



Worcester County United Field Hockey Academy
Coaches Corner #5 – LEADING

<p>Why Lead</p>	<p>Forwards lead for one or a combination of the following reasons</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To receive the ball 2. To create space for themselves 3. To create space in which a team-mate may lead (interchange positions) 4. To create space into which a team-mate may run with the ball 5. To create space into which the ball may be passed for a team-mate 6. To deceive or wrong foot an opponent <p>Some of the above reasons for leading are quite common knowledge, but the question remains, “How does your team-mate know which of the above reasons has caused you to lead in a certain way or to a certain position on the field?”</p> <p>Part of the answer is in teamwork, playing and training together often, but above all knowing the cues and signals being sent out by the “leader”. Once all of this information has been digested by the ball carrier he will react accordingly. Providing his skills are finely tuned he should be able to pass that ball, exactly where the “leader” wanted it, and so give the leader a better chance of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breaking away from the marker 2. Eliminating defenders 3. Scoring a goal 4. Making another pass
<p>Leading</p>	<p>There are leads, long leads, leads back towards the ball, and leads to receive the ball on the forestick or the reverse.</p> <p>There are many types of leads and these are usually fed by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through passes 2. Square passes 3. Overhead passes 4. Diagonal passes



Worcester County United Field Hockey Academy

Coaches Corner #5 – LEADING

Features of Leading

Forwards must learn to read the play extremely well and to move about, so that once the team has possession and begins to build an attack, certain features of leading become important.

Timing of the lead

Knowing where to lead

Running off the ball

Re-leading after the initial dummy lead

Timing of the lead

The forward in the best position to make the lead must hold his lead until the ball carrier has seen him or has the ball under his full control. Without full control, the ball carrier can only respond to a “call” and then the ball will be passed more in hope than with precision. It is vital that players are trained to have good peripheral vision, because this enables them to see the leads earlier. Consequently the leader will give the cue signals and then move, confident that the ball carrier has “read the cue or signal” and will pass the ball accurately to the correct position. A lead too early or too late can cause the ball carrier great problems because he either has not got the ball under control or has not seen the signal or he may get caught in possession if he has to wait too long. *Timing the lead if vital.*

Where to lead

May forwards are told to “run about” to shake off the marker, whereas short sudden leads into space created by clever running will pose far more problems for the marker. Forwards should lead where they can get the ball delivered to them, with a minimum opposition. Quite often the less complex leads and moves are the most successful. An important part of leading is to out maneuver your marker and in international hockey this may only be by a meter or less. If you then receive the ball, the marker is greatly disadvantaged.

Running off the ball

This is an integral part of teamwork and helps create space, helps create alternative leads and can cause confusion amongst defenses. A simple rule of hockey is - “Make a pass then make a lead”. This rule epitomizes teamwork and allows for the alternate pass, and can also be used to distract a marker or defender from tackling and so acts as a *decoy*, or *dummy*.

Re-leading

If a lead is made and is not satisfied with a pass, then the forward should re-lead, to create confusion and also offer the ball carrier with an alternative pass. Any forward who only makes “one” lead will have little success in modern day hockey. The lead, change of direction, the re-lead by top forwards poses great problems for most markers and defenders.

