

"Tech Talk" – Issue 3 - for the Ringette Coach

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The newsletter will include information for ringette coaches at all levels such as: philosophy, ethics, resources, growth and development, physical training, mental skills training, practice planning, program development and leadership development.....

If you know of anyone who is interested in obtaining this "Tech Talk" email newsletter, please have them send an email to jodi@ringette.ca with "Subscribe Tech Talk" in the subject line.

10 STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE ICE TIME

One of the most common complaints and pet peeves of many players, coaches, and even parents is that ice time is not being used effectively. Ice is a valuable and limited resource in the ringette world and when it is being “wasted” due to poor practice planning, everyone tends to get upset, especially the players. Players are there to play because that is what they enjoy and so conscientious coaches should develop carefully thought out practice plans to ensure that the most benefit is derived from each and every ice time. Practicing accounts for roughly half of the ringette season and so these must be enjoyable for girls to develop as players and to keep excited and motivated throughout the years. Boredom results from practices that are not well planned so the girls must always have something to do besides standing around otherwise they will decide that this is a waste of time. Girls want to feel good about themselves after practicing and feel they have worked hard to accomplish goals they have set for themselves and the team. Bearing this in mind, here are some strategies to help coaches maximize ice time during practices.

- 1) Have a quick “chalk talk” in the dressing room 5-10 minutes before practice so that you can go over and explain all the drills that are going to be executed. This cuts down on wasting ice time by not having to talk so much on the ice. Also, the chalk talk is a good time for girls to bring up any questions from the last game they may have or to go over specific scenarios that may have occurred. Basically, the chalk talk is a good way to connect with the team and make sure everyone is on the right track.
- 2) While on the subject of talking to the team, it is vitally important that long speeches are delivered to the team in the dressing room and not on the ice. Many coaches get out on to the ice and call the team in for a huddle. This is totally acceptable if you only talk to them for a minute or two however, many coaches get caught up in what

they are saying and before they know it, 15 minutes have passed. This is the biggest culprit of time wasting! There is a saying for this... "all talk, no action." If coaches want to talk to their team, it is best saved for before or after practice. The top teams are those who don't just talk about what they need to do, they are already practicing it.

- 3) Choosing drills that get as many players moving and involved as possible is the key component of a successful practice. It is very disappointing to watch a practice where only one girl at a time is doing a drill and 10 others are standing in a line waiting for their turn. Instead, choose drills where more than 1 player is involved (as many as possible), keep lines moving as fast as possible (don't wait for the first player to finish before the next starts), and keep the drills short so that wait times are minimal. Ideally, when a player has completed a drill, she should only have enough time to catch her breath before it is her turn again.
- 4) Use ice more effectively by using as much of the ice as possible. If you have enough players, use both ends of the ice for a drill so that they participate twice as often. If you only have one goalie make sure she alternates ends so both groups get a chance to shoot on her.
- 5) Split up into groups such as offense and defense so that you can work on specific tactics without the rest of the team standing and watching. Either have two coaches on the ice to work with different groups (which is preferable) or design a drill one group can do independently while you work with the other.
- 6) To keep practices interesting, use a variety of drills. Always change up drills you are using especially skating drills because otherwise girls will get bored of the same drills and come to dread certain drills. The team will be much more productive if they are interested in what they are doing.
- 7) In addition to using different drills, keep each drill short. It is difficult to give an exact time line for a drill but generally 5-10 minutes per drill is sufficient. Going on longer than this will decrease productivity and thus efficiency. It is much more fun for the players to do many different drills rather than one drill for a good portion of practice.
- 8) Have the majority of warm-up for practice off-ice. If you are coaching a high caliber team, this may mean a team run. Stretching can also be done in the dressing room so when they hit the ice they are ready to go.
- 9) Be on time! If the team is consistently late starting practice, imagine how much wasted ice time this can add up to over the year. Be ready to begin practice as soon as the ice is ready.
- 10) Have fun! Although you want to plan a practice that gets the most out of your team, keep in mind that everyone is there to enjoy themselves. Maximizing your ice time

should include a fun game or competition at the end of every practice to keep the girls smiling, interested, and most of all – want to continue playing.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRY-OUTS

There's something exciting about a cool, crisp, fall day that gets the heart pumping and blood flowing...it's the thought of the upcoming ringette season! Now is the time of year where tryouts are going on and may leave coaches wondering what to do at tryouts and how they are going to pick a team from all the talent out on the ice. This task can seem daunting if you don't use specific drills that can help separate players and sort out ones you want to include on your team. Here are some helpful suggestions for coaches.

Skating

The ability to skate well is a very important aspect of ringette. Skating drills should be included in all tryouts but the amount and types will vary according to age and level. When coaching a young team, many of the better players are ones who have already developed good skating skills. This will become evident at tryouts if you include skating drills. Incorporating backwards skating is important because it is a skill many have not developed yet but is extremely valuable especially when picking defense. As the age and level increases, the amount of skating done in a tryout should decrease. Generally, at a higher level and age, most of the girls can skate quite well and so time should be devoted to other drills. Skating can be used to determine who is in good condition but will not necessarily help you pick the majority of the team.

Shooting

Shooting drills are helpful to determine who has a good shot (both forehand and backhand) and also can be used as a goalie warm-up drill and to evaluate the goaltenders. Players must be given clear instructions as to when drills are used as a goalie warm-up and when they should be shooting to score. For example, some players will deke the goalie every chance they get but this is not fair to the goalies if it is just the start of practice. Something else to consider is that while some players may have a great shot in a drill where there is no pressure by defenders, they may not be able to get any good shots off in a game if they take too long to wind-up or can't get around a defender. Exhibiting intelligent shot selection is an important quality and so using an excess of shooting drills, especially with an older age group, is not a good idea.

Defending/Attacking

One of the best drills to determine who can play offense well and who can defend well are 1 on 1's. There are a variety of 1 vs 1 drills that can be used depending on what qualities you are looking for (i.e. defensive gap control, who has good agility and mobility, who can work in a tight space, etc.). One of the best qualities of 1 on 1 drills is that it promotes competition and brings out different characteristics of players. These are good drills to see who is tough, who is willing to put out effort, and who thrives on

competition. It gets easier to start separating players using these types of drills. They are also advantageous due to their relevance to game situations.

While 1 on 1 drills are excellent, 2 on 1 drills also work well. 2 offenders vs 1 defender will help you see defenders that can react to an odd-man rush and how they position themselves in relation to the attackers and the net. It also lets you see what kind of passing skills the offensive players have. However, these types of drills must not be solely relied upon to determine the skills of the offense. This is because you may have different levels of talent working together and it may not be a fair assessment of one player if she is partnered up with someone much weaker. For this reason, it is advisable to limit drills that involve breakouts or 3 on 2's. To evaluate these types of scenarios, it is best if left to a scrimmage.

Scrimmages

Scrimmages are one of the best tools used in a tryout. Many coaches are unsure whether or not scrimmages are effective. Scrimmages allow the opportunity for players to show what they can really do. Some players show very well in all practice drills but when it comes to a game, they are invisible. Others that may not appear as talented in drills will come across completely different in a game. Often players that are hard-working will end up doing better in a scrimmage because they are checking, digging the ring out, and getting rebounds. These are all game skills that are vitally important but are not evident by most drills used for evaluation in a tryout. Scrimmages combine everything you need to effectively compare players – what could be more relevant than an actual ringette game? In addition, scrimmages will let you observe the attitudes of the players. Having a positive attitude is something every coach should be looking for so be sure to watch how different players react to situations such as penalties, etc. Finally, scrimmages can show who is an intelligent player –one who makes smart passes, takes good shots, and is out there to support her teammates. Whatever drills you decide to use in tryouts, have fun with the players, get to know all the players trying out, and good luck for the upcoming season.

GENERAL INFORMATION and DATES TO REMEMBER

The Coaches Association of Canada (CAC) is asking all coaches to send their e-mail address directly to the 3M NCCP Database by going to http://www.coach.ca/new_e.htm and clicking on Access Coaching Information Online.

The CAC has launched the 3M NCCP Database Online, a service that allows coaches to check their certification status. Coaches can check their status by going to the Web interface at <http://www.coach.ca/data/> .

Online Journal

The Women in Coaching program has launched the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching. This online resource is designed to address key issues and challenges facing

women coaches. Its purpose is to provide timely, accurate, targeted information in order to establish a healthier and more positive environment for women coaches at all levels in Canada and throughout the world.

Check out the journal at <http://www.coach.ca/women/e/journal/index.htm>

Women in Coaching - Web site

The redesigned web site is comprehensive and combines fundamental information for women coaches such as access to scholarships and a list of coaching resources along with a variety of interactive services such as the sections, where coaches can solicit advice from sport psychologists, sport nutritionists and expert coaches and the Online Mentor Program, designed for women coaches at all levels who want an opportunity to receive feedback from and exchange ideas with an experienced coach.

See the new web site at <http://www.coach.ca/women/index.htm>

Women in Coaching - Online Mentor Program

In conjunction with the unveiling of their newly redesigned Web site, the Coaching Association of Canada's Women in Coaching program recently launched an Online Mentor Program, designed for women coaches at all levels who want an opportunity to receive feedback from and exchange ideas with an experienced coach.

Canadian women coaches who have taken at least one 3M NCCP course are eligible to apply to work with a mentor coach. Every attempt will be made to pair coaches with an appropriate mentor and coaches will be paired with mentors on a first come first served basis. Coaches can apply online at <http://www.coach.ca/women/e/mentor/index.htm>.

Women coaches who have regular access to e-mail, are willing to volunteer a few minutes a week to respond to e-mails, and are 3M NCCP Level 3 certified are encouraged to become mentors. Prospective mentor coaches can fill in an application form online by visiting the Women in Coaching Web site at <http://www.coach.ca/women/e/mentor/index.htm>.

Upcoming Events

2002 Canadian Ringette Championships - Regina, Saskatchewan

2002 World Ringette Championships – November, Edmonton, Alberta

2003 Canada Winter Games - February, 2003, New Brunswick

2003 Canadian Ringette Championships - Waterloo, Ontario