

## **-Lacrosse Idea Swap! – Vol. 4-**

Idea Sharing With Like-Minded Coaches

### **From Keith...**

I started using a drill I saw some where that is called "ball bag". Everyone has a ball and spreads out around the field. You pre-determine how long you are going to run the drill- 15,30 or 45 seconds. When you blow the whistle, each player picks up there ground ball and then rolls it back down. They use alternate hands and techniques,ie push the ball like a hockey stick, kick the ball out, etc. Focus on "ball" "release", snapping the head of their stick up, and curling away from pressure. Also great conditioning if they are working hard. I coach at the HS level.

--/--

### **From Mark...**

Swap Idea

I don't know that this is a revolutionary idea, but it's helped with our defense's body and footwork.

Most of our boys are in their first year of playing lacrosse where body checking is allowed, but have 2-3 seasons of non-checking experience. For this drill the defense plays without sticks. We line the middies up at the top of the restraining box and the attack back at X. The defender takes on the middle who tries to score. After that encounter, he turns right around and takes on the attacker coming from X who tries to score. After a couple of rounds we add more defenders and middies/attack until we have 3 defenders and 4 middies/attack out there.

It has helped to make the defense more cognizant of when to use a body check and when to play extremely tightly.

Use it if you wish.

--/--

### **From Laurie...**

Here is a change to the same old shuttle drills...

I call them U Penn shuttles: Group 3 kids 1 person in the middle others on either side. Person in the middle starts with the ball. They turn and pass the ball to the other person and then sprints to that person. touches sticks and sprints back to the middle to receive the pass back from the person who has the ball. Then continues to the next person. The person in the middle will stay for 2 min. and then switch with the others. I

incorporate different types of pass and cuts to this drill. It gets the kids running and not so much chatter like on shuttle lines.

--//--

### **From Geoff...**

I got one for you. This one is a defense drill, you line up all your long polls facing the same direction (left or right) with there sticks in one hand ( if they are facing left-stick in there right hand, facing right-stick in left hand, butt of stick on ground) In a continues shuffle side to side staying low and on their toes, the first defense man performs a wrap check around the body of the defense men in the line checking there sticks as they shuffle to the end of the line and taking the same position. The next man follows in the same form.

You can also have them all face forward and do the same shuffle using poke checks & slap checks. This drill is a good way for long polls to get use to different types of checking, as well as learning a good defensive stance.

I find that my defense uses the wrap check more often and more effectively in game play, and stay in form when playing defense more often.(not to mention they don't cross their feet when guarding their man)

--//--

### **From Peter...**

Here is a game we use, maybe at the end of a practice, which the younger kids (U11) love. It is a variation of sharks and minnows that is used in soccer (since virtually every kid in our town plays soccer). Have the kids lie down on a line facing away from the field. Spread balls out on the field less then the number of kids (i.e. if you have 20 kids spread 16 balls). On the whistle the kids jump to their feet turn and locate/scoop a ball and run across another line about 15 yards away. More balls a pulled away until there are only 2 kids left going after 1 ball.

Variation 1 – Kids who do not scoop a ball become sharks, stay in and start on the opposite line and after the balls are scooped play defense trying to steal a ball. Kids who lose a ball to a shark become sharks themselves. Play continues until all the kids are sharks.

--//--

### **From Rick...**

Here are two ground ball drills we did yesterday as a result of watching our 1st & 2nd graders participate in their first "game" against another team last

weekend. During the game, there were lots of times where the ball was on the ground in a large crowd of players. They proceeded to try and "scoop" the ball with the stick in a vertical position (digging a hole instead of scooping) in the middle of a crowd. So, here's what we did yesterday:

1. 1-1 ground balls where the two players stand back-to-back with the ball on the ground between their heels. The coach blows the whistle, and the players must try to goose the ball in front of them either by kicking the ball or flicking it with their stick to get it in front of them (and hopefully out of the crowd). Then, the player who scoops the ball turns and passes it to the coach, who repeats the drill with the next two players.

2. Limbo ground balls - To encourage the players to get low to the ground with both their bodies and sticks (in a horizontal position, parallel to the ground), we had two lines of players with a coach between the two lines with balls. The coach put the ball on the ground in front of him, then the first player from one line goes to scoop the ball. The coach holds his stick a few feet above and parallel to the ground over the ball, forcing the player to bend down low (with stick parallel to the ground, back hand down) to scoop. Once the ball is scooped, the player then passes to the first player in the other line. That player then passes back to the coach, and the drill is repeated.

--/--

### **From Michael...**

#### Conditioning Drill

Split the team into 2 equal teams. One team is white shirts, the other is dark shirts. All the white shirts enter the crease area. The dark shirts spread out in the same restraining box. The object is to release the players from the crease area and they must tag their opponent. The dark shirts can run anywhere within the restraining box. If a player runs outside of the box he is out. The event is timed. Each team will have two turns tagging the other. The team that tags out their opponent in the least amount of time wins. I like this drill because the boys that are tagging will work in units to track down the quicker players.

--/--

### **From Michael...**

It's pretty basic.

#### Called the Star Drill

5 lines (at each point of a star) you can start by rolling the to the opposite line and following it to that line and get on the end of that line. The opposing player scoops and

then rolls the ball to the opposing line and follows the ball and gets in that line waiting for his turn. Progress to passing with one ball, strong side then weak side. The fun really gets going when you use 2 balls and then when the team is really good add a 3rd ball.

I have used this drill at all age levels from U-11 to college players. It builds focus, ball awareness, and stick skills in a form of controlled chaos.

--/--

### **From Michael...**

Great idea. I coach 5th & 6th graders and find it difficult to convince them to scoop through the ball, especially when there's a crowd. We did 3 v 2 ground balls ("good guys, bad guys") for most of the season but I ended up with 2 kids going after the ball and the others hanging around for an outlet pass. Wanting to train players to scoop through the crowd and push the ball forward for a fast break, I came up with the following 2 v 2 with an outlet, which worked pretty well.

Ball in the center, with 4 players (2 teams of 2) about 5 yards away, facing each other. Each team has a 3rd teammate about 5 yards behind the opposing team. On the whistle, the 4 closest players go for the ground ball, ideally using good man-ball technique for the 2nd player through to scoop on the run. Once the scoop is made, it's one cradle to secure possession and a quick pass forward to the 3rd teammate, who in a game situation would have a fast break opportunity. With enough space and players, we've done this as a full-field drill that actually turns into a fast break. Winners stay on & change direction (with a different player being the outlet).

--/--

### **From Cooke...**

My 9 to 11 year olds have had trouble with ball control. We lost a game last week because we didn't get the ground balls. Saturday I had a two on two to simulate a game scrum that occurs in our games. I had to remind them to get their sticks down early to scoop and once they had the ball in their stick, they had to tuck the stick close in to their body and run out of the mele/ They had been getting the ball and standing up raising their sticks in the air and getting checked. The drill was to get down, scoop, stay crouched while running and getting clear. It sounds basic but many of these kids had not seen a lacrosse stick six weeks ago. They all agreed that this drill worked. We'll see Wednesday in our last game before the playoffs.

--/--

### **From Rob...**

#### Passing and Catching Drill

I set up cones about 30 yards apart around the track or field, send at least one player to each cone, the concept is to pass ball from one cone to the next and player advances to the next cone (like advancing ball down field). Players must cut back to ball then turn around to advance to next cone and pass to next player. I had two balls going at once.

--/--

### **From Joe...**

We call this game cut throat! This is a 3 v 3 plus goalie. 3 offensive players attack def from the 12m. If they score they rotate out. If they lose, they go to def. I put a 15 sec req on the attack. I got this drill from coaching basketball.

--/--

### **From Joe...**

I have a ground ball drill that keeps them out of standing in line, gives them more opportunities in the same time, and also adds the element of maintaining awareness around them:

Simply, give everyone a ball and let them serve grounders to themselves out in front of them and chase and scoop--AT FULL SPEED. With everyone going in different directions, they have to be aware so as not to run into each other. This means they usually have to dodge or run a j turn after the scoop in order to avoid collisions. They do 10 with each hand and then 10 more each hand with a kick of the ball before scooping

--/--

### **From Roger...**

Couple of ideas for the swap James.

1) For new goalies or those just learning the position. Movement around the net is important. For younger players the automatic and natural thing to do is follow the opposition player leaving a large gap stick side and making it very easy for the opposition to score. Having a coach or assistant coach working with the goalie and repeatedly telling the goalie to follow the ball not the body as they travel around the net is helpful. Stop every once in a while and have the goalie freeze to show the goalie how much of the net is open stick side if they forget to follow the ball helps also. Reinforce this later with players breaking in to take shots.

2) Have the whole team line up on one side of the field (all with balls) with only the coaches or a few players in the middle. The idea is to have the team run to the other side of the field while the coaches or players try to stick check and get the ball loose. If any players lose their ball, they now join the players in the middle. The drill continues side to side until all the players have lost their ball. The drill reinforces the importance of cradling and moving or dodging (it is also a way to improve endurance in a fun way).  
--/--

**From Kevin...**

Here is a tip, when teaching young kids to use their weak hand let them understand that they also have to train their brain. Tell them that when they have their cereal in the morning to eat it with their left hand. Do everyday tasks with their weak hand will strengthen their right/left motor skills

--/--

**From Kevin...**

I run my team with 15 runners and two goalies. Perfect numbers for this drill.

Goalie in each net.

Three lines of 5 each.

1 line starts down on either end 5 on 5

The line defending the zone then becomes offense and runs down on the other end again 5 on 5.

After they lose the ball again the D becomes O and down to the other end.

Continue back and forth.

Challenges. Remove players to work on short handed, power plays and pulling the goalie situation.

--/--

**From David...**

I tie a rope around the waist of my defenders and attach it to the head of their stick so they can not go for an over committed tamahawk type of check. This forces them to use good body positioning and land solid poke, and slap checks.

--/--

### **From Dave...**

Excellent idea. My drill is a variation of 3-on-3 (+ goalie) Scoop ~n~ Shoot:

It plays on the idea that sometimes a ball is mis-played by a clearing defense and put on the ground.

Setup: Goalie in goal, three defenders anywhere along goal line, one middie at the center line, one attack/middie on each side (outside) of attack zone.

Coach rolls a ball near the top of the attack zone.

Coach yells "Go", all players converge on the ball.

The middle middie should be the one that gets to the ball first, scoops through for the pickup, then the offense has 10 seconds to shoot.

Variations:

Put defense closer to drop to force a quicker scoop

Set up pick plays to keep defenders guessing as to who is going to scoop the ball.

Put a defensive middie just behind the middle middie.

--/--

### **From David...**

Often times we forget that the brain works at phenomenal speeds, and because of this we neglect to give our players the opportunity to gain competitive advantage by feeding the brain information which is critical in such a fast-paced game like lacrosse. Speaking from the box lacrosse game, I get my players to always take a quick peek over their shoulder before going after the ball against the boards. This does a few things. It gives the player a chance to see if opposition players are coming after them (for protecting the body and ball), but it also gives the chance to see where players are on the same team in making a quick play. You can think of a ton of drills where players approach the ball along the boards, look, and than are forced to make the most effective play for competitive advantage.

--/--

### **From Christopher...**

My favorite drill is an oldie but goodie.

A coach drops all the practice balls on the ground behind the net and places half the players behind the endline. The other half go to the center x. A player behind scoops a ball and pops out from one side of the net. At the same time a player releases from the X and prepares to catch a pass. Both players must keep sticks to the outside at all times.

Pass is made at full speed and immediate shot is taken.

Players change lines.

--/--

**From Kathy...**

I coach a developmental and youth team. To help with the accuracy and power behind their shots on goal, we hang metal pie pans in the corners of the goals. When they hit the corners with a strong shot, they know by the sound. If they hit it with a weak shot, they know that it needs a bit more power behind it.

--/--

**From Lori...**

One drill we work on is our running game...offense starts at one end of the arena by the side boards, defense at end the same end, in the center of floor. Defense job is to maintain the offensive player to the one side of the floor until they get to the other end, the offensive player tries to break to the middle of the floor by adjusting her speed, defense is only to "contain" the offensive, do not attack or come close with stick or the offensive will easily blow them off. If offensive player breaks away, she goes for a shot on net.

Good for player to learn how the change in speed can help on the floor , defense learns to read the other player.

--/--

**From Ray...**

You have 2 lines of your defensive players at mid-field one on each sideline. Then you have one line behind each goal of your offensive players. 2 goalies in cages. You can choose to shorten the field if need be. This is a good drill to get running in instead of sprints. How it works, to start the drill first 3 guys behind cage run out goalie hits them with a breakout pass. 2 guys run out from mid-field and get in hole and play 3 on 2 defense You can set 3 passes before shot. If ball is dropped they leave ball where it is. Opposite offensive line runs out and scoops ground ball 2 new defensive guys run out same situation shot saved cleared to new group. it can be 4 on 3, 5 on 4, 6 on 5, or even #'s...

--/--

**From George...**

I've coached at the college level (D-3) and High School Level (albeit many moons ago). I'm currently involved in a U-9 youth program. Two drills that have worked well for me:

Traffic Signals: This works better in small groups 5-8 kids at the beginner level (older kids will get bored). In a 12 x 12 area (can be adjusted). Each kid has a lacrosse ball and runs around cradling the ball. The drill is fairly self explanatory. The coach yells, "Green light" - kids must start running around cradling the ball (game speed). "Yellow Light" - kids should go half speed (slow). "Red Light" - kids should stop and cradle in place. Coaches can mix in their own lights/colors. E.G. - "Blue Light" might be to roll the ball in front of you and scoop up the ground ball. "Black light" might mean to switch hands and try to cradle lefty.

Jewel Thieves: In the same 12 x 12 playing area (can be adjusted). The coach divides the group into small teams (2-4 kids) and places home bases (a small coned off area - each team has a home base) and spreads balls (jewels) on the ground throughout the playing area. When the coach blows the whistle, teams must scoop up ground balls (jewels) and cradle them back to their home base. Teams can also steal jewels from other teams' home bases (teams cannot stay in their home base and baby sit; they must go out and collect more jewels). No stick checking allowed. To mix it up, put different colored balls into the drill, each color would be worth a higher denomination. As kids get better, you could try stick checking but that hasn't worked well for me.

Obviously, these games are geared to beginners (7-8 yrs.). It's just a fun way to work on cradling, scooping, running with/without the ball. Kids are practicing these skills without realizing it.

--/--

### **From George...**

I have been coaching for three year now but it's at the K to third grade level. I believe the drills setup at K -2 mostly are basic stick handling skills and at 3rd grade you keep up with the basic but start adding some new tricks depending on the level of your kids. Than 4 and up you need to start adding advance drills. I played through college and have used the drills I remember but wanted new ones that are better for today's game. So your drills have shown me several new tricks. Thanks

One drill I implemented for my third grade team is below. I found it a great drill to teach kids where to go after a shot and save.

#### Circle Break out (Clear)

This will help players develop defensive break out skills.

What you need – At one end, in front of the goal, you will have 5 defenders (3 midfielders and 2 defensive) and 4 offensive players (2 attackers and 2 midfielders).

How this drill works – All nine players run in a circle in front of the goalie. A coach shots at the goalie. The goalie catches the ball and yells clear. The three defending midfielders break to the top of the box. Two midfielders run to the side of restraining box and the other midfielder running up the middle. (Midfielder must learn to run to an open spot and not to the same break out lane) The two defensive players sprint out to each side of the cage. (Defensive players must learn to not run to the same side of the cage.) The four offensive players choose a player to ride. The goalie must choose the open player to throw within four second or before the player stops running.

Result – Experience with a break out and the goalie to learn quickly who is open after a shot.

--/--

### **From Richard...**

Defense picking up ground balls-

Roll the ball away from them have one attack chase full speed from behind and have the d' pick it up and throw it behind them and reverse field and catch it and run away  
If you work on this enough it works in a game  
But you need to work on it

--/--

### **From Amy...**

Here is an idea that came together after a Varsity Lacrosse player, who is on a PE internship with us, played an old favorite game from childhood called Steal the Bacon.

We changed the handkerchief to lacrosse balls and gave every student a stick. We have done this in PE class now where I have a mixed bag of talent, grades 5 - 8. Every student was engaged and wanting more.

This is a perfect game for all levels to learn how to scoop and run under pressure, how to go one on one, and how to hold an attack.

- 1) Mark two parallel lines on the field about 20 yards apart.
- 2) Divide the group of players with sticks into two teams and have each team stand on one of the lines facing the opposing team.
- 3) Have each line of players count off 1 - 11( or however many you have). Each line of players should have one of each number.
- 4) Have each player identify who their pair is from the opposite line ( same number).
- 5) The coach stands between the two teams , but off to one end with a bucket of balls
- 6) The coach then yells out a number or set of numbers and throws the ball into the center between the teams.

- 7) The players with the number called sprints into the middle and attacks the ball trying to win it from the other player with the same number.
- 8) Once a player has possession (offense) they attempt to run it back across their own team's line for one point.
- 9) The opposing player (defense) continues to attack offense with legal moves until the point is earned.
- 10) If defense gains possession they become offense and try to get it across their team's line for a point.
- 11) When multiple numbers are called teammates can pass to each other to get it across the line.
- 12) Only players whose numbers have been called may be part of the action.
- 13) As soon as a point is won, all players return to their respective team lines. The ball is returned to the coach and another number is called as a new ball is thrown out.

We just work on basic skills and wear no protection, so the only contact we allow is head of stick to head of stick. Also, this started out as a game to learn how to scoop and run so all the balls were rolled out, but it has evolved into a totally random, any kind of toss game. Sometimes the ball is laid out to center, sometimes far to the right of the line, sometimes far to the left. I can say this the students never want to stop.

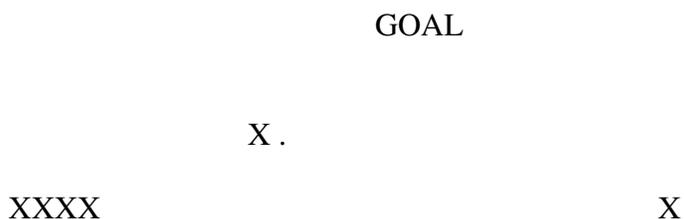
--/--

### **From Jen...**

This is a great idea and it is done all the time in basketball and football. I coach JUCCO bball and we have coaches round tables all the time!!! My husband coaches football and they are constantly sharing drills/plays.

I have a drill I do called 6 point passing (with a shot off the last pass).

Here is what it looks like to set up:



X X

X

XXXXXX

X .

GOAL

The X's that have the ball are going to pass to the line to the right of them and up the field. They will then get it back and pass to the middle line and get in back; then to the next line to their right and get it back. Followed by a shot; the last person to pass to the shooter will then get a ball and go up the same side.

You can do this drill with and without goalies; you can do this drill left and right; you can time it to see how fast they can do it; you can count drops, bad passes, missed shots, there is a variety of things you can do.

--/--

### **From Kyle...**

I think sharing drills is a great idea!

The best drill we use at all levels is called Gettysburg. I don't know if it's new, but players of all ages love it.  
I adopted this drill from Coach Lamb, the Head Coach at Brigham Young University.

You play on about a 70 x 50yd. field. Just long enough to give a lot of space, but not too large to make the drill go too slow.

Split your team into two teams, and line them up along the side line on opposing ends of the field. The first four in each line come out onto the field. A coach stands on the sideline at or around mid field. He rolls out the ball to one team, (determined by picking numbers) who then scoops the ball and brings it down field. There are no goals, so the temptation to shoot is taken away.

The offensive team can pass or run the ball over the end line. It's a full 4 v 4 contest, with D-poles and short sticks mixed together. The game is played to 10. After a team scores the ball is awarded to the other team for the next round. Gettysburg forces the players to formulate an offensive strategy and the defense to respond. If defense gets the ball they will go on offense. Play proceeds until the ball goes out of bounds or until someone scores. If the ball goes out of bounds or a team scores all eight come off and a new eight goes on. Playing in control is stressed in this drill. Good fundamental defense is critical and penalties result in loss of possession. This drill focuses on passing, playing as a team, looking for the open man and ball movement. Defensively, 1 v 1 defense, stick checks, recognizing and adapting to an offense and creating ground ball opportunities. The drill allows players to try new moves, work on speed and agility, get creative with passing and encourages free thinking and creativity.

I like to use this drill at the end of my practice, to allow players to try out things they learned in practice that day.

--/--

#### **From Dan...**

This is for a younger set of players:

We were having trouble accurately setting up picks so I added picks to our line drills.

Player A runs from line 1 toward player B. A passes to B (in line 2) and stand stills about 15 feet from B. After B catches the ball he runs toward the opposite line and "rubs shoulder" with player A. B continues and passes to player C from line 1 and B then "sets the pick" for player C and the drill continues.

--/--

#### **From Nicole...**

We were having issues with communication and working together between the girls on our team, so in the last 15 minutes of each practice we were having the girls form a human knot and they had to talk to and work with one another to try to get everyone out. It took about 3 practices until they really started working together and talking to one another. That in turn, also, started happening on the field. By the way, they finally insisted after one practice that they were not leaving until they were all untangled it took them 56 minutes. (18 girls) I really have to say by doing this it brought them together as a team instead of a group of individuals! and it ended the practices on a good note and made it fun!

--/--

**From Katie...**

I use this when we're getting ready for playoffs and it's just my varsity team. The girls can appreciate what they're working on.

The players are divided into three equal teams (depending on the number of players, 6-6-6, 7-7-7 whatever) and one goalie. It's a half-field drill. They pinnie-up into different colors. One team is defense, the other two play attack.

Ball starts at a cone at center field, or goalie can clear to center field while two attacks race to it. Whichever team makes it to the ball first wins possession. The team with possession plays with opposite hand. The attack team without possession plays defense, trying to regain possession for themselves, the third team only plays defense for the goalie and tries to limit shots. If the defense-only team gets possession, they can either run it out to midfield, pass it to the goalie to be cleared, or send it to the other attacking team to run it midfield around the cone to bring it back in on attack.

--/--

**From Katie...**

I like to incorporate the basic principles of yoga into the stretching routine at the end of practice. Rather than just doing static stretching, the team does a few sun salutations, and yoga poses that stretch the main muscle groups. In addition to stretching and cooling down, I emphasize awareness of the body, a connection between the mind and body, and controlled breathing - all of which enhance their game of lacrosse.

--/--

**From Buck...**

What a great idea. I'm coaching middle school kids in Carlsbad, CA (San Diego county) and one of the hardest things we have to teach the boys is to keep moving when they don't have the ball and especially just after they have passed it to their help. Their strong tendency is to stop and watch rather than look for an opening/seam for an easy give and go to the goal. Here is a drill that I like for MS kids to make them think about staying in motion and making something happen.

Players in a line. Player A steps out to five yards straight ahead. Place a cone on ground 10 yds straight ahead. Player A rolls a ball to either side (depending on the throwing hand you desire), Player B runs to ball, scoops and opens to the cone(away from goal) where he passes to Player C (at head of the line), Player B turns back and continues running between cone and Player A for a feed back from Player C. Player B can then

shoot.(recommended after first getting the drill down). Player A remains, playing defense as desired for several plays. Player B goes to end of line, Player C moves to B's position to scoop and next player in line becomes Player C. If using a goal place it 90 degrees either side of the original line-cone axis. You can also have Player B be as passive or aggressive on defense as desired.... :?)

This is a simple give and go, but helps the kids to keep thinking when they aren't holding the ball and at this age is an easy way to beat most defenses. That's my drill, I used to call it the slingshot because of the way it draws on paper, swinging out to the cone then whipping back toward the goal, but my kids started calling it the Buckshot... Call it what you like. Use it or not.

--/--

### **From Steven...**

A drill I use at the beginning of the season; I split my squad in half and have them form two lines facing each, about 20 feet apart other one line takes three steps to the left so that the rows are staggered. A ball starts at one end and the players pass back and forth till it makes it to the other end. Every time a player drops the ball the whole squad does a push up at the end of the drill. Then we repeat, this time its two push-ups for every drop. Next time 3 push-ups and so on. Once the players do it once they move the lines back another 10 feet and start again. To add another dimension to this drill I have the players catch the ball, run across to the other line, run around the other player, and pass to the man that he was standing next to, then return to the original spot. This only includes one side of the line so the ball has to go down and back to complete the drill. As an incentive to the watching players I let them take one stick check as the player holding the ball comes around.

After the drill I talk to the players about the importance of teamwork and when one player is not ready, or has not been practicing hard enough the whole team will suffer and have to pick up he slack on the field.

--/--

### **From Vince...**

I coach both youth girls and youth boys. One of the most important methods of coaching is to provide instant and accurate feedback that a player clearly understands. This drill and technique provides players with significant improvement - and continues to be one of the most favorite drills. Proper shooting technique is proper foot work - left foot pointed towards the goal, body sideways, hands / elbows high, stick away from the body, great hip turn, stomach turn shoulder turn (kiss the shoulder), shifting weight from front foot to back foot, and then uncoiling, finishing with strong wrists towards the target. The use of a radar gun box - speedtrax - cost is \$135 - provides players with an immediate read out of their shot speed. When I start working with girls on proper shooting techniques - a u13 girl may start with a speed of 18 mph, but as we work on proper foot work, turn of

hips, shoulders and follow through - with the feed back of the radar box - the girls quickly progress from 18 mph to mid thirties, and some of the u13 to mid 40's. For boys at the u15 level - they often start at 40 mph and rapidly progress to mid 50's and by season end - to high sixties and low 70's. Practicing proper shooting technique with a radar box - provides great info the shooter - as they adjust and work on their shooting fundamentals - they can see their immediate improvement. This is a drill done early in the season and one we work on after each practice - the players will stay 30 to 45 minutes more to work on their shooting technique. Significant improvement in shooting technique, accuracy and fun. A radar box at \$135 may seem expensive - but I have had 5 seasons of use - and all players have significantly improved - girls and boys.

Great shooting technique, use of a radar gun box - speedtrax - dramatically improves accuracy and speed - often doubling in a short time period.

--/--

### **From Nick...**

Here's a drill I really like for beginner shooters. We find too many younger players are "push-passers" or side-arm tossers when left to figure out the stick on their own. When these players begin shooting they simply exaggerate the bad mechanics (that we're trying to overcome with other drills) and do them harder/faster. Since the ball ends up in the net, and some of them can be relatively accurate with their bad mechanics, it's difficult to convince them they're doing it wrong. So we create a situation wherein only the proper passing/shooting mechanics can succeed.

What you'll need: Two nets. Net2 is directly behind the Net1 about 5-10 yards (decrease the distance to increase the difficulty)

How it works: Players stand in front of Net1 about 10 yards away. However, they are shooting into Net2. They must use an overhand, and we stress here that they begin to play "above their shoulders", technique to clear Net1. Don't allow them to simply lob the ball over Net1. You can now adapt many of the shooting drills in your book to this environment. (rapid fire, catch & shoot, etc.)

--/--

### **From Mike...**

We call it our *Basketball Drill*. Here is how it works.

We place 2 goals about 40 yards apart and set a grid about 25 yards wide. Three players bring the ball down against 2 defenders. This will create a traditional 2v3. Once the shot is taken the shooter steps out and the other two offenders now become the defenders against three new offenders coming from the goal that was just shot on. The game really makes the kids get back and play defense in a hurry. On the offensive side it makes the

kid make decisions quickly in small spaces. The game is non stop. We get a lot of work in a short amount of time and the kids really enjoy it. Thanks for all you do.

--/--

### **From Jason...**

Lacrosse football

Line the kids up 6-6 and have them play football style, 3 downs to the 50 3 more to score. great conditioning and riding drill. you can play around with your rules to customize it as you wish. I also chose to do conditioning with my kids once a week or so. Gives them more incentive to work hard. The final idea is an unsettled drill you already have when you bring both goals up to the box and start with a 2-1 2-2 3-2 3-3 4-3-4-4 clear it out. players love this because everyone has a chance to score and the pace is very quick. play a game to 15 for your final sprint for a variation.

--/--

### **From Bob...**

OK here is my coaching tip for you.

Everyone practices fast break drills the same way. They have there 3 defense line up with the 3 attack in 3 corners of a box with a line of middies and a bucket of balls. The coach sends a middle to start the dill and fill the last corner of the box.

What I do differently is set up my middies to face off and the start the play off with a actual game play situation. The middle that wins the ball starts the fast break.

The next phase I put one wing man on each side and face off again. I have the face off man win the ball and pass it up to the wing man.

The next phase I put 2 wing man on each side (offense / defense ) and face off normally and move the ball up to the face break.

I find this is more realistic then just having a line of middies move the ball to a fast break.

--/--

### **From John...**

Stale practice form the first O line during some 6 on 6? Throw in the 2nd or 3rd Midds and Attack and have them played light by the defense. After 10 minutes of the O "feeling it out" have the Defense go heavy. Run plays and encourage shots...The competition feeds all around and some less skilled or lacking of desire type players might surprise

themselves and you!! This also reminds the 1st line O that sitting is an option for those that lack hustle. I have discovered several key players this way and just this season created 6 plays around 9 players and they contributed everytime. Before they were content, hiding if you will, amongst the ranks. Now they are leaders and have discovered something about themselves. Outstanding!!

--/--

### **From Bob...**

This is a drill that we use early in the season or when our defenders are having trouble playing good defense. We line up about 20 yards from the goal 1v1. The offensive player tries to beat the defensive player and score. The defender tries to stop the offensive player. We make sure the defender is using proper footwork, is staying low ( in a good defensive position ) not turning their hips. When done properly it gives the defender confidence that they can hold the offensive player in check long enough until help arrives.

--/--

### **From Gay...**

Well, my kids liked this one but it may be an old one, I leave it up to you to decide. When racing towards the ball don't try to out run a player, when in range, hit the ball away from both of you but towards your side. This leaves the ball in front of you and you with the advantage.

--/--

### **From Patrick...**

McEachern (Georgia) High School's Oklahoma Drill

Type: Ground ball Drill

Purpose: Focus on ground ball during a 2 v 1 situation

Setup:

4 players involved in drill

2 players face each other 2-3 yards apart (Players 1 & 2 below)

2 players face forward ready to scoop ground ball (Players 3 & 4) on Coach's order.

Set up looks like the following:

Player 1                      Player 2

Player 3   Player 4

## Coach

### Procedure:

Ball is placed between Players 1 & 2.

Players 3 & 4 get ready to get ground ball.

Players 2 & 3 act as a team. Players 1 & 4 act as a team.

Coach designates Player 1 OR Player 2 to get involved as the man hitting his opponent off the ball.

Coach blows whistle to start and end drill.

### Procedure points:

Players 3 & 4 face forward and do not know which player (1 or 2) is entering the drill.

Players 3 & 4 MUST focus on ground ball and fight to get it.

### Teaching points:

Players 1 & 2 must not back off the ball. The single player must learn to shake off the hit to get the ground ball.

The other two players must work as a team to perform a "man-ball" situation correctly.

Teach how to hit properly. Teach the purpose of, and how to communicate, the "release" portion of the "man-ball" situation.

--/--

## **From Harris...**

Here is a simple line drill that works well for us.

First of all, only 5 or a maximum of 6 players in a line. This allows for lots of touches.

The drill includes:

long pass

short pass

over the shoulder pass

ground ball (roll to)

The drill begins with a long pass, receiving player moves to ball.

Next, as the players approach each other a short pass is made

Next, as the players move away from each other an over the shoulder pass is made

Next, the receiving player rolls the ball to the player in line and the sequence begins anew

Naturally, players in line back each other up.

Naturally, the drill can be done righty or lefty.

Coaching tip, patience on the over the shoulder pass and be sure that the stick is positioned over the correct shoulder.

--/--

### **From Tim...**

I predominantly coach under 11 and under 13 year olds and the one thing that no drill has corrected is the 6-8 player clusters going after ground balls. No matter what skill drill I teach in games we degenerate into the cluster and the ball just rolls around with no one gaining possession. I created this drill not to correct this behavior but to take advantage of the reality of this behavior.

Set up: I get 8 boys in a tight bunch (3 x3 yard area) and let them know they are on equal opposing teams (purple and white in our case). I place the rest of the team in a line ten yards away. I place a ball in the cluster and blow the whistle for the first boy in line. The cluster usually fumbles it around and the goal is for the charging boy to run through the cluster at speed and kick the ball in the direction of his travel and scoop and pass to outlet (me). If he succeeds he returns to line with five points and one boy from the cluster moves to the line, if he does not succeed after 10 seconds he joins the cluster. The first team to 25 points wins and avoids our running for the day. The end result is that I have never had a team fail in this drill and in games we avoid the long run clusters. Later in the season we work on scooping it in this type of traffic but early on and lower skilled players kick it to open space and use their speed advantage to gain possession.

--/--

### **From Joe...**

Set up a box with cones about 12yds X 12yds. Have player 1 inside the box and four people (X1-4) outside the box, one per side.

Player 1 starts at the back-left cone (in bold). When directed he cuts towards X1, calling for the ball. When player 1 catches the ball he (as quickly as possible) turns to his right and passes to X2. After passing the ball player 1 then retreats to cone2 and then cuts to X2 to receive a pass. This process repeats itself on to cone 3 and then cone 4 until player 1 has worked his way all the way around the box.

Run this drill twice. When player 1 cuts from cone1 he should be catching and passing with his left hand. The second time have player 1 start from cone4 (player1 should move from cone 4 to 3 to 2 to 1. He should be catching and throwing right handed this time.

This drill is designed to help players make quick cuts and move the ball quickly to the open man.

