



Player Development Program

2023



A message from the Duxbury Youth Lacrosse Board of Directors:

The Duxbury Youth Lacrosse (DYL) program was established in 1988 to teach boys the game of lacrosse. Each year between 40 and 60 boys have started and learned to play the game through the program. Today, DYL has nearly 300 youth players and an estimated 1,600 “alumni.” The program has had hundreds of volunteer coaches. Some past players are current coaches!

The number one “development plan” for youth sports is **fun**. When kids have fun, they keep coming back for more. After fun, we measure success by the enthusiasm with which the boys play the game, the lacrosse fundamentals they develop, and the respect they have for themselves, their coaches, and their opponents.

The Player Development Program (PDP) is a coaching tool that is instructive, not prescriptive; it provides general benchmarks that will bring some consistency to the program and will support the development of fundamentally sound lacrosse players.

The PDP achieves four goals:

1. Explains the purpose of DYL and the values we feel are important. In this way, it will aide DYL in remaining true to its mission over time.
2. Provides general guidelines for developing all players who participate in our program, regardless of their experience, athleticism, or skill.
3. Allows coaches to focus on developing each player while ensuring that there is general consistency from one level to another.
4. Aligns us with the Duxbury High School program in terms of basic teaching, values, and fundamentals.

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Thank you for your support of Duxbury Youth Lacrosse and to those who make it great each year!

-Duxbury Youth Lacrosse Board of Directors

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Duxbury Youth Lacrosse (DYL) strives to provide a preparatory lacrosse education to grade school boys of Duxbury, Massachusetts in a fun and safe environment. The following Player Development Program outlines both macroscopic and microscopic goals of the organization, the grade-based levels, and the individual teams and coaches.

One of the program-wide goals is to construct a **player profile** by identifying the developed traits of a “quintessential” DYL athlete.

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse players should characteristically possess the following attributes:

- **Sound fundamentals**
- **Passion for the sport of lacrosse**
- **Confidence & competitiveness**

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse players should embody a town program that develops:

- **Character through lacrosse**
- **Community through lacrosse**
- **Culture through lacrosse**

Major Goals of the DYL Organization

- To get every boy in Duxbury to try the sport of lacrosse
- For every DYL athlete to return the following season after having a positive experience
- Maintain a healthy partnership with the Duxbury High School (DHS) Lacrosse programs
- Graduate many versatile athletes who are passionate, coachable, and prepared for DHS
- Emphasize fundamentals and stickwork at all levels
- Develop goalies at all levels
- For DYL teams to be “hard to play against” but also a “pleasure to play against”
- Commit to the development of all players (both “A” and “B”) through engagement and positive coaching
- For DYL to be vocal and influential leaders in the Town Pride League
- For DYL to honor the sacred origins of the game and to have a positive impact on the communities of Duxbury, the South Shore, Massachusetts, and New England

Major Goals of DYL Coaching

- Be a role model: honor the game through words, actions, and body language
- Be a teacher: properly prepare all athletes for the next level
- Be a strategist: promote hard work at practice that translates to success in games
- Establish a culture in which fun is a priority, all team members are valued contributors, all team members are accountable, and safety is nonnegotiable
- Recruit organizational help (assistants and team parents)
- Make practice plans, make a season plan
- Communicate cleanly, clearly, and concisely

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse players should characteristically possess sound fundamentals, passion for the sport of lacrosse, confidence, and competitiveness

FUNDAMENTALS

Create athletes by focusing on basics

- Stickwork
- Passing/Catching
- Footwork
- Groundballs

Reinforce “good habits” at all levels

- Stick fitness
- Holding a stick vertically
- Shooting overhand
- Two-handed groundballs with a low approach and acceleration
- Passing and catching every day

Correct “bad habits” at all levels

- Low quality sticks / pockets
- Holding stick at the hip
- Shooting sidearm
- One-handed groundballs / raking
- “Chasing sticks”
- Walking on the field

CONFIDENCE

Build up a player’s self-esteem

- Repetition = success = confidence
- Understand the value of self-efficacy
 - “I believe in you”
 - “Believe in yourself”
- Use the magic ratio for corrections
 - 3 compliments
 - 1 constructive criticism
- Fill a player’s emotional tank
- Build progression into practices
- Build progression into season plan
- Revisit drills and concepts and focus on improvements
- Create leaders out of players who might not be stars

PASSION

Instill a life-long love affair with lacrosse

- Make practices fun
- Make games fun
- Always end events on a high note
- Embrace the positivity in learning
- Get players to watch lacrosse
 - Stay for siblings’ games
 - DHS MIAA games
 - NCAA College games
 - PLL/NLL Professional games
 - FIL International games
- Organize outings
- Get players to talk about lacrosse
- Encourage lacrosse journaling
- Coaches vs players
 - Traditions/Rite of passage
 - Team building
 - Shows kids that lacrosse can be a lifetime sport
- Encourage players to take a break and play other sports so there is excitement to return each spring

COMPETITIVENESS

“Competitiveness is not a dirty word!”

- Winning games should be a goal, just not winning-at-all-costs
- Understand: you don’t have to win to be competitive
- Build games and competition into drills and practices
- Create challenges (like SNYPR)
 - Position-wide / Team-wide
 - Level-wide / Program-wide
- Reward effort, celebrate results
- Balance individual goals and accomplishments with team cohesion and collaboration
- The Dragon is a powerful mascot for kids to channel

Building Character

DYL is a perfect vehicle to develop character in impressionable boys and young men. Through lacrosse, DYL athletes should learn how to win with class, lose with dignity, persevere, and respond to challenges. DYL players should learn the value of accountability, leadership, discipline, humility, and respect.

DYL must promote Respecting the ROOTS of the game

R = Rules

O = Opponents

O = Officials

T = Teammates

S = Self

DYL Coaches have the opportunity to build character by outlining their expectations at the start of the season, by mentoring players when frustrations get the best of them, and by demonstrating these elements of character at all times.

Strengthening Communities

In lacrosse, players should find community in their team, the program, their town, their league, and in the sport at large. Players should understand their obligation to their community from the most local level (making it easy for teammates to be successful) to the most global level (leaving the place better than when you found it).

DYL should make it unmistakably clear that the town should come first (e.g. wearing town issued or DYL branded equipment and apparel is expected) and that all members are encouraged to give back to the community as much as possible.

Shaping Culture

DYL coaches establish the culture and all team members are expected to embrace and personify it.

- End practices by thanking the coaches*
- End games by thanking the officials*
- End games with a handshake (gloves off, shake hands, say “good game”)*
- Complaining about calls is prohibited, excuses are unwelcome*
- Players should learn the history of the game*
- Players should arrive on time, prepared to start*
- Team members should own mistakes and commit to fixing them*
- Celebrate turnovers, groundballs, clears, and assists as much as goals*

Coaches shape a culture that fosters sportsmanship, selflessness, and responsibility over dishonor, selfishness, and excuse-making.

A Common Thread

Grade-to-grade, level-to-level, coach-to-coach, Duxbury Youth Lacrosse should share a common thread of concepts, terminology, and strategies so that each DYL athlete has a comparable lacrosse experience regardless of which year they were born.

Concepts

- Hammer the fundamentals
- Keep everything fun
- Keep everything simple
- Keep everything natural
 - **Break everything down to a 2-on-1 game**
 - Create it offensively
 - Recognize it defensively
- Give focus to “unsettled” situations in practices as they dominate the youth game
- Make the goalie position special
 - Building confidence is the top priority
 - Attention at every practice
 - Make goalie a captain and let goalies lead the warm-ups
- Make outside-of-practice wall-ball an expected part of the training
- Individual Mantra (offense): “Move feet to get the hands free to get the ball out cleanly”
- Individual Mantra (defense): The reverse: “Don’t let them get their hands free...”

Terminology

1-3-2 Formation (etc.)

First number = number of players behind the GLE

Second number = number of players along the crease area

Third number = number of players aligned at the top of the box

“The Box” or “The Triple Threat Position”

An area about 2’ x 2’ above, in front of, and to the side of the head where the stick head should be located, perfect for catching, throwing, and cradling

“Closing the Gate”

A defensive technique used against a ball-carrier to take away his alley to the net by placing the top foot towards the corner of the field, driving him away from the goal.

“Drop-In” or “Pack-it-In”

Position of off-ball defenders who move into the hole to support the defender covering the ball carrier.

“The Hole”

The area immediately outside of the crease in front of the goal.

Slide / Recovery communication

“Ball” or “I’ve got ball”: *On ball defender*

“Right” or “I’m right”: *Defends man right of ball-carrier, defends ball-carrier if he dodges right*

“Left” or “I’m left”: *Defends man left of ball-carrier, defends ball-carrier if he dodges left*

“One” or “I’m one”: *“Hot” man on the crease, he slides if ball-carrier dodges to the middle*

“Two” or “I’m two”: *His man is two passes away, he slides second to cover man left by “one”*

“Three” or “I’m three”: *His man is three passes away, he slides third to cover man left by “two”*

“Back” or “I’m back”: *His man is at “X,” he does not slide*

Strategies

Offense

Offense begins when we gain possession in our defensive end.

“Settled offense” is when we develop coordinated movement:

“100” = 2-1-3 formation

“200” = 2-2-2- formation

“300” = 1-3-2 formation

“400” = 1-4-1 formation

Lacrosse can be broken down into a very simple concept:

CREATE A 2-ON-1 SITUATION!

Most goals are scored off an unsettled situation. DYL must stress the importance of winning every ground ball. The second we win the ground ball, we pass it to the first teammate we see. The result is almost always a 2-on-1 situation (instant offense).

Other ways to create a 2-on-1 situation:

- Dodging a defender
- Picks (off-ball preferred)
- Cutting (beating your man off-ball)

Six fundamentals of offense to teach:

1. Passing and catching on the run (the faster the better)
2. The v-cut (perimeter ball movement)
3. Clearing through (cut to crease with stick up) or always occupy your man off-ball
4. Recognize and execute a 2-on-1
5. Always step to the ball (as in every single time the ball is thrown to you)
6. Dodging and shooting

Defense

1-on-1 Defense

- Simply put: stay between your man and the goal
- If you play good 1-on-1 defense, a slide isn't necessary
- 1-on-1 defense is based on footwork
 - Defenders have to be as fast backwards / sideways as their man is forward
 - Defenders need to get low
 - Defenders' proper stick position is critical
- Checks should be to the hands only
 - Do not allow checks to the head of the stick
 - Disrupt the ball-carrier's ability to make a fundamentally sound & balanced pass/shot
- Identify and take away opponent's strong hand (over-play the strong side)
 - Make the opponent beat you with their weak hand

Team Defense

- Communication is essential
 - Goalie is the “quarterback”
 - Teammates should know and use the team terminology

- o Defenders should not shout out randomly
- o All defenders have a responsibility that likely changes with each pass
- Off-ball defense
 - o All defenders should have one eye on their man, one eye on the ball (create triangle)
 - o When moving to or through the hole, sticks should be up and in the passing lanes
- Slide packages
 - o Older levels (6th, 7th, 8th) should learn and understand responsibilities of:
 - Adjacent slides: “Left one,” “Left two,” “Right one,” “Right two,” “Three”
 - Crease slides: “One,” “Two,” “Three”
- Individual strategies in a team defense to understand:
 - o Covering a crease player (being on the ball-side of your man)
 - o Covering a cutter (keeping your head on a swivel)
 - o Understanding how to “drop-in” to help out (“pack it in”)
 - o Know where and when to get to the hole
 - When in doubt, get to the hole, find a man from the inside out

Clearing / Riding

Basic Clearing Strategies

- Clearing is simple if we can pass and catch
- Find the 2-on-1
 - o Spread the field
 - o Goalie gives us an extra player; it’s his job to find the 2-on-1
- Hurry but don’t rush
- Wing defenders get wide (banana cuts) and stay ahead of goalie
- Clear the ball up the sideline all the way to “X”
 - o Avoid bringing the ball up the middle of the field
- If defenseman is clearing the ball up the sideline toward you, head straight up the field
 - o Far-side middle should stay back to remain on-sides

Basic Riding Strategies

- Defense begins when we turn the ball over on offense
- Zone it up – 3 across
- Force the clearing team to make the cross-field pass
- Take away their strength (i.e. stud ball-carrier)
- Force them to the middle (when they do carry it)
- Weak side attackman gets to the middle
 - o If everyone is doing their job, that’s where the ball will wind up

EMO /MDD

Keep it simple! Apply basics of offense and defense with some modifications to consider:

Extra Man Offense (EMO)

- 1-3-2 (diamond) works well but a 3-3 (0-3-3) places all shooters out front
- Find the extra man (learn to freelance)

Man Down Defense (MDD)

- Box-and-One zone preferred (wheel and hub with spokes)
- Pack it in (arrive at man when ball does then drop-in after pass)
- Hustle
- Don’t play man behind
- Do whatever it takes to get last second check on shooter

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse Development Plans

The following five pages are the DYL development plans specific to a level (grade or grades). They are designed to give guidance to coaches on focal points, benchmarks, and strategy goals. Each plan also identifies corresponding skills and tactics and categorizes them into three groups:

1. Proficiency Level Skills
2. Developing Level Skills
3. Exposure Level Skills

Proficiency Level Skills are the tools that players are expected to be competent in (as a generality) by the end of the season. These are the skills that should dominate a season's focus. **Developing Level Skills** are the tools that players are expected to have comfort with (as a generality) by the end of the season, with room for growth and improvement. These skills should be regular components of practices. **Exposure Level Skills** are tools that players should be introduced to by the end of the season. While the preponderance of time and focus should be spent on Proficiency and Developing Level Skills, coaches should periodically inject Exposure Level Skills into season planning, especially if teams are experiencing fast growth and game success.

Notes & Disclaimers

- A. Not every single player at the level is going to meet the benchmarks set forth in the development plan and some players will be proficient at Developing Level Skills quicker than others. These plans are meant to define the general scope of the level's abilities and goals.
- B. For Proficient Level Skills that have been defined as such at earlier levels, some planning will need to be conducted for "review" and "reacclimation." In other words, nothing is to be presumed and all skills will need to be worked on at every level in the organization.
- C. 5th and 6th Grade development plans are separate (not combined like other grades/levels) because of the difference in format, playing field size, and the addition of the long-pole in 6th.
- D. For combined grade development plans, one major difference between the lower grade and the upper grade is the pace and the intensity. While the skills might fall into the same categories for each, the speed with which they are executed and the approach to working the skills should differ. In fact, on the whole, as an organization, there should be a noticeable difference in both pace and intensity as players graduate to the next grade/level.
- E. There really isn't a discernible difference between "A" team plans and "B" team plans. "B" teams should have the same curriculum, but perhaps with more time and patience to learn it.
- F. These development plans are merely guidelines and not checklists nor report cards. If in the course of a few games a coach feels the level is either far behind or way ahead of the plan, adjustments could and should be made to keep the players engaged, appropriately challenged, and still having fun.

1st/2nd Grade Development Plan

Game format: 7 v 7 (2 attackmen, 2 midfielders, 2 defenders, 1 goalie)

Field: Small field

Atypical rules: Face-offs could be optional, offsides is corrected on-the-fly, passing rules in place

Proficiency Level Skills

Stick skills (in a quality stick)

Cradling

Hand Placement

Holding stick “In the Box”

Groundballs

Object of the Game

-To move the ball to the other team’s half of the field and score in their net.

Developing Level Skills

Throwing

Catching

Shooting

Passing to open man - “One More”

Footwork

Weak-hand skills

Understanding the different positions

Exposure Level Skills

1-on-1 defense

Basic faceoff concept

1 or 2 dodge moves

Basic rules of the game

Basic lacrosse terminology

Tactics & Game Emphases

In a 1st / 2nd grade game, the ball will be on the ground most of the time and it’s a sure bet there will likely be a half dozen or more players huddled over it trying to pick it up. It’s ambitious to expect any amount of settled lacrosse and therefore challenging to outline appropriate team-oriented tactics for this level. However, players should be taught a few basic principles of operating as a group:

1. In a groundball scrum, trust that your teammates will come up with the ball and be ready to be a passing option for them once they do.
2. On offense, if everyone spreads out, it will make it harder for the other team to play defense and easier to make good shots on net.
3. On defense, keep track of your assigned player and stay with him. If everyone does this, the other team will have a very hard time scoring on you.
4. The most important thing you can do as a team is talk to one another. Tell each other you are open (when you are). Help each other remember which way to run after you pick up a groundball. Call out the number of the player you are covering on defense. Talk to each other and good things will happen!

3rd/4th Grade Development Plan

Game format: 7 v 7 (2 attackmen, 2 midfielders, 2 defenders, 1 goalie)

Field: Small field

Atypical rules: Offending player subs out after fouls, goalies cannot breach midfield line

Proficiency Level Skills

Stick skills (in a quality stick)	Footwork
Groundballs	Shooting
Throwing	Understanding the different positions
Catching	Basic rules of the game
Passing to open man – “One more”	

Developing Level Skills

Weak-hand skills	One-handed cradle
1-on-1 defense	Basic rules / terminology
Basic faceoff moves	Communication
Dodging	Stick checks (poke & lift)

Exposure Level Skills

Ball protection (using outside hand)	Basic clearing / riding
Clearing through (off-ball offense)	Wing middle faceoff responsibility
Fast breaks	

Tactics & Game Emphases

Coaches should still expect the ball to be on the ground for most of a 3rd / 4th grade game but that shouldn't deter the teachers of the game from getting the players comfortable with “shape.” While practices should be dominated by groundballs, transition, and unsettled attacks on the net, the game certainly starts to resemble team lacrosse as the players will know it for the rest of their playing careers and so coaches need to start developing team tactics to augment the individual skills we are building at this level.

Having the players form a diamond (one player at X, one player at the top of the box, two players slightly north of the GLE) is a foundation to create offense. When we slowly but steadily introduce picks, clearing through, and moving toward one another for passes we will start seeing better opportunities to take high percentage shots on goal.

For team defense, we still put a heavy premium on 1-on-1 defensive skills emphasizing that good 1-on-1 defense is enough to be a challenge to opponents. Talking to one another, listening to the goalie (e.g. “tighten up”), and making sure that they stick to their assigned player will make for a formidable defensive team.

This is the time we also start to round out the nuances of the game by introducing clearing, riding, and two-man faceoff strategies.

5th Grade Development Plan

Game format: 8 v 8 (2 attackmen, 3 midfielders, 2 defenders, 1 goalie)

Field: Modified field

Atypical rules: No counts, goalies cannot breach midfield line

Proficiency Level Skills

Stick skills (in a quality stick)	Shooting	Faceoffs
Groundballs	Dodging	1-on-1 defense
Throwing	Understanding rules	Stick checks
Catching	Terminology	Communication
Footwork	One-handed cradle	Understanding positions

Developing Level Skills

Weak-hand skills	Fast breaks
Ball protection	Clearing / riding
Clearing through	Wing middies face-off responsibility

Exposure Level Skills

Motion offense	Extra Man Offense (EMO)
Off-ball skills	Man Down Defense (MDD)
Team defense – sliding	Picks

Tactics & Game Emphases

The addition of a third midfielder gives the 5th grade team a new dynamic and a new shape to get comfortable with. Settled offenses could make use of a 1-2-2 “open” formation or a 1-3-1 formation with a player on the crease. Clearing through and creating space becomes a mighty tool for prolific offensive opportunities and players should get comfortable with moving as a team (perhaps as simple as replacing areas previously occupied by a teammate).

On defense the team begins to understand “sloughing” or “tightening up” to the hole to minimize easy shots. Once that concept becomes ingrained, sliding can be introduced starting with terminology and communication. Players understanding that they can help one another (if and only if their teammate is beaten by a ball-carrier) so long as another teammate takes their place and the initially burned defenseman recovers back to the hole for a new assignment. Teaching an effective slide (either from the crease or from the adjacent defenders covering “right” and “left”) is no easy feat and baby steps should be taken to develop this significant team-oriented defensive tactic.

At this level players might start to gravitate towards specific positions. While it’s great to identify goalies and focus their attention on that critical position, Duxbury Youth Lacrosse believes in versatile athletes and an effort should be made to rotate players through different positions, if not quarter-to-quarter certainly game-to-game.

6th Grade Development Plan

Game format: 10 v 10 (3 attackmen, 3 midfielders, 3 defenders, 1 goalie)

Field: Full field

Atypical rules: No counts, no zone defense

Proficiency Level Skills

Stick skills (in a quality stick)

Shooting

Faceoffs

Groundballs

Dodging

1-on-1 defense

Throwing

Understanding rules

Stick checks

Catching

Terminology

Communication

Developing Level Skills

Weak-hand skills

Clearing / riding

Ball protection

Wing middies face-off responsibility

Clearing through

Long-poles

Exposure Level Skills

Motion offense

Extra Man Offense (EMO)

Off-ball skills

Man Down Defense (MDD)

Team defense – sliding

Long Stick Midfielders

Picks

Tactics & Game Emphases

6th Grade lacrosse is when the sport starts to look the way it will look for the rest of their playing careers. The game is 10 versus 10 on a full-length field with long poles and most of the high school rules (with a few league modified exceptions).

Settled offense pits six players against six for new shapes and formations to implement including the very popular (and effective) 1-3-2 in which the attackmen form a triangle around the goal and the midfielders form a triangle with a player on the crease and two near the top of the restraining box. Opposing defenses will likely be bigger, faster, and more agile than they were in 5th grade and formidable teams will be able to start sliding and recovering with frequency. Creating separation and space to pass and shoot becomes more challenging and the team must work together with motion, cuts, clearing-through, picks, and quick crisp passes to create 2-on-1 situations.

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse should field those formidable teams on defense with smart positioning, fundamentally sound footwork, and pristine communication (with effective sliding as a fail-safe). The addition of long poles (while requiring a learning curve) allows players to cover more ground in less time and when used properly to better disrupt skipped passes and to win pivotal groundball battles. Worth noting that the ball will still find its way to the ground more than you might think and continuing to focus on unsettled lacrosse (transitions, fast breaks, clears) is still the best path to success at this level.

7th/8th Grade Development Plan

Game format: 10 v 10 (3 attackmen, 3 midfielders, 3 defenders, 1 goalie)

Field: Full field

Atypical rules: No counts for “B” teams, no zone defense

Proficiency Level Skills

Stick skills (in a quality stick)	Understanding rules	Understanding positions
Groundballs	Terminology	Ball protection
Throwing	One-handed cradle	Clearing through
Catching	Faceoffs	Fast breaks
Footwork	1-on-1 defense	Wing middle FO responsibility
Shooting	Stick checks	
Dodging	Communication	

Developing Level Skills

Weak-hand skills	Extra Man Offense
Clearing / riding	Man Down Defense
Long-poles	Long Stick Midfielders
Motion offense	Checking (body)
Off-ball skills	Advanced faceoff maneuvers
Team defense – sliding	Positional specialty skills

Exposure Level Skills

High School Expectations	*Nutrition / Athleticism / Maintenance
*Leadership Skills	*Off-field priorities
*Size / Speed / Pace	*Grades / Safety / Behavior / Accountability

Tactics & Game Emphases

7th and 8th grade lacrosse games should start resembling high school lacrosse games perhaps minus the size and speed of the athletes. We expect the ball to be less on the ground or in chaotic transition and more controlled in a developed offense, which could be a fast-paced attack of the opponent’s goal. Duxbury youth players at this level should be able to work together on both offense and defense to establish shape and to utilize everyone’s individual skills to work as one cohesive team, communicating with one another and understanding everyone’s role, responsibility, and objective.

The “special teams” aspect of the game should start looking cleaner between clearing, riding, fastbreaks, EMO, and MDD situations. Players should be comfortable attacking from and defending multiple formations.

While players will start gravitating towards set positions (especially defenders and long-poles), we still want to encourage all players to learn all positions and game planning should still revolve around learning and preparation.

Transitioning to Duxbury High School

Many of the models found in this development program are based on the philosophy and principles of the Duxbury High School lacrosse teams including the concepts, terminology, and strategies outlined in the Common Thread section. Therefore, DYL players should feel efficiently prepared to tryout for DHS teams and ultimately find success at that level in acclimation as well as competition. This page has a few more noteworthy tenets of the DHS program for DYL coaches and players to understand.



Three Rules of DHS Lacrosse

1. No excuses
(don't make any, don't let anyone make any for you)
2. Leave the place better than when we found it
3. Be reliable

Typical DHS Practices

5:30 pm – 7:30 pm every night starting in March
Practices mapped out on 3'x5' index card

- Stretch
- Stick skills
- Warm-up
 - Line drills
 - Star drill
 - Diamond drill
 - 3-man weave
- Scrimmage
 - Scrimmage is defined as 1v1, 2v2, 3v3, 5v4, 4v3, 3v2, 2v1, etc.
- Full field work
 - Clearing
 - Riding
 - Fast breaks
- EMO / MDD

DHS Practice Philosophies

- Practices and drills have progression (Fundamentals → Competition)
- Drills have competition built in (little games to keep it fun)
- Drills Reinforce good habits (muscle memory)
- Magic number is 6 players per drill
- Teaching model: Demonstrate / Reinforce / Repetition
- 3-man weave is run at every practice (at least 10 minutes)
- Accountability philosophy: Doing it “right” and missing is better than doing it the “lazy” way and finding success. Players will be removed from the field who refuse to make adjustments. Players who commit to practicing the “right” way are allowed to stay on and correct their mistakes.

Developing a Lacrosse Goalie

Mental Notes:

1. Goalies need to be treated differently. It is not normal to step at an object being launched at you. Goalies can take some serious abuse both mentally and physically without the opportunity to really give it back. Therefore, their confidence needs to be built up over the course of a season.
2. Goalies don't need to be in the cage during a lot of shooting drills; they become an opportunity for him to simply get lumped up.
3. Set goals with your goalie that has nothing to do with saving the ball. If he concentrates on all the other contributions he can make to the team, he won't overthink a goal he let in.
 - a. Focus every practice
 - b. Staying positive and leading the defense
 - c. Communicating to the defense and the entire team
 - d. Clearing the ball effectively and directing the clear
4. Hammer the fundamentals during his warm-up every day
 - a. Step to EVERY shot
 - b. Hands out away from his body
 - c. Good starting position in the cage
5. The better the athlete the easier the above will be

Practice Notes:

1. Warm up your goalie BEFORE practice, even if it is 20 minutes before. All goalies need work on their stick skills, so have them participate in line drills with the rest of the team.
2. Wall ball is an ideal way to "get warm" before getting in the cage. The backup should be playing wall ball while the starter is warming up. Have an injured or non-participating player backing up or have a ton of balls.
3. YOUR INTENSITY WILL DIRECTLY AFFECT HIS!!! If you are just going through the motions, and it is easy to do, then so will he. Get a little fired up, challenge him, and some days go right at him.
4. If he is not focused and going through the motions, have him step out and re-focus.
5. Having a coach dedicated to working with the goalies every practice on goalie-specific drills will be a major advantage

Review on Technique:

1. Hand positioning on the shaft
2. Hand positioning in relation to your chest
3. Position in the cage
4. Step to the ball (string)
5. Bounce shots
6. Stick in itself

Program Goal:

Develop multiple goalies at each level. Let as many kids try it at the youngest levels and from 5th – 8th grade letting kids try the position in "B" games.

Courtesy of Chris Sweet, Duxbury HS Varsity Lacrosse Coach

Duxbury Lacrosse Wall-Ball

A key program-wide goal is to establish a culture in which players recognize the importance of improving their stick skills outside of practice and adopt a program-sanctioned routine that is age and grade appropriate. The following routine was created by the DHS programs and modified for the different grade levels of DYL.

Facility:

Concrete, brick, or any solid wall at least 12 feet high and 10 feet wide. The wall at DHS Athletic Complex is an available resource.

Equipment:

- Stick
- Ball
- Gloves (players should always throw, catch, and cradle with gloves on)

Method:

Stand 5-10 yards from the wall for all drills. Always catch the ball in the air.

Drill Routine:

Total time spent should be 15-20 minutes, 2-5 days a week (depending on the level).

Drill Routine	1 st /2 nd	3 rd /4 th	5 th /6 th	7 th /8 th	DHS
One-hand cradle	20 each hand	25 each hand	30 each hand	50 each hand	50 each hand
One-hand quick stick	20 each hand	25 each hand	30 each hand	50 each hand	50 each hand
Two-hand quick-stick	20 each hand	25 each hand	30 each hand	50 each hand	50 each hand
Change-hand quick stick	40 times	50 times	50 times	75 times	100 times
Right-hand face dodge	20 times	25 times	30 times	50 times	50 times
Left-hand face dodge	20 times	25 times	30 times	50 times	50 times
Split dodge		50 times	50 times	75 times	100 times
Cross-handed right		25 times	30 times	50 times	50 times
Cross-handed left		25 times	30 times	50 times	50 times
Behind the back			20 each hand	25 each hand	50 each hand
Two-shot fakes			20 each hand	25 each hand	50 each hand
Side-arm cradle				25 each hand	50 each hand
Under-hand cradle				25 each hand	50 each hand
Custom *				Change of angle	Change of angle

**Create any shot/pass that will improve your skill*

Results:

If this is practiced 2-5 times per week for a two-month period, you will see a dramatic improvement in your stick skills, especially your off-hand. 95% of all the great players developed their skill from practicing off the wall with similar routines.

Courtesy of Chris Sweet, Duxbury HS Varsity Lacrosse Coach

DYL Policies, Expectations, & Best Practices

Coaches

- Make detailed practice plans (including overall focus and points of emphasis) and share with your coaches prior to the practice beginning
- Connect with your opposing coach three or more days in advance to confirm game details
- Make sure your coaching bag is complete with balls, cones, a horn (for home games), and a first-aid kit with ice packs, bandages, and athletic tape
- It is wise to keep extra mouthguards, stick endcaps, a screwdriver, tape, and other miscellaneous equipment that will provide useful during a game
- Have a pregame meeting with the other coach and the official(s)
 - Introduce yourself
 - Review high level game rules (especially league specific rules as officials are assigned to games from several leagues with different rules)
- Make sure all players get quality playing time (including high pressure situations such as the last two-minutes of a close game) and make every rostered player feel like a valuable member of the team
- If you find yourself leading significantly (7+ goals), make adjustments to slow your offense and to allow the other team to have an opportunity to score
 - Require five complete passes before anyone can take another shot
 - Insist players use their off-hand for all passes and catches
 - Slow down the pace
- At the end of the game – have the boys thank the referee for officiating
- Make sure they also thank you and your coach staff (after games and practices)
- Make sure your bench area looks cleaner than when you found it
- Always conduct yourself professionally (remember that all the boys are watching and taking queues from you and parents are paying attention as well)
- Allow level coordinators and DYL Board of Directors to handle major conflicts and/or complicated situations
- Take advantage of coaching education courses and/or training offered by or paid by DYL

Players

- Compete with class and honor
 - Take a knee when other players are hurt
 - No swearing, taunting, or disrespectful behavior
 - No “palms up” (complaining about a call)
 - No yelling at officials
 - No goon mentality (cheap shots, intimidation, hacks, retaliation, etc.)
- Conduct a handshake at the end of the game
 - Helmets stay on
 - Right glove comes off
 - Handshake like a gentleman (no fist bumps or high-fives)
 - Respect and thank your opponent for playing the game by saying “good game”
- On-time means being dressed and equipped and ready to begin warm-ups when practice begins. Players should be at least 10 minutes early for practice to get ready to start and 20-30 minutes early for games to equip and warm-up
- Players should wear town gear (shorts, shooter shirts, jerseys, and helmets – if practicable) to Duxbury practices, games, and events
- Players should inform coaches of any issues (problems with equipment, trouble understanding the drill / assignment, language / behavior from another player)

Parents / Spectators

- Be supportive of your child by giving encouragement and showing an interest in his team. Positive reinforcement encourages learning and fun. Research has shown that a ratio of 5 positive statements (compliments, positive recognition) for each negative statement (criticisms, corrections) is ideal for helping athletes do their best. Try to maintain a 5:1 ratio in your comments to your child.
- Attend games whenever possible. If you cannot attend, ask how your child did, not whether the team won or lost. Some questions that you might ask before asking about the final score include: “Did you try as hard as you could? Did you have fun? Did you learn anything today that might make you a better player in the future?”
- Be a positive role model by displaying good sportsmanship at all times to coaches, officials, opponents and your child’s teammates. “Honoring the Game” is an important part of what Duxbury Youth Lacrosse stands for. Help us by honoring the game in your behavior as a spectator.
- Let your child set his own goals and play the game for himself. Be your child’s “home court advantage” by giving him your unconditional support regardless of how well he performs.
- Let the coach coach. Refrain from giving your child advice when he is playing. Use positive reinforcement with your child’s coach. Let the coach know when he/she is doing a good job.
- Respect the decisions of the referee or umpire. This is an important part of honoring the game. Your child will pay more attention to how you act than to what you say.
- Read the rulebook. A full understanding of the rules will help you enjoy the game and educate others.
- Get to know who is in charge. Meet with the leadership of the program to discuss topics such as cost, practice and game scheduling, insurance coverage, emergency procedures, etc.
- Get involved. Volunteer.
- Sit back and enjoy the game. Remember, lacrosse is played for **FUN.**

Additional Resources

Organizations / Leagues

Duxbury Youth Lacrosse:

duxburyyouthlacrosse.org

Town Pride Lacrosse League: tplax.com

Positive Coaching Alliance: positivecoach.org

USA Lacrosse: usalacrosse.com

National Lacrosse League (NLL): nll.com

Premier Lacrosse League (PLL):

premierlacrosseleague.com

Lacrosse Drills / Instructions

Trilogy Lacrosse: trilogylacrosse.com

POWLAX Master Coach: powlax.com

BTB Lacrosse: btb-lax.com

Raptor Lacrosse Training: [youtube channel](#)

Kaizen Lax: [youtube channel](#)

The Lacrosse Network (TLN): [youtube channel](#)

Lax Sports Network (LSN): [youtube channel](#)

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