

THE NAME OF THE GAME

In any discussion concerning hockey in the 90's, key words and catch phrases abound. To mention a few, we could include: time, space, movement, transition, support, creating 2 on 1's, creativity, making good decisions, playing with tempo and general skill development. We also use these and other terms to describe the best players in the game and why they are so effective. A lot of these terms were not used ten and fifteen years ago in describing players or teams.

What we should do as coaches is to enhance the players' ability to perform in these terms. As the game continues to evolve so should the methods of coaching. We will all use our tried and true methods to teach specifics but I think it's what we do in addition to this that will have the most profound effect on players of the 90's and beyond. Instead of lamenting the fact that players don't play pond hockey or ball hockey and lack Hockey sense, we need to be more creative with the practice time we have and help them learn these game skills.

With these thoughts in mind, it is my hope that these and other small games become an important part of every practice. Games can be created to teach any technique or concept determined to be a priority.

Why use small games?

The reasons are many. Players like the idea of competition and the challenges it brings. Games keep more players moving than the traditional drills that bring a lot of waiting in line during precious practice time. Players learn best when moving and confronting different situations. With the use of games, we can challenge each player to participate at his own level and also stimulate the growth of the multi-level players on each team. It creates a practice intensity that is only matched during actual contests. Lastly, your players will develop game strategies, make better decisions and have greater enthusiasm for practices.

Organizing modified games.

The games can be very simple with few players and emphasis on one or two specifics, to complex and including the full team. However, what is

