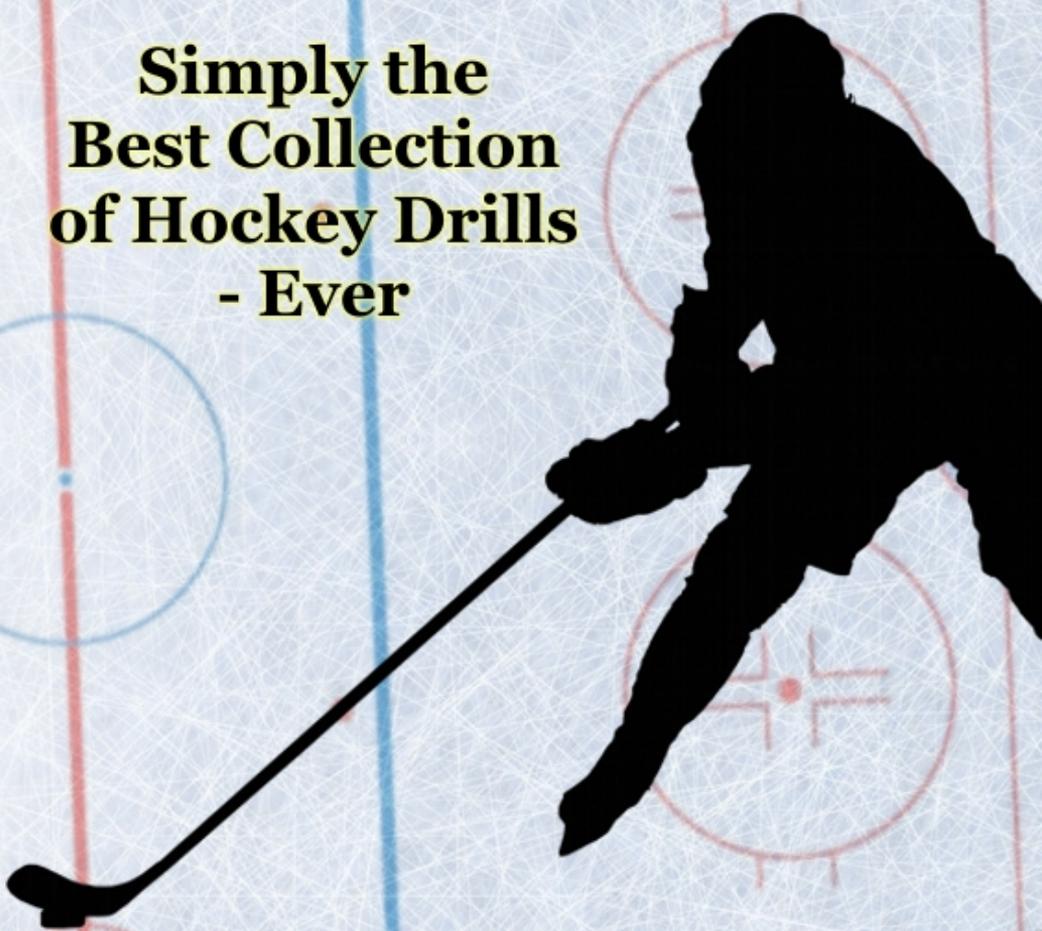


Essential Hockey Training

66 Drills for Success

**Simply the
Best Collection
of Hockey Drills
- Ever**



By Rick Traugott

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66 Drills for Success

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thehockeycoach14@gmail.com

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Introduction

What sets this book apart...

In almost 30 years as a hockey coach, coupled with 17 years as a player, I have now digested the 66 drills I use all of the time when coaching hockey. The neat thing is that I have coached from Atom (9 year olds) to university to the CWHL and mostly stayed with the same set of drills throughout. The drills in this book have no specific system work but certainly support any system that teams are using. Do I use drills other than these 66? Of course I do. I regularly design drills (sometimes on the fly) to work on certain things I think are important in any given practice. But these are my **go to** drills - the ones I know are terrific and never let me down. I know that you as a coach will undoubtedly find this set of drills invaluable to your practice planning.

Here is what sets this drill book apart from others:

- 1) The drills are simple, easy to understand, easy to explain and easy to execute.
- 2) They are, for the most part, appropriate for all ages levels and skill levels.
- 3) Each drill comes with a diagram, explanation, teaching points and a place for notes that you can add to.
- 4) The drills cover all aspects of the game and can easily support any system that a team is playing.

- 5) There are notations for drills that have a natural progression into a certain tactic or system that coaches might be working on in any given practice.

Personally, when I am looking for some new drills online, I get overwhelmed with both the volume and the complexity of most of the drills. Usually I am looking for one simple thing to work on and I have to try to decipher what can amount to hieroglyphics digitally placed on a hockey rink background. I have tried my best to make the diagrams and explanations of each drill as straightforward to follow as possible. I also know that good drills are “timeless”. There are drills that players could literally do every practice and never get sick of them (my favorite as a player was always Breakout, Counter, Counter, 3 on 2).

I remember hearing a great story about the Edmonton Oilers of the mid-1980's with Gretzky, Messier, Kurri, Coffey, etc. From February on they would run pretty much the same practice for 45 minutes every day. It included a warm up, flow drills and power play work. When asked if they ever got sick of the same drills, no player ever complained. I know with 66 drills, your players will never get tired of the same old practice.

Some thoughts on practice planning...

I always go to practice with a plan. Sometimes it's not written down as neatly as I would like, but I always have a plan.

That plan usually starts with what items I want to work on in that particular practice. Sometimes it is just skills - passing, shooting, skating, stickhandling. Other times there might be a particular team tactic or system I want to work on. In doing this, I can break down some of the skills involved in that system and then I will incorporate those skills into the drills at the beginning of practice. For instance, if I want to work on offensive zone entry with the entire team, I will make sure we are doing some cross over work with the puck in our warm up drills, do some shooting while skating full speed down the boards and a drill that works

on getting the puck wide to the boards in neutral ice - all essential skills for working on offensive zone entry.

It doesn't matter what level you are coaching, working on skills is vital to your success. I always spend the first half of practice on skill work (and some individual tactics possibly). When I coached with Stan Butler in the old Metro Junior Hockey League (Stan is now the coach of the North Bay Battalion), he used to always remind me that "the most skilled team at the end of the year will win - and we plan on being the most skilled team." I have never forgotten that and I make it a priority with any team I am involved with.

I also feel like players can't just jump into practice without some kind of on ice warm up. But, I make sure that warm up is purposeful, in other words, it can be a ballistic warm up but with puck handling, or working on a specific skating skill while getting the blood flowing.

I also know there is great value to doing some conditioning at the end of each practice. We always skate for about five minutes hard. Usually just lengths or half ice sprints. Nothing grueling but it signifies the end of practice nicely and helps in overall conditioning.

What I consider good drills...

I like drills that are simple enough that players don't have to think too much about where they are supposed to go but complex enough to work on at least three things in the drill.

First, I don't ever use a whiteboard in practice. I do all my explaining and demonstrating with no markers. Now, I must admit that I am blessed with good "rink voice" and generally I can be heard throughout the entire rink. But, even if players don't hear what I am explaining, they know enough to go to the back of the line and watch the first few times. Again, I make sure my drills are simple enough for players to pick up quickly.

I will always explain what it is we are going to concentrate on in each drill. There needs to be a focus to what players are doing ALL OF THE

TIME. As example, we might be doing a passing and shooting drill and I will make it clear to all players that passes have to be tape to tape. Once the drill is half way through, I will almost always stop the drill and either correct something, re-emphasize something or add something. For instance, if we are doing a good job of tape to tape passing, then I will add that shots HAVE TO be low and to the far post.

I also make sure I keep to a time allotment for each drill. If you start going over time on a drill or two you sometimes find you don't have enough time left to do the things you REALLY wanted to do in a certain practice.

These 66 drills...

I have categorized all of the drills into nine different categories. Of course there is some overlap, but generally they all relate to each other in some way. Here is an explanation of each group.

1. **Skating Drills** - There are some skating skill drills and also a conditioning drill or two. There are some essential drills in this group, especially Snakes. It is a drill I will do at the start of almost every practice. With or without pucks it can be a good warm-up, skating skill drill or puck handling drill.
2. **Passing, Shooting, Skating Drills** - I refer to these as PSS drills. There are lots and they all work on different aspects of hockey skills. Typically, drills like these have components of all skills thrown in. Make sure you emphasize certain aspects for players to concentrate on when you run the drills.
3. **Offensive Play Drills** - I am a big fan of scoring goals. I believe as coaches we are so concerned with preventing goals that we neglect working on scoring goals. I always say "goalies hate me" because we do so many "scoring goals" drills in my practices. But, scoring goals is fun! And the better we can be at generating offense the more fun we will have and the more games we will win in the end.
4. **Playing and Reading the Rush Drills** - This group is anything from 1 on 1 rushes to 5 on 5 rushes with backcheckers. Lots of variety and great drills in this section.

5. **Offensive Zone Entry Drills** - Solid drills to help get the puck wide across the blue line and create scoring chances on the rush.
6. **Forechecking Drills** - A few drills to work on crucial skills on the forecheck. Being able to angle effectively on the forecheck is truly an essential skill for all players.
7. **Backchecking Drills** - Only one. But it is excellent and it also ties in with some of the Read the Rush drills in part 4.
8. **Defensive Zone Coverage** - Moving from 1v1 to 3v3 to 5v5. All skills are worked on in these drills and they will fit nicely into any defensive zone coverage system you are implementing.
9. **Small area Games (SAG) and Fun** - Everyone needs some fun at the end of practice. Not only are these fun drills but they are also battle and skill oriented with some disguised conditioning.

Best of luck and enjoy this book.

Rick Traugott
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