the other positions.
 - Goalie is a different position mentally, and if we don't match mentally strong players with this position, we are setting them up to fail. This is a highly skilled position.

- **FACE-OFF SPECIALISTS**
 - Wrestlers always come to mind as those that excel at face-offs.
 - Good balance and center of gravity.
 - Excel at using leverage
 - Never quit mentality
 - Scrappy on ground balls.
 - Again, have everyone try it. Give all players a basic "how to" and then have them compete one day. You never know who might rise to the top.

ii. EXPECTATIONS FOR INCOMING FRESHMAN LACROSSE PLAYERS

- **CHARACTER**

We expect our players to have high character. If there is a punishment issued by the school, a similar punishment is issued by the team. For example, a player is suspended from school for three days for fighting. Then that player cannot participate in Brighton lacrosse activities for three days.

- **ATTENDENCE**

Players need to attend all practices. The only valid excuse is school related testing or studying. Parents are asked to schedule doctor appointments, celebrations, etc. around practice times. If a player misses a practice for anything other than school, they sit for the 1st quarter of the next game. No exceptions.

- **SKILL**

Everyone needs goals to aim for. These are for the 8th graders to focus on (and 7th graders to start to work on). Additionally, these should be used by all new players joining lacrosse in high school. Coaches must ensure that practice plans and drills teach and reinforce these concepts.

 1. All players must be student athletes. "Student" is the priority.
 2. All players must respect the game, the officials, the fans, the coaches, their teammates, and their opponent.
 3. All players must be ready to work hard when they step on the lacrosse field. There are no shortcuts to Championships.
 4. All players must throw and catch with both hands consistently and with fluidity.
 5. All players must be able to scoop a ground ball using either hand WITHOUT RAKING THE BALL (yes, they still rake in High School).
 6. All players must effectively protect the ball while being pressured
 7. All players must display an ability to exchange the ball (pass & get open by V cut) while being pressured defensively
 8. All players must understand basic language on offense and defense
 9. All players must talk loudly to teammates while on defense and offense
 10. All players must play defense with their feet first while their stick is pointed at the opponent's hips.
 11. All players must understand approach angles while defending a ball carrier. This includes attackmen riding.
 12. All players must perform a split dodge and switch hands to either side. Strong hand to weak hand. And weak hand to strong hand.



13. All players must be able to play man to man defense using hands and feet and approach the opposing player by taking something away. This includes attackmen who are riding a player with the ball.
14. All players must be able to recognize and take advantage of an odd man situation on offense by finding and exploiting the 2 v 1 situation within the larger scheme. This includes defenseman and goalies while clearing.
15. All players must recognize and provide help in an odd man situation on defense in a simple "STOP BALL" and react to first pass scheme. This includes attackmen who may end up playing defense.
16. All players must understand basic concepts of man up (patience with fast ball movement) and man down (zone and rotation)
17. All players must understand and use a trail checks in certain situations.
18. All players must identify beneficial match-ups and get the ball to player to the desired match-up.
19. All players must understand a primary dodge vs. a secondary dodge on offense (i.e.- split dodge is primary, roll dodge is secondary).
20. All players must understand the basic slide packages (who is "Hot", who is "2nd", COMA, Crease, Adjacent).
21. All players must understand the concept and value of "Dodge – Pass – Pass – ReDodge" on offense.



SECTION III: COACHING NEW (AND EXPERIENCED) PLAYERS

i. BRIGHTON FUNDAMENTALS

Webster definition:

Fundamental - forming or relating to the most important part of something. Of or relating to the basic structure or function of something.

The following seven basic skills or fundamentals are the foundation of our program. Every coach is expected to be familiar and understand how to teach the Brighton Lacrosse Fundamentals. The fundamentals are expected to be taught & retaught at every level. Our players should not outgrow the fundamentals, they are expected to build on top of them.

Also, where possible, we want to make learning the “fundamentals” fun. Especially for our K-2 ages and for brand new players. We know these groups can go through times of frustration in learning lacrosse and it is our responsibility as coaches to continually find new and exciting drills to facilitate learning. The end of this section will provide a library of those drills.

ii. THE SEVEN FUNDAMENTALS OF BRIGHTON LACROSSE

1. SWITCHING HANDS

- Critical to all other skill development and usually the first skill taught.
 - The visual aid we use to teach is to have the players imagine 2 eyes located on the top inside portion of the head. And players must turn the head of the stick so the “eyes” are always looking at him
 - At the same time, have them slide the shaft into their bottom hand like putting a sword in a sheath. And when the gloves touch each other - Switch hands.
- Eyes face the player...slide bottom hand up....bump hands...let go with top hand...switch

Drill to teach switching hands:

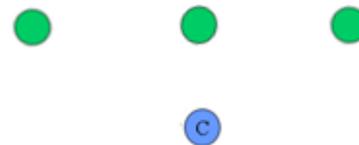
Switching Hands Line up

Set-up:

- Form a line of players with a coach in front. Coach demonstrates proper exchanges.

Drill:

- First stationary. And without a ball.
 - Coach blows a whistle. Player, with two hands on the stick, exchanges from right to left and then left to right.
 - Coach blows the whistle repeatedly signifying a switch each time.
- Then stationary again but add a ball.
 - Again switch from right to left and then left to right at the coaches whistle



2. CRADLING:

- Teach proper cradling technique with two hands on stick with stick held vertically with two hands – “Collarbone Position” - we do not teach horizontal cradling as the player is not able to shoot or pass quickly out of this position
 - Stick needs to be in the finger tips (not the palms of the glove)
 - Bottom hand is loose, should just be used as a guide
 - Top hand should do all of the work
 - Player should simply turn their shoulder to also protect their stick

- A good visual aid is have the player remove glove of their strong hand, arm should be at a right angle with palm facing away from their face. Now bend wrist back (should look like a waiter holding a big tray. Place a ball in their palm and have them rock the ball back and forth; do not let them grasp the ball. Centrifugal force should keep the ball in their palm. This is the correct feeling of cradling

Drill to teach cradling:

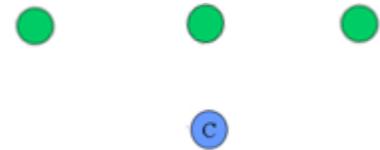
Cradle Line up

Set-up:

- Form a line of players with a coach in front. Coach demonstrates proper cradling.

Drill:

- First stationary. And without a ball. Stick in fingertips.
 - Player, with two hands on the stick, cradles righty.
 - Coach blows the whistle signifying a switch of hands.
 - Player, with two hands on the stick, cradles lefty.
- Then stationary again but add a ball.
 - Cradling and switching from right to left and then left to right at the coaches whistle
- Lastly, have them jog in a circle around you, with a ball
 - Cradling and switching from right to left and then left to right at the coaches whistle



3. GROUND BALLS (GBs):

- Chasing & picking up groundballs is all about the effort – We must emphasize the importance of this effort at ALL times! Every time a ball is on the ground is an opportunity to teach effort.
 - Dropping a pass or making a bad pass are physical mistakes that will happen, we expect our players to scoop the ground ball with maximum effort
 - Equally important, never let the players rake the ball, this shows a lack of effort and is potentially dangerous as their feet are not moving when they rake.
 - K-2 grades should treat all rakes as a turn-over in possession
- Technique
 - Hand placement
 - Top hand should be near the top-middle of the shaft for beginning players.
 - Choking-up should only refer to the top hand, not the bottom hand. Bottom hand should always remain near the butt end.
 - We teach getting two butts low (1-player's butt and 2-butt end of stick)
 - Right handed ground balls - left foot leads beside the ball
 - Left handed ground balls - right foot leads beside the ball
- Must accelerate through the ball to get it off of the ground quickly
- Player should communicate, "Ball"; when the ball is on the ground & "Release"; after he picks up the ball
- Upon picking up the ball player should
 - Cradle up in Collarbone position (head of stick next to ear)
 - Roll away from pressure not into pressure
 - Look to move the ball
- If the player does not pick up the ball the first time...try again (teach the importance of effort)
- What to do in ground ball scrums:
 - It is important that our players are taught to run through the ball in a scrum, even if they miss the ball, hopefully their momentum drives the ball in their direction

- If two players arrive at the same time or when our wing middies are waiting for a ball to pop-out on a face-off, teach our players to box out, similar to form taught to basketball players going for a rebound
- Boxing out requires getting low and using legs to push the opponent off the ball with their hips
- We also want to teach our players to play the ball with their feet or tap in in a direction with their stick to get out of traffic
- Grades 4th grade & above, players should be aware of protecting butt-end against their leg when running through a groundball
- Defending Ground Balls:
 - This is the situation when the player is one step behind the player about to pick-up the ground ball
 - Teach our players to look for the butt-end of the player that is about to pick-up the ground ball stick, poke check the back hand or lift the butt-end so they miss the ground ball
 - Do not push from behind. EVER. Teach the youth why this is wrong and dangerous. Reinforce It.

Drill to teach and reinforce ground ball play:

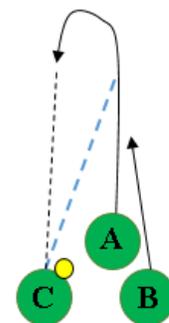
3 Player GBs

Set up:

- Player A starts on a line. Player B starts stick length behind. Player C has the ball.

Drill:

- Player C rolls the ball out.
- Player A picks up the ball while being pressured by Player B (properly-no push from behind)
- After picking up the ball, Player A rolls away from pressure and passes, rolls, or runs the ball back to Player C.
- Rotate players. B to A, C to B, A to C



Teach effort, rolling away, communicating and coming to the pass. And reinforce mirror concept while passing. If you player passes right, the other player catches left.

4. PASSING:

- Technique
 - Foot placement – Just like throwing a baseball, step with opposite hand you are throwing, right-handed throw should step with left foot
 - Hand placement- Bottom hand is always near the butt end, Top hand should be no more than 12” from the bottom hand. Hands are never touching each other on the stick. It is important that the stick is held in the fingers, not in the palms (similar concept as golf)
 - Top hand keys
 - Pushing Head of stick towards the target
 - Snap wrist, similar to following through on a basketball shot
 - Top hand thumb should be on the side of the shaft
 - Bottom hand keys
 - Pulling butt-end away from the target
 - Down the line wind up and follow through.
- To teach this start by giving the player the feel of the top hand release and the ball gliding off the throwing strings

- Player holds stick using only the top hand, with ball, points opposite shoulder toward target, lays hand back (cock wrist), then release a one hand pass.
- Player executes an exchange and repeats with other hand
- Player puts bottom hand on stick and repeats one hand drill, but adds a little pull with bottom to execute a two handed pass.
- For the older youth players, add weight transfer and shoulder turn to complete the technique
- Hands high and away, recoil down the line, step directly towards your target, push, pull, follow through down the line

5. CATCHING:

- Hand Placement
 - Bottom hand is always on the butt-end
 - Top hand should be near middle of shaft for beginners and should be worked down to about 12" from bottom hand as players advance
 - Choking-up should only refer to the top hand, not the bottom hand. Bottom hand should always remain near the butt end
- Stick should be held in fingertips...soft hands
- Head of stick should be forward from butt-end, this will allow the player to "give" with the ball
- Players may have a tendency to snap at the ball to catch it (a grab the ball in front and cradle quickly technique). This is WRONG! To correct this, practice quicksticks with players facing each other with shoulders square at each other. Tell them to "give" while catching. It solves the snapping problem quickly.

Drills to teach passing & catching

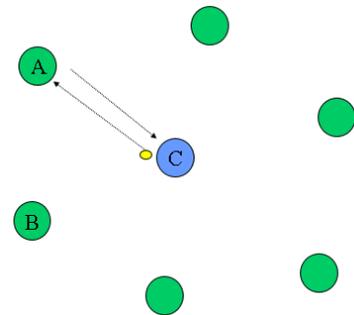
Circle Passing

Set-up:

- Form a circle of players with a coach in the middle.

Drill:

- Coach starts with the ball and passes around the circle.
- Teach Mirror Concept
 - If coach throws with right, player catches with left
 - If player throws with left, player catches with right
- Then do the same with GBs



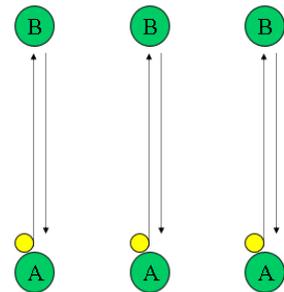
Partner Pass & Catch

Set-up:

- Two players spaced no more than 10 yards apart.

Drill:

- Player A throws to Player B.
- Player B catches it and returns the pass.
- Reinforce mirror concept
 - If coach throws with right, player catches with left
 - If player throws with left, player catches with right



6. DODGING:

- Simply put, dodging is nothing more than the ability to get by a defensive player
- This ability is obviously important as it can:
 - Allow us to clear the ball (thus goalies and defenseman need to know how to dodge)

- Put the ball carrier in a good scoring position
- Force the defense to slide, which can allow us to put an adjacent player in a scoring position
- There are several types of dodges, some of which we discuss in the advanced section of this document. For fundamentals we will focus on the split dodge
 - The offensive player is attempting to get the defensive player going in one direction, plant their outside foot, switch hands and change directions
 - Technique of a right handed to left handed split dodge
 - Square shoulders to defender, run at them with stick in right hand to make them backpedal
 - Attack to your right (stick side) by taking a pronounced step to plant foot
 - From that plant foot, lunge across to the left with your left foot and switch your stick from right to left and explode past defender
 - Coaches need to ensure that the overall line if this dodge is straight at the goal. In other words, try to ensure when players are finishing the dodge they are not fading away from the goal or their defender. Rather they are exploding right off the defender's shoulder and getting back online to the goal.
- You can see, the ability to switch hands will allow the player to complete this dodge at full speed

Dodging Drill

Set-up:

- Set up 4 cones 10 yards apart. Players line up behind the first cone.
- Remind players this is not a race and you want them to concentrate on doing the dodge correctly instead of quickly.

Drill:

- Player A runs to the 2nd cone and performs a split dodge (Right to Left)
- Player must get back online because at cone 3 he must do another split dodge but this time Left to Right
- Finally executing his 3rd split dodge at cone 4 (Right to Left).
- Now have the next player go, and so on.

7. SHOOTING:

- We teach overhand shots first!! Penalize missed shots that are sidearm.
- Technique
 - To start, weight on back foot
 - Stick in fingertips
 - Bottom hand on the butt-end, top hand 4" to 6" above bottom hand
 - Get hands up and way back (like you are pulling on a rope above and behind you)
 - Chin to front shoulder, straight line to stick
 - Head of stick slightly above the butt-end or bottom hand
 - Hips & butt should be facing the sidelines, front shoulder pointed at the goal
 - Bottom hand should pull and be used as a guide down and across torso
 - Top hand should snap wrist at end (important for accuracy). Part of the player's follow through
 - Release ALL of the player's potential energy by following through – player should end up with rear shoulder facing the goal
 - Weight on the front foot
- Like most other sports, use of core and weight shift is important for generating power
- Shooting effectiveness is increased by changing levels. Meaning if the player's stick is high shooting overhand, it will be difficult for the goalie to see the ball or guess if the player shoots low

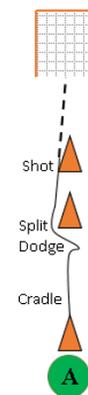
Shooting Drill

Set-up:

- Set up 3 cones in front of the goal.
- Cone 1 to 2: 10 yards apart. Cones 2 to 3: 5 yards apart
- Players line up behind the first cone.

Drill:

- Player A runs to the 2nd cone and performs a split dodge (Right to Left)
- Player must get back online because at cone 3 he must shoot (lefty)
- Now have the next player go, and so on.
- Then switch so that the split dodge is left to right and the shot is righty.



iii. WALL BALL

Wall ball is important. As coaches we need to relay this to our youth players. At a wall, players can work on all seven Brighton Fundamentals: cradling, switching hands, ground balls, passing, catching, dodging, and shooting. We need players to put in extra work and a wall is always there to be a player's partner. No Excuses!

Depending on where you practice (if there is a wall available to you) work in wall ball to your practice plan daily at the beginning of the season so your players learn the proper fundamentals while you are observing and coaching them. Then, demand that your players arrive 15 minutes early or stay late to get in wall ball minutes. Develop the Habit!

- Rules of Wall Ball
 - All drills must be performed with both hands.
 - Any wall will work, but a smooth concrete wall at least 10 feet tall is the best surface.
 - Use your gloves when performing this routine.
 - Stand about 7 yards from the wall at first. Create more distance as you get better & throw harder.
 - Perform this routine 4 or 5 times a week for 15 to 20 minutes and your stick skills will improve a great deal in a very short period time.
- Example set
 - Throw right catch right – 25 times
 - Throw left catch left – 25 times
 - Pass and switch hands to catch – 25 times
 - Backhand Righty – 15 times
 - Backhand Lefty – 15 times
 - Quick-stick Righty – 25 times
 - Quick-stick Lefty – 25 times
 - One handed Righty – 15 times
 - One handed Lefty – 15 times
 - Behind the back righty – 15 times (no need for BTB lefty)

iv. BASIC SITUATIONS

Below are basic expectations of Offense, Defense, and Face-Offs. We will get into complex positional training, rides and clears, as well as motion Offense and Man2man defense in another document

- OFFENSE



- Realize that much of the youth game is played in transition rather than organized offensive sets thus ensure that transition offense is 50% of your offensive practice drills
- For settled offense we will teach motion principles and spacing. For 7th-8th grade, this will be very similar to what the high school runs. For grades 3rd-6th that means beating the defensive player in front of you, going to the net, shoot if it is an open shot or dump to adjacent player.
 - Adjacent offensive players need to get in passing lanes and move towards the pass
- When the ball is in our defensive end, we want two attackmen on the midfield line and one attackman on the restraining line in the middle. ALWAYS!
- “Yellow” indicates we want to slow the ball down, do not go to the goal. This will be used when we are changing middies, desire to give our defense a rest or if we want to run out the clock
- DEFENSE
 - Straight up man-to-man defense. No zone
 - Players need to understand how to find and match up with an opposing offensive player
 - Then they need to stop the ball - our primary goal
 - Off ball defenders should be in the proper positions relative to our “T principles” (explained later), playing help defense
 - The defense is expected to communicate. “I have ball”, “I have left”, “I have right”, “I’m hot”, etc
 - When the ball is in our offensive end, we want our defensemen locked on the attackmen. Standing hip to hip next to them. Not standing behind or in front of them.
- FACE-OFFS
 - Wing play (basic alignment – can have others as well)
 - Midfielder on the draw side (or left side) of face-off man should come all the way down the line towards our defensive end (they have draw and defensive responsibility)
 - Midfielder on the right side of the face-off man should start hip to hip to the opponent (box out).
 - Both wing players should look to beat their respective middies off the line and immediately start to “box-out”



SECTION 4: MORE DRILLS TO REINFORCE FUNDAMENTALS

The below drills have been broken out by category to assist in teaching and reinforcing the Seven Brighton Fundamentals. I combined passing and catching as one category for drill purposes. Also to note, in each section there are drills appropriate for K-2 and New players as well as experienced 8th graders, as well as drills that are just a fun change of pace. Regardless they all teach the Seven Brighton Fundamentals and should be a part of every practice plan.

1. Switching Hands

- **Run the Crease:** Two lines of 4-5 players opposite each other on the crease. Two players start with the ball, on the whistle, they should cradle while running around the crease, they are expected to plant, switch hands (in front, do not roll) and change directions each time the whistle is blown. The next couple of players in line should have balls in their sticks ready to go to keep this drill moving quickly. Advanced players should be able to read out how many fingers a coach is holding up while they are running the crease.
- **Run the Sideline:** One line of 5-6 players in either corner of field behind the net. Set up cones making an area 5-7 yards wide & 10-15 yards long. First player in line should step out and play defense. The next player should start with the ball at the intersection of the end line and sideline. The player with the ball should use the hand that is next to the sideline (left handed if sideline is on the left). The player with the ball is attempting to clear up the sideline. The defensive player is using the technique described in the fundamentals to ride the player with the ball out of bounds. The player with the ball should either run by the defensive player or roll ball and switch hands

2. Cradling

- **Cradling lineup:** Line all players up, show proper cradling technique. Each player should have a ball in their stick and demonstrate cradling as explained in the fundamentals section of this document. Players should switch hands on whistle and continue cradling
- **Relay race:** Form lines of 3-5 players, place cones 20-25 yards apart for each line. First player in each line starts with a ball, on the whistle they should run while cradling ball right handed, at the cone they should switch to left hand. The player should drop ball in front of next player in line. All players that have completed should sit-down, first team to complete wins
 - Variation: One handed cradling (make sure stick is still vertical)
- **ThunderDome:** Cones to make a circle, each player with 1 ball, coach(s) in the middle. Purpose – Players to improve cradling and stick protection. Rules
 - All the players are in the middle of a designated area with a ball.
 - On a whistle, players must run around and protect their sticks from coach(s) who are trying to knock the ball out.
 - If a player drops the ball or gets the ball knocked out, then they must go out of the area and wait till the next game.
 - Last player standing wins.
- **Gladiator:** Cones to make a circle, players around the circle, 2 players in the middle, one ball. Purpose – Players to improve on cradling and stick protection. Rules
 - 2 players stand in the middle of the circle, rest of the players around the circle.
 - On the whistle, players outside the circle may poke or lift check at the 2 players inside the circle, but are not allowed to move any closer
 - 2 players in the middle bump each other
 - If a player drops their ball first is out and a new challenger from the outer circle replaces them as the new gladiator
- **The Fox and the Farmer:** One “Farmer” and the rest of the players are “Foxes”. In a designated area, each “fox” has a ball, and flags or pinnies tucked into their shorts. Purpose – for players to work on cradling, stick protection, dodging, and endurance. Rules



- Coach sets up an area in which the players cannot leave. Each “fox” must wear flags or pinnies on their waist (better to put them in the front of the player, or in the shorts in front of the player so they learn to use their body as a shield)
- On the whistle, players run around cradling a ball and dodging the “farmer.” The farmer without a stick runs around and tries to pull the flag or pinnie from the players.
- A player is out if they drop the ball or lose their flag/pinnie
- Last person standing wins and becomes the next farmer
- Irish Channel: Line up cones to create a 7 yard wide by 20 yard long area. Have 2 players start at one end (one on defense, one on offense with ball). Defender cannot throw checks, only leverage pressure. Offensive player zig-zags while practicing his cradling. Learn how to protect the stick with your body.
- Sharks & Minnows: I think every coach knows this game. Coaches should emphasize proper cradling technique, stick protection and switching hands by split dodge or rolling away from pressure

3. Groundballs:

These drills should be done with both hands, we are attempting to develop players with both hands

- London Bridge: One ball, coach with stick, a cone. Purpose – To get low on ground balls. Rules
 - Set a ball on the ground in front of a coach. The coach’s stick is out horizontally at waist high
 - Players must pick up the ground ball while going below the coach’s stick then run to and around the cone. On the way back they must drop to ball in front of the coach
 - After everyone has gone through, next time the stick should start to lower so players must “sprint” through the ball. If they miss the ball or get hit by the stick, the player is out.
 - Player that can go the lowest wins
- Egg Hunt: All players into 2 groups, large number of balls (30 minimum), one cone, one goal. Purpose – for players to work on groundballs, cradling, shooting. Rules
 - Put all the balls in the middle of the field
 - Have all of the players line up in front of the goal with their backs to the balls
 - Set one cone out about 10 yards past the balls on the opposite side from where the kids are
 - On the whistle, players need to hop up, run scoop a ball, cradle the ball around the cone and back, and then take a shot on goal
 - First group to get all the players to make a goal wins
- Messy Backyard: 2 groups of players, a large number of balls (15 to 30 balls), cones for boundaries, stop watch. Purpose – To improve scooping on groundballs, cradling, and endurance. Rules:
 - Have two groups of players on opposite sides of a designated area (use cones to make the boundaries). Coach places the balls in the middle
 - On the whistle, players scoop up balls and run to their opposing team’s “backyard” and place the ball there.
 - Players may take balls from their backyard and place them in the opposing team’s backyard d. After a designated amount of time, the team with the least number of balls on their side wins
- Partner GBs: 1 player behind another. Player behind has the ball, rolls it out, the player in front chases, scoops, rolls away, passes to the player that was behind, the player behind passes it back, now that player is behind. Teach effort, rolling away, communicating and coming to the pass
- Kick-n-Go: Very similar to partner GBs, instead the player in front starts with the ball on the ground and he/she has to kick it in front of them. Rolling away from pressure, passing back and forth is the same as partner GBs
- Playing GB w/ a Step: One player behind the other. The ball starts out 5 yards in front of the front player. On the whistle, both players run to the ball, the player in front is expected to run through the ball, protect butt-end and roll-away from pressure, the man behind is expected to check or lift butt-end and play proper defense if the front player picks up the ball



- **Butt-to-Butt:** Ball is placed on the ground, have two players positioned butt-to-butt over the ball. Legs bent, stick held by both hands. On the whistle, players should box-out in attempt to pick-up the GB. Players can use feet
- **Musical Ground Balls** - All players with 1 or 2 fewer balls than players. Purpose – to work on recognizing the a ground ball and quickly picking it up. Work on speed. Rules:
 - All players lay on the ground with their heads toward the middle of a designated area. Coach puts balls in the middle
 - On the whistle, players jump up and pick up a ground ball as quickly as possible and pick up a ground ball
 - Those unable to get one must sit out. Rest of the players reset and the Coach removes 1 or 2 balls
 - Continue until there is one winner
- **Hungry Hippo** – 2 teams of players 2 buckets or trash cans, and a large number of lacrosse balls (30 minimum). Purpose – to work on groundballs, endurance, and speed. Rules:
 - Start with 2 teams on the same line on either side of a coach
 - the coach throws out all the balls into an area
 - At the whistle, all players run out and pick up ground balls. Then cradle back to their bucket and place the ball inside.
 - When all the balls have been picked up, team with the most balls wins.
- **Magic Ball:** 3 to 4 lines of approximately 3 players per line. The players should be lined up in the alley. With players looking forward, Coach performing this drill will roll out one or two balls. Coaches are expected to teach GB effort, technique, cradling, switching hands, boxing out, defensive posture, using hands and legs on defense. Keep score per line. This drill can be run by player picking up the ball going to the net and shooting or running back to the original starting line. The player gets a point if they score or return the ball to the line, he can then go back out and get another ball
- **Oklahoma** – two lines of players 10 yards apart, lined up facing each other. Drop a ball half way in between the two players and let them battle for the ball.
- **1V1** – winner goes to goal to score, loser plays defense
- **2V1 GBs, 3V2 GBs, 4v3 GBs, 5v4 GBs**

4. Passing & Catching with Mirror Concept:

These drills should be done with both hands, we are attempting to develop players with both hands

- 100 Touches:
 - This is a great way to warm-up while working on hand-eye coordination
 - The side benefit is every time a player drops the ball they are picking up a ground ball without even knowing it (make sure they do not rake in this drill)
 - We have had a bunch of fun with the kids with this – get everyone in a circle around the coach performing the drill
 - Stick should be in fingertips, the player should toss the ball up and come down with it, simulating giving with the ball while catching it
 - Start with Right hand; 25 times, left hand; 25 times, put it on the ground lefty & righty....the purpose is to get each player at least 100 touches in a very short period of time
 - Coaches should change the routine to keep this fun and challenging
 - Bounce off of sidewall once and catch (lefty & righty)
 - Bounce off of shaft once & catch (lefty & righty)
 - Toss ball up & loop head of stick around ball & catch (lefty & righty)
 - Toss ball up, catch behind back, toss back
 - Toss ball up catch between legs, toss back
 - Toss ball up, sidewall progression, go for 1 bounce & catch, then two & catch, etc.
 - Toss ball up, catch with stick over shoulder



- Toss ball up one handed catch Mirror Partner Passing: Have players partner up, line them up 5-10 yards apart. All players on one side start with the ball in their right or left hand, the opposite partner must mirror them. Players should switch hands on the whistle. Coaches should be coaching proper throwing/catching technique. The passes should be crisp....no lolley-pops
- Head-man the Ball: Lines of 3-4 players 15-20 yards apart. Players should be passing to the player ahead of them. The concept is moving the ball up field. Player(s) in the middle should be catching, rolling and quickly passing the ball up field. Again, no lolley-pops in this drill. Switch positions, everyone should get a turn in the middle. Relay race: 1st player in each line start with the ball, the teams should move the ball up and down the line 2-3 times, team that finishes first should sit-down when they are done. Switch hands.
- Continuous Give-n-Go: Line players up in lines of 4-5 players. One player should start out 5-7 yards ahead of the next person in line. The first person in line start with the ball right-handed. The player 5-7 yards away should be off to the left side in this example. The first person in line passes to the player ahead (who is mirroring the pass), he/she catches and passes back (give-n-go). The first player in line should be moving. Complete two passes, then the next player is up. After the last person in line has gone, it should be repeated going the opposite direction, now switching hands. The drill is completed after every player has played the middle position
- 4 Corner Passing: Exactly how it sounds. Get groups of 4 players, they should pass ball around with sticks to the outside practicing the mirror concept. The player catching should roll-away switch hands and pass to the next corner. Players should switch direction on the whistle
- Zipper - 2 lines of players, can be multiple groups. Number of balls depending of lines. Purpose – to work on passing and catching. To work as a team moving the ball. To move the ball quickly without running around.
Rules:
 - Ball starts at one end and gets tossed back and forth, proceeding up the lines
 - Have a timer so the players race the clock. Can make it competitive with large number of players; first group of 2 lines to get the ball through wins
- LaxGolf - 1 ball per player, 1 bucket or trash can. Purpose – to work on accurate passing. Work toward later to accurate clears: Rules:
 - Place a trash can/bucket at a point a distance from the players
 - Players take turns throwing the ball into the trash can/bucket
 - Player with the least number of passes into the trash can/bucket wins
- Ultimate Lacrosse (like ultimate Frisbee) - 2 teams of even number of players and 1 ball. Cones if needed. Purpose- to move the ball as a team across the field without dropping it to the other side to score points. Create a field big enough for the number of players with 2 end zones Rules:
 - Both teams start in their end zone. Coach will throw the ball into the middle and blow a whistle to start the game. Players run out and pick up the ground ball. First to get the ground ball starts with possession.
 - Players may not take more than 3 steps with the ball. If they do, they ball goes to the other team
 - If the ball drops to the ground, the other team gets it.
 - No contact with players. If a player is touched, they may take 5 steps forward toward the end zone
 - First team to 3 goals wins the game

5. Dodging

These drills should be done with both hands, we are attempting to develop players with both hands

- Station orange cones in a line or in zig-zag formation about 10 yards apart. Have the players demonstrate different dodges at each cone. Split, Face, Roll, Spatula, etc.
 - Variation: Add a live defender at each cone. Instruct defenders to only poke check. Will teach players when to begin their dodges (cushion).
- Juke-Tag: Cone off a 5 yard by 15 yard area. A defensive player should be in the coned area, this player is trying to stop the offensive player by using feet and hands to push player out of bounds. The offensive player is



attempting to juke-out the defensive player by using a hard plant and change of direction. Starts this drill with neither player using sticks, next, give a stick & ball just to the offensive player, eventually both players. Defensive players should not be throwing checks

- 1v1s: Another staple of our practice plans. Emphasize proper defensive technique. Vary the positions on the field to start north, south, east, west etc.

6. Shooting

These drills should be done with both hands, we are attempting to develop players with both hands

- Score on Coach: Use tennis balls. Players with a ball, coach in goal. Purpose – To shoot on a coach and have fun. Rules
 - Coach puts on a costume or a helmet. Players get to shoot tennis balls and try to score on the coach
 - Costumes can vary, I've seen this done with a Chewbacca suit and it was hilarious. Kids loved it.
- Let em' Rip: Simple shooting drill to practice hands, back, weight shift and follow through. Player should be in shooting position 5 yards in front of cage. Player should start with hands back, weight on back foot. Coach simply tosses ball to player so they have to continue to reach, player should catch, transfer weight, unwind & rip it to the center of the cage emphasizing snapping wrist and shoulder follow-through
- Continuous feeding / shooting: Two lines of players on either side of goal line extended (GLE). Cone should be placed 7 yards in front of cage. Balls should be located for both lines of players. The drill starts with one line cutting to the cone, the opposite line player should feed, cutter should catch and shoot. Now the feeder becomes the cutter, the next player in the other line should feed. This is a continuous drill until the balls are gone.
- Split-n-Shoot: Line of players in front of the cage, Place a cone 10 yards in front of the cage. Form a line of players 3-5 yards in front of the cone, each player should have a ball. Player should split dodge at the cone and shoot on the net. Make sure players run through this drill using both hands.