

Lacrosse Skill Instruction

Skill name: Two Handed Cradle

Skill description: The two handed cradle is the most important skill and should be taught first. Mastery of this skill is a prerequisite to all other skill development. Cradling skills are used in catching and throwing, securing a ground ball and dodging.

Teaching points:

Use the four step method to teach technical skills.

1. Introduce the skill
 2. Demonstrate and explain the skill
 3. Have the player practice the skill
 4. Correct errors and provide feedback
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- 1) Introduce cradling to the players and the importance of mastering the skill. Show why it is important to cradle when running with the ball. Show how the ball falls out or is easily checked out of the stick.
 - 2) Demonstrate cradling slowly and from different perspectives; facing the players, from the side, left and right handed. Keep the demonstration and discussion simple and brief. Too much information is overload for a beginner.
 - a) Place the stick in your hand with the top hand a few inches from the head on the shaft and the bottom hand near or at the bottom of the stick. The top hand will do all the cradling work, the bottom hand will grip the stick loosely to allow the shaft to move (rotate)
 - b) The stick should run across the front of your body with the head of the stick to the left or right of your head and the bottom at the opposite hip.
 - c) With a ball in the stick slowly curl the wrist and arm in a coordinated movement toward your body allowing your arm and stick to move across your torso. The stick will now be more perpendicular to the ground.
 - d) Reverse the motion by “uncurling” your wrist and arm and bring the stick back to the original starting position.
 - 3) Have the players practice the skill in a group.
 - a) Move among the players and provide individual assistance and error correction.
 - b) Use cradling drills to have fun while developing the skill.
 - i) Relay races, cone races, etc.

4) Common errors and how to correct:

Error: Shaking the top hand side to side and the ball falls out of the stick.

Correction: Player does not understand how to curl the wrist and arm correctly. Put the ball in the cup of the players hand and have them curl their wrist and arm toward their body. Then have them do the same exercise with the stick only. Finally put ball back into the stick.

Error: Snapping the wrist rapidly with no arm motion and the ball falls out.

Correction: The player needs to synchronize arm and wrist curl movements. Stand behind the player and help him/her with the coordinated arm and wrist movement.