A blue-tinted photograph of lacrosse players in action on a field. The players are wearing helmets and jerseys, and are holding lacrosse sticks. The background shows a crowd of spectators.

8U BOX LACROSSE PRACTICE GUIDE

Drills and Plans for Running Box Lacrosse for Ages 6 – 8

BOX LACROSSE PRACTICE GUIDE DRILLS AND PLANS FOR RUNNING BOX LACROSSE FOR 8U [AGES 6 – 8]

Our Mission:

As the sport's national governing body, US Lacrosse provides national leadership, structure and resources to fuel the sport's growth and enrich the experience of participants.

Our Vision:

We envision a future that offers everyone a lifelong opportunity to enjoy the sport of lacrosse.

About Box Lacrosse:

Box Lacrosse is played inside the confines of a multi-sport rink. Each team has six total players on the floor to start a game with five runners and one goaltender. Players rotate on and off the floor in shifts to play offense by trying to put the ball in their opponents' goal and play defense by preventing their opponents from scoring on their goal.

Rules:

US Lacrosse published a Box Lacrosse Rulebook annually, found online at [USL Box Rulebook](#)

Insurance:

Will the USL insurance plan cover me if I play box lacrosse?

The US Lacrosse Member Insurance Program applies whether the lacrosse games or activities are held outdoors or indoors, as long as the established rules approved by US Lacrosse are enforced. For box lacrosse, US Lacrosse Box Rules must be followed without modification.

US Lacrosse Box Practice Plans:

These practice guides to lacrosse coaches, parents, and program administrators, players across the country will have an opportunity to learn box lacrosse in a way that is age appropriate.

Properly Equipment for Players:

To be fully utilized these practice plans, like the US Lacrosse Box Rules, require players to be properly equipped with the right equipment. Within the US Lacrosse Box Rules, Rule 28 Protective Equipment and Rule 29 Goaltender Equipment state the mandatory equipment that players must wear.

For more information review the US Lacrosse Rules and review the latest Equipment Guide that can be found at [US Lacrosse Equipment Guide](#)



Practice #1 — Fundamentals & Games

- Age Group:** 8U
- Resources:** Open Wall/Field Space or Outdoor/Indoor Lacrosse Box, Lacrosse Balls, 2 Ball Bags or 2 Nets, Tape, Universal Screw Driver, Hacksaw, Zip Ties, Helmets & Gloves, Sticks, Pylons, Whistle, Name Tags, Sharpie
- *Note - No Goalies Are Required For This Practice*
- Pre-Practice:** 20 min - Optional): Meeting Coaches, Players & Parents
Demo: Stick Cutting & Taping
- Post Practice:** (40 min - Optional): Prearranged BBQ with the families on the team
- Reminders:** Athletic position = Feet parallel (hip width apart), knees slightly bent (1/4 squat aka peak power position), staying on “the balls (forefoot)” of your feet, leaning slightly forward, with head/chest up, abdominals flexed (as if about to be punched in the stomach), a “neutral spine” and “shoulders set.”
- 4 Phases of a Movement:** Preparation (1), Force Production (2), Critical Instant (3), Follow Through (4)

Drill #1 Fundamental Skills Analysis

Drill Duration: 4 mins

Descriptions: **Huddle (Circle at Centre-Floor)**

- Explain the importance of the Circle
- Coach Introductions (1 min)
- Discussion (2 min)
 - ◊ History Of Lacrosse Among First Nations People (Research) - [Video](#)
 - ◊ Land Acknowledgement - [Link](#)
- Discussion (1 min): How Lacrosse Is Played? Rules?

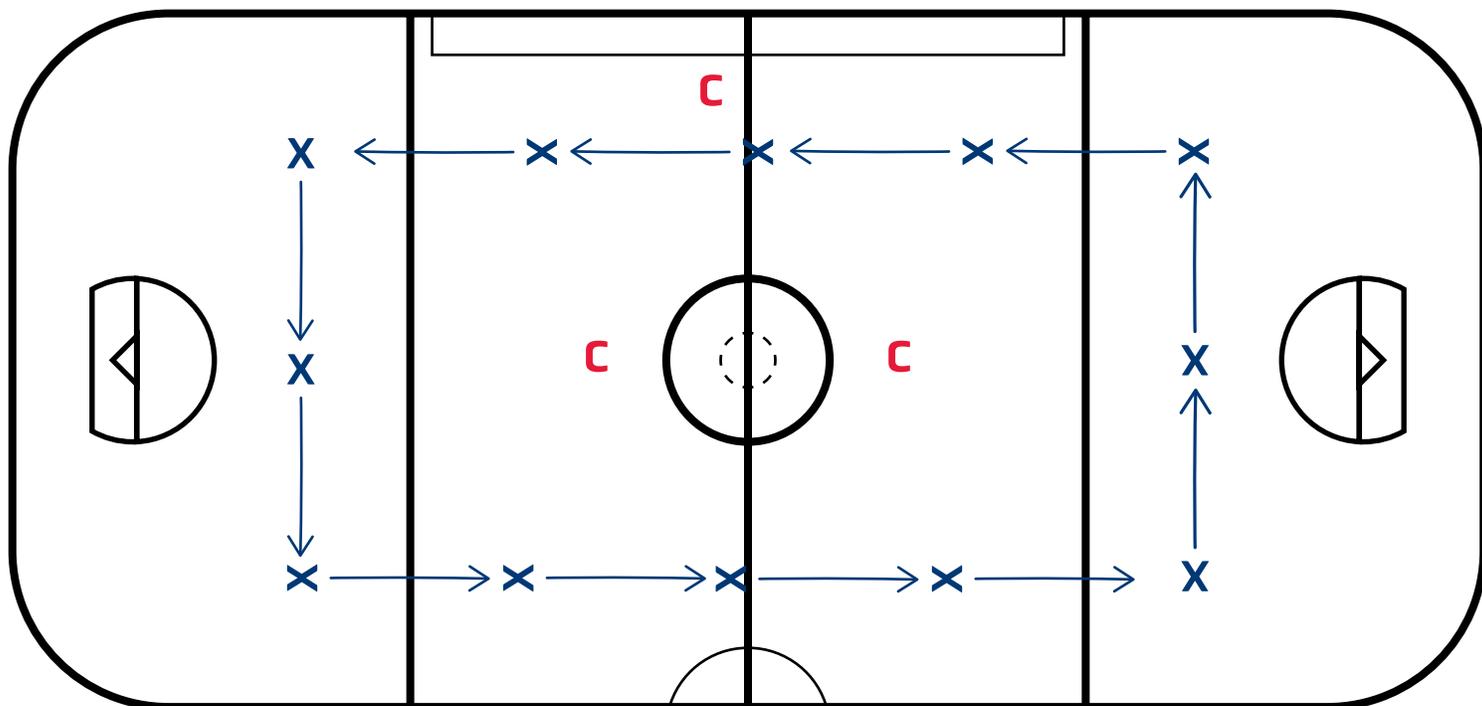
Drill #2 Warm Up Drill - Running Around the Perimeter

Drill Duration: 1 min

Descriptions: Variation #1A: "No Balls"

- Have players run around the entire outside of the box, holding the stick with "two hands" (no balls)
- Positively reinforce the players that followed the only instruction which was "two hands on the stick."
- Let players know to hold their stick on whatever side they ran with it during this drill, for all subsequent drills ("strong hand").

Drill Diagram:



Drill #3 Defense Drill - Athletic Position ["Balance" & "Footwork"]

Drill Duration: 5 mins

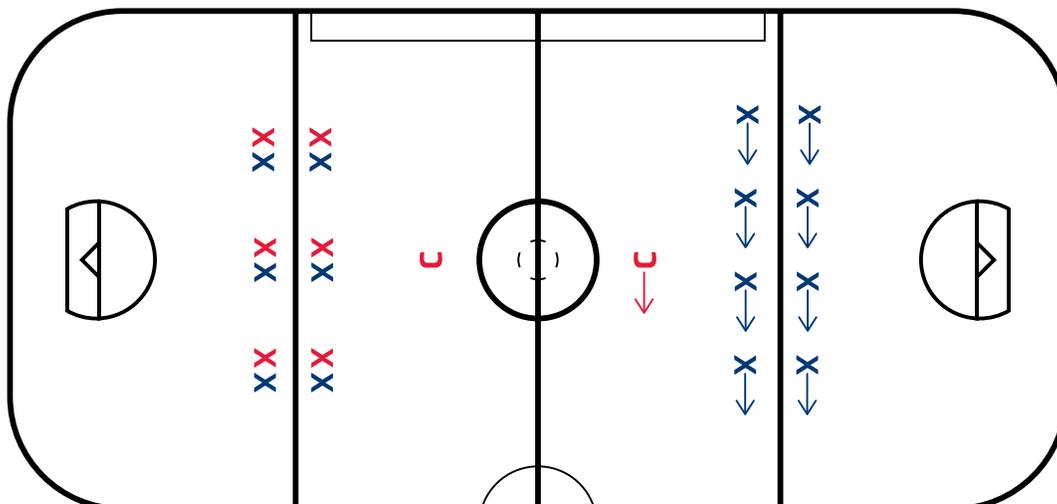
Descriptions: **Variation #1 (2 min): "Pushing a Partner"**
(No Stick) *left diagram*

- Demo (1 min): "Holding The Stick," "Athletic Position" (Footwork)
- Players stand in what they believe to be the athletic position and coaches walk around and see if they can push them off balance (using a reasonable amount of strength).
- Players then try to push each other off balance, one at a time, with no sticks.
- Coaches informally correct the posture of any noticeably bad athletic positions among the group.

Variation #2 (2 min): "Follow the Stick"
right diagram

- Have players stand (with nobody else within arm's length) in two different groups, in opposite ends of the floor, with the assistant coaches instructing them to follow their stick (forward, back-pedal, side-shuffle, down & roll - then up).
- Players should maintain the athletic position throughout the drill, having a wide stance for "side-shuffling and a deep knee bend ("getting low") when "back-pedaling."
- Each sequence of movements should last between 30-45 seconds (giving players the feel for what an average shift would be like).
- Have players sprint to the opposite end of the floor and repeat the drill in front of the other coach.
- Most common error = not bending knees and getting low/wide while maneuvering.

Drill Diagram:



Drill #4 Loose Ball - “Stationary” Pick-Ups (Scooping)

Drill Duration: 5 mins

Descriptions: **Variation #1 (2 min): “4 Different Techniques”**

left diagram

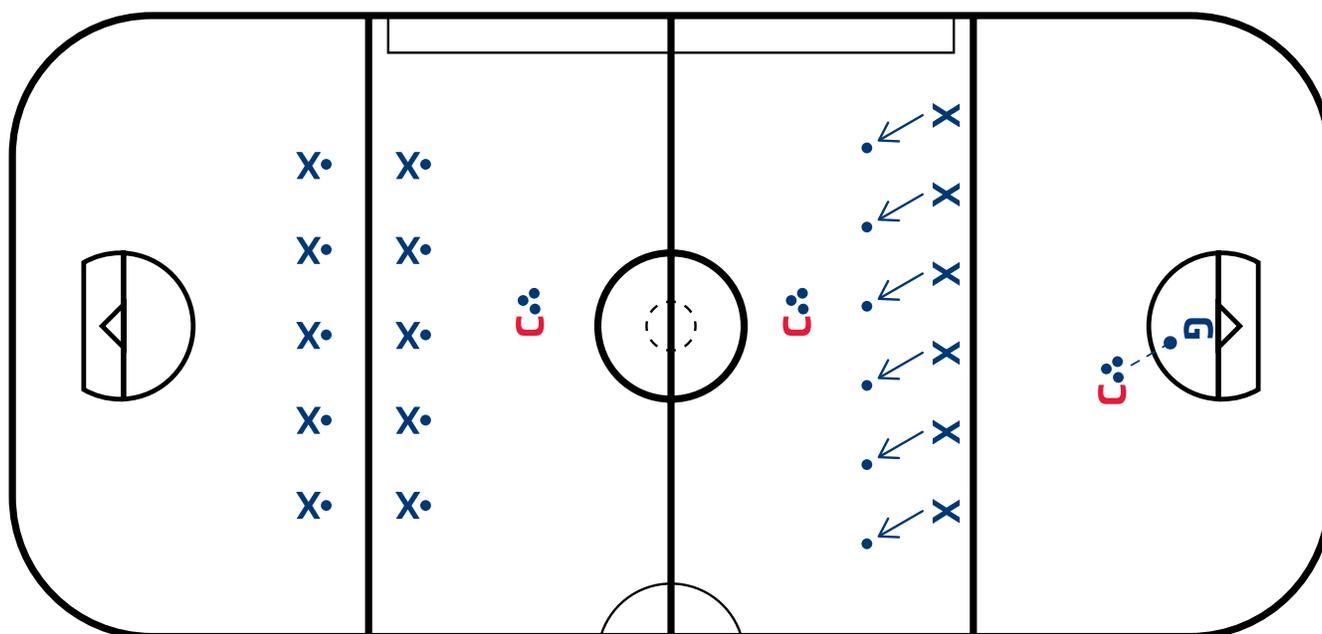
- Demo (1 min): Loose Ball - “Scoop, “Trap & Scoop,” “Scoop-Tuck-Turn,” “Scoop-To-Triple Threat Position”
- Have players stand (with nobody else within arm’s length) as a group.
- Each player should have a ball on the ground in front of them to start.
- Have them practice all the techniques listed on the Loose Ball Skills Analysis in “stationary” form (from a stand still).
- Start with the “scoop” (Variation #1A), the “trap and scoop” (Variation #1B), “scoop, tuck & turn” (Variation #1C), and lastly “scoop-to-triple threat” (Variation #1D).

Variation #2 (2 min): “Dynamic Loose Balls”

right diagram

- Advance to having players take 5-10 running steps before they pick up the ball; eventually having them run full speed from half-floor or full floor.
- Most common error = not keeping the butt-end of the stick low to the ground (“mowing the lawn” instead of “shoveling snow”)
- *Run this drill while other coaches warm up the goalies in drill #2* Demo (1 min): Loose Ball - “Scoop, “Trap & Scoop,” “Scoop-Tuck-Turn,” Scoop-To-Triple Threat Position”

Drill Diagram:



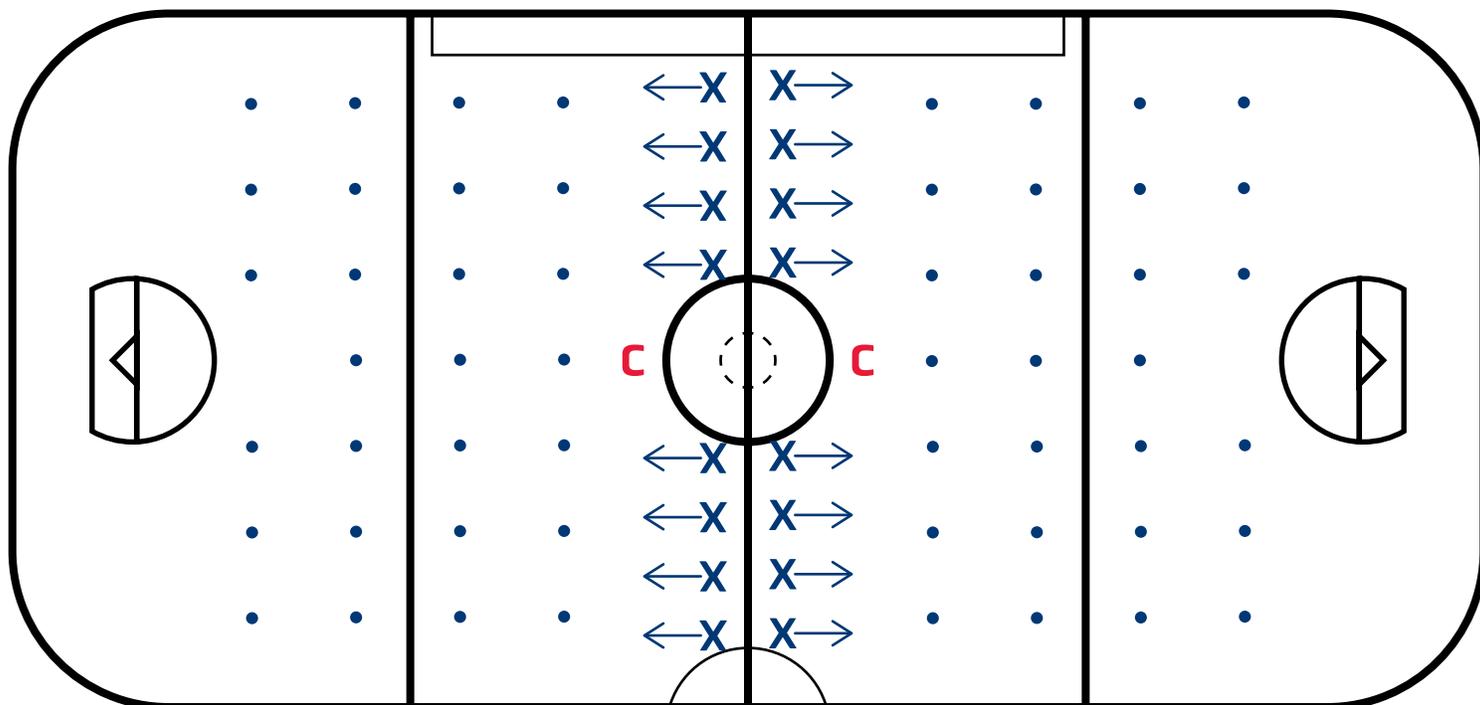
Drill #5 Games Drill - 52 Pick Up

Drill Duration: 5 mins

Descriptions: Variation #2A: "Team Competition"

- All players start behind the restraining line, with two coaches having a combined 40-50 balls in their ball buckets/ball bags or nets.
- Players are divided evenly into two teams and stand close to their associated coach, with coaches throwing all of the balls into one end of the floor and on the whistle the two teams (it is possible to play with up to 4 teams) competing to scoop more loose balls than the other team(s).
- For competition purposes, the first team to win two rounds will be considered the winners.
- Water Break = 1 min

Drill Diagram:



Drill #6 Cradling Drill - Stationary Cradling

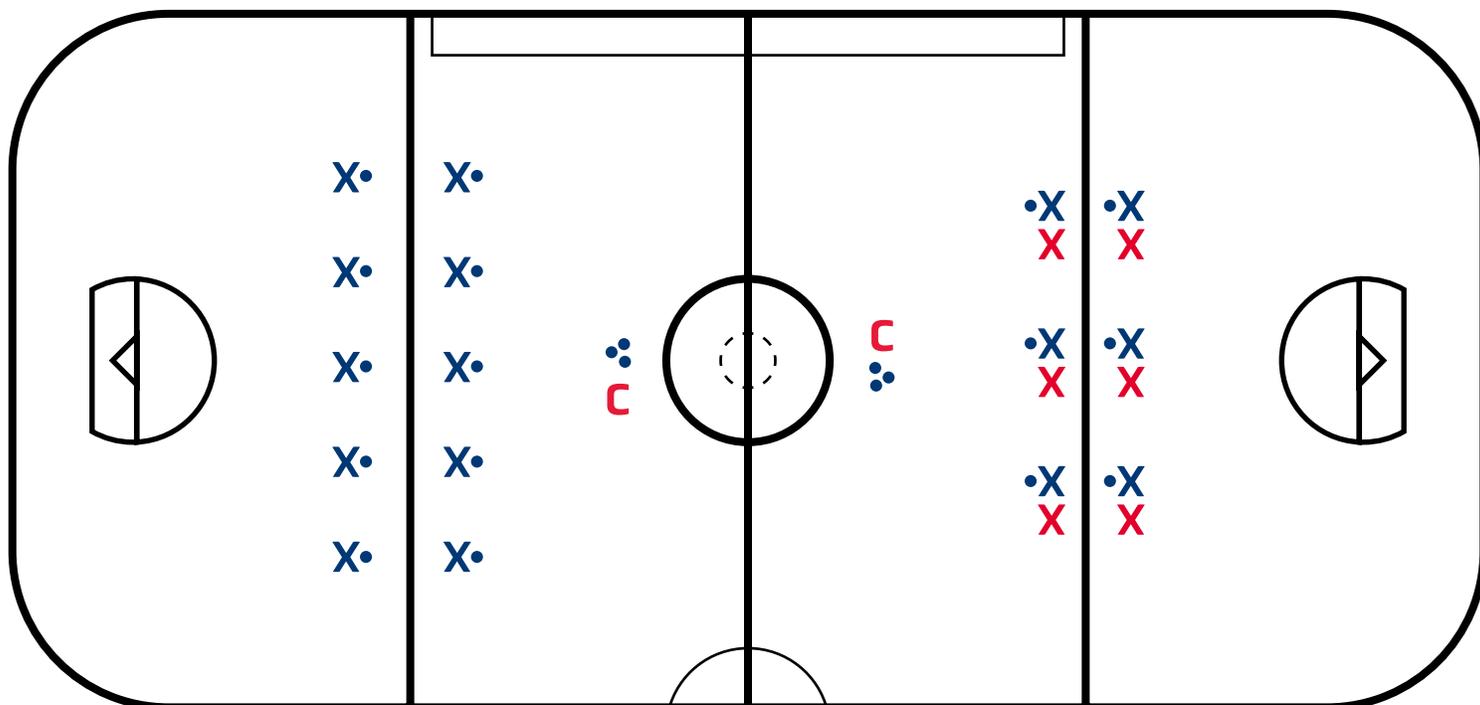
Drill Duration: 3 mins

Descriptions: **Variation #1: "Stationary Cradling"**

left diagram

- Demo (1 min): "Cradling" (Stationary)
- Have players stand (with nobody else within arm's length) as a group, holding the stick on whatever side of their body feels most comfortable, with a ball in their stick.
- From a stationary position, have players practice the two-handed cradling technique, as described in the Cradling Skills Analysis.
- Build up to walking around while cradling, emphasizing the coordination of timing your stride with your cradle.
- Most common error = bottom hand cradling

Drill Diagram:



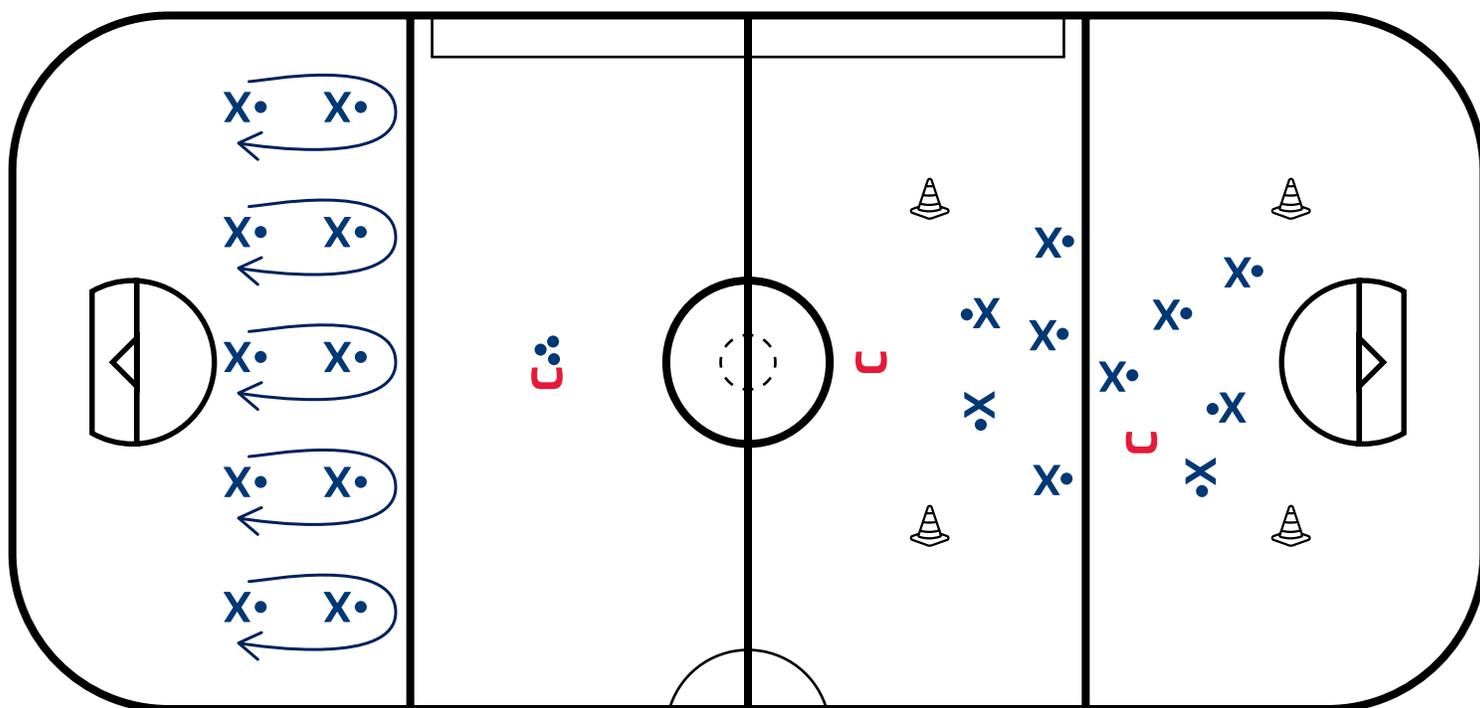
Drill #7 Cradling Drill - Dynamic Cradling

Drill Duration: 2 mins

Descriptions: Variation #3: "Cradling Around A Partner"
left diagram

- Line players up across from each other (5 yards away), with balls, and have them take turns cradling around their partner; both directions (left & right). Start at a jogging speed and build up the intensity.
- Most common error = not protecting their stick from their opponent

Drill Diagram:



Drill #8 Games Drill - Cradling Relay Races (East – West)

Drill Duration: 5 mins

Descriptions: **Variation #1B (2 min): “Single Pylon”**

left diagram

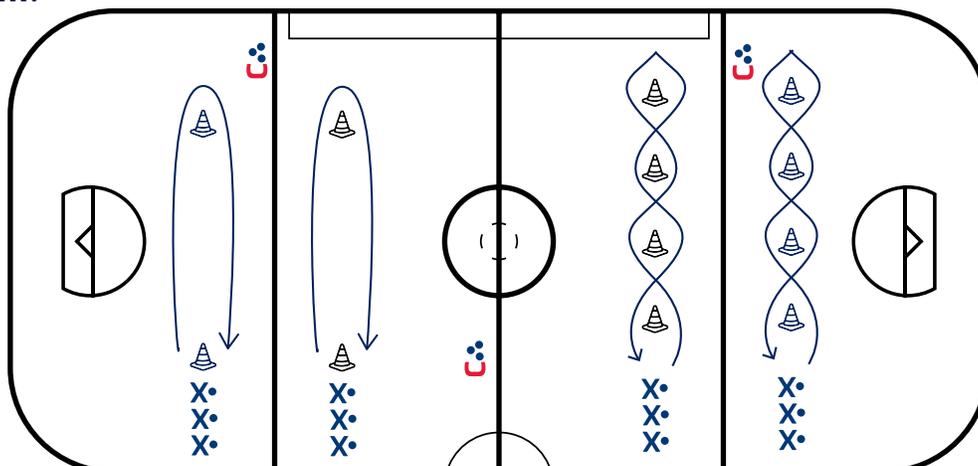
- Have players grouped into 2-4 lines depending on numbers (aim for 4-5 players per line if possible), with lines spread out evenly across the floor and operating side-to-side (east-west) in orientation.
- Place pylons on the ground to mark the start of each line, leaving enough space for there to be a straight line of players behind the pylon without being impeded by the sideboards.
- Place another pylon near the opposite side boards with enough room for players to circle around the pylon without running into the boards.
- At the sound of the whistle the first player in each line races around the pylon without a ball (Variation #1A), and later with a ball (Variation #1B).
- Another option is to replace the pylon with a coach or volunteer player who is allowed to try to strip the ball as the player runs around them (Variation #1C).
- All players take their turn racing around the pylon, sitting down in line once complete.
- The first team sitting down wins the relay race.
- Players in line are not allowed to leave until the player ahead of them crosses the starting pylon.

Variation #2B (2 min): “Weave”

right diagram

- Same as the above variation except running through multiple pylons in a straight line, with the last pylon closest to the sideboards allowing enough room for players to circle around without running into the boards.
- Players now weave through the pylons using a zig-zag pattern, while cradling a ball.
- Water Break = 1 min

Drill Diagram:



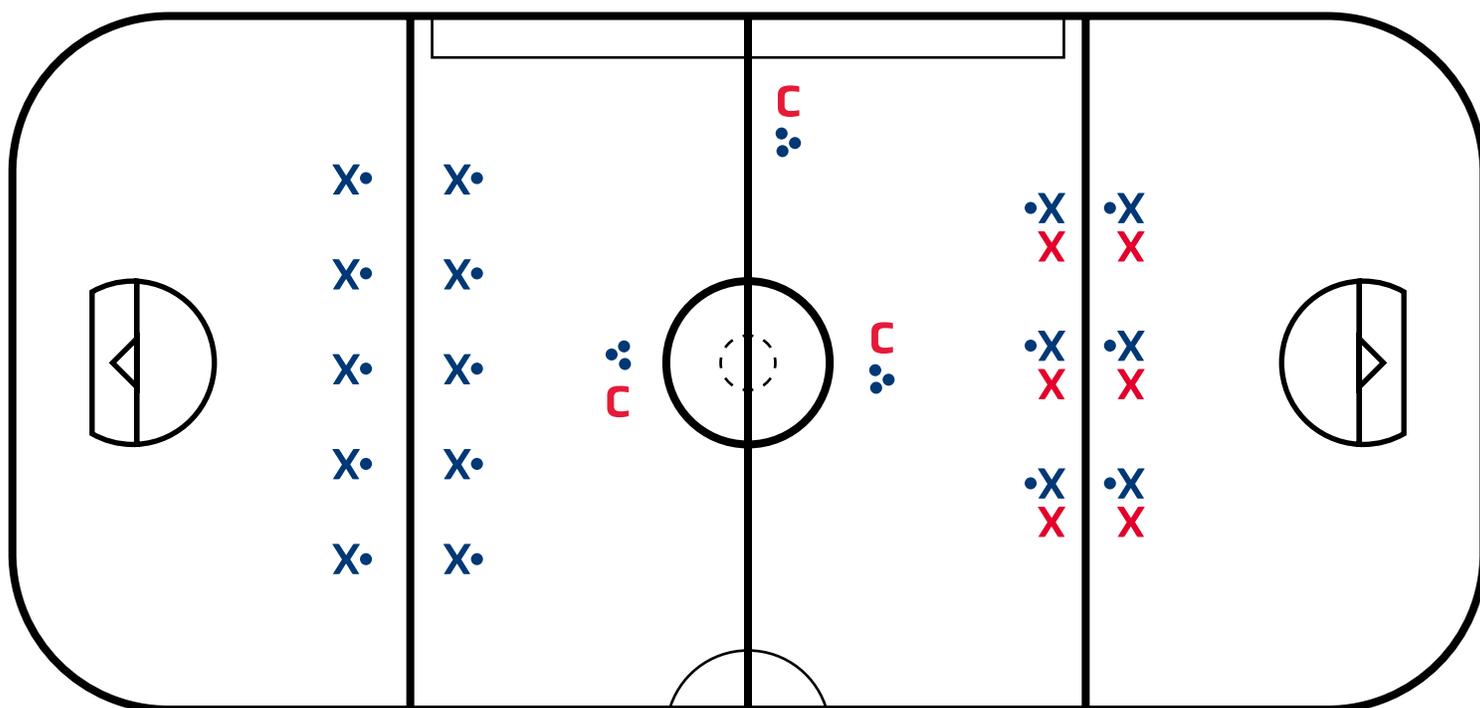
Drill #9 Cradling Drill - Stationary Cradling

Drill Duration: 2 mins

Descriptions: Variation #2 "Partner Ball Protection"
right diagram

- Demo (1 min): "Ball Protection"
- Have players partner up (1 ball between the two), with one player trying to get the ball off the other player, who is stationary and trying to use their body/stick position to "protect the ball."
- Only light slashes on the head of the stick are permitted
- Players should alternate roles after 30 seconds.

Drill Diagram:



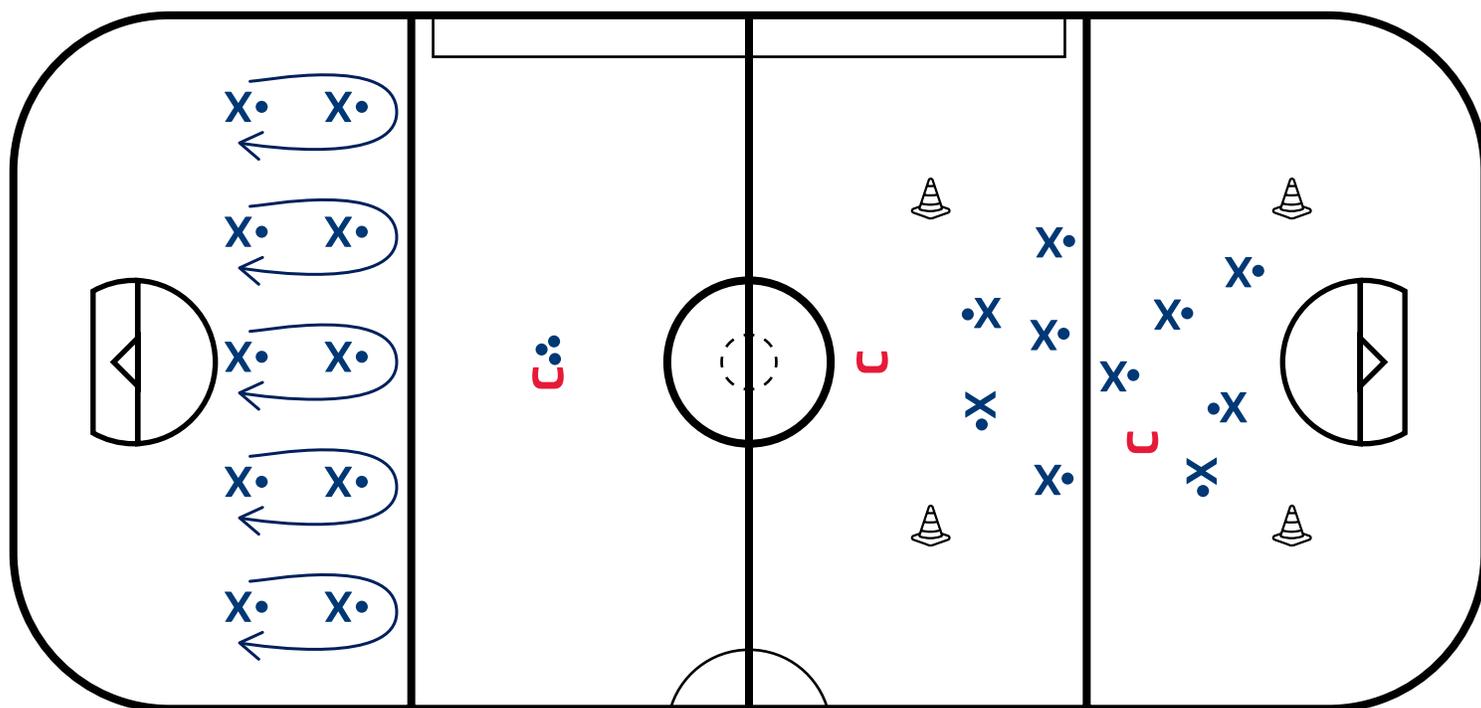
Drill #10 Cradling Drill - Dynamic Cradling

Drill Duration: 4 mins

Descriptions: Variation #4 "Scrambled Eggs"
right diagram

- Create a designated area using pylons, appropriate to the size of the group you are working with. Have all players weave around each other at a walking speed, and later at jogging speed.
- Emphasize players keeping their body between other players and the ball (i.e. protect or "hide" the ball), utilizing proper cradling technique.
- Once the players get the hang of the technique coaches can casually try to dislodge the ball from players who don't have it protected, otherwise pushing them on their hips in order to throw off their center-of-gravity.
- This drill can also be done as a game whereby if a player drops their ball or gets knocked out, they must go out of the designated area and wait until the next game (multiple small designated areas is preferred).
- Most common error = not protecting their stick from their opponent

Drill Diagram:



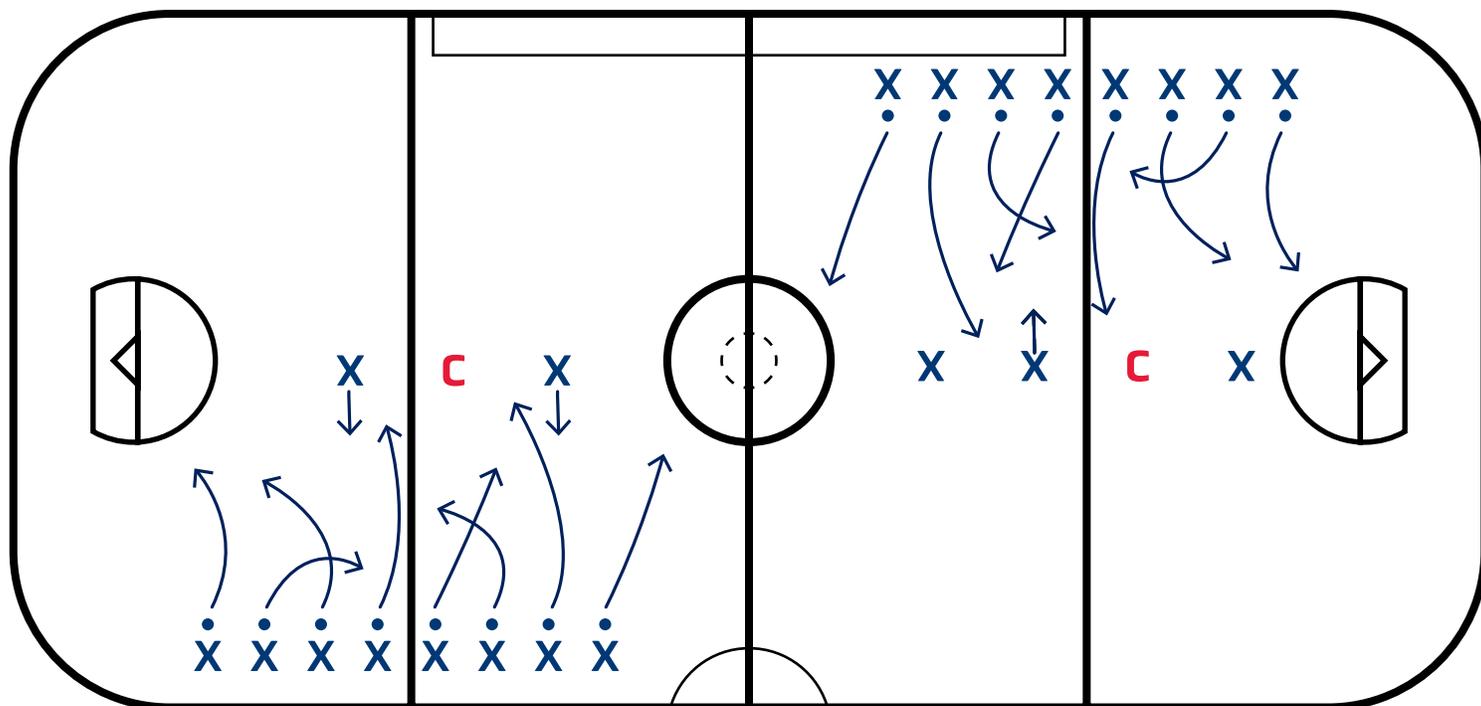
Drill #11 Games Drill - Sharks & Minnows

Drill Duration: 7 mins

Descriptions: Variation #1: "D/O Boundary"

- Using the end-boards and/or the restraining lines as boundaries, start with a coach and one volunteer in one or both the offensive/defensive zones of the lacrosse floor. Creases should also be utilized as another boundary that only the "sharks" can step in.
- Have all players ("minnows") start against the sideboards, with balls in everyone's stick, ready to try and successfully cradle to the opposite side boards, without dropping the ball.
- The coach and initial volunteers ("Sharks") are trying to "strip" players of the ball; all players should be using 2-hands to cradle.
- Players become "Sharks" if they drop the ball, get stripped, or get pushed over the restraining line.
- Players need to protect the ball and get safely to the other side of the floor.
- The game ends when every player has lost their ball, or there is one or two players left who still haven't dropped their ball.
- Water Break = 1 min

Drill Diagram:



Drill #12 Stickwork Drill - Partner Passing

Drill Duration: 10 mins

Descriptions: **Variation #1 (6 min): "Stationary Passing & Catching"**

left diagram

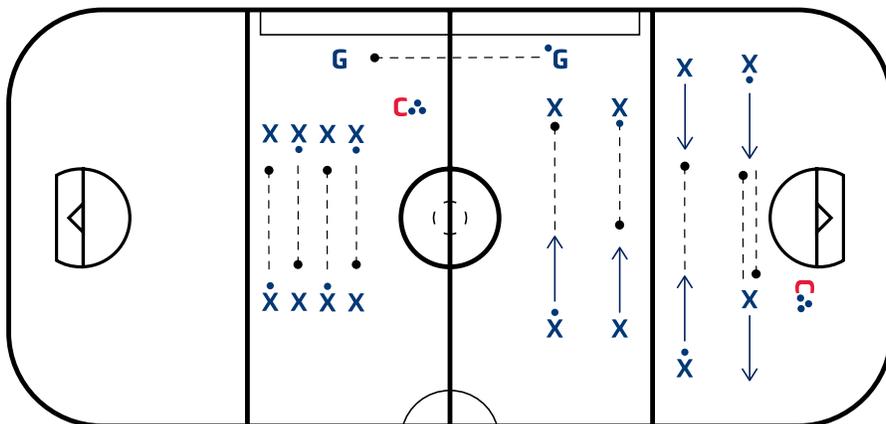
- Demo (1 min): "Soft Hands" (Catching An Egg Example)
- Work on just stationary catching to begin with; give every player a ball and have them toss it up in the air a few times, trying to get a feel for catching it (Variation #1A).
- Next, arrange players into two rows, 3-5 yards apart, removing a ball from one partner, with the other partner underhand passing the ball (with their bare hand) to the other partner who tries to catch it in the triple threat position using "soft hands."
- Each player should get at least 5-10 quality attempts to catch the ball in this fashion (Variation #1B).
- Players should give each other a target to pass to when preparing to receive the ball.
- Progressively have players move farther and farther away from each other.
- Identify players that are having considerable trouble catching and/or passing, pulling them aside in small groups of players that have a similar problem (catching or passing).
- Most common error = not giving a target to the passer and/or not calling for a pass

Variation #2 (2 min): "Long Pass"

right diagram

- Demo (1 min): "Crow Hop" (Outfielder In Baseball Analogy)
- Move next to 5-10 yards apart (then 15 yards). On longer passes have young players start with a crow hop, similar to a long throw to home plate in baseball.
- As players get farther away from each other the release point (where the ball comes out of the stick) will have to be slightly further behind the players head (ear) in order for the pass to make it to the target in the air; especially for younger/weaker players.
- Most common error = players releasing the ball too far in front of their body

Drill Diagram:



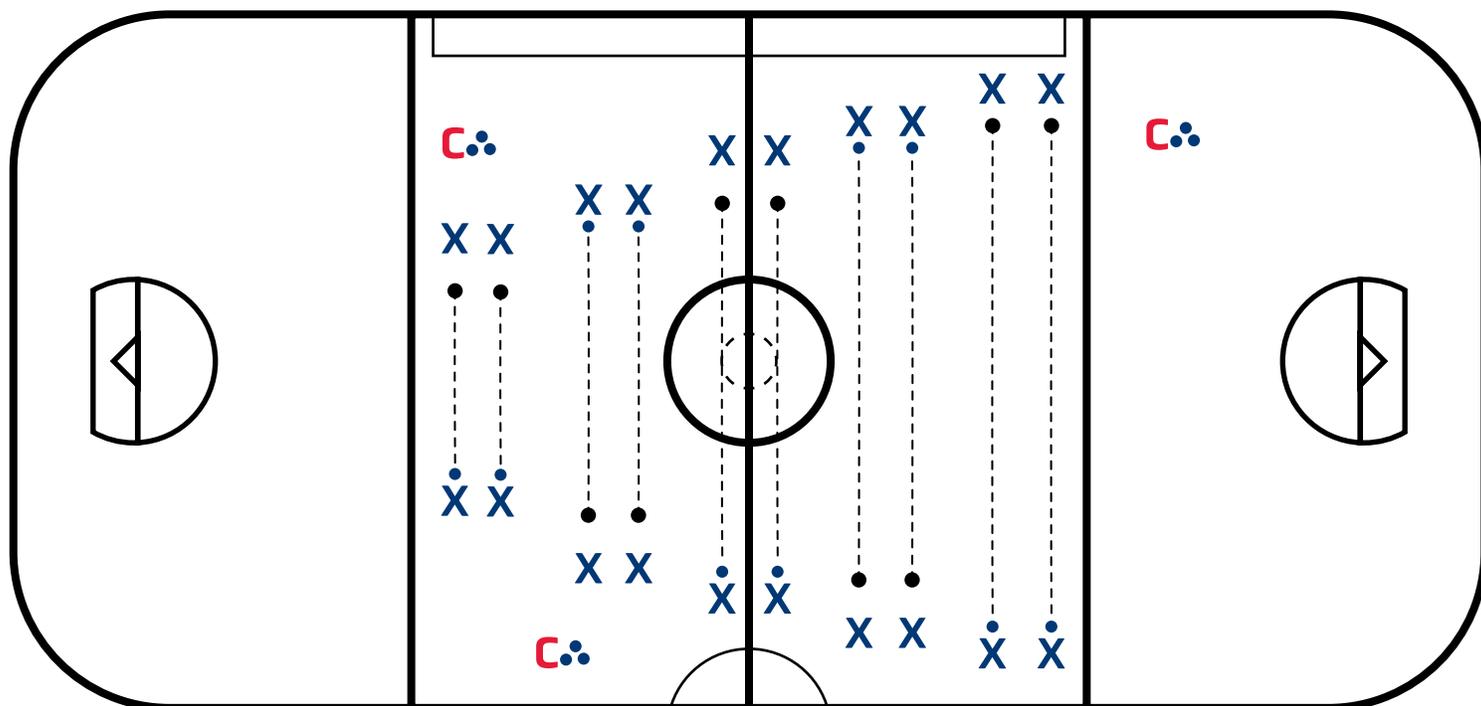
Drill #13 Games Drill - Progressive Passing (“Egg Toss”)

Drill Duration: 5 mins

Descriptions: Variation #1B: “Overhead Pass”

- Start with players in two rows, 3 yards apart, all balls starting in the same row of partners.
- Everyone passes the ball to their partner at the same time, and if the ball is caught both partners take a step backwards, trying to complete the pass from further away. If the ball is dropped, the partners can try again from the same distance.
- Players move progressively farther and farther away from each other, until their backs are against the sideboards or a designated marker (pylon).
- The first group of partners to successfully complete this “long pass” wins the game.

Drill Diagram:



Drill #14 Fundamental Skills Analysis

Drill Duration: 2 mins

Descriptions: **Story:**

- Circle at center floor
- Haudenosaunee Legend (1 min)
 - ◊ The 4-Legged Animals vs. The Winged-Birds [Link](#)
- Come up with an appropriate word, as a team, for a team cheer.