



Roller Hockey  
**Australia**

# An Introduction to Coaching Roller Hockey



# The Philosophy of Roller Hockey

*Roller Hockey is more than just about winning games, it is a sport based on respect, friendship, and passion. When we play, coach or train let's all remember these simple principles:*

- *Play hard and with intensity but be fair*
- *Respect the referee and their decisions*
- *Do not harm your opponents*
- *Be respectful of your opposition players and management*
- *Regardless of skills level - everyone is part of the sport*
- *Support the sport by being more than a player – contribute whenever and however you can*



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# 1

## Introduction



## 1. Introduction

The Roller Hockey Australia introduction to coaching and training is a guide that together with a series of practical workshops and clinics provides new and existing coaches information that may assist when training and coaching roller hockey players and teams. This document is a collection of learnings from past and existing players, coaches and trainers from various clubs around the world.

The coaching and training guide is a tool that can be used by all levels of coaches and trainers. The guide focuses on developing roller hockey players through the different groups as opposed to their skill levels. To fully benefit from this guide we suggest you complete a practical session with an existing Australia accredited coach.

All good coaches are willing to learn and explore new ideas. The internet provides everyone with the ability to access training material from professional clubs, I encourage all players, coaches and trainers to be curious to learn and to be brave with their approach to coaching and training.

A special mention to the following people who have helped in the creation of this coaching and learning guide.

- Quim Pauls – FC Barcelona coach, Spanish national coach
- Ramon Riverola – FC Barcelona trainer
- Chris Shah – ex Australian coach
- Nick Galtos – ex Australian coach
- Jorge Lopes – ex Australian and Portuguese coach
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- Jofre Busch – Translator

Stephen Hoey

Chairman





# 2

## Developing Roller Hockey players at different ages



## 2. Developing Roller Hockey Players at different ages

Roller Hockey players develop their skills at different speeds, however they are typically grouped into age brackets that enable them to play against similar size and skill levels.

The following table outlines the typical age groups that can be a guide for grouping of players when taking training sessions. It is also important to understand what the focus of the coach should be when training each age category, as players move from one age group to the next the level and focus will change.

Age Group “years old”	Training Focus	Objectives of training
5-9	FUNdamentals	Teach players how to skate Teach players individual tactics and techniques
9-12	Train to LEARN	Develop skating and individual tactics and techniques Teach group tactics
12-16	Train to IMPROVE	Develop players knowledge of group tactics Teach the purpose and intention of group tactics
16-18	Train to COMPETE	Teach the different types of tactics
18+	Train to WIN	Maximise and optimise the training sessions to ensure a high level of technical ability and tactical knowledge



# 3

## Roller Hockey Fundamentals





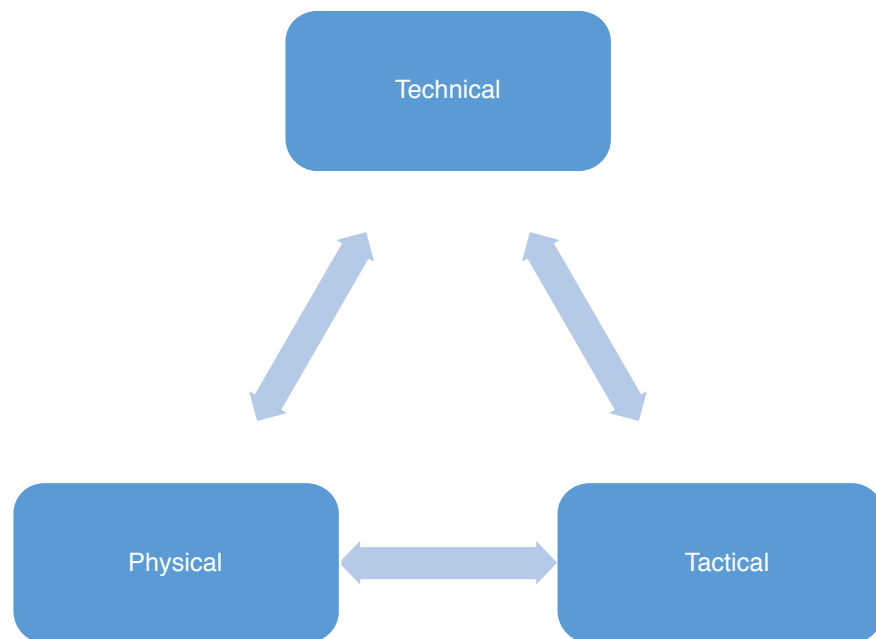
### 3. Roller Hockey Fundamentals

There are 3 key fundamentals that need to be considered when coaching and training roller hockey teams and players.

Individually these are very important however collectively they are critical to successfully developing roller hockey players and teams. These fundamentals apply to training all age groups.

The 3 Key Fundamentals are:

- 1) Technical
- 2) Tactical
- 3) Physical





### 3.1 Understanding Fundamental 1 - Technical

The following basic technical skills are required by all roller hockey players;

1. Protecting the ball
2. Passing the ball
3. Receiving the ball
4. Controlling the ball
5. Techniques for shooting the ball

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#### 1. Protecting the ball

The ball must be protected by placing it on one side of the body whilst holding the stick and ball to the same side. Additionally players must use the leg to protect the ball so that the opposing player cannot take it.

#### 2. Passing the ball

The passing action has to be strong and low, precisely taking into account the position and speed of the receiving teammate, if he/she is moving you must take note of the direction of their skates and stick or if they are static make sure the pass is towards the curve of their stick.

#### 3. Receiving the ball.

Receiving the ball is made with the curve of the stick slightly angled towards the on-coming ball, towards the floor, cushioning the pass with a soft feel from both arms which move slightly backwards before connecting the ball with the stick. The body is required to lean forward and with the legs open and knees bent.

#### 4. Controlling the ball.

It is very important when executing all of the elements of roller hockey. Players must be able to skate with the ball holding it when required and being able to control the ball quickly to be able to protect the ball, execute shots or passing to team mates.

#### 5. Techniques for shooting the ball.

The shot to the goalkeeper must be fast, precise and well executed. The stick does not need to be fully raised to shoot the ball. The speed is essential to surprise the opponent (mainly the goalkeeper). Each shot must be done when there is a chance of scoring, never from the corners or in front of a defenders, when there is no chance to score.



There are five kinds of shots and each of them has two different positions: forehand and backhand.

**1) PUNCH SHOT;** a hard, fast “punchy” type shot without raising the stick too far from the floor, it can be low or high depending on the situation. The curve of the stick is normally positioned between the legs when taking this shot.

**2) SLAP SHOT,** the Slap Shot is a full body shot with power coming through the waist and core of the body. If required lift the stick higher to obtain more speed and strength.

**3) LIFT SHOT;** it can be done using forehand or backhand, taking the ball backwards from the skate and in a sweeping direction using the wrists.

**4) FLICK SHOT;** it can be done using forehand or backhand with the ball in front, close to the skate and with the ball touching the stick. In this case the direction and the strength comes from the wrist, it is really effective inside the goal area and a few metres from the goalkeeper.

**5) TURN AROUND SHOT;** forehand or backhand, low or high like the previous shots. This is very effective when the ball is received behind the play or intentionally executed depending on the defender’s position.



## 3.2 Understanding Fundamental 2 - Tactical

Tactical training has 2 components;

- 1) Individual and
  - 2) Team
- 

### 1. Tactical - Individual

Each player plays an important role within a team and must know their job when playing the game to ensure the team benefits. Whether it be in a attacking or defensive situation each must know their role and the positioning of their body and stick.

When counter attacking whether it be 2-1 or 3-2 each player plays an important individual role which must be explained by the coach to all players. It must be clearly communicated which positioning on the floor is best to support the move and not interfere with any team mates.

### 2. Tactical - Team

Individual technique and individual tactics are important, however all players working together as a team is more important.

During the first stages of learning roller hockey we must teach our future players all aspects of the defensive system and practice these during roller hockey training sessions. This is very important to apply these systems during games when appropriate against players and opponents.

#### 2.1 Team defence

Every type of defensive structure requires the following basic principles to be applied

- stop or delay the progression of the player with the ball
- stop or delay the progression of the player without the ball
- help your team mate when screens and blocks occur

There are 3 common and effective defensive structures for all age groups to learn;

- a. **Box Defence - Open v Closed**
- b. **Man 2 Man – Zone v Press**
- c. **Diamond**



**A. Box Defence;** The most classic defence in roller hockey.

Each player has to defend an assigned zone to look after. We divide our defensive half into four different zones, priority to the right-handed on the right, and the left-handed to the left.

BIG and OPEN box: the attackers will be situated in the mid-field line, and the defenders within the area line, pressing the opponents in the proper zones.

SMALL and CLOSE box: the first line will be situated about 2 metres above the penalty area and the second line inside the area, without pressing the opponent players.

In every situation of box we must take into account the following:

The defence must be done with everyone being focused and with intensity. Once we lose the ball, every player must take the nearest defence zone while the opposition is counter-attacking.

Players defending in front, must cover the attacker who is coming with the ball until the back defenders take the relief, and they can change positions depending on the combination.

**B. Man to Man;** start with a Y as an initial setup

When the attacking team loses the ball and is required to play man to man defence, the team should aim to make a Y between the 4 players. The 2 players on top of the Y mark typically the 2 men who have remained in the half. The other 2 men of the Y who make up the tail end are positioned to pick up players as they pass over the half way line. Once all players pass over the half way line each player remains with 1 player only, taking in account the basic defensive fundamentals. It is very important that no one loses their man and does not leave too much space between themselves and the defender.

The variations to the Man to Man defence are:

1. High pressure – every player marks an opponent , full court
2. Pressure within a zone – every player marks an opponent within a designated zone
3. Pressure to one opponent – one player is targeted to mark out of the game, the other players may play man to man or a triangle



**C. Diamond;** is less typical but can be very effective.

A diamond defence is setup with one player being the front point, one player being the back point and the other 2 players being the side points. The diamond is used to disrupt a pivot attack along with creating opportunities for counter attacks. Each player has a role to cover the middle area of the diamond from the opposing players depending on where the ball is on the court. The key to diamond is linking the defence between each player that makes it difficult for the attacking team to penetrate and shoot towards the goals.



## 2.2 Team attack

Every type of attacking structure requires the following principles to be applied

**Move into space with and without the ball;** When one player has the ball and is not in a position to shoot the ball at the goals they will be required to either carry or pass the ball. Players without the ball should always be thinking about how they can assist their team mates with being in position to receive the ball. This will require skating to an open position that enables the ball carrier to pass the ball.

**Support your team mate with the ball;** Additionally to being in a position to receive the ball every team mate should consider how they can support the ball carrier. This may occur via a block, a screen or skating into a position to move a defender.

**Create situations to shoot;** When attacking our primary objective is to score goals and therefore we need to always consider how we can create situations where players can shoot towards the goal.

There are 3 common and effective attacking structures for all age groups to learn;

1. Pivot
2. Rotation
3. Five Bases

**Pivot Attack;** A pivot attack is typically played against a box defence. This attacking system requires one player approximately at the half way area distributing the ball between the other 3 attacking players. The other players are required to be in positions that enable them to receive the ball via a simple and straight pass. A typical setup has the distributor on the half way line moving side to side, 1 player on the wings of the box defence and the remaining attacking player in the middle of box. The modern style of roller hockey requires the players to make space to enable shots towards the goals and this should be achieved by using the corners and via screens and blocks.



**Rotation Attack;** the rotating attack system requires all players moving in circular and various angle directions. This system is typically used against a man to man defence. It is important that all players understand their role in this system and that tactical moves are introduced that enable players to attack the goals with shots and dribbles. It is important that at least one player is available to defend quickly in the event that the team loses the ball.

**Five Bases;** this basic system requires the ball carrier to have 3 passes at all times. This requires every player skating to positions on the floor that enable them to receive a pass. It is very important that every player is aware of their teammates and their positioning on the floor.





### 3.3 Understanding Fundamental 3 - Physical

Physical readiness for Roller Hockey players is key to becoming a good player. It important to understand as a coach and a trainer – WHAT needs to be done, WHEN you need to do it, and HOW you prepare and complete the exercises.

The following categories need to be understood when undertaking physical training for roller hockey players and teams.

- Training for STRENGTH
- Training for SPEED
- Training for RESISTANCE
- Training for FLEXIBILITY
- 

Research provided (Ramon Riverola FCB Barcelona) indicates that a professional roller hockey player in a match averages 16000 metres per game. This study is generalised across both defenders and attacking players. This highlights the importance of training, specifically to distances that are mostly encountered when playing roller hockey

Metres	Percentage
0-2 metres -2280	14%
2-4 metres -5880	37%
4-6 metres - 6370	40%
6-8 metres - 1630	10%
>8 metres - 160	1%

Additionally research suggests that players play at a maximum intensity for 70% of the time, with 20% below the maximum intensity. 10% is stationary or has reduced level of focus on the game.

The above information is very important when considering the intensity of your training and how it is structured. Additionally the table above highlights close to 80% of explosive skating is between 2 and 6 metres. When developing exercises for training consider this information and ensure the drills with the correct distances are used.



# 4

## Training the right way



## 4. Training the right way

Preparing for each training session is vital to improve player and team performance.

Every training session should have at least 1 objective. It may be to practice and improve counter attacks, or training a specific position on the floor. Typically a training session should consist of no more than 3 to 4 key activities. The following table is an example of a training session that has a simple but structured plan based on 1.5hr training session for a Junior and Senior teams.

Senior Men's Date: 1/6/2050	Training Objective: Counter Attacks	Time
<b>Warm Up</b>	1-1: 2 players have 1 ball between them and pass. When whistle blows , player with ball defends, other player tries to take ball	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Warm Up</b>	Team Stretch	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Exercise 1</b>	Shooting Drill: Long shots on GK at one end, flick shots on GK at other end	<b>15 min</b>
<b>Break</b>	Water	<b>2 min</b>
<b>Exercise 2:</b>	Dynamic Drill 1 – counter attack 2-1	<b>20 min</b>
<b>Break</b>	Water	<b>2 min</b>
<b>Exercise 3:</b>	Diamond Defence - structure and attack	<b>15min</b>
<b>Practice Match</b>	Game with focus on executing counter attack drills, whilst playing a diamond defence	<b>30 min</b>



The following table is an example of a training session that has a simple but structured plan based on 1.5hr training session for Youth and Pee Wees.

<b>Youth</b> Date: 1/6/2050	<b>Training Objective:</b> Skating and Passing	<b>Time</b>
<b>Warm Up</b>	Skating Game : Octopus	<b>10min</b>
<b>Warm Up</b>	Team Stretch	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Break</b>	Water	<b>3mins</b>
<b>Exercise 1</b>	Skating 3 circles, crossing legs and backwards	<b>10mins</b>
<b>Break</b>	Water	<b>3 mins</b>
<b>Exercise 2</b>	Skating Slalom	<b>10 min</b>
<b>Exercise 3:</b>	Passing 1-1, 2-2, and attacking the goals	<b>15min</b>
<b>Break</b>	Water	<b>3 mins</b>
<b>Practice Match</b>	Game with focus on passing , must pass to score	<b>20mins</b>

Players at ALL ages need to be fully engaged and active in the session as much possible for as long as possible. Every coach has a responsibility to ensure that the players are getting the most out of every training session.

### **Tips:**

- *Avoid long periods of discussion and standing around*
- *Use dynamic drills that require multiple movements in a single drill, this will have more players active*
- *A white board can be useful to explain the drills*



## 5. Useful Information

Below is a list of useful websites and books that can be used to gain more knowledge and learnings about roller hockey games, tactics and technical drills.

### Facebook:

Roller Hockey Australia

Som D' Hoquei

Mundo Do Hoquei

### Websites:

[www.rollerhockeyaustralia.com.au](http://www.rollerhockeyaustralia.com.au)

[www.hockeypatines.com](http://www.hockeypatines.com)

[www.okpatins.com](http://www.okpatins.com)

[www.hockeyglobal.net](http://www.hockeyglobal.net)

<http://treinadoreshp.blogspot.com.au>

<http://pacogonzalezhoqueiporters.blogspot.com.au>

### Books:

Hockey Patines Preparacion Fisca ; Ramon Riverola i Sabate