



CAPITAL HOCKEY 11 A-SIDE

ATHLETE & COACH RESOURCE



Capital Vision:

New Zealand's leading hockey brand demonstrating sustained success on the national and international stage underpinned by a connected and fully aligned Capital community.

Capital Hockey: Coaching Philosophy

- Growing people to reach their potential
- Hockey is simply the vehicle
- Positive and meaningful relationships are at the core of what we believe
- Cultivating authentic experiences drive our culture and makes us different
- Elevating those around us

Capital Hockey: Wants to see:

- People Centred Coaches – value the person holding the stick not the hockey playing ability of the person
- Participation is key – keep it **fun** and engaging with **equal game time, rotation of player positions and team roles**
- Happy, positive teams, focussed on person and athlete development, skill mastery & team bonding/culture
- Role modelling of **positive behaviours** – towards coaches, players, peers, umpires, officials, parents, administrators etc
- Praise **attitude, effort & improvement.**



Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to provide some assistance for coaches and players to understand basic concepts when playing 11 a-side Hockey. This will allow foundation coaches to support the development of our athletes as well as develop as a coach.

Contents:

- Core Hockey Principles
- Core Hockey Fundamentals
- Core Hockey Skills
- Skills Required
- Main Moments in Hockey
- On-Field Structure
- Playing Formation
- Playing Positions
- Skills Terminology
- Hockey Terminology



Core Hockey Principles

- **With the Ball:**

- Increase time (through early preparation and swift execution of skills)
- Find space (less combative style of hockey – move ball around the field wherever you can find space),
- Dynamic Play - give the first pass you see, pass & go mentality to create space and options, this is also the introduction to creating a +1 scenario.
- Continual movement off the ball (recycle leading).
- Maintain ball on strong side and look to pass or dribble on opposition weak side
- Prioritise movement of ball rather than movement of player with ball – this is a faster way of ball movement

- **Without the Ball:**

- Reduce time by applying immediate pressure on ball carrier, force out wide, force a mistake & delay
- Congest space and protect the middle
- Force opposition on your strong side
- Recognise transition phase and employ counter control/attack measures quickly



Core Hockey Fundamentals

- Body Position (knees bent, bottom down, left elbow extended with stick away from feet, weight distributed on top half of feet (to aid agility and balance))
- V-Grip, hands 30 cm apart on the stick for receiving, ball carrying, tackling. Left hand dominant hand, right hand with a looser grip.
- Ball carrying ~ 1/2m, ball comfortably out in front and slightly to the right of the right foot, left elbow promoted
- Ball control in receiving and ball carrying (soft hands & ball on stick)
- Ball speed – function of awareness, body position – especially follow through upon impact
- Vision (pre-scan, scan & post-scan)
- Encourage forehand application and two hands on the stick
- Provide information (voice, stick cues, facials, arm movements etc)
- Footwork – fast feet, agility, change in direction, change in pace, transfer of weight
- Timing
- Ability to anticipate, make quick decisions, take risks, be creative/play with flair & deception at appropriate times
- A mastering the basics mentality



Core Hockey Skills

Apply the 80:20 rule – practice the skills you use 80% in the game, 80% in training to build mastery. Instill a BASICS FIRST ATTITUDE

- Push Pass – static, on the move, off both feet – ensure follow through and no donkey kick. Ensure arms straight and no flick of the wrists
- Hitting – short handle – static and on the move off the right foot
- Receiving – open (in space), closed (in congestion), moving forward, moving back – with **soft hands**
- Ball carrying – on stick with eyes up, ball out in front, moving ball on angles, different speeds
- Elimination – Left-to-Right, Right-to-Left – preferably on opposition weak side, V-drag & 3-D skills
- Tackling – Immediate pressure but patience, fast footwork (one in front of the other), side-on running, stick pancake grip and inside left knee to protect feet & await an opportunity to make a tackle. Manipulate out wide and don't allow space to cut-in (never position yourself square or ahead of the player)
- Goal Scoring – One touch receive then shot in circle (so fast feet), shot selection and circle options & positioning, short-sharp leading movements, transition: first phase (direct shot/deflection), second phase (rebound), 16 yard defensive press.
- Goal Keepers – Communicate and organise defence to prevent goal scoring opportunities, save direct shot at goal, clear wide – head up, head still, hands up, fast feet (weight on top half of foot), feet distance shoulder width apart for balance & stability.



Skills Required

These are basic skills required at small sticks level. All of the below skills can be found in the Small Sticks Coaching Resource

With a breakdown of coaching points on the technical skill plus drills and small games related to the skill.

Fundamental

- Hockey Grip & Hockey Position
- Communication
- Agility
- Body Position
- Vision

With the Ball

- Push passing & receiving
- Open, Closed & Indian Dribble (Ball Carrying)
- Elimination Skills – Left to Right, Right to Left & V drag
- Hitting – short-handle
- Slap Hitting (hands apart hit)
- Sweep Hitting

Without the Ball

- Right & left steal
- Take Over Tackle
- Channelling & Block Tackle
- Intercepting



Main Moments In Hockey

Main Moment	With the ball (Attacking)	Transition to defend	Without the ball (Defending)	Transition to Attack
Key Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players are spread out • Build up play e.g. Defender pass to Midfielder to striker (Avoid continuously encouraging to “just hit it forward”) • Create overloads - Players supporting play • Players working together (1-2 pass) • Individual play - elimination skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on the ball quickly • Point the defence & protect the middle • Quick movement behind ball • Prevent easy outlets. • Cover defence • Get into good defensive shape. • Zonal vs. man on man marking if outnumbered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compress (reduce time & space, protect the middle, force wide) • Win the ball back as close to the opposition goal as possible • Man to man marking in the defensive 23 and defensive circle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure the ball • Move the ball out of congestion (ball speed) • Move quickly into attacking positions
Player Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passing (ball speed) • Receiving (mobile + soft hands) • Ball Carrying with vision • Elimination skills • Goal Scoring • Communication • Pre-scanning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick decision making to get behind the ball quickly • Awareness to cover defend and get into good defensive shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising • Channeling • Pressing • Intercepting • Marking • Getting on to the hot line. • Tackling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness to get up the field • Ability to control the ball quickly • Awareness of where the space and goal is

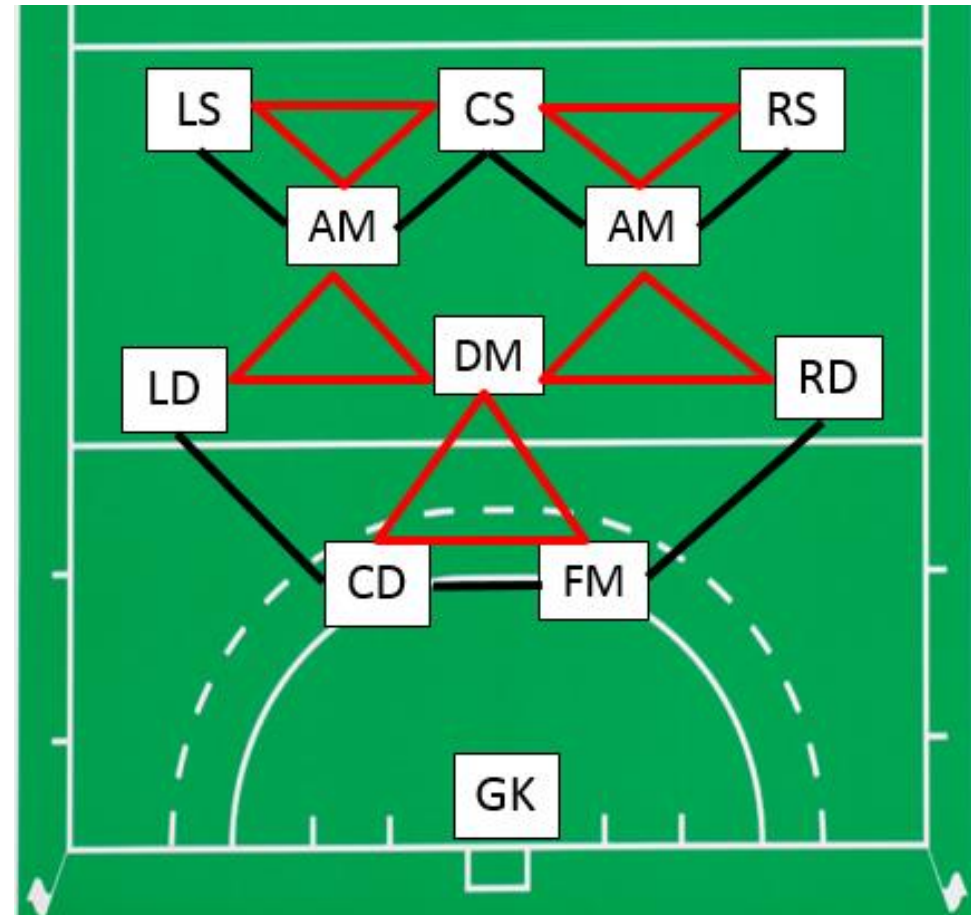
On- Field Structure

- The on-field structure is made up of three layers
- It is important that the layers always stay relative to each other – **the layers must not get too far apart**
- All players must move forward to attack, and all players must move back to defend



Basic Playing Formation

- The strikers and attacking midfielders form a **'W' shape**
- The back four defenders are in a wide **'U' shape**
- Playing in this formation helps us to **work in triangles** around the field
- We must stay connected and **work as one unit** at all times



Strikers

- Don't stay in their starting position (i.e. RS/CS/LS) – must **constantly swap positions** to confuse the defence
- Need to **create width and height** through leading
- Must **play with speed and intensity** and make the most of their opportunities in the circle
- Have an important defensive role because they are the **first line of defence in screens**



Midfielders

- Midfielders play both a defensive and an attacking role
- The **midfield links the strikers and defenders**, ensuring that the whole team attacks and defends as a unit
- Midfield players need to be able to **“create the game”** – they need to win the ball and then have the vision and awareness to set up attacking plays



Defenders

- Defenders must understand **how to mark their player in different situations** – i.e. in front, side-on (so they can see the ball and the player), zonal etc
- Need to recognise when they can promote to assist the attack, and when they need to play more defensively
- **Good communication** is key for a solid defensive group – they need to call players lines and ensure that everyone is marking their player





Playing Positions

GOAL-KEEPER: Responsible for the defensive circle – communicates and organises field players in the circle and defensive 23.

Key Attributes of a good goal-keeper:

- Fast and agile
- Proficient with both left and right foot
- Ability to judge and close down shooting angles
- Ability to make aerial saves with the glove (left) and stick (right)
- Ability to go down correctly at defensive PC's and/ or remain standing depending on circumstances (hit/flick)
- Good communicator and organiser of the defence

Main Requirements of the position:

- To save straight shots at goal
- To clear the ball wide of the goal
- To organise the defence so that the attacking team's ability to score is minimised
- To communicate generally to the team

DEFENDERS: (Back 4: Right Defender, Left Defender, Central Defender & Free Man). The primary role for the back 4 is defensive. They must work as a unit and ensure that the opposition has limited opportunities to score. This is not to say they cannot join the attack, but as a rule only one of the back four players would aggressively attack at any one time. The remaining players must move forward with the attack, and also mark the free attackers in case of quick turnover and/or counter attack.

These players have a key role to provide quality ball for the midfield and strikers to generate constructive attacks.

Key Attributes of a good defender:

- Fast and agile (ability to turn and get back quickly, or move up on a player)
- Strong basic skills, particularly trapping, passing, tackling, intercepting & communicating



- Ability to channel opposition attack away from the danger zone
- Understanding of both man to man and zonal defence, and ability to correctly decide which approach to use (man to man = defensive 25 & circle, zonal = anywhere else)
- Vision – understanding of where other players are, and where the best passing opportunities are.

Main Requirements of the Defensive Positions:

Right & Left Defender

- Mark Opposition Left & Right Striker – mixture of man to man and zonal
- Employ cover defence measures if ball coming down the opposite side of the field – Help Side Defender becomes the last line of defence in a central position – leaves side striker unmarked if they remain out wide and takes up a position where there is a greater threat eg in front of the goal. Ball side = side of the field the ball is on if you divide the field in half vertically.
- Ability to overlap (move into midfield or striker tier) and occasionally join the attack (if space permits)
- Responsible for taking the majority of the free hits on the on the left and right sides of the field
- Priority passes include closest attacking midfielder (LI/RI), closest striker out wide (LS/RS) & Central Striker, Defensive Midfield (CH).
- Outlet passes include Central Defender and Free Man.
- May take Long Corner Hits

Central Defender

- Mark opposition Central Striker or operate as the Free Man – this position may switch interchangeably throughout the match
- Move forward with the attack picking up the free Central Striker and be available as an outlet pass.
- Responsible for taking the majority of 16 yard and free hits in the defensive 1/3
- Priority passes include Free Man, Left or Right Defender depending on which side the Central Defender is on for the free hit, Defensive Midfield, closest Attacking Midfield, closest Striker out wide & Central Striker.
- Outlet passes include Left or Right Defender depending on which side the 16-yard hit is on, closest Attacking Midfielder & closest Striker out wide.



Free Man

- Position themselves on a direct line between the goal and the ball. This is referred to as the Hotline
- Ensure ball does not get through defensive screen by communicating to tiers in front and moving to close gaps of greatest threat whilst remaining on the hotline
- Adjust depth off the ball to improve chances of intercepting opposition free hits through the screen
- Become an extra midfielder and move into the attack to create an overload scenario
- Ensure the gaps between defenders, midfielders and strikers remain relative to each other when not in possession of the ball so as eliminate space for opposition to play into
- Communicate to players whether to hold or advance in the case of an opposition attacking overload scenario. The FM doesn't have a designated player to mark but at times when players get eliminated the FM will have to decide to step up and make a tackle or release a player and mark that person's player
- If the situation requires it, interchange with the Central Defender and pick up the marking role of the opposition Central Attacker
- Responsible for taking the majority of 16 yard and free hits in the defensive 1/3
- Priority passes include Central Defender, Left or Right Defender depending on which side the FM is on for the free hit, Defensive Midfield, closest Attacking Midfield, closest Striker out wide & Central Striker.
- Outlet passes include Left or Right Defender depending on which side the 16- yard hit is on, closest Attacking Midfielder & closest Striker out wide.

MIDFIELDERS: The midfield is the engine room of the team. It is required to support and contribute to the attack (especially the Attacking Midfielders), but also has key defensive responsibilities – ensuring the opposition cannot make clean breaks through the middle of the field. Midfielders must be good distributors of the hockey ball and have good game awareness.

Key Attributes of a good Midfielder:

- Fit, fast and agile with good acceleration
- Strong all-round basic skills, including passing, receiving, ball carrying and shooting
- Vision and game awareness – understanding of where other players are, and where the best opportunities are
- Ability to switch play or change the point of attack i.e. move the ball from one side of the field to the other efficiently



- Understanding of man to man and zonal defence, and ability to correctly decide which approach to use.
- Ability to appropriately weight passes, understand how to use angles, space within tiers of both their team and the opposition team so as to exploit opportunities

Main Requirements of the Midfield Positions:

Attacking Midfielders (RI/LI)

- At least one of the 3 midfielders must join the attack – preferably two at any one time.
- In the shooting circle will normally be positioned around the circle edge for rebounds or direct shots
- Responsible for marking the opposing Attacking Midfielder
- One Attacking Midfielder must support the Defensive Midfielder in providing an outlet to the Defensive Back Four when in possession at the back
- Be mobile when receiving the ball and look to go forward as a first priority
- Must be able to receive the ball strong and protect from opposition – ability to post-up and roll out
- Ability to lead and create space for Strikers in the next tier
- Can take free hits anywhere in the field or alternatively offer up a pass and act as a link player between the attack and the defence
- Ability to use skills to force a PC or attacking free hit at the right time
- Priority passes include Strikers, Attacking Midfielder, Defensive Midfielder
- Outlet passes include Back Four Defenders

Defensive Midfielder (CH)

- Responsible for marking opposition Defensive Midfielder and occupying the centre of the field
- When on attack in the shooting circle, will normally be positioned at the top or just outside the circle for direct shot or rebounds
- Has a key role in providing an outlet pass for the Defenders and must be available when the Defenders are under pressure
- Be mobile when receiving the ball and look to go forward as a first priority
- Must be able to receive the ball strong and protect from opposition – ability to post-up and roll out
- Be responsible for taking free hits in the centre of the field (roughly in the attacking 2/3 of the field)
- Acts as the key pivot player, moving the ball from one side of the field to another



- Priority passes include Attacking Midfielders, Strikers, Left and Right Defenders
- Outlet passes include the 4 Defenders

STRIKERS: The Strikers' number one role is to generate and convert scoring opportunities. Strikers must do this by:

- Working as a unit
- Creating depth and width on attack
- Linking well with the midfield
- Operate as the first line of defence, and their ability to reverse press – put pressure on opposition defence by getting into pressing positions quickly.
A strong reverse press can result in a goal-scoring opportunity if the opposition are dispossessed in their defensive area.

Key Attributes of a good Striker:

- Fast and agile with good acceleration and a change of pace
- Good basic skills including receiving, ball carrying, elimination and goal-scoring
- Able to identify and execute the best shooting opportunity (eg direct shot, deflection, pass)
- Ability to execute goal shot with limited time and space
- Vision and game awareness
- Constant movement – leading, re-leading to create space
- Ability to put pressure on opposition defence
- Ability to use skills to force a PC or attacking free hit at the right time
- Appropriate weighting of passes
- Understanding of angles and lines of attack and defence



Main Requirements of the Striker Positions:

Strikers (RS/LS)

- Stretch Opposition defence to create space for receiving ball to link with the other Strikers
- Receive the ball going forward where possible
- Accelerate ahead of ball carrier making use of the baseline
- Shoot where possible or create another shooting opportunity for another Striker/Attacking Midfielder
- If not shooting should occupy a post position in the circle
- Know where to position in attacking circle depending on deflection or rebound
- Be ready for the ball in the attacking circle at all times eg deflections, rebounds
- Responsible for marking the line of the Left/Right Defender
- Responsible for getting into the press first to pressure opposition
- Priority passes include Other Strikers, Attacking Midfielders
- Outlet passes include Attacking Midfielders, Defensive Midfielder

Central Striker

- Stretch Opposition defence to create space for receiving ball to link with the other Strikers
- Receive the ball going forward where possible
- Accelerate ahead of ball carrier making use of the baseline
- Shoot where possible or create another shooting opportunity for another Striker/Attacking Midfielder
- Be ready for the ball in the attacking circle at all times eg deflections, rebounds
- Normally occupies the spot position in the attacking circle
- Link with the midfield to create attacks
- Create space through leading for other Strikers to receive ball in space
- Responsible for setting the first line of defence and applying pressure to the opposition defenders
- Priority passes include Other Strikers, Attacking Midfielders
- Outlet passes include Attacking Midfielders, Defensive Midfielder.



Skills Terminology

Push passing - Moving the ball along the ground using a pushing movement of the stick after the stick has been placed close to the ball. When a push is made, both the ball and the head of the stick are in contact with the ground

Receiving - This term describes of method of gaining control of the ball off of a pass or a loose ball. Trapping the ball involves using your stick while keeping it in the player's possession. It can include stopping the ball completely or redirecting the ball in a controlled manner.

Open Dribble – This is a way of moving the ball with small taps in a controlled way.

Closed Dribble - This is a way of moving the ball by having the ball close to your stick (in contact)

Indian Dribble – This is a way of moving the ball from side to side quickly by turning the stick over the ball.

Elimination Skills - Skills used to avoid or evade members of the opposition and maintain possession of the ball. The main principle is the ability to drag the ball from either right to left or from left to right to eliminate

V Drag – An elimination skill executing the drag a V-shape is created with the ball.

Hitting - A strike of the ball using a downward swinging movement of the stick. This stroke is used to make long passes or to take shots on goals.

Sweep Hitting - A type of hit where the stick is kept close to the ground when striking the ball

Right & left steal – An action to stop an opponent from keeping possession of the ball

Channelling - A defensive tactic used to force an opponent to the side-lines and away from the defensive goal (middle)



Block Tackle - An attempt to take the ball away from an opponent with the stick.

Intercepting - When a player takes possession of the ball away from the other team by getting between a pass



Hockey Terminology

Height – Getting players high up the field to create space

Width – Getting player out wide to create space

Outletting – Passing patterns out of defence through the midfield to the strikers

Press – A defensive structure or shape to make it hard for the opposition to pass through you

Pointing – Having a player directly in front of the ball on the line to the goal

Transition phase – This is the phase immediately after you have gained or lost the ball. A fast reaction time to either try score a goal and re-gain the ball is imperative.