



LACROSSE

COACH'S HANDBOOK

"I'd rather play lacrosse six days a week and football on the seventh."

-Jim Brown

”

Whether you're BIG or small, fast or slow, there's a creative part for you in this sport. Find your strengths and roll with that.

-Lyle Thompson

Table Of Contents

This handbook is organized by skill. Various drills used to help with specific skills are found within the different sections. Often the drills help to develop multiple skills but their main objective determines which section they are found under.

01 — Stick skills, ball handling, stick tricks

02 — Line Drills

03 — Catching and Throwing

04 — Groundballs, man ball

05 — Fast Breaks

Remember: no player should be standing around for more than 30 seconds in a drill - you can always start a second drill next to one if there are too many players. Take the age of your players, subtract five and that is how long they can pay attention to a drill.

06 — Shooting

07 — Dodges

08 — Transitions

09 — Man to Man defense

10 — Checking

11 — Goalie Drills

12 — Team Games

13 — Face Offs

14 — Conditioning

CRADLING

Demonstrate keeping the stick above shoulders for cradling, and by waist. Learn one handed cradle, and what times to use it.



Develop a cradling routine to teach the kids to warm up their sticks. It is a series of fakes.

- 1. First cradle** is fake to the right (pump fake - exaggerated cradle to the right of the face. Half rotation
- 2. Fake** going from the inside on the right. Stick rotates out from the face side - half rotation and back.
- 3. Stick makes a full circle** - starts on face side, goes all the way round staying on the right side of the body.
- 4. Stick goes across the face** and back.
- Stick goes across the face to opposite shoulder, **rotates a full rotation**, then return stick to right side of the body.
- Stick goes across face to opposite shoulder, **rotates a full circle on its way back in front of the face**.

Stick Tricks

Stick tricks help with gross motor skills, and allow kids to become more comfortable manipulating their lacrosse sticks.



Land lacrosse ball on sidewall of stick head, toss in the air, then catch it with the sidewall.

Flip lacrosse ball up into the air, rotate stick and catch the ball on the back of the pocket. Then, repeat in reverse. Catching and throwing to self, while flipping stick.

Indian Pickup

Toss the ball in the air, hit it with the bottom half of the lacrosse stick, then catch it again.

Around the world, Toss the stick over your head, catch with your opposite hand, ball stays in stick.

Toss ball in the air, have your stick go around the ball once, then catch the ball before it hits the ground.

Cradle over head

Player starts in standing position, then sits while cradling, then lays down and cradles over head (over face). Without dropping the ball.



Start with a one handed cradle, then move to two hands. Cradle on side, then cradle in front of face as you go back into a laying position.

Pivot Drill

Pivot stick protections. Place team in pairs. The player with ball can only pivot. Their goal is to keep their shoulders between the ball and the defender. The defender can move and stick check only.



The Gauntlet

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Start by setting up cones in two parallel lines. five cones in each line. Each cone line a couple of steps apart.

Start by having two lines going at once, **players weave through the cones** switching hands at each cone (face dodges).

Then progress into a one line drill. Have players drop their ball and find a cone. One player per cone in each line, facing one another. Have them hold their sticks into the middle space. One player at a time weaves their stick through traffic. Not dropping. No checking at this point.

Line Drills - Shuttle lines

2

Variety and movement are key

Groundballs: to and away

Roll to the first person in the line, they pick up and run. **Call: Ball/Release**

Next roll to the **second person in line**, they roll it away from the line for the first person in line to pick up.

Finally, practice picking up **bouncing groundballs**. Bounce to the first person in the line. Have the first person run to the bounce and try and grab it before the second bounce.

Passing and Catching: To and Away

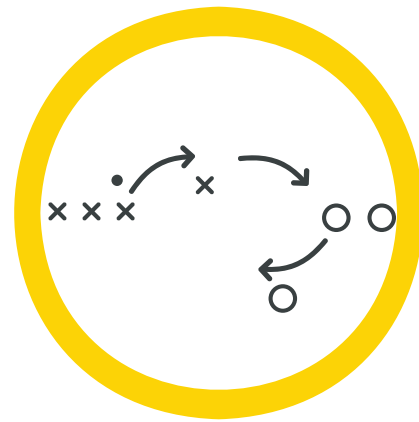
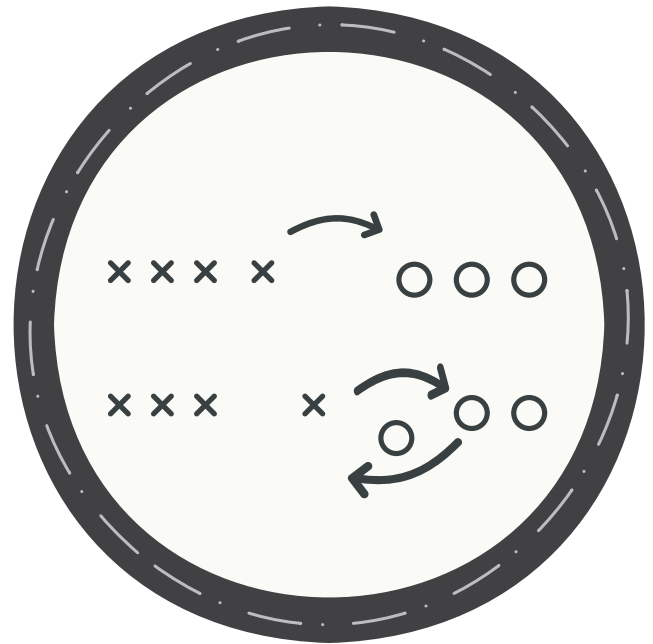
(Over the shoulder - both right and left sides - stick should be in the same hand as the shoulder you are looking over).

Start with the first person running toward the next line, **throw to the first person** in the line (Run to the ball - no standing catches - right and left hand). Then go to the back of the line.

Throw to the second person in line, have them throw an **over the shoulder pass** to the first person in the line as they run away.

Pass Around - Player passes to player first in line, then acts as dummy D so that the player with the ball can fake around them and throw around them.

End with Quick Sticks - Left and Right

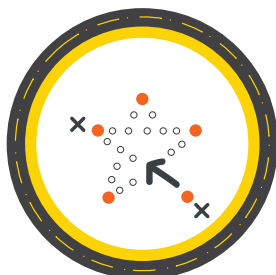


Over the Shoulder

Make sure that players have their top hands all the way at the top of their stick to catch over the shoulder passes.

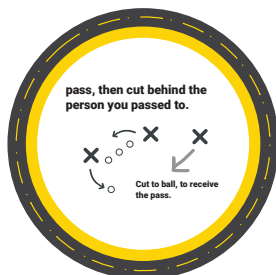
Catching & Throwing

There is nothing more important than a player's ability to catch and throw. Every practice should warm up these skills.



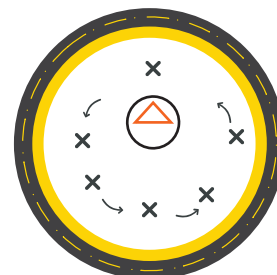
Star Drill

Set up five cones, each cone representing one point of the star. Have the players pass to the cone one away from their left (skip one line). Chase the pass, and run to the ball on the catch. To Challenge, spread these cones the entire length of a half field.



Weave

Have three players line up on the goal line. Place the ball with the player in the middle. The weave starts with the middle player passing to one side. They follow their pass, weaving behind the person they passed to, this is continuous. The key is to maintain spacing and to cut to the ball.



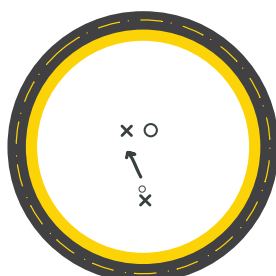
Timed wrap around

Have the offense fan out around the goal, time how long it takes to successfully get the ball around the goal. Catch outside hand, switch throw with outside hand.



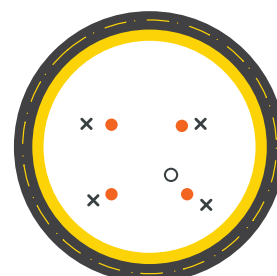
Feeds - from x to top

Place two players on the goal line, Have two top lines do a fake to get open, catch a feed shoot.



Triangle

Teams of three. Two players are on the same team, the person feeding the ball and the person trying to get open. The goal is to practice catching under pressure. Both the catcher and the defender start at the same cone and cut toward the feeder, the defender is trying to knock down or intercept the pass. If Catcher is successful, pass ball back to feeder. This can work with groundballs as well. Push off of defender to get open - V Cut.



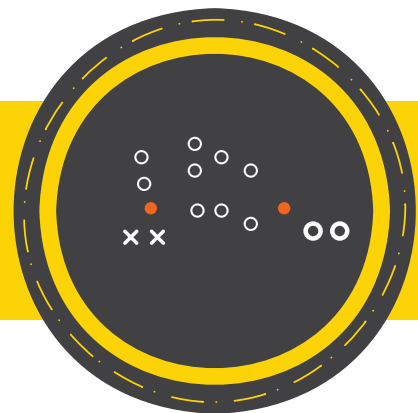
Monkey in the Middle

Place one defender to start in the inside of a square. Have four players around a square. Players can only hold onto the ball for five seconds, then they have to throw the ball. They can throw left right or diagonally. Any drop means defense changes out.

Groundballs

Team Games

Choke up, get low, drop your back hand - all are needed for a good groundball. Make sure to call "Ball" and "Man" when going after a groundball with a teammate. Men's lacrosse - remember you can kick the ball if it is stuck in too close to pick up.



King of the Hill

This is a last man standing groundball game. Have two or three pairs of lines going at once. This is a one on one groundball competition. If you win you move up to the right line. If you lose, move to the left line. Go until someone has won five times in the furthest right lane.

Musical Groundballs

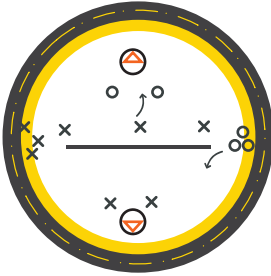
Use the circle from the middle of the field to do this drill (if there is no circle, use cones). Just like musical chairs, place lacrosse balls in the circle, have players run around the outside of the circle until the music stops. Players rush to pick up a ground ball. One without a ball steps out of the drill to practice cradle. Take out a lacrosse ball each time, one less than number of players.

Clean up the Garbage

Place 20 groundballs all around the front of the goal. Have two teams, of two going head to head. The teams have to go collect as many groundballs as they can. As there become fewer ground balls have them work together to win the ground balls (Man Ball) Pick up ball, place in team basket.

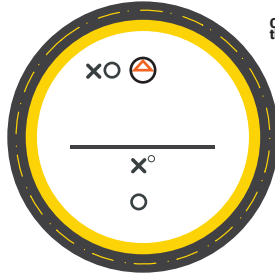
Fast Breaks & man down defense

Offense: Move the ball, no drops. Go to goal, only pass if forced to pass by defense.
 Defense: Slow the ball, force the pass and hopefully the error.



**Continuous 3v2
"West Genny's"**

Create two teams, have them line up at the 50 on opposite sides on the sideline. Have two start on defense. Start with a goalie clear to one side on offense. 3v2 starts from the top. Once the play ends with either a goal or a save the defense becomes the offense. Goalie clears to their teammate at the 50 and they run down to the other side to be on offense. When play is happening on the other half, have the next two defenders set up.



2v1 with trailing D

Defense - objective is to slow the ball and force the pass, or sell the weak side to give the goalie a better chance at a save.

Have four players in the drill at once. One D and one attack at the goal line extended. One attacker with the ball up by the restraining line (the 30). Have a trailing defender behind the attacker with the ball, about 4 feet behind. One the whistle the attack is going to goal, force the slide. Defense needs to talk and try to slow the ball so the D can catch up.



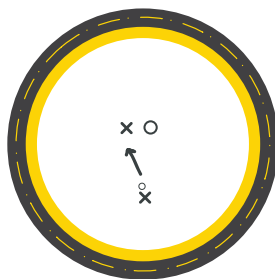
6v5

Have the offense fan out around the goal, time how long it takes to successfully get the ball around the goal. Catch outside hand, switch throw with outside hand.



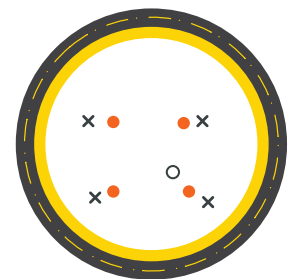
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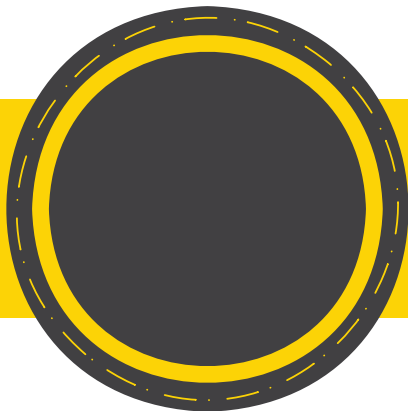
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Shooting

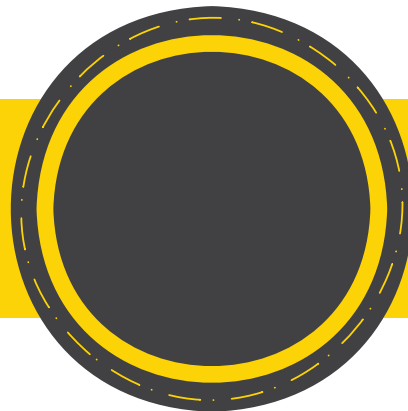
Power & Accuracy

Have players go through the motion of standing like a baseball pitcher. Teach them that a full rotation of their hips is where their power comes from. Teach over hand high to low first. Show where to position hands (further down the stick), show how foot placement impacts accuracy. Pull with bottom hand, push with top, follow through other side.



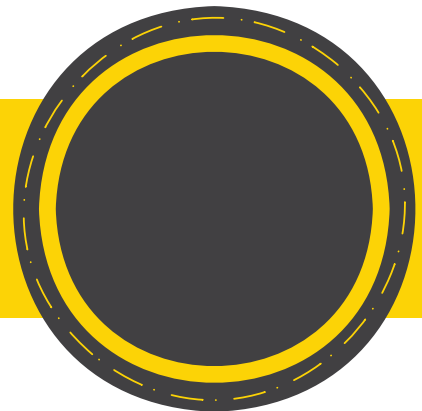
Fedex Drill

Place 5 balls around the perimeter of the attack zone. Give players 30 seconds to score as many shots as they can. The goal is to have them pick up and shoot, follow through on their shot and keep running in order to take as many shots as possible in 30 seconds.



Fake and Shoot

Players without defense, without goalie, do a quick dodge, followed by a quick release. No goalie for this drill, place pennys or cones in the corners for accuracy training.

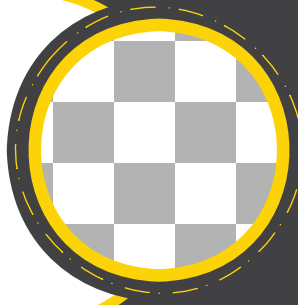


Crease Roll

1v1 around the crease. Question mark dodge. Teach footwork for defense, and how to fight to get under defnder for offense.

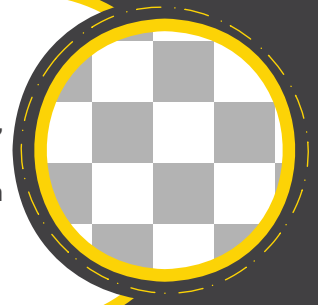
Face Dodge

Have ball start on their strong side, go across their face to the opposite shoulder, it stays there until they have passed the defender.



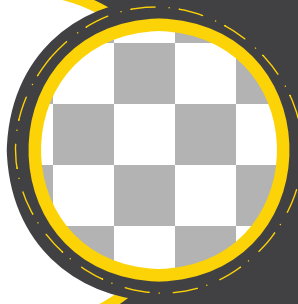
Pump Fake

Have ball on strong side, so one large cradle and back to strong side, then move past defender on strong side.



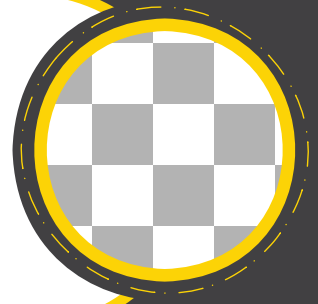
Roll Dodge

Step with off hand foot to the opposite foot of the defender, then roll with your back to the defender's face, switch hands as rolling. Try to maintain a straight course.



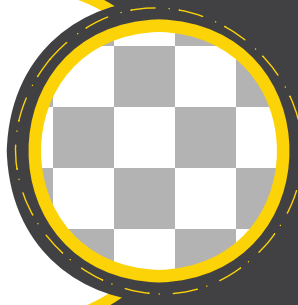
Stutter Step

Quick movement of feet, like fast feet, then a change of speed forward.



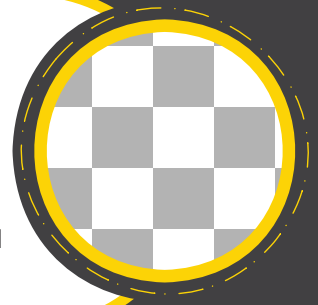
Question Mark

Good for crease rolls.



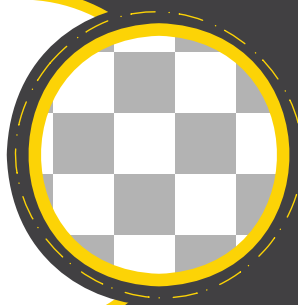
Pick and Roll

Set a pick on a teammate who is marked. Once the teammate uses the pick, you roll out of the pick and make a cut to the ball.



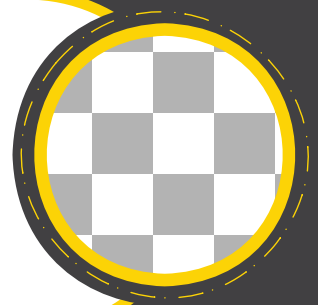
Rocker Step

Go through the steps of a roll dodge, but as you begin your roll, stop half way and roll back the same direction. A fake roll dodge.



Split Dodge

Take two hard steps on direction, quickly switch hands and go the opposite direction.



Midfield Transitions

Taking the ball from defense to offense is essential, as is playing defense on the transition.

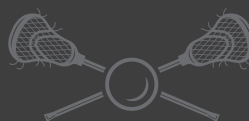


Goalie Clears

Start with a fake shot (Just a pass from the offense to the goalie), then have the goalie yell clear, have the defense run out to the sides, offense now plays defense trying to make the clear.

The ride

Practice transitioning from the 50 to the box. Place cones where players would be positioned. Mark everyone. Practice cutting and getting open, running to space.



Gator Ball

- like team handball. Players can only take four steps with the ball and then have to pass or pivot. No checking - emphasis on off ball movement, cut backs to ball, picks.

You can always pass backwards.

Checking Footwork first!

Poke Checks,
and lifts!



Footwork No stick drills

Alley Lacrosse - Set up an alley way of cones. Do a 1v1, One defender, one attacker. Have the defender play without a stick. Put their gloves together and push the player out of bounds, hands together. Work to force them to their off hand.

Island Hopping - Set up a large square with cones, place smaller cone squares in each corner, those are the islands. Players each start on an island, one defender in the middle. Players on the corners have to hop islands and find open space. The defender in the middle (the pirate), is trying to check players when they are in between islands.

Crease rolls, crease defense



Team Defense/man to man

Working together - Talk

Eye of the Storm - in the center of a circle is a cone, the defense is defending the cone. Attack is lined up in a large circle around the cone. In order to score a point the offense has to place a foot on the center cone while holding the lacrosse ball in their stick.

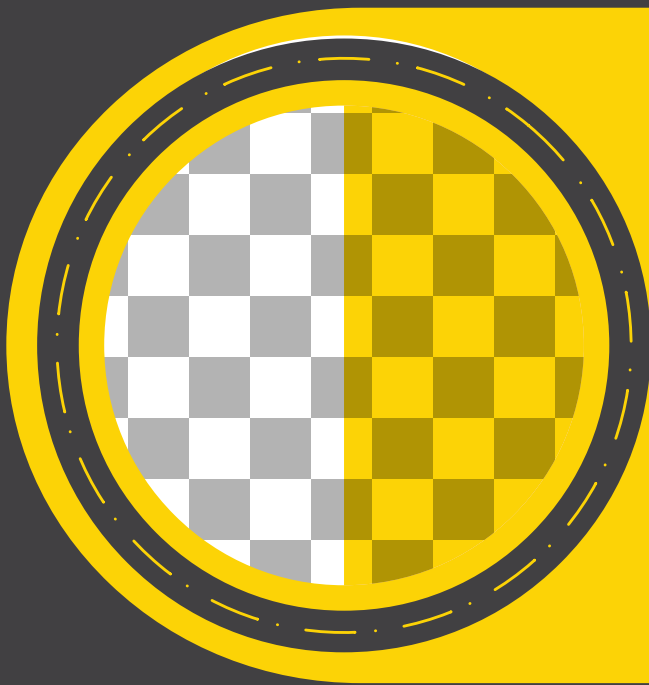


5v5 in a square.

With one player always on D.

Defense is always man up.

Have the one player wear a penny.



**Team defense
relies on
communication!**

Goalie Drills

Always warm up your goalie!

Always warm your goalie up, never shoot as hard as you can during warm ups. Warming up your goalie is not about you scoring, it is about them gaining confidence and practicing their footwork.

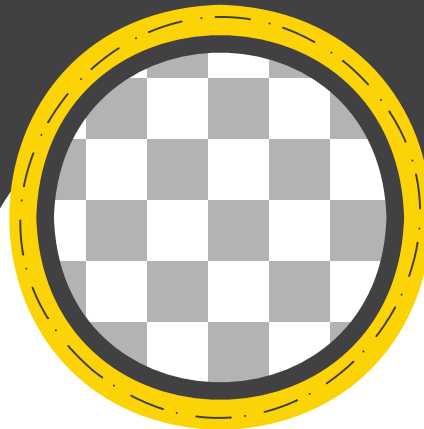


Walk the Line

Most important fundamentals drill for goalies. Have goalie straddle a line on the field. Making steps to practice the footwork. Muscle memory work. Practice stick side high, low. Visualize the saves and footwork. Step to the ball.

Cross Crease

Feed cross crease and have the goalie follow the ball and rotate to correct post to make the save.



Feeds from X

Feed from X (directly behind the goal, or back left, back right). Have the goalie follow the ball and rotate to correct post to make the save.

Team Games

Game Like Scenarios

Angry Birds - Set up four or five teams depending on size of group. Teams of three work best. Place hula hoops or cones down for each team's nest. Place three balls in each nest. Set a two minute timer. The goal is to steal as many "eggs" from other team nests as possible, and return them to their own nests. The team with the largest number of eggs at the end of the two minutes wins the round. Change the rules for rounds depending on age and skill level. There could be a no checking rule, a minimum pass rule (have to pass to a teammate before placing an egg in your nest).



Steal the Bacon

Divide the group into two teams. Give each player on the team a number (They should have a matching number on the other team). Set up a tiny field. Place the ball in the middle of the field and call out a number. Kids from both teams then rush to pick up the ball and go to goal.

Numbers

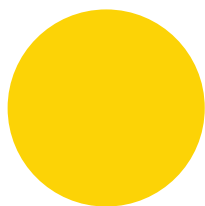
Create two teams. One starts on offense, one on defense. Each team does a huddle before each round (there are 5 rounds if there are five kids on each team, more rounds if there are more kids). Each team can decide how many players to send out each round, but can only send each number once. They can send five out, or four, or three, two, or one. They do not know how many players the other team will send out. It may be a man up situation, or man down.

Olympics

Divide the team into mini teams. Let each team pick a country name. Then have each team compete in a series of games (drills, as a team).

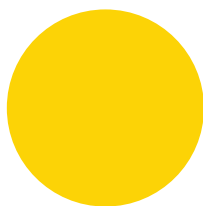
Face Off Drills

The team who wins the face offs wins the game.



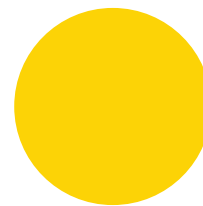
Speed Whistle

Line up in face off position and clamp and reset with every whistle. Whistle gets faster as the drill progresses until its almost continuous.



Pinch and Pop

Clamp on the whistle then push the ball forward and scopp the ball.






Clamp and Heavy Rake

Clamp on the whistle and pull back so hard through your legs that the ball goes to the strong side wing middle coming off the wing line.

Add face offs to more drills. Have as many drills as possible begin with a face off. It will make practice more game like, and have players moving more.

Draw Controls

-  Practice watching the ref for draws. You will see them whistle before hearing the whistle. Begin twisting your wrist when you see them begin the whistle.
-  Practice losing a draw on purpose. Allow your circle, midfielders to know that the ball is coming to them. Have a “play” call so that the center knows to let the other player “win” the draw.
-  Practice one hand ball controls. These are especially useful for draw controls. Toss the ball up for your midfielders to catch one handed and continue with a forward run. Cacth one handed, bring down to a controlled catch

Conditioning Games

Agility ladder - Multiple reps through an agility ladder work well for endurance.

Dice sprints - set out five cones, four in the corners of a square one in the middle. Number them 1-4. Player stands on the middle cone. Have kids run to the cones you call out, touch them and back. Fast feet until a number is called.

Team Running - have kids lay down in a circle with their feet to the outside of the circle. One runner starts by running around the circle. They hop over the legs of their teammates. Challenge: Have players hold their legs up in the air until their turn to run start and end at your spot. Push up position works too.

Relay Race - Divide team into four groups, set cones out in front of each teams line. Three cones, each about 10 yards away, 30 yards away in total. Have team sprint, touch each cone and come back to the line, next person goes.

Catch the other team - Divide team into two groups. Place them on opposite sides of one half of a field. Have them run in the same direction. The goal is to catch the back of the other team. They are sprinting in a circle chasing the other group. Use just half of a field.

