



Hockey Canada Development Programs

Skill Development



Challenge – Learn - Improve

2020 - 21



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Hockey Canada believes every player should have the chance to participate in the great game of hockey, to learn the skills of the game, and be given the opportunity to achieve a sense of accomplishment through their participation.



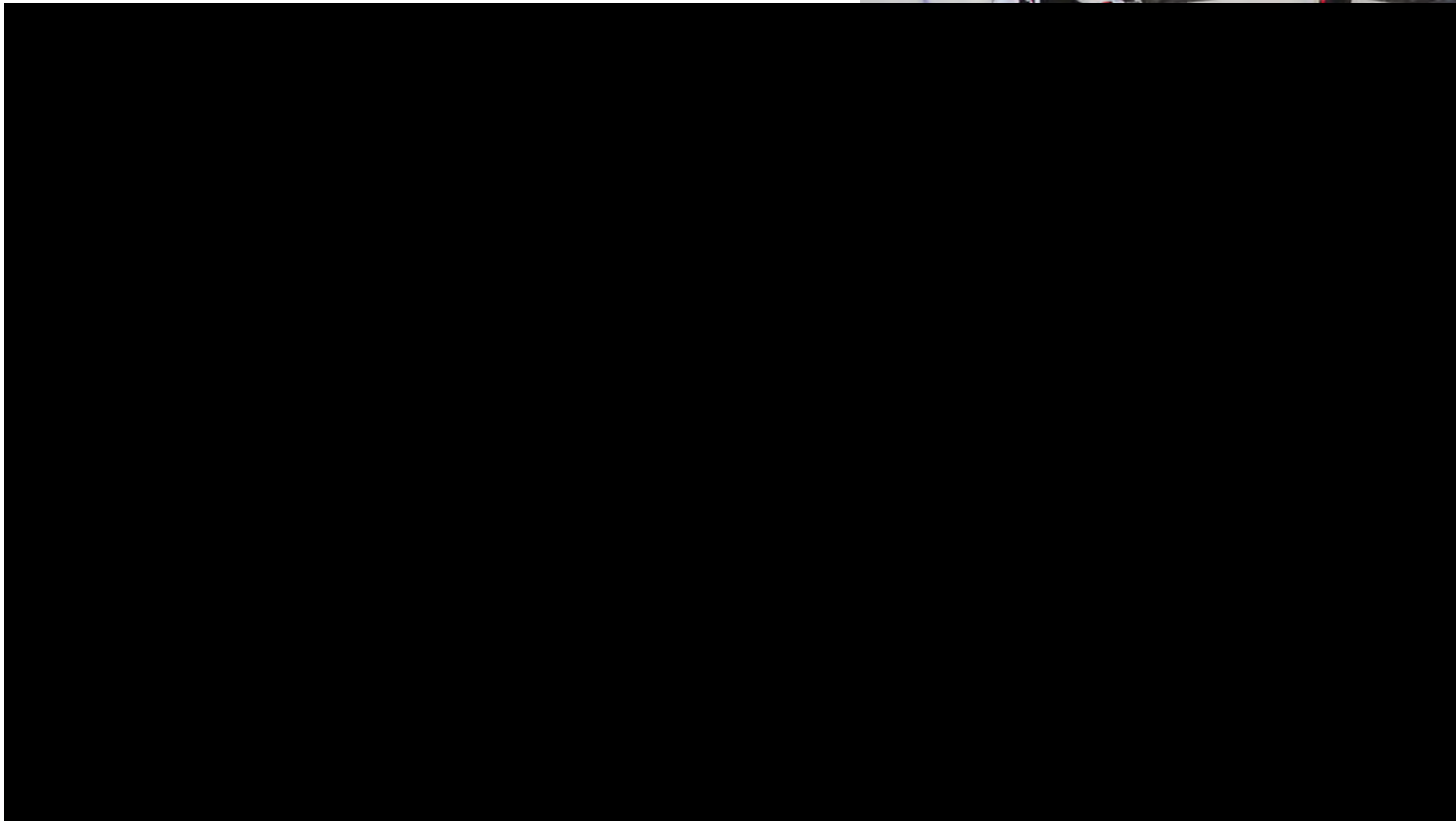
Hockey Canada's Mission Statement

The goal of Hockey Canada is not to put players in the NHL, but rather to ensure a meaningful, enjoyable experience. This is not to say that we don't want boys and girls to achieve the highest levels possible, but rather if we go about it the right way they will have a better chance.



"To Lead, Develop, and Promote Positive Hockey Experiences."

Hockey Canada Believes



Hockey Canada Believes



- ❖ There are a number of areas to look at when it comes to the development of hockey players today.
 - ❖ Seasonal Structure
 - ❖ Skills versus team play
 - ❖ Practice versus games
 - ❖ Formal games versus half ice or cross ice games
 - ❖ Competition
 - ❖ Multisport Participation

Association Development

The most important aspects of Minor Hockey Association development are:

- 1) Consistency in the coaching philosophy
- 2) Consistency in what the coaches are teaching.



A Minor Hockey Association's success from a coaching / player standpoint will be based on 3 main aspects:

- 1) Enjoyment of players coming to the rink everyday
- 2) Improvement of players' skills
- 3) Developing of players to play at the next level



Player Development

Keep as many kids as possible
playing at as high a level as
possible
For as long as possible



By implementing a **standardized technical curriculum and methodology for instruction**, your association is building a foundation for athletes to enjoy the game of hockey and reach their potential. While it should be the goal of each team to be successful in their league, the player development process should be at the forefront of each team and this **development component must not be compromised.**



Player Development

Everybody wants to be part of the outcome, but it is the process that determines who is worthy of being part of that outcome



All players and including players on the pathway to High Performance need to continuously perfect and advance individual skills and tactics. The results will contribute significantly to team success both in practice and in games. The coach must understand how these skills and tactics are executed for efficient practicing and maximum development of the players.



Player Development

Talent ID is about keeping kids around long enough to see what they can really do!



- ❖ If you Pick him / her – Play him / her!
- ❖ A coach's job is to develop every player to contribute to the team
- ❖ All players deserve the same opportunities – you never know who will flourish to become a great player

Seasonal Structure

“People never want to be part of the process, but they want to be part of the outcome. The process is where you figure out who’s worth being part of the outcome..”



If you want more quality cream , you need more quality cows!

John Herdman — Coach — Men’s National Soccer Team



Seasonal Structure



-Prep / Tryout Season: Refers to the period of time prior to the season starting – typically when prep camps and / or tryouts are held.

-Development Season: Refers to the period of time following tryouts or evaluation prior to the regular season starting.



Seasonal Structure



-Development and Regular Season: Refers to the period of time from the first regular season game to the start of playoffs or Provincial / Branch Championships.

-Playoff Season: Refers to the period of time from the end of the regular season through to the end of Playoffs.

-Off Season: Refers to the period of time from the end of the playoff season to the start of the next Prep or Tryout season.

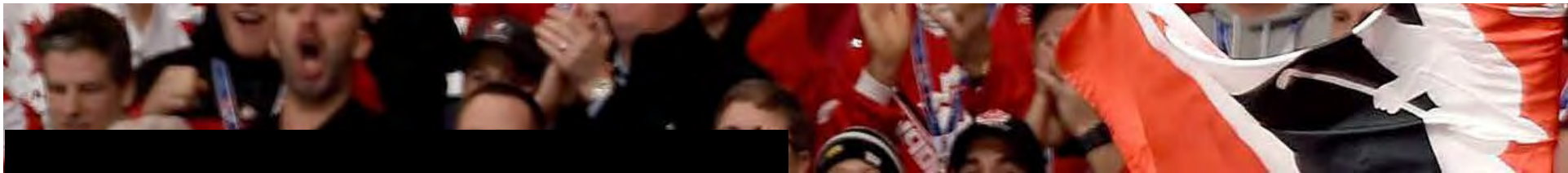


Seasonal Structure



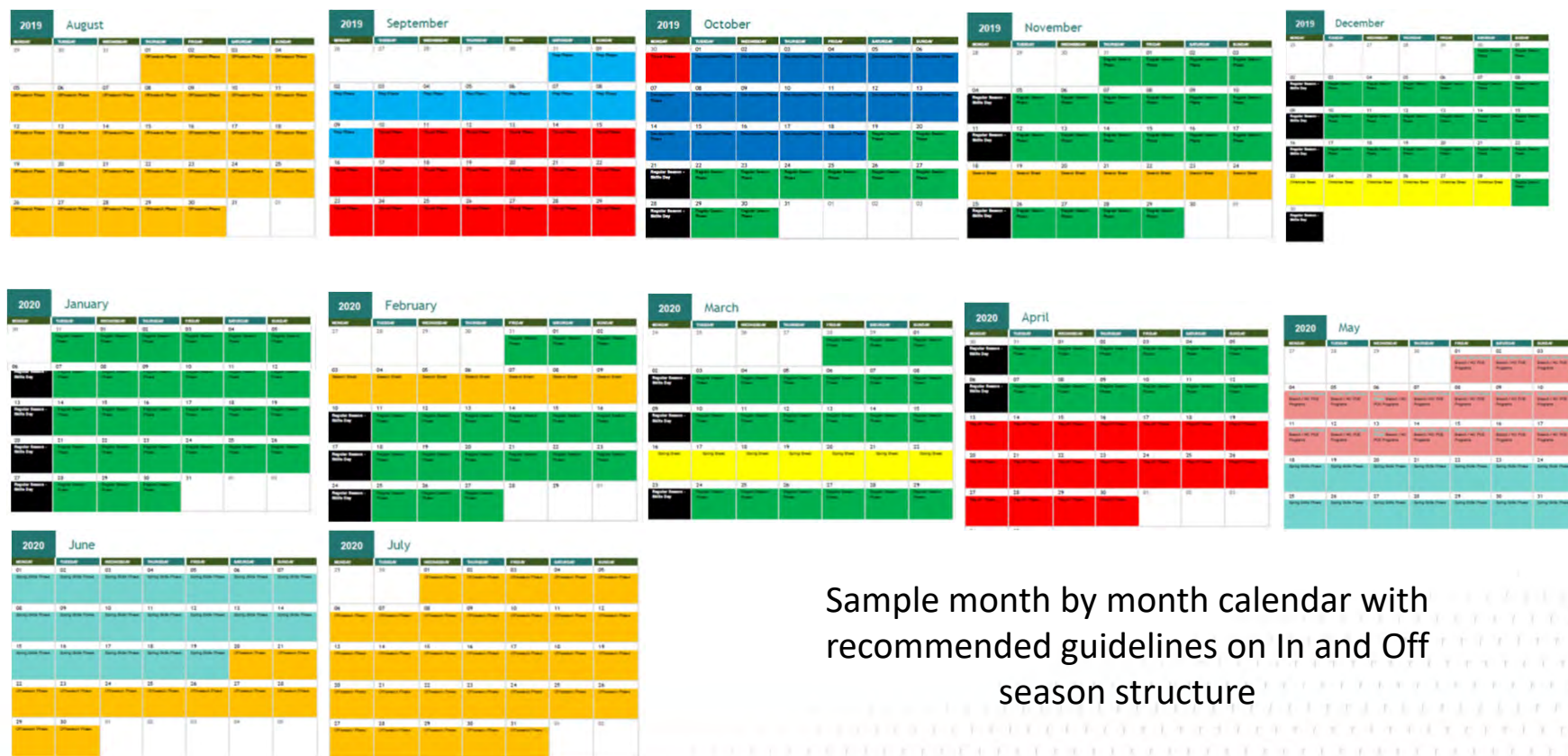
Optimal Seasonal Structure

- Recreational / Competitive programs
- Age Division Specific Programming
 - Prep phase
 - Tryouts / evaluation phase (where applicable)
 - Development Phase
 - Competition phase
 - Off Season
- Breaks in Season
- Tournament Style Playoffs



Seasonal Structure

Yearly Calendar



Sample month by month calendar with recommended guidelines on In and Off season structure





Seasonal Structure

The following slides are guidelines for some ideas to help build the optimal season that takes into account the principles of Long Term Player Development. These guidelines will have a dramatic effect on the development of players

3 Important components that will have an immediate impact on developing players

1) Hockey School before tryouts

- ❖ 5 – 10 skates then tryouts

2) Athletic Warm ups and cool downs before and after every practice and every game

- ❖ 20 minute athletic warm up / 20 minute athletic cool down

3) Eliminate Playoff Rounds and go to Tournament Style Playoffs

- ❖ Everyone makes playoffs





Seasonal Structure

1) Hockey School before tryouts

- ❖ There is no need to rush into tryouts – give players 5 – 10 ice sessions of “Hockey School” to get back on the ice prior to formal evaluation
- ❖ The beginning of the season is stressful enough, level the playing field by letting coaches get to know the players and vice versa
- ❖ Players get a chance to develop instead of going out and **trying not to make a mistake**

3 Important components that will have an immediate impact on developing players





Seasonal Structure

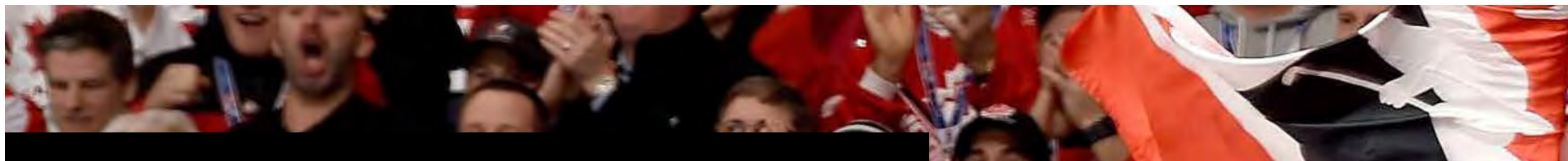
2) Athletic Warm ups and cool downs before and after every practice and every game

- ❖ 20 minute athletic warm up / 20 minute athletic cool down for each practice and game
- ❖ Most teams do warm ups / cool downs before and after games, but very few do anything before and after practice
- ❖ When asking players to be at the rink early for practice and games have them active and doing something beneficial – Physical literacy – Active Skill Based warm ups

Can eliminate a day specific for dryland training which will also lead to more rest and recovery

3 Important components that will have an immediate impact on developing players





Seasonal Structure

3) Eliminate Playoff Rounds and go to Tournament Style Playoffs

Everyone makes playoffs!!!

- ❖ Enables coaches to coach to develop versus coaching to win just to get into playoffs
- ❖ Stretches out the season with more time to develop and more time for rest / recovery
- ❖ Gives every player a chance to play at the end of the year when the competition and intensity should be at it's highest versus some players being eliminated in February

3 Important components that will have an immediate impact on developing players



Skills Versus Team Play



- ❖ Coaches at the levels of U13 and below should focus on teaching the technical skills of the game. Rushing into teaching team play and team tactics does not allow kids to develop the technical skills required to play the game, it takes away their creativity, and reduces their ability to develop their potential of becoming dangerous offensive players.
- ❖ The more advanced the team is, the more they should work on advanced technical skills especially at U13 and below. A few examples are below:
 - saucer passes
 - creative scoring moves
 - creative 1 on 1's
 - deceptive puck control
 - advanced agility

Skills Versus Team Play



- ❖ Coaches need to spend time developing the individual skills and individual tactics of the game, versus team play and systems.
- ❖ Team play and defense is easier to teach than technical skills and should be taught when the players are U15 and above, when they already have the solid skill base required to execute and understand the integrated team approach.
- ❖ A coach can have the best planned breakout, or a perfectly designed game plan, but if the players can't execute basic passing and receiving, or can't adjust when things breakdown, the planning does not matter.
- ❖ Kids will have a lot more fun in practice when they are working on offensive skills such as scoring than watching a coach at the white board drawing x's and o's to explain team systems and strategy.

“ There is no use teaching team play, until the kids have reasonable mastery of skating, passing and puck control “
Dr. Murray Smith – Sports Psychologist

Practice vs Games

1 efficient practice will give a player more skill development than 11 games collectively.



- ❖ One of the biggest issues surrounding the development of hockey players is the number of practices they have compared to the number of games they play. An ideal, realistic ratio is **3 practices for every 1 game** played for ages 9 – 13.
- ❖ At the ages of 5 – 8 the practice to game ratio should be even higher (6 : 1) and realistically there is no need for many formal games.
- ❖ **A Game By The Numbers**
 - Players will have the puck on their stick for an average of **8 seconds per game**.
 - Players will take an average of **1 - 2 shots** per game.
 - 99% of the feedback coaches give players is when they have the puck. Ironically, players only have the puck on their stick for 0.2% of the game.

Practice vs Games

- ❖ If you look at these stats, how can we expect kids to develop when they are playing more games than practicing? **Studies show that the better kids are at something, the more they will enjoy it, and the longer they will play.** Many kids quit hockey because they get to the level where they can't compete due to lack of skill – therefore it is no longer fun.



“ I think 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 practice to games is the way to go. In practice, that’s where you become a better hockey player. You get to have the puck on your stick more, and take more shots on net than in any game. Even as a professional you don’t have the puck on your stick that much, and at a young age it’s crucial to develop your skills, you can’t do that in an organized game.”

Paul Kariya – 2017 Hockey Hall of Fame Inductee

Formal Games vs Half ice or Cross ice Games



- ❖ For kids aged 5 - 8 there is no need to play only full ice, formal games. Playing half ice or cross ice games will create far more development.
- ❖ Rationale
 - The rink was created for 10 adult skaters per side, therefore why should we expect young kids to play on the same size area. To look at it proportionally, adults would be playing on a rink the size of a soccer field.
 - During any game, the majority of play happens in one zone, so 2 thirds of the ice is not being used anyway.
 - Kids need to learn to handle the puck in a confined area.
 - Half ice or cross ice games allow for more kids to participate, rather than sitting on the bench.
 - A child's version of a game is much different than that of an adult. Kids would rather be on the ice being active. If you ask them what their favorite part of hockey is they will say handling the puck, shooting, scoring, and skating – How much do they really get to do that in a formal game?

Competition



- ❖ Competition is a fact of life, and something we face in all aspects of society. Competition is healthy, but there is a time and a place for it. Winning and losing should not be a priority for young players. Players should learn to compete in practice, and want to get better, but it needs to be put in the proper context by MHA's, coaches and parents.
- ❖ Let the kids play informal games, don't keep stats, wins and losses will become important enough down the road, but when they are just learning the game, let them learn without putting any pressure on them.
- ❖ Thousands of kids play hide and go seek everyday, yet there are not referees, stats, and records of wins and losses

“ When they have too many games when they are young, they are going out trying to fulfill a role and trying to not make mistakes, and as a result they get very little skill improvement. “The main thing is not to rush the kids into situations they are not ready for, and keep things in perspective, that the game of hockey is a participation sport for kids, and not meant to be entertainment for parents.

Player Development



- ❖ Put the player development process at the forefront and refuse to compromise about the importance of this process
- ❖ Implement a standardized technical curriculum and methodology for instruction
- ❖ Build a foundation for players to enjoy hockey and reach their potential

Player Development



- ❖ Identify the specific skills needed to develop players
- ❖ Decide how to best develop these skills in players
- ❖ Implement specific skill development in drill designs and practice plans
- ❖ Design a productive yearly development plan

Player Development



- ❖ It's not as hard as it appears, but it does take courage and commitment
 - Development plan
 - Skill improvement
 - Drills
 - Observation
 - Sequencing/Progressions
 - Teaching progressions

Skill Improvement



- ❖ To best develop the skills their players need, coaches need to know:
 - Where players are in their skill development
 - Where players need to get in their skill development
 - What skill development is required
 - What tactical development is required
 - How to teach/instruct the skills players need
 - What teaching process to use
 - What game/team play consists of
- ❖ Once a coach knows the areas players need to work on, he or she needs to include efficient drills focused on repetition and specificity in all practices

Drills



- ❖ Drills are effective only if executed properly
- ❖ Instructors need to execute the drill, observe players as they do the drill, and correct their technique
- ❖ Repetition is the key to improvement

Sequencing/Progressions



- ❖ “You can’t play in the orchestra until you learn how to play the violin first”
- ❖ Master individual skills before trying to master tactics and systems: D-specific only **after** the fundamentals, for example
- ❖ There are many skills to teach and many minor hockey coaches have limited practice time: you have to be organized!



Teaching Progressions

5 key points to consider:

- 1) Technique
- 2) Practice
- 3) F.I.O. – Figure it Out
- 4) Practice with purpose and speed
- 5) Game application



Technique



- ❖ Teach skills not only for technique, but also for results
- ❖ Repetition helps players become consistent performers
- ❖ Results happen when repetition leads to mastery so technique can be incorporated into drills and ultimately into games

Practice

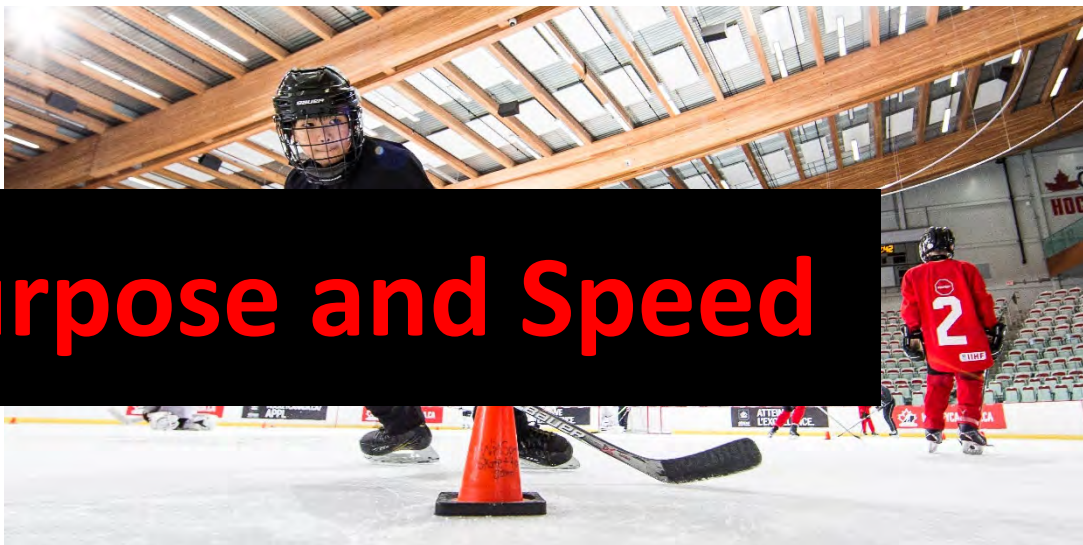


- ❖ Practise at a speed so players can learn
- ❖ Use progressions:
 - 1) If you can't do it standing still...
 - 2) You can't do it moving...
 - 3) And you can't do it to beat an opponent
- ❖ Work on the same skills in a variety of drills
- ❖ Players need to learn at a speed where they can practise, think, and create without worrying about making mistakes

F.I.O. – Figure it Out



- ❖ *Figure It Out* is all about creativity and improvisation
- ❖ If players are attached to the outcome — **if they're worried about making a mistake — they won't reach their creative potential — they need to let go!**
- ❖ Create or set up the drill, and let players decide on the patterns



Practise With Purpose and Speed

- ❖ Once technique has been practiced it then has to be done with purpose – Use drills that take the technique and apply them to situations that require a game like purpose and speed
- ❖ Practice with purpose then has to be done at speed – GAME SPEED
- ❖ When stickhandling can be done with purpose and speed it can then be done without thinking. It then happens automatically and deception and creativity can come into play – When they are good enough, take away the pylons and add coaches or other players to put the puck carrier under stress

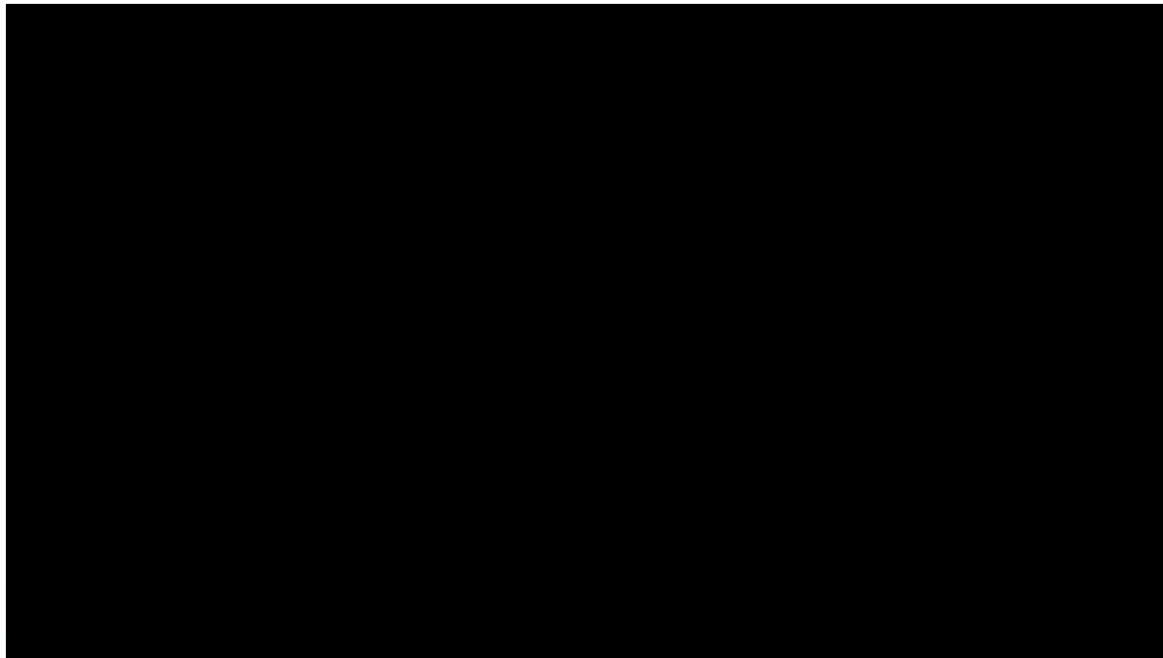
Game Application



- ❖ Once they have technique, once they have practiced, once they have figured it out with purpose and speed - then comes the most important aspect of all!!! – **Game Like Application**
- ❖ It is very important to progress to drills that will also have game applications – **Players love to know how they can apply what they have been working on**
- ❖ Puck protection is key – start with the skill then progress to game like pressure situations where the player is under **STRESS!**
- ❖ To get players to buy into this approach, you need to show them how it applies **IN A GAME**

Skill Development

Skill Development doesn't have to be complicated. Keep it simple!





High Reps



**Non Game-Like
Simulation**

**Game
Simulation**



Low Reps





Skills – Tie the technique into tactics

- ❖ Best place to go for game application – watch pros, watch games, watch video

❖ How do we encourage creativity?

- ❖ Watch goals scored in the NHL and develop drills out of what you see.
- ❖ We all know great practice players, but the great ones can do it in a game!
- ❖ In order to gain buy in, and keep buy in, the players will eventually need to know how it applies in a game.



Small Area Games

Small area games push players to use their skating and puck skills in competitive situations



Yearly Plan



- ❖ We encourage coaches to set priorities for your Forwards and Defense and establish a teaching sequence
- ❖ Design warm ups, team drills and splits (Forward and Defense specific)
- ❖ Teach, practice, give feedback and repeat
- ❖ Be cognisant of what you need to teach and how much practice time you have
- ❖ Record what you do (save your practice plans)

Make It Fun!

- ❖ Teach skills and tactics but remember it is a game that teaches so much more....
- ❖ Make it a good place for kids to be



Complacency Isn't an Option



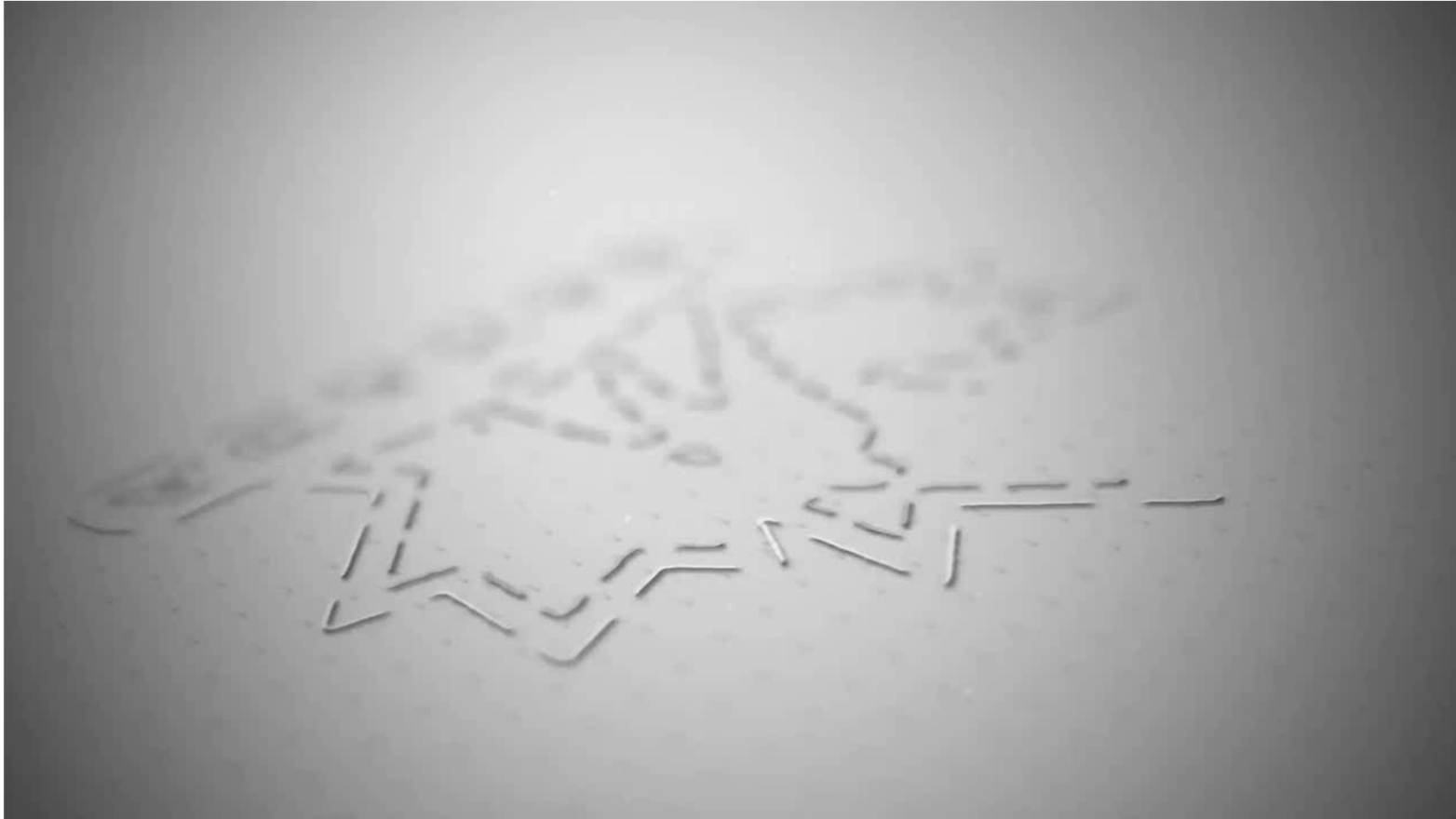
- ❖ There is no standing still....you either get better or you are left behind
- ❖ This is true for coaches and players



Where We Are Going



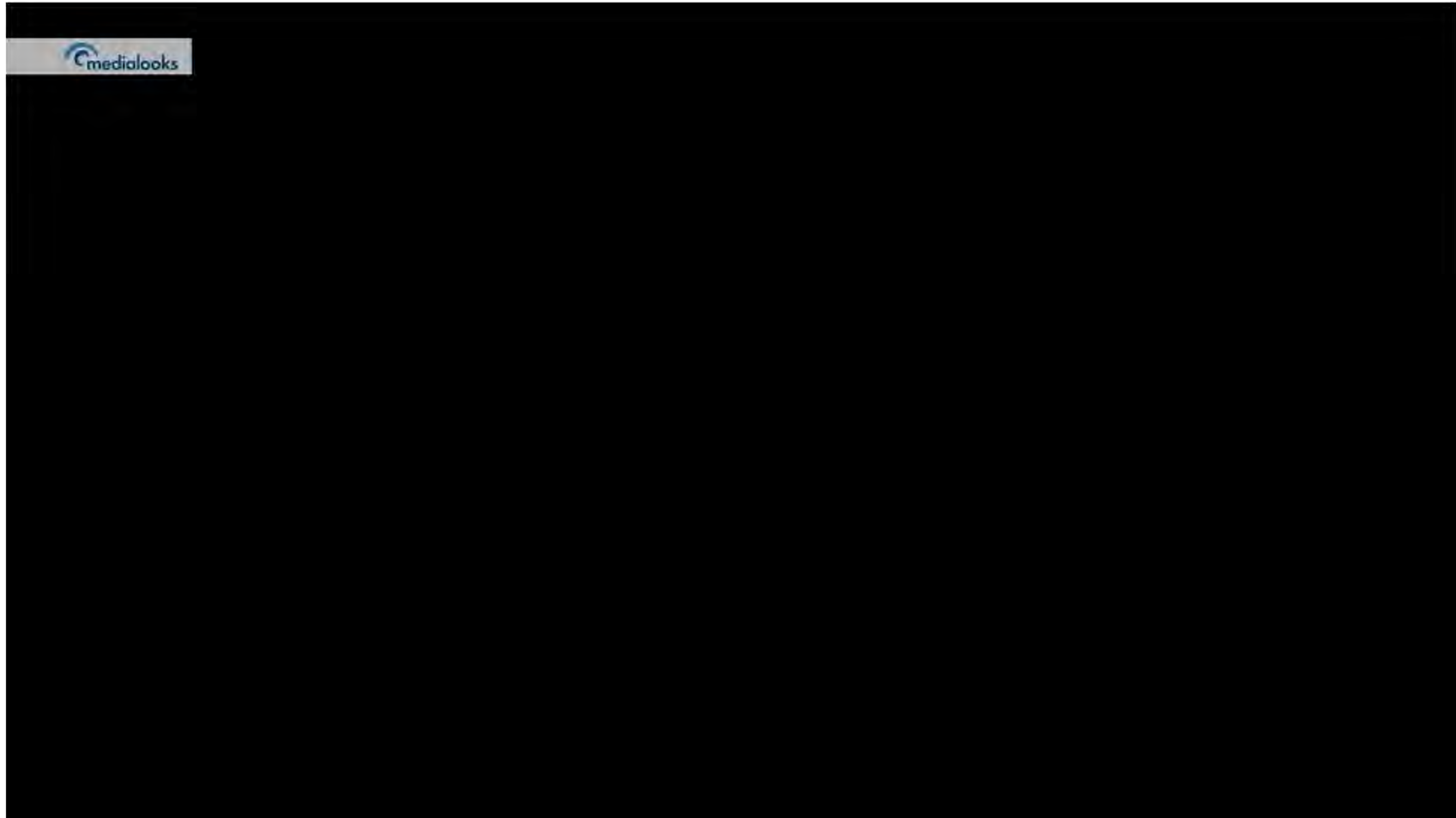
Is There a Practical Application?



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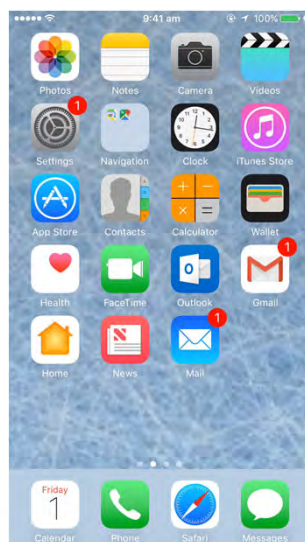


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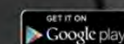
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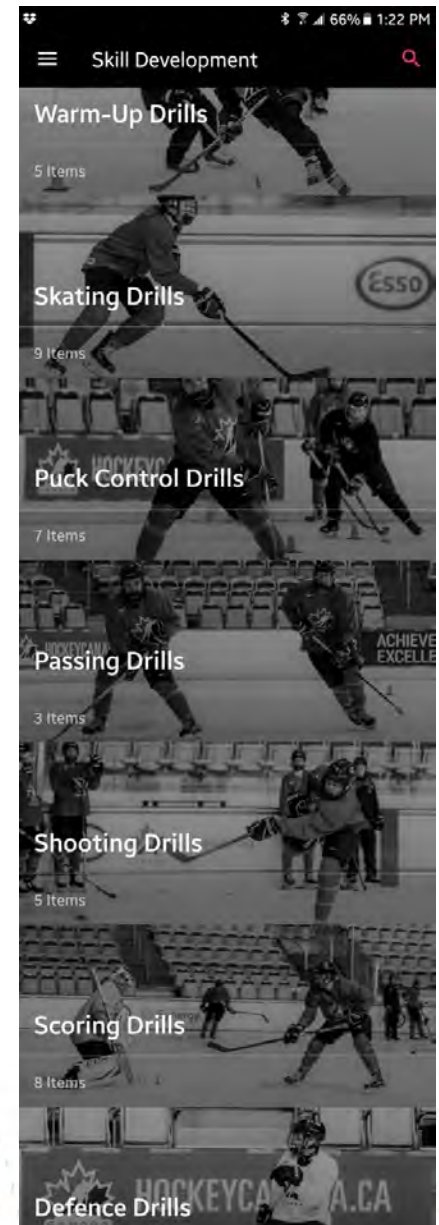
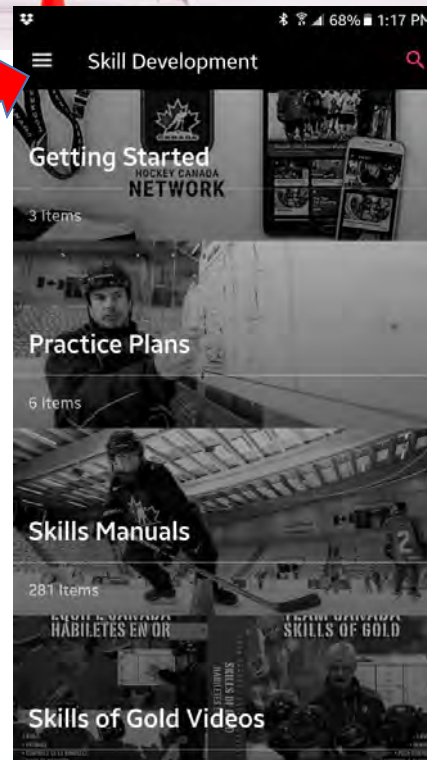
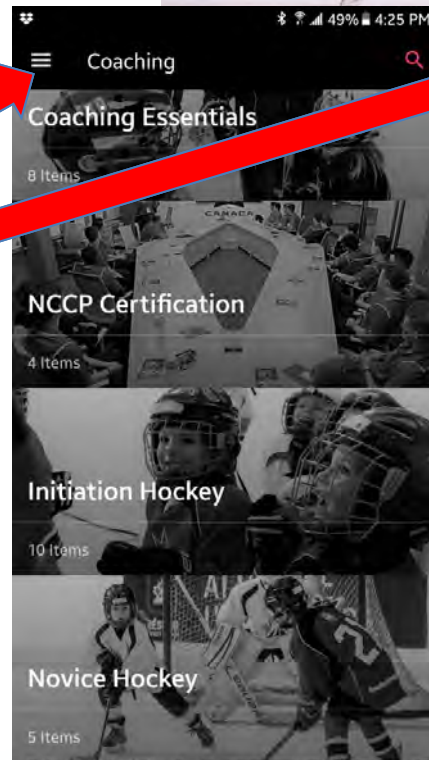
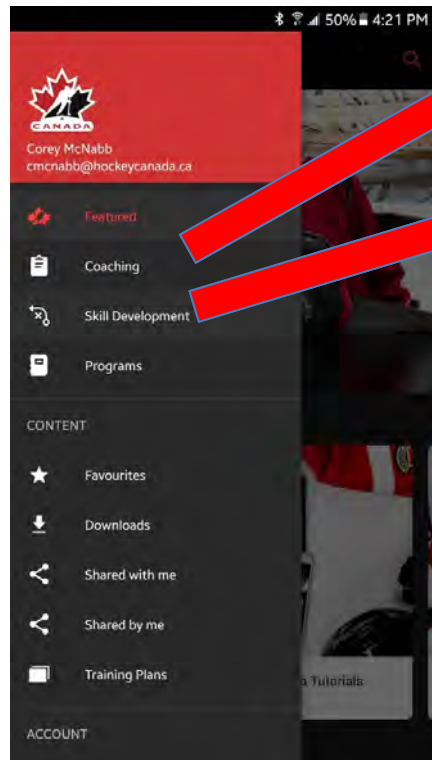


Join our Email list for the latest news and updates about the new Hockey Canada Network App.

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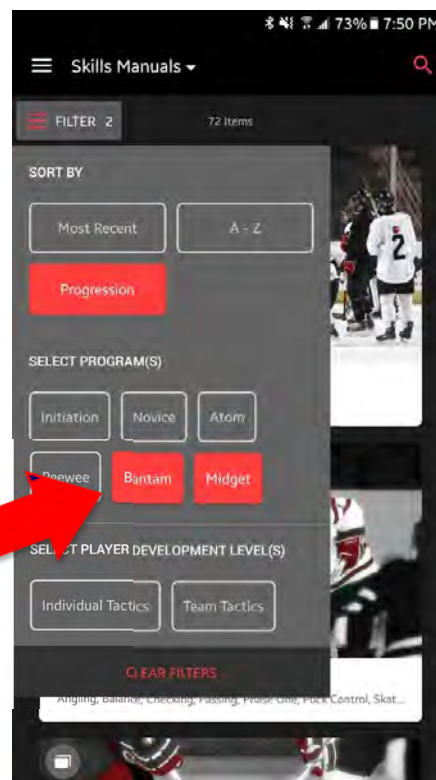
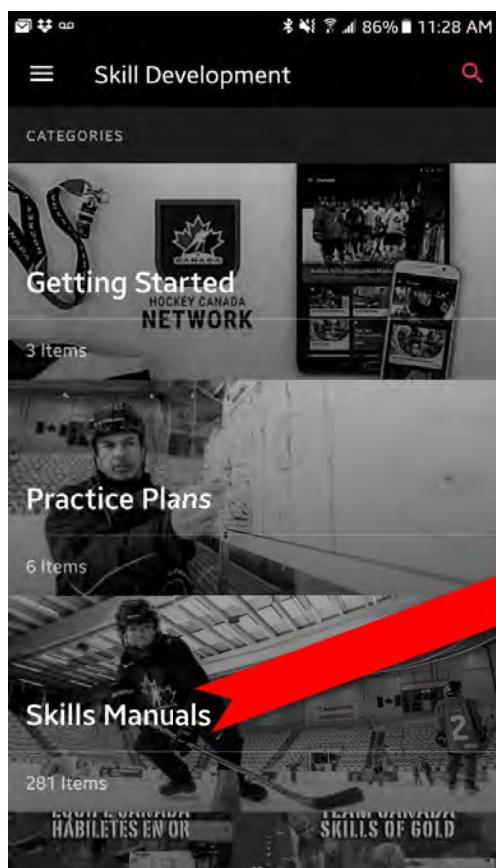


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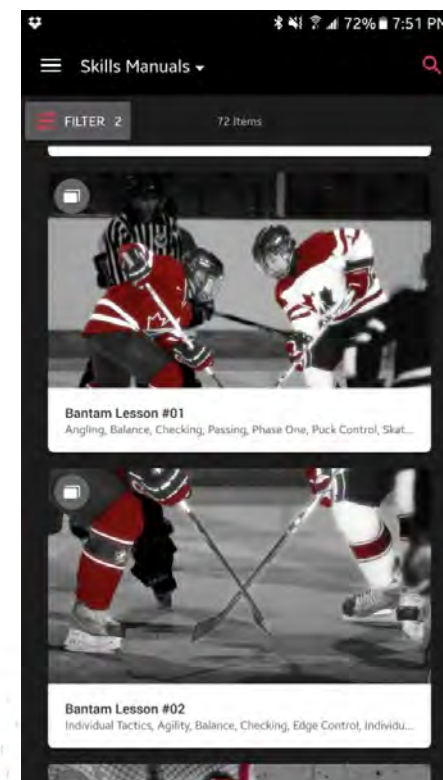
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Skill Development – Skills Manuals



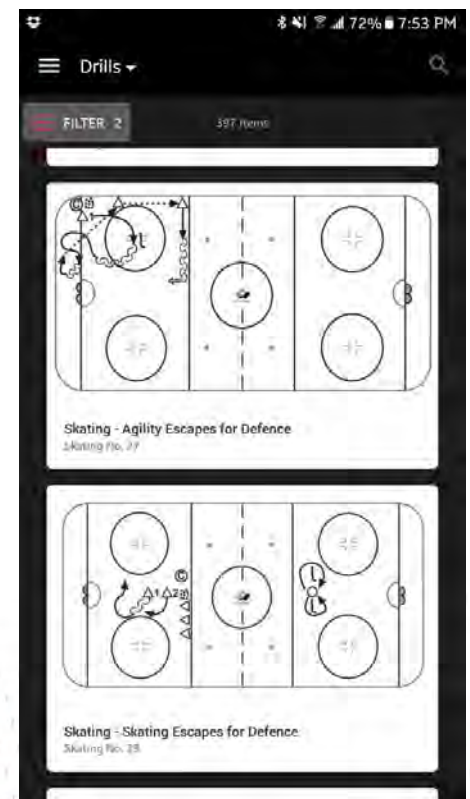
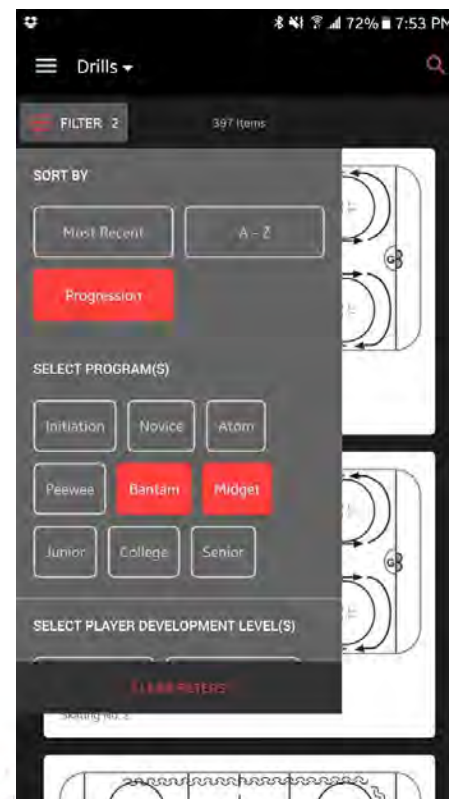
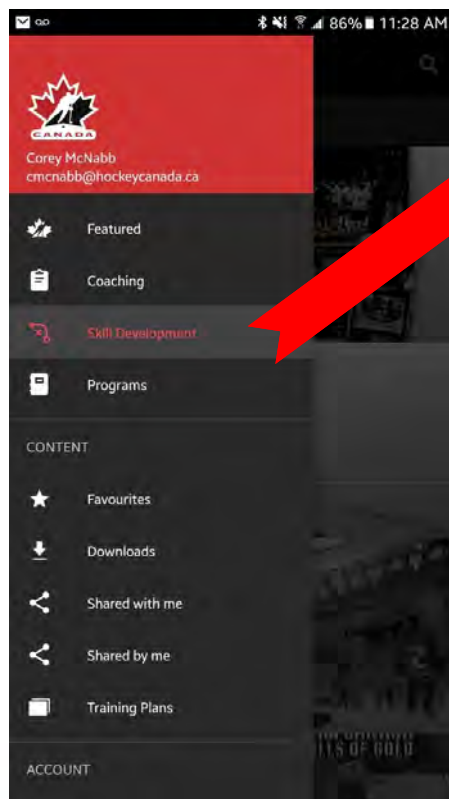
The Hockey Canada Skills Development U15 and U18 Manuals are broken up into 32 separate practice plans. Each individual drill can also be accessed.

Favorite, download and share an entire practice plan or individual drill



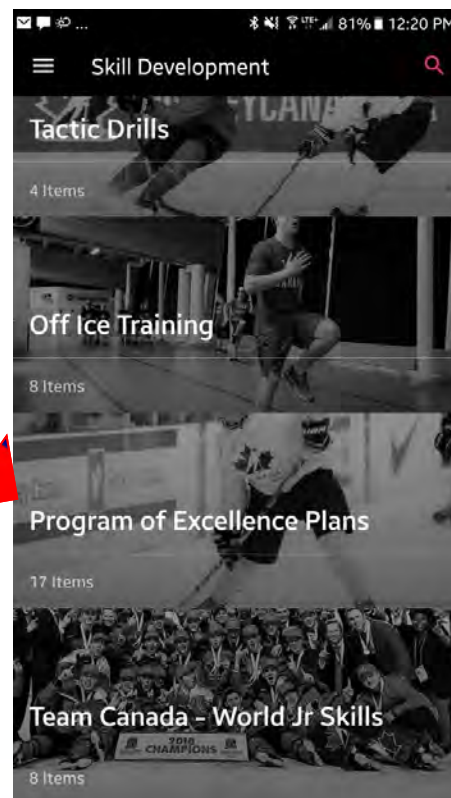
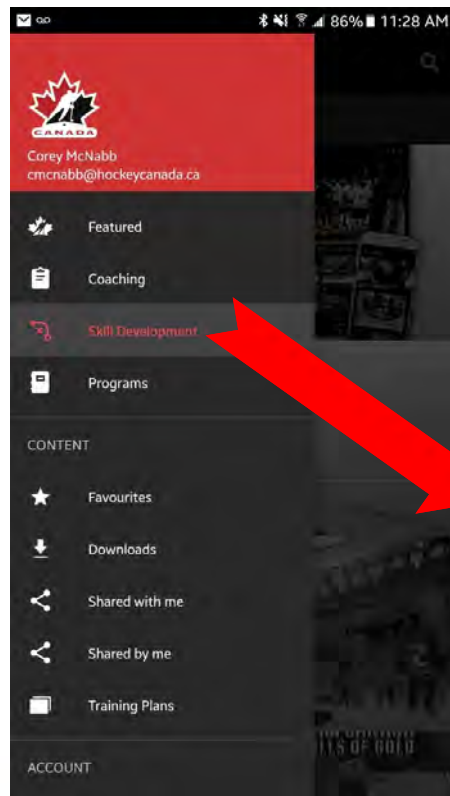
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Skill Development – U15 / U18 Skills



RESOURCES

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15 set practice plans put together by former Team Canada Coaches. Combinations of skills, tactics and team play in ready made practice plans.

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