

# Townshend Hockey Skating Systems Newsletter

October 2011



## MESSAGE FROM GRAEME...

You may have noticed that there we didn't put out a newsletter in September. We made the decision not to as we were coming off our best summer yet and in addition to my starting up with the Leafs, we have been diligently working to lay out our summer programs for 2012. I suspect that may be the case in all of the years ahead as we regroup and debrief throughout the

month of September.

I once again would like to thank my staff for their efforts this year. We are continuing to grow and teach more hockey players than ever before and I am blessed to have such a dedicated crew helping me to provide quality instruction on the ice as well as a great support staff off ice.

Most importantly I would like to thank all of the stu-

dents that allow me to continue to do what I love to do. I have met some great players of all ages and am enjoying watching you grow as people and players.

Look for an email from us in the coming weeks with a detail list of our summer offerings for 2012 and don't forget that we offer THHS Gift Certificates! E-mail us at

TownshendHockey@yahoo.com to order.



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## CHECKING

There has been a great deal of focus and conversation around checking at all levels of hockey and USA Hockey recently made some changes to their checking policies beginning with the 2011-2012 season. I thought it would be timely to talk a little bit about what checking is as it is much more than just hitting your opponent. Below are some answers to frequently asked questions.

Q. What is checking?

R. Checking is a defensive/tactical skill which is used to regain puck possession and/or to create a brief man power advantage. Checking skills include fore-checking, back-checking (which both require good skating skills), stick checking and body checking.

Q. How is checking most useful in a game?

R. All of these skills are useful. By back-checking effectively, a team or individual player can cause the opposition to turn the puck over prematurely which leads to possible scoring opportunities—this is generally the result of a good transition game. Approximately 80% of all goals scored are a result of transition plays developed by causing turnovers through good fore-checking and back-checking skills.

Q. Are there times when checking is not useful or appropriate?

R. Body checking skills are not very useful when killing a penalty as this just puts the defender out of position. Body

checking should NEVER be used when a player has his back to you or when an opponent is in a vulnerable position. All players need to develop good self preservation skills.

Q. What are the most important skills the players need to be learning to safely give and receive checks?

R. Most injuries are the result of getting a hit, not generally from delivering the hit. Players must be aware of what is going on around them at all times. This on ice awareness is a "skill" that MUST be taught and practiced at all levels. On ice communication is vital. Warn your teammates of danger; let them know if they are pressured or if they have time. I know that



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Are you looking for a motivational speaker for your organization? Contact us at townshendhockey@yahoo.com to schedule Graeme.

Christmas Break Clinic
Chesswood Arena, North York
Program: Hockey Skating and Checking Skills
Date: January 2 - January 4, 2012
Time: 9am-noon (9hours on ice)
Price: \$350(includes HST)

these skills are not being stressed nearly enough as only 2% of our player's possess these skills and they all played youth hockey.

When under heavy pressure, the player must actually slow down in order to get the fore-checker to slow down (and they will), this will reduce the force at which the fore-checker can hit the puck retrieving player.

boards, your stick and hands should come up to glass height. Use your arms, hands and stick as "shock absorbers" / These skills are taught in great detail at our camps and must be practice and taught extensively under the detailed eye of a teaching. Professional before being used in a game.

Q. What do you think the impact of USA Hockey's change to no body contact until the Bantam level will have on the

game? R. I think it is a good idea "IF" coaches use that extra year or two to really teach proper body checking skills both defensively and offensively. They MUST focus on the "self protection/defensive" aspect first.

I hope that the dialogue around checking will continue at all levels from youth hockey through the NHL. Concussion rates and injuries are at all time highs and it really is the smallest things that can make the biggest difference. ~ Graeme



"Practice until you get it right, then practice until you can't get it wrong"

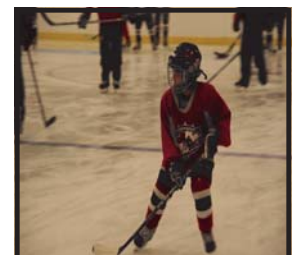
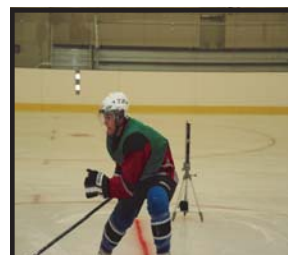


Where have you and your Townshend Hockey Apparel Been?

This is a picture of Townshend Hockey Student, Lucas Sim enjoying a relaxing afternoon in his pool after 3 weeks of hard work at camp this past summer! Love that he wore his new hat!

Send us a picture of yourself in your Townshend Hockey clothing for future newsletters— TownshendHockey@yahoo.com

More photos from Summer 2011



We are looking for future newsletter content. Please forward your ideas, photos and comments to Townshendhockey@yahoo.com