



# First Shinty



**Sports  
Coaching  
Competences  
for  
Teachers**



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for  
Teachers**

**First Shinty  
Unit**

# Preface

Sports Coaching Competences for Teachers (SCCT) is an initiative jointly produced by the Scottish Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs) with advice from sportscotland, the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGB) and the Scottish Coaching Unit (SCU) in partnership with the National Coaching Foundation (NCF).

The work has been funded by the Scottish Education and Industry Department (SOEID).

The project team have produced a set of written materials as a series of Units, each providing for a given sport, guidelines and support materials for tutors and learners. The materials are available in hard copy, on disk or may be downloaded from the Web site. The Web site and its disk equivalent provide a background to the materials and an overview of their content, in addition to providing a systematic method of accessing the documents.

Further details about the origins and context of the initiative can be found on the Web site.

<http://www.scct.ac.uk>

The SCCT was a proposal designed to assist the leadership and promotion of school sport by improving opportunities for non-specialist teachers to access appropriate content and coaching methodology. The materials have been written in league with the relevant NGB – in some instances the NGB has taken the lead role in the authorship of the text – in all cases the material attempts to link with existing NGB coaching award schemes so that transfer of knowledge, skills and competences may be achieved by those participants who wish to proceed on to higher coaching awards or to the coach education provision of the NGB. As such, the SCCT materials can stand alone as text for teachers interested in the ideas associated with a particular sport, or they can provide the basis for course delivery by designated tutors in teacher education or elsewhere. Course delivery is envisaged to be 12 hours duration and the SCCT units are designed as 2 hour programmes of work.

Government statements in recent times have endorsed the role of schools and teachers in the development of young pupils, participation in sport and this SCCT initiative is clearly associated with the overall aim of improving the confidence of teachers to lead sport in the school setting. While these materials are best suited to extra-curricular contexts, much of the content and the themes therein can be modified and adapted for use in the formal curricula of the Primary and early Secondary school. The following institutions are represented on the project team along with representation from the governing bodies of several sports.

Northern College of Education  
University of Glasgow St Andrews College of Education  
University of Edinburgh Faculty of Education Moray House  
University of Paisley, Faculty of Education  
University of Stirling, Department of Education  
University of Strathclyde, Faculty of Education

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# Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the substantial contribution made by Alan McMillan, SportsScotland Shinty Co-ordinator to the writing of the unit.

I would also like to thank Alan and SportsScotland for their kind permission to use *Sammy Shinty* as a basis for the diagrams in the unit.

Teresa Campbell

# **Sports Coaching Competences for Teachers Initiative (SCCT) First Shinty**

## **Introduction**

### **Shinty**

Shinty is an indigenous game to Scotland which offers all participants a fast, exciting and fluid game to play. It has been enjoyed by many people for generations and will do so for many years to come.

### **First Shinty**

First Shinty is a modified version of the adult game of shinty and is designed for primary-aged children. It was developed by the Camanachd Association along with Team Sport Scotland and has been designed to promote the teaching and playing of shinty at primary school level. The game is played by two teams of six players and provides opportunities for children to develop a wide range of skills specific to the game as well as skills that are general to all games playing.

First Shinty is about acquiring basic skills and developing an understanding of the game through fun and enjoyment. It has been developed specially for children to enable them to learn the basic skills and rules and tactics of games playing. When comparing it to the adult version of shinty, first shinty has obvious benefits for children in that it uses smaller playing areas, simplified rules, small sided teams and modified, less threatening equipment.

First shinty is particularly useful in primary school in that it gives children the opportunity to have more time on the ball and so gives them more time to develop and practice skills. The game can be played where there are limited playing areas and can be played indoors. Boys can play alongside girls and the nature of the game encourages fun and enjoyment in a safe environment.

### **Unit outcomes**

This Unit on First Shinty is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of teaching and coaching of First Shinty while improving personal practical performance.

Through engaging in the unit participants will develop:

- an awareness of approaches to coaching of Shinty with Primary school aged children and a knowledge of appropriate resources.
- an appreciation of the value of First Shinty for children both within the formal curriculum and the extended curriculum.
- an ability to introduce and develop the basic skills of the game.

- an knowledge of the rules of First Shinty and an ability to use competition effectively.
- an awareness of the importance of sound organisation and management skills and an ability to effectively apply these within planned sessions.
- a knowledge of how to structure a programme of sessions for children to ensure valuable, stimulating and enjoyable experiences.
- an ability to organise tournaments.

## National Coaching Foundation further reading

Throughout this unit references are made to further reading from the National Coaching Foundation booklets. The booklets referred to are

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| National Coaching Foundation      | <b>The Body in Action: Introductory Study (1984) Pack 1</b><br>NCF Publications |
| National Coaching Foundation      | <b>Improving Techniques: Introductory (1984) Study Pack 4</b> NCF Publications  |
| National Coaching Foundation      | <b>Working With Children: Introductory (1984) Study Pack 7</b> NCF Publications |
| CAMPBELL, S. and<br>CRISFIELD, P. | <b>Making Sport Fun</b><br>(1997) NCF Publications                              |

These booklets refer to coaching in general and cover relevant issues for anyone working with children in sport.

# Unit notes for participants

## Session 1 – Shinty for children

### Outcomes

In session 1 you will develop:

- a basic knowledge of the history of shinty
- a knowledge of the nature of First Shinty and an appreciation of its underlying philosophy and its value for children both within the formal and the extended curriculum.
- an appreciation of the importance of correct preparation of the body and the purposes of general and activity specific warm ups.
- familiarity with the adapted resources currently available for teaching and coaching First Shinty
- personal performance in the skills of movement and ready position and the ability to introduce and develop these skills.

### History of shinty

- Shinty is traditionally known as IOMOIN
- Introduced to Scotland around 1500 years ago
- Introduced by Curraghs from the north east of Ireland
- The shinty stick is known as the CAMAN
- The Camanachd Association was founded around 100 years ago and is responsible for promoting and developing Shinty.

# Children and First Shinty

## The First Shinty philosophy

First Shinty is about

- acquiring basic skills
- developing an understanding of the game
- fun and enjoyment.

First Shinty is a modified version of the adult game of shinty and is designed for primary-aged children. It was developed by Team Sport Scotland along with the Camanachd Association and has been designed to promote the teaching and playing of shinty at primary school level. The game is played by two teams of six players and provides opportunities for children to develop a wide range of skills specific to the game as well as skills that are general to all games playing.

First shinty has been developed specially for children to enable them to learn the basic skills and rules and tactics of games playing. When comparing first shinty to adult shinty its value is very obvious in that first shinty uses:

- smaller playing areas
- simplified rules
- small sided teams
- modified, less threatening equipment.

First shinty is particularly useful in primary school in that it gives children the opportunity to:

- have more time on the ball
- play shinty with limited playing areas
- play alongside boys and girls
- develop a variety of skills
- have fun and play safely
- play indoors.

As a coach/teacher of first shinty it is important to acknowledge that it is about maximum participation, skill development and enjoyment. These thoughts should be at the forefront of your mind when planning and delivering sessions for children.

Further Reading Team Sport Scotland First Shinty: teachers' and coaches' manual,  
Scottish Sports Council

Any coach working with children needs to be aware of the influence of physical development on performance as well as particular issues on children and exercise.

Further reading NCF Working With Children pages 1-8; 23-27  
NCF Making Sport Fun pages 15-18

## Equipment

First shinty uses specially designed equipment.

### **Stick (Caman)**

The first shinty stick is shorter than the standard shinty stick. It has a plastic shaft and a rubber head. The stick is lighter and easier for children to swing and is much less dangerous. If you do not have access to first shinty sticks, plastic unihoc sticks make a suitable alternative.

### **Ball**

The ball is made of high density foam covered in a soft shell. It is larger and softer than the traditional shinty ball and moves more slowly. These properties make the ball much less threatening to young players and makes it easier to control. The first shinty ball is generally used for games played in festivals and it is more common to use plastic airflow balls, vinyl covered foam balls or tennis balls as these are more usually available in larger numbers.

### **Goals**

The standard goal for the adult game of shinty measures 12 ft by 10 ft high. In first shinty there is no rule on the size of the goals or type of goals. The recommendation is to provide goals that suit the age and ability of the group. Success both in scoring as well as in defending the goal is important so the game should be played using a goal size that provides an achievable target while still allowing the goalkeeper to have a chance of saving the shot.

It is possible to use indoor hockey or five-a-side goals but it is more likely in club and class situations that cones or markers will be used. Tables and benches turned on their sides serve the important purpose of stopping the ball disappearing off into the distance every time a goal is scored.

### **Pitch**

The recommended playing area for first shinty is a rectangular pitch no bigger than 80 yards by 50 yards. Games can be played on smaller areas than this and this is actively encouraged.

## Warming-up

As with any physical activity, warming up is an essential part of a First Shinty session.

An effective warm-up

- increases body temperature and reduces risk of muscle injury
- gets the children moving and out of breath
- increases flexibility of the joints
- motivates the children to work hard
- is an enjoyable experience for the children.

Children will have been made aware of the importance of warming up in their physical education classes but it is always valuable to reinforce and to check their level of understanding. What is even more important is that you practice what you preach by starting each session with a thorough warm up which will include:

- 1 General whole body warm up to raise heart rate
- 2 Flexibility
- 3 Game based

Further reading on the value and nature of warming-up  
NCF The Body in Action pages 22-33  
NCF Making Sport Fun pages 9-10

## Practical warm-ups

Throughout the unit you will experience a variety of different warm ups from your tutor and the others in your group. These are only a few of the many possibilities. Examples of a wide variety of warm ups can be found in various texts and resource packages.

You will already have come across numerous ideas for warm ups in you physical education classes and you will also have your own unique ideas. These are all valuable and will help to add variety to your sessions with the children.

Below are some examples of suitable shinty warm-up activities:

### General

- Running within working space changing direction and pace of running on command.
- Traffic Lights– the children listen for verbal signals that indicate which activity has to be performed.

|             |                  |
|-------------|------------------|
| Red         | stop             |
| Amber       | running on spot  |
| Green       | jogging          |
| Roadworks   | jogging in lines |
| Traffic Jam | form groups of 4 |

- Warm-up to music. Use fast tempo music to accompany different ways of moving and actions on the spot eg running, skipping on the spot, hopping, side stepping

### Flexibility

- Use the caman to assist in flexibility exercises such as shoulder stretches, side stretches, seated hamstring reaches, lunges
- A progression of the previous flexibility task is to number each of the exercises. The children jog round holding caman in ready position. When a number is called they must perform related stretching exercise until instructed to return to jogging.

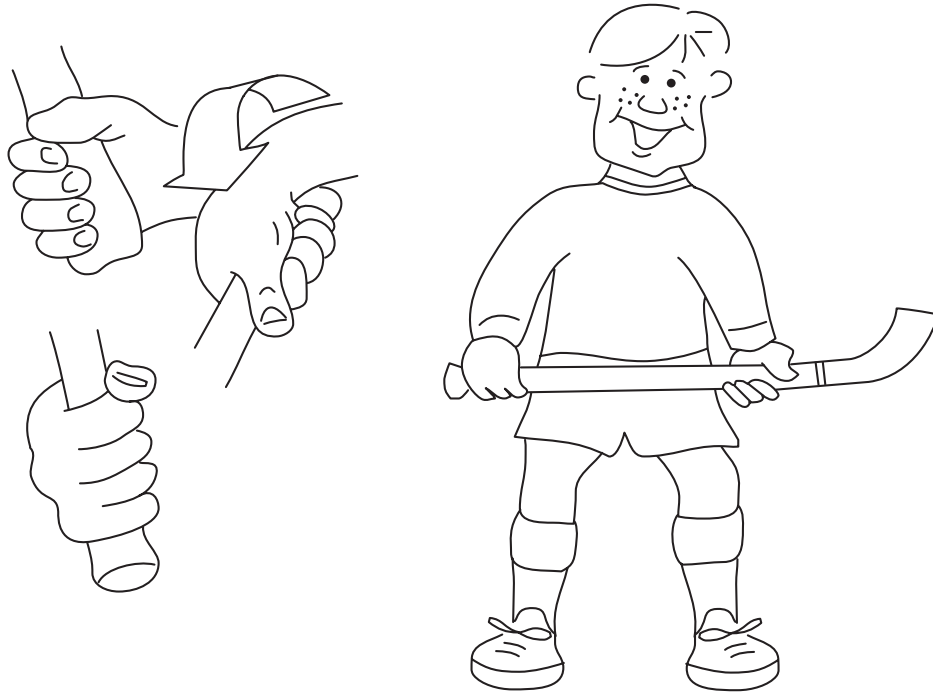
- Once the group are familiar with a variety of flexibility exercises, and how to do them properly, they can work more independently. Work the group in pairs. One child leads and performs a stretching exercise and the partner has to copy. Change over with the other child leading for the next exercise etc.

## Games

- Numbers Game. Children jog round the working area. When a number is called they must perform identified activity eg 1 – touch the floor; 2 – change direction; 3 – lie flat down on stomach and back up. This develops the ability to listen to and respond quickly to signals.
- Tig – tig is a very enjoyable warm-up activity for children. There are many variations that can be used to add enjoyment to the session. A couple of examples are given
- Chain Tig – when the catcher tigs a player they join hands and chase as a pair. As other players are caught they join up to form part of the chain. When a chain of four is formed it should break into pairs. Both pairs act as chasers
- 2 Tunnel Tig – the number of catchers required will be determined by the size of the group, have approx. One catcher for 10 players. If caught the player must stand with feet apart. These players can be freed by others crawling under legs.
- Throwing and Catching. Children work in pairs moving across the pitch and back. While moving they pass a first shinty ball back and forth to each other. This can be progressed from using two hand to throw and catch to using one hand to throw and the other to catch.
- Collect the Colours–Distribute a range of red, green, blue and yellow objects (beanbags, quoits, markers) around the working space ensuring an equal number of objects for each colour. Divide the group into 4 teams assigning each a colour. Place four hoops, one of each colour, at one end of the working space with the teams lined up behind. The team has to collect one object at a time and place it in the hoop. Only one team member can run at a time. The next can go only when the previous runner has placed the object in the hoop. The winning team is the first to collect all objects.

## The ready position

The ready position is an important early skill in that from this position the player can easily react and respond to any situation.



### Teaching points

- First establish which hand is the dominant hand – i.e. the preferred hand for writing. The caman should be held with this hand at the top of the stick.
- The caman should be held horizontally with the other hand supporting and with the hook of the caman pointing upwards.
- Feet should be shoulder-width apart with the weight forward on the toes – from this position you are able to move quickly in any direction.

### Skills practices

1. Players run round the working area holding the caman in the ready position. When the whistle blows they have to stop in the ready position, ready to move quickly again on the next blow of the whistle.
2. Players run in the ready position watching for others and moving to avoid contact. Reduce the designated area using the lines on the floor or cones. This will increase the need for alertness and quick responses.
3. Players run round in the ready position responding to verbal signals to run forwards, backwards, sideways.

- 4 Tig – the number of catchers required will be determined by the size of the group, approx. One catcher for 10 players. The catchers run without sticks. The others must carry the caman in the ready position and are not allowed to take either hand off the stick. When a player is touched by a catcher they are out. Once everyone is caught, change the catchers.

Throughout the practices emphasise the importance of movement and the ability to respond quickly to signals both auditory and visual.

It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are as follows:

### **Common errors**

- The hands are positioned too close together on the stick. This gives less control of the caman.
- The feet are too close together. This makes it difficult to push off strongly and will result in overbalancing.
- A reversed hand grip at top of stick. This makes it more difficult to dribble or hit the ball and can result in hitting problems later on.

## **First Shinty within the formal curriculum**

Whether teaching within the formal curriculum or leading extra curricular sessions it is important to remember that you should be focusing on all aspects of a child's development. This will be achieved through the way you deliver the sessions as well as through the tasks.

## **Aims specific to physical education**

Just as in the formal curriculum we are addressing the 5-14 aims this should also be the case in the extra curricular work. We are not only interested in the physical development of children but also in aspects of social, cognitive and affective development. We need to ensure the sessions provide all pupils with opportunities :

- to engage in purposeful and enjoyable physical activity;
- to develop physical skills, knowledge and understanding of the concepts involved and the ability to apply these in various contexts;
- to develop self-awareness, confidence and co-operative relationships with others and the ability to meet challenges presented in a variety of physical settings;
- to develop life-long positive attitudes to health and fitness;
- to develop critical appreciation of their own performances and those of others.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS 5-14  
1992

When you are working with children it is essential to consider the full value of the activity and to remember that it is not just what we teach but how you teach it that is important.

## Session 2 – Developing basic skills

### Outcomes

In session 2 you will develop:

- a knowledge of the range of skills required in First Shinty and an appreciation of prerequisite skills
- the ability to organise and lead a warm up
- personal performance in the skills of dribbling and stopping the ball and the ability to introduce and develop these skills.
- an appreciation of the importance of planning in successful teaching/coaching and an ability to structure effective sessions.

### First Shinty skills

When introducing and developing first shinty there are several basic skills to be covered.

- The ready position
- Dribbling with the ball
- Stopping the ball with the feet
- Push-passing
- Hitting the ball from stationary
- Tackling.

The development of these skills and the ability to use these within a game is suitable for pupils in upper primary. However it is important to recognise that the development of these skills and ability to use them in a game does not just begin when children reach primary 6. Throughout primary children should be following a planned progression in games.

Progression should be evident throughout the Games programme in Primary Schools from Primary 1 to Primary 7. This progression should reflect the natural development of children in terms of the ability to: perform skills; apply skills; work with others and understand what they can do.

Stopping and hitting the ball are the two key fundamental skills used in First Shinty. The player uses the other skills as a means to using stopping and hitting effectively in the game. It is important therefore to place emphasis on stopping and hitting in skills development and to ensure the children have mastered these.

## Dribbling with the ball

Using the dribble, the player is able to control the ball and move into position for passing or scoring



### Teaching points

- From the ready position slide the lower hand up the shaft of the caman until just below the grip
- Bend the knees to give a good strong stable base
- Keep the ball in front of the body and slightly out from the feet
- Tap the ball from side to side using both sides of the stick
- Keep the ball close to the stick and under control.

Correct grip and body positioning are essential for successful dribbling.

The following practices allow children to get used to the stick and the ball with the teaching points being introduced gradually. It is important to avoid overloading children with too much information at any one time.

### Skill practices

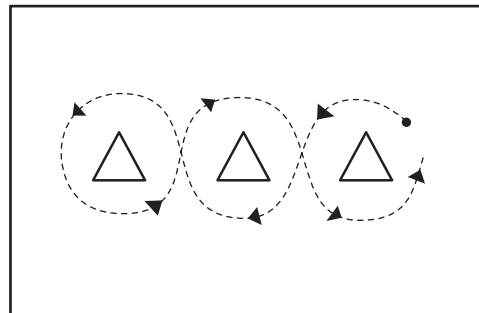
1. In a stationary position, feet apart and knees relaxed, hit the ball short distances from side to side using both sides of the stick. Emphasis should be on correct grip.
2. Each player has a caman and a ball. Dribble the ball around the working area avoiding other players and keeping the ball close to the caman. Encourage use of both sides of the stick.

- 3 As with practice 2 players dribble the ball but introduce boundaries using cones or lines on the floor to reduce the size of the working area. This will encourage the children to look up more regularly and to respond with more sudden change of direction. Again encourage use of both sides of the stick.
- 4 Place coloured markers around the working area. Children choose a marker to start at – only one child per marker. Whatever colour of marker they start at will determine the coloured path they follow i.e. if they start at a red marker they must dribble round taking a path that leads them from red marker to red marker. Encourage them to visit as many markers as possible. This encourages awareness of surroundings.

## Skill based games

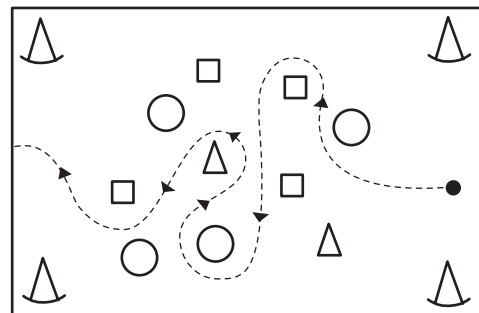
### 1. Slalom dribble

Set up slalom courses across the working area using 3 cones/markers for each slalom. Divide the group according to the number of sets of cones. The children dribble the ball in and out of the cones on the way up and the way back. When they return to the start the next player goes.



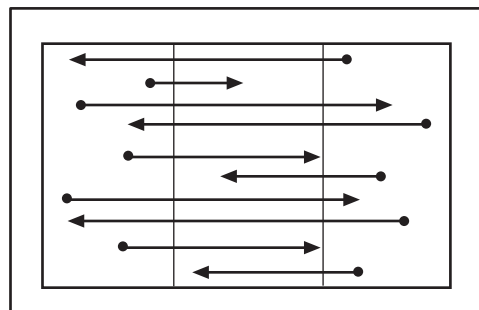
### 2. Through the maze

Set up a square with cones marking the corners and fill it with obstacles such as cones, hoops, beanbags etc. Pupils enter the square, dribbling the ball, and follow the course round the obstacles until they exit at the other end. This has to be achieved without touching an obstacle. If an obstacle is touched they must return to the starting position.



### 3. Dribble and change

Divide the working area into 3 sections using cones to mark the areas (a badminton court is ideal for this) Split the children into 2 groups one group in each of the two end sections of the working area. The groups dribble the ball within the allocated area. When the whistle blows the two groups swap areas trying not to collide with other players or lose control of the ball



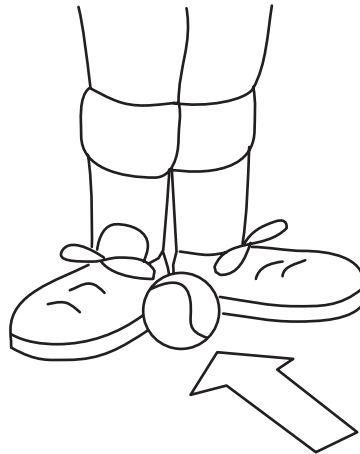
It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are listed overleaf:

## Common errors

- The head of the caman is coming too far off the ground
- The index finger of the lower hand is pointing down the shaft – fingers should be curled round the shaft.
- The ball is being struck too hard and is running away from the caman.

## Stopping the ball – with the feet

Stopping the ball with the feet is the most effective way of stopping a fast, unpredictable ball



## Teaching points

- Feet should be flat on the ground with the heels together and the toes pointing out at a 'ten to two' angle.
- Legs should be straight and together to ensure the ball is contained if it bounces up off the ground
- The caman is held in front of the body as in the ready position
- Players should move into this position just as the ball approaches and not too soon. They should wait in the ready position and actively click the heels together just before the ball reaches them.

## Skill practices

1. In pairs, players stand facing each other about 5m apart. One player rolls the ball to their receiving partner. The receiver is waiting in the ready position and stops the ball with their feet before returning it to the feeder. This should be done five times before the partners change roles.
2. As above but with the feeder deliberately changing the direction and speed of the ball to force the receiver to react and move to the ball.

3. In pairs the players stand facing each other about 5m apart. They pass the ball with the caman rather than rolling it and the receiver has to stop it with their feet. This practice can be made more difficult by increasing the distance between the players and by increasing the speed of the passes.

## Skills based games

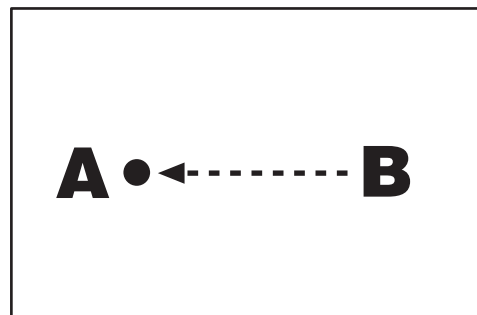
### 1. Pig in the middle

Players are in groups of three. Two players work together trying to pass the ball to each other as many times as possible. The player in the middle is only allowed to stop the ball with their feet. When the ball is intercepted the middle player changes with the player whose pass they intercepted.

2. As above but using a scoring system. A point is awarded to the middle player if they intercept the ball. A point is awarded to the passing pairing if they manage 5 consecutive passes. The players change round roles once either the player in the middle or the pairing reach 5 points.

### 3. Signal ball

In pairs, player A stands with their back to player B who has the ball. On a given signal, A rolls the ball to B who has to turn round quickly and stop the ball. The feeder A progresses to varying the speed and direction of the ball to make it more challenging. Change round roles after five passes.



It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are listed below:

### Common errors

- Heels are apart and so do not stop the ball
- Toes are not pointing out sufficiently and so the feet form too narrow a stopping area
- Knees are slightly bent and so the knees are apart
- The player kicks rather than stops the ball. As a result the ball is not contained within the stopping area and bounces out where other players can take it.

## Structuring a coaching session

Careful planning is crucial to the success of any lesson with a class, it is also essential in maximising the value of each coaching session with children.

As a coach you must be clear on what you want to achieve in the session and plan how you are going to achieve it in an interesting and enjoyable way for the group.

The coaching session should include

1. Warm-up – general and games specific
2. Skills Development
3. Game
4. Cool Down

Each of these sections plays an important part in the value of the overall session.

### Warm-up

- This prepares the children for activity. Warm-up activities should start off gently and increase in intensity and should result in increased heart rate, breathing and body temperature.
- Once the muscles are warm the children should then do some flexibility work which can be made more interesting by using the caman.
- Game based warm-ups are enjoyable for the children and allow for early practice of basic games skills such as movement, observation and responding to signals as well as for revision of previously learned skills.

### Skills development

- Children should be given the opportunity to explore new skills; to practise and refine skills already acquired; or to be introduced to and guided in specific techniques.

### Game

- Children love playing games and must be allowed to put the skills they have worked so hard to master into some form of a game.
- At the early stages of a programme of sessions, games will take the form of skill based games– examples of which are identified along with each skill in the Notes for Teacher Participants.
- As the children begin to master more skills they can be introduced to small sided games and eventually to the full 6 v 6 game. As the coach you must make informed decisions as to what form of game is appropriate to the group.

### Cool-down

- The cool-down can take the form of a gentle practical activity designed to allow the body to cool down after strenuous work or a quiet discussion designed to calm the group and give them feedback on their successes in the session.

## Features of a successful session

When planning sessions there are various things to consider at different stages to ensure a valuable and enjoyable experiences for the children.

### BEFORE

- *Decide what you want to achieve* – you must be clear on your outcomes for the session i.e. what will the children learn
- *Plan the session outline* – think your way through the activities. What warm ups will you use, what activities will help the children to achieve the intended outcomes?
- *Organise equipment* – be clear what resources you will need and have them ready for the session

### DURING

- *Keep the children active* – this is central to enjoyment and the more practice the faster the progress
- *Vary the activities* – do not let the children become bored. Look for the signals and respond quickly
- *Give clear instructions* – explain in simple terms and do not say too much. Question the children to make sure they understand
- *Use demonstration* – demonstrations are the most effective form of conveying what to do for children. Use pupils demonstrations to illustrate good technique but ensure the others know what is good about what they are seeing. Demonstrate yourself but only if you can do it properly. If not just slowly mark through what you want the children to do without actually doing it.
- *Give positive feedback* – Children respond to positive feedback. Let them know what is good about what they are doing as well as giving advice on improvement.
- *Be enthusiastic* – Just as with any teaching, your enthusiasm will influence the children. Be an interesting happy person – the children should feel that you enjoy working with them.

- *Keep control of the group –* Safety is crucial – distracted children are potentially dangerous children so keep them busy. Try to anticipate any potential problems and deal with them calmly – avoid direct confrontation by dealing calmly and privately with any disruptive children

## **AFTER**

- *Evaluate the session –* As with any lesson it is crucial to analyse what was achieved both in terms of the progress made by the children, in relation to what you aimed to achieve, and in terms of the effectiveness of the approaches you used.
- *Record what has been covered –* Making a note of the session will prove invaluable in keeping tabs on what has been done with the group and in assisting with future planning.
- *Begin planning next session –* Immediately after evaluating and recording the session is the best time to plan for the next one. At this stage you are clear what you want to do next. Don't lose these thoughts and plan your next session straight away.

Further reading on planning a session  
NCF Making Sport Fun pages 13–14; 23-26

## **Session 3 – Developing skills and improving performance**

In session 3 you will develop:

- a knowledge of the process of improving performance and an ability to use this in practice
- personal performance in the skills of push-passing and hitting a stationary ball and the ability to introduce and develop these skills.
- an ability to devise skills focused practices.

### **Improving performance**

It is essential for yourself as the coach to be able to recognise good skills technique in order to teach and improve performance. The effective coach :-

1. Knows the features of correct technique
2. Can recognise correct technique and observe and identify specific areas for improvement in performance
3. Knows what to do to improve performance.

As a coach you must be familiar with correct action and technique in order to diagnose and correct faults. However you must remember that at this stage we should not be obsessed with perfection and that enjoyment is more important. In other words be helpful, encourage and offer some advice to children but do not over coach.

Further reading NCF Improving Techniques pages 9-11; 20-22

## Push-passing

The push-pass is a natural pass to use from dribbling and allows the player to pass with control and accuracy



### Teaching points

- From the ready position slide the lower hand up the shaft of the caman until just below the grip
- If passing with the right side of the caman the right foot should be forward. If passing with the left side of the caman the left foot should be forward
- Weight should be transferred forward onto the front foot as the ball is contacted
- There should be a low back swing when striking the ball

### Skill practices

1. Children find a space facing the wall, about 3m back. They push the ball off the wall using one side of the caman then the other. Encourage the children to move to position correctly for the pass.
2. In pairs the players face each other about 6m apart. Two cones/ markers are placed to form a space (approx 1m) through which the ball must pass as it travels between partners. This practice can be made more challenging by decreasing the space between the cones or by moving the partners further apart.
3. In pairs, or larger groups if space is limited, place a cone against the wall. Players take it in turn to have 3 attempts at hitting the cone using a push-pass. Players start 5 paces away from the cone and only when they have successfully hit the cone 5 times do they then increase their personal distance by 2 paces to 7 paces. As they keep achieving the target of 3 hits they continue to increase the distance from the cone by 2 paces.

- 4 In groups of 3 in triangular formation, pass the ball to the next player. Pass clockwise and after 3 rotations the group change to passing anti-clockwise.

### Skill based games

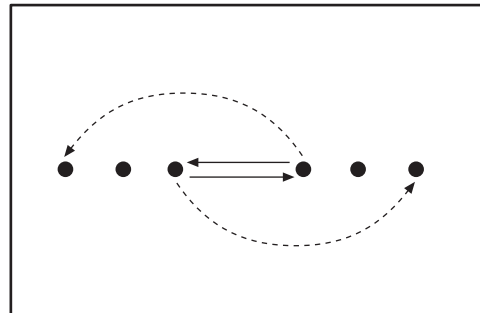
1. Take skill practice two and add some competition. Each player receives 2 points if the ball passes between the cones. The first player to score 20 points is the winner.

#### 2. Clock Passing

In a group of 6 forming a circle. The player who starts with the ball passes across the circle to another player calling the player's name to alert them to the pass. The passer follows the ball to take the place of the receiver who will move on when they pass to the next person.

#### 3. Pass and Move

Two lines of three or more players stand facing each other. The front player push-passes the ball across to the front player in the other group. After passing the player follows the path of the ball and runs on to join the back of the opposite line.



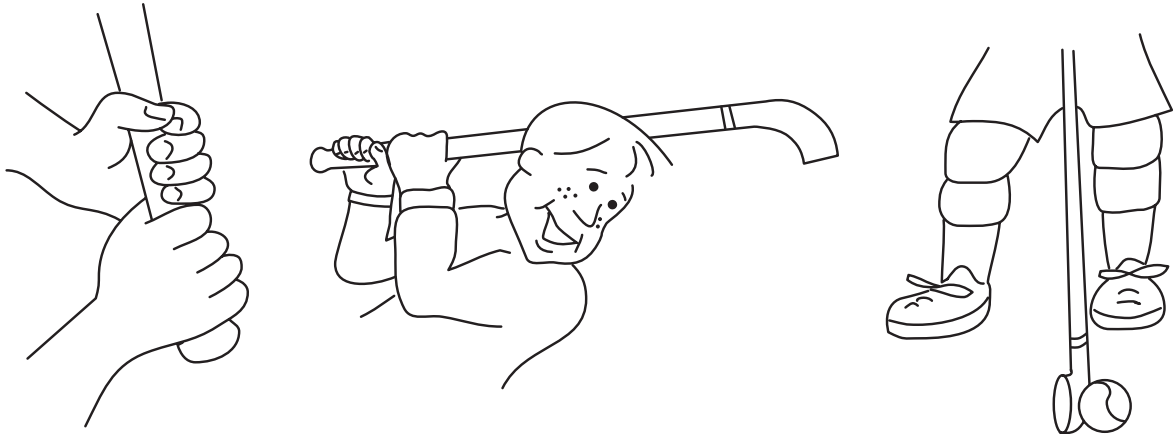
It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are listed below:

#### Common errors

- The index finger of the lower hand is pointing down the shaft – fingers should be curled round the shaft.
- Legs are straight and the back is bent
- There is a high back swing resulting in a hit rather than a push
- The stick does not follow through towards the intended target after the push.

## Hitting the ball from stationary

The hit is used for shooting and long passing. Hitting can only be practised indoors if working in a large space or in a controlled situation and should ideally be practised outdoors.



### Teaching points

- Hands should be touching at the top of the caman grip with index finger and thumb of top hand touching the lower hand
- Feet should be shoulder width apart and knees should be slightly bent and relaxed
- Body should be side on to the direction of the shot. Shoulders should be over the line of the shot and should rotate sideways in preparation for the hit.
- Ball should be in line with the inside of the front foot about 6-10 inches in front of the toe
- The elbows should stay close into the body as the caman swings back until the hands reach shoulder height.
- Begin with small swings with a short back swing and follow through before moving on to full swings
- The weight should be transferred onto the front foot as the ball is struck
- The head should be down and the eyes on the ball throughout the hit.

If practices and games using hitting are to be used indoors please give careful consideration to the space available ensuring that it is sufficient for the practices to be carried out safely.

### Skill practices

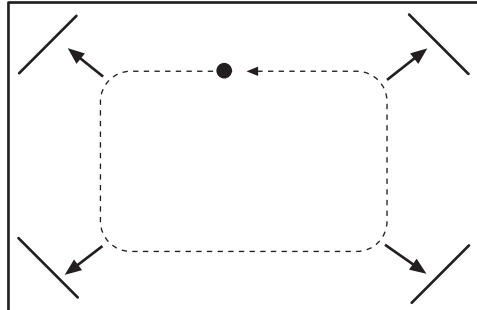
Players work in pairs. Two cones are placed about 10m apart. The players stand facing each other standing beside a cone each. Two other cones/ markers are placed to form a space (approx. 1m) through which the ball must pass as it travels between partners. If the ball goes off line the nearest player must retrieve it and return to own cone before resuming the task.

## Skill based games

1. As with skills practice 1 but introduce a time limit of 30 seconds where the pairs have to count how many successful hits they achieve in that time. Repeat, setting the challenge for each pairing to be at their own record.

### 2. Corner goals

The aim of the game is to develop length and accuracy in hitting skills. Set up four goals, one at each corner of the field. In relays, children attempt to strike the ball through each goal in turn, counting the number of shots it takes from start to finish. Put benches, or tables turned on their sides, behind the goals so that the ball will rebound back to the players.

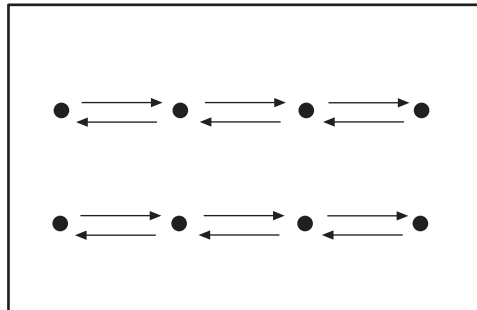


### 3. Line relay

Select teams of equal numbers and standards.

Players stand in a line with their team and have to hit the ball from one player to the next.

The first team to move the ball up and down the line a set number of times is the winner.



It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are listed below:

### Common errors

- Lifting head and taking eyes off the ball
- Trying too hard to hit the ball – need to relax the swing
- Ball positioned too far away from or too close to the front foot
- Shoulders not over the line of the shot
- Hands apart on the grip.

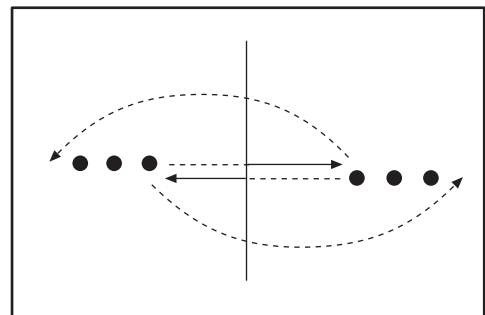
## Devising practices

When children have mastered skills at any level it is important to allow them to use these skills in enjoyable and challenging practices and games. That is why for each of the skills in this unit there are skills practices and skills based games provided.

However skills practices and games are not just about individual skills. It is also important to give children practices that require them to use combinations of skills. As a teacher/ coach it is important to be able to devise new practices or games or to modify existing ones to allow for the combining of skills.

The following is a variation on the simple Pass and Move skills based game that combines the skills of dribbling and push-passing

Two lines of three or more players stand facing each other at opposite ends of the working space. A cone is placed half way between the two groups. The front player dribbles the ball until in line with the cone and then push-passes the ball across to the front player in the other group. After passing the player follows the path of the ball and runs on to join the back of the opposite line.



When planning and deciding on the practices and games to use in sessions make sure that they serve the purpose of allowing the group to practice to skills they have been working on and where appropriate to combine with skills learnt previously.

# Session 4 – Using small sided games

## Outcomes

In Session 4 you will develop:

- personal performance in the skill of tackling
- a knowledge of how to use competition effectively
- a knowledge of a variety of small sided games and an appreciation of their value.

## Tackling

Tackling is taking the ball from an opponent.

## Teaching points

- From the ready position slide the lower hand up the shaft of the caman until just below the grip
- Knees should be bent so as to create a strong base
- Contact should only happen shoulder to shoulder. Shoulder contact with the opponents back or chest is not allowed
- The caman cannot be used through another player's legs in order to play a ball.

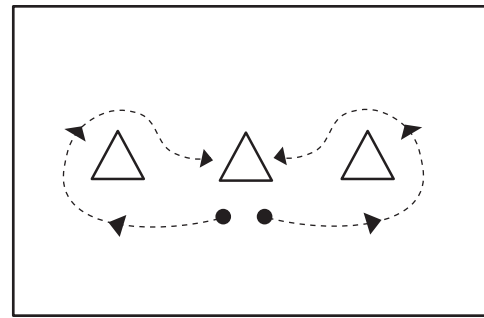
## Skill practices

1. Split the working group into 2 sections, group A and group B. Each player has a caman but only group A start with a ball each. Group A dribble the ball round the working space keeping the ball close to the stick. Group B spread out and position themselves within the working space. As group A dribble round, group B are not allowed to move from the spot but are allowed to use the caman to knock any ball away from a player if the player is not keeping the ball close to the stick.
2. In groups of three. Player A is in possession of the ball. Player B tackles player A and passes the ball to player C. Roles now change with C in possession, A tackling and passing to B. Keep the roles changing in rotation.

## Skill based games

### 1. In pairs

Three cones are set out 2/3 m apart. The centre cone is the goal and the two outside cones are markers. The players start at the markers and the ball starts beside the centre cone. On the whistle the players move in and try to gain possession of the ball. When a player gets the ball they must dribble it round their marker cone and back to touch the ball off the centre cone to score a goal. When a player loses possession of the ball they must run round their marker cone before moving in to tackle for possession.



2. Two teams of three or more play in a grid area 15m square. A scorer counts the number of passes for each team when in possession. Players are encouraged to move in to tackle and retrieve a poorly guarded ball and to push it to a member of their own team. The team with the highest accumulative number of passes at the end of a given period of time is the winner. This can also be played using accumulated time in possession rather than number of passes. This is best done with a time keeper for each side and a stop-watch each.

It is during the skills practices and games that you will see errors occurring in the technique. It is important to observe and pick up on these points early. The common errors are listed below:

### Common errors

- Lifting the caman high thus intimidating opponents
- Keeping possession of the ball for too long
- Knees are not bent sufficiently to ensure a stable body position
- Trying to tackling through an opponents legs.

### Competition

Competition is an integral part of first shinty.

If used **properly** competition can provide

- motivation for children
- a sense of team spirit
- the opportunity to use skills in more challenging situations.

If used **incorrectly** competition can provide

- feelings of inadequacy for children

- opportunities for individuals to 'go it alone'
- too much pressure and skills deteriorate.

As a coach/teacher you must use competition sensitively as any form of competition, in the wrong hands, can be counter productive for many children.

Children should be encouraged to work as part of a team and not as individuals although there is a place for 1v1 games as a lead up to working with others as part of a team.

Further reading on the place of competition for children  
NCF Working With Children pages 13-17; 22.

## **Small-sided games**

Small-Sided Games are valuable and can be justified in any team game in that:

- smaller numbers in teams gives players more time with the ball
- more time with the ball allows for greater practise of skills within the game
- smaller numbers in teams increases the chance of all team members being involved
- smaller playing area reduces the amount of chasing after the ball

It is important to introduce and use small sided games with planned progression, requiring children to use the skills they have learned in increasingly challenging situations. Progression in use of small-sided games along with the value of each scenario are outlined below:

1 v 1 allows children to work on outwitting opponent without having to cope with cooperation as well.

1 v 2 requires children to cooperate with partner while experiencing a manageable amount of opposition from opponent.

2 v 2 requires children to cooperate with partner and outwit opponents.

3 v 2 & 4 v 3 use of overloading allows the larger team to experience greater success while still having to cooperate with others and outwit opponents.

3 v 3 4 v 4 etc allows even competition with small numbers ensuring more time with the ball for players thus giving more practice of skills in the game.

## **Using small-sided games**

When setting up a small-sided game with children it is important to be clear on what rules are being used. Do not introduce too many rules at a time and only include rules that are essential to the safe playing of the game.

There are various versions of small-sided games that can be used as progressions leading to the more standard small-sided games or the 6v6 full game. These can also be used as valuable games in their own right.

## Progressions to 1v1

**1v1** Two players stand facing each other, about 5m apart with their feet shoulder width apart. The players take it in turns to hit the ball towards their opponent and score 2 points if the ball rolls between their opponents legs or 1 point if the ball hits off their opponent's foot. The winner is the player to score the most points after a given period of time or a set number of hits each.

**1v1** Two players stand facing a wall, about 2m from the wall, with one ball between them. The object of the game is to hit the ball off the wall and send it as far away from the opponent as possible. Each player is only allowed two touches – one to stop the ball and one to hit the wall. If the player does not hit the wall, then a point is awarded to their opponent. Play five to ten points. When they can successfully manage the above 1v1 situations, children are now be ready to play the following 1v1 game.

## Game 1v1

**Skills** stopping; hitting and push-passing with accuracy

**Objective** to score goals between cones, posts or against benches

**Rules** Indoors –players are not allowed to swing the caman above knee height. Outdoors – the height of the swing allowed can be increased depending on the size of the playing area. Safety is of utmost importance.  
If the ball crosses the side-line it is played back on by the player who did not touch it last. If the ball crosses the by-line it is played back on by the player whose line it crossed.

**Pitch** The size of the rectangular pitch and the width of the goals will depend on the space available and the age of the players A goal width of approx 2m is recommended.

## Progressions to 3v3

**2v1** The side with two players attempts to make as many consecutive passes as possible before the ball is intercepted by the single player. No tackling is allowed and the player has to intercept the ball as it is passed from one player to another. When an interception is made one player changes sides.

**3v2** The team with three players has to achieve 5 consecutive passes to score a point. The team with two players scores a point if they make a successful interception – no tackling is allowed. The team with the most points after a set period of time is the winner.

**3v3** This is played on a conventional pitch with a goal at either end using cones, posts or benches. The size of the pitch and the goals will depend on the age and ability of the group. Players are allowed only two consecutive touches of the ball – they are not allowed a further two touches until another player has touched the ball. If a player touches the ball more than twice a free hit is given to the other team. There are no goalkeepers allowed.

**3v3** As above but there is no restriction on the number of touches a player can make. Players are allowed anywhere on the pitch but a goal can only be scored when hit from behind a line 5m from the goal. There are no goalkeepers allowed.

When they can successfully manage the above situations, children are now be ready to play the following 3v3 game.

### **Game 3v3**

**Skills** stopping hitting, push-passing and dribbling

**Objective** to score goals between cones, posts or against benches and to pass the ball the required number of times before shooting.

**Rules** Indoors and outdoors: each team must pass the ball a minimum of three times before shooting. Players cannot tackle, they can only intercept the ball when it is being passed.  
Hitting the ball is only allowed if there are no other players close-by. The caman must not be swung at the ball that is in the air – to hit an aerial ball the caman must be stationary. If the ball crosses the side-line it is played back on by the player who did not touch it last. If the ball crosses the by-line it is played back on by the player whose line it crossed.  
The game is started with a drop-ball from the centre of the pitch.

**Pitch** As with 1v1 the size of the rectangular pitch and the width of the goals will depend on the space available and the age of the players. A goal width of approx 2m is recommended.

## Session 5 – First Shinty – the full game

### Outcomes

In session 5 you will develop:

- a knowledge of the rules of First Shinty
- an ability to take use basic skills in 6 v 6 games an ability to take on a variety of officiating roles and an appreciation of the value of involving children in officiating games.

### Full First Shinty 6v6

When playing games it is important to include non-playing teams in roles that will make them feel involved and keep their interest on the game.

Children can be given the following roles:

2 scorekeepers

2 timekeepers

2 coaches – 1 for each team.

Their role is to identify one thing the team could do to improve and to give this information to the team at the end of the game.

When children have a good knowledge of the rules of the game and are sufficiently confident they can be given the responsibility of refereeing games. However asking a child to referee a game when they do not have the confidence or knowledge to do so effectively is detrimental to the game and to the child.

### Rules of First Shinty

1. The playing pitch will measure 87.5m x 55m maximum.
2. Smaller pitches may be used if necessary or to suit the ability of the participants.
3. A First-Shinty ball must be used at all times.
4. The team will consist of a maximum of eight members, six of whom will be on the pitch at any one time.
5. Substitutes are ‘rolling’ – i.e. can be changed as many times as the teacher/ coach deems necessary. It is recommended that no player is off the pitch for longer than five minutes.
6. Play which could lead to injuries should be positively discouraged. This includes uncontrolled swinging an swinging in close proximity to other players. All teachers/ coaches, parents, referees and players should be aware of these situations and act immediately. If a dangerous situation should arise, the referee should stop play and award a throw-up to the two players involved.

7. Players' sticks must be stationary when playing an aerial ball.
8. The goal area will have a five yard semicircular arc marked, in which no player other than the goalkeeper is allowed . If any other player enters this area, a free hit will be awarded to the opposing side. If a defending player clears the ball away from within the circle, a penalty should be awarded to the attacking team.
9. Start the game with a drop ball between two players.

# Session 6 – Planning competition

## Outcomes

In session 6 you will develop:

- a knowledge of the role of the teacher/coach in the development of Shinty
- an awareness of support available in Shinty development
- an ability to plan and organise competition.

## The role of the teacher/coach

1. To take care of the children and ensure their safety As a coach you must acknowledge your role in ensuring children are in no danger in your sessions. This means giving careful consideration to the following:

- create a safe working environment with safe uncluttered playing areas and carefully organised and checked equipment.
- use warm-up and cool down activities
- plan activities that are suitable for the age and stage of the group
- have easy access to a first aid kit for treatment of any minor injuries – it is strongly recommended that you obtain a first aid qualification and keep it up-to-date
- know what your best course of action is in the case of a more serious emergency – always know where the nearest phone is located.

Further reading NCF Making Sport Fun pages 5-122

2. To plan and organise enjoyable and evaluable sessions. As previously discussed, careful planning is crucial to the success of a session. Your role as the coach is to be clear on what you want to achieve in the session and to plan how you are going to achieve it in an interesting and enjoyable way for the group.

Further reading NCF Making Sport Fun pages 13-14

3. To make children feel good about themselves through giving them positive experiences Children choose to attend the sessions because they enjoy the activity. Too much emphasis on winning and pushing children too hard will destroy this enjoyment for the vast majority of children. Praise children for their achievements and encourage them in personal improvement.

Further reading NCF Making Sport Fun pages 16-184

4. To help children develop first shinty skills and an ability to use these as a valuable member of a team.

As a coach you should:

- know correct technique to enable you to help children in their mastery of the skills and to diagnose and correct faults
- know your group and know how to get the best out of each and every child
- encourage teamwork in practices and games playing and encourage fair play

Further reading NCF Making Sport Fun pages 19-22

5. To generate in children an enthusiasm and love of sport and activity in general Your own enthusiasm will play an important part in developing children's love of shinty. If you make sessions interesting, fun and rewarding for the group this will encourage continued participation.

Further reading NCF Making Sport Fun pages 1-2

## Organising competition

There are various forms and level of competition for primary school

- games within class
- time or club sessions
- inter class games and school festivals
- inter school/club festival

## Festivals

Many sports are adopting the Festival approach to competition. The basic philosophy of festivals is to provide an opportunity for children to experience the enjoyment of playing alongside others of similar abilities in a friendly atmosphere.

- Festivals should aim to promote
- fun
- maximum participation
- fair play

In order to provide maximum participation a round-robin structure should be used. The knockout structure should be avoided as the concept of some teams being put out of the competition after playing only one game is totally against the festival philosophy.

## Planning a festival

When planning a festival the following decisions have to be made:

- **The number of teams** – this will be restricted by the number of playing areas available. If you have only one playing area it is not advisable to have more than four teams playing. Any more and the games would have to be very short and players would have a lot of waiting between games.

- **The number of games to be played** – the number of teams will dictate how many games need to be played to allow all teams to play each other.  
The number of games is calculated as follows:–  
3 teams number of games =  $2+1=3$  games  
4 teams number of games =  $3+2+1=6$  games  
5 teams number of games =  $4+3+2+1=10$  games  
6 teams number of games =  $5+4+3+2+1=15$  games
- The length of games – this will be determined by the total time available, the number of games to be played and the number of playing areas.  
When calculating appropriate length of games remember to allow for change over time between games.
- The order of play – this should be worked out in advance and should be planned to avoid teams playing consecutive matches as far as possible.
- **Scoring system and score sheet** – a simple and commonly used scoring system is:
  - Win – 3 points
  - Draw – 2 points
  - Lose – 1 point

Prepare the score sheet ahead of time using the format illustrated below. This sheet allows for results to be recorded easily. Each teams results are recorded across the way in the horizontal row – the points are recorded in the upper section of the box and the actual game score is recorded in the lower section.

|          | <b>A</b> | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b> | <b>points</b> | <b>position</b> |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------------|
| <b>A</b> |          | /        | /        | /        | /        |               |                 |
| <b>B</b> | /        |          | /        | /        | /        |               |                 |
| <b>C</b> | /        | /        |          | /        | /        |               |                 |
| <b>D</b> | /        | /        | /        |          | /        |               |                 |
| <b>E</b> | /        | /        | /        | /        |          |               |                 |

A simple festival involving three or four teams can easily be played using one playing area. If there are four teams there will be a total of 6 games to be played. Playing games of 7 minutes with 3 minutes change over time will take an hour in total and each team will have played 3 games.

If playing an inter school festival involving more than five or six teams it is best to have two playing areas as this will ensure the games are played within a reasonable period of time and that the children are not waiting too long between games.

Clear guidelines on planning festivals can be found in the following publications:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| The Scottish Sports Council | Mini-netball coaching manual,<br>Scottish Sports Council   |
| The Scottish Sports Council | Mini-netball festival handbook,<br>Scottish Sports Council |

## Getting help

First Shinty is a growing sport. Children across Scotland are being introduced to the game within the formal curriculum and in clubs by enthusiastic teachers and coaches, who have been introduced to the game in pre service or inservice training.

For those interested in developing first shinty there are important contacts and sources of information.

## Contacts

SportScotland Shinty Co-ordinator – Alan McMillan  
University of Strathclyde  
Jordanhill Campus  
76 Southbrae Drive  
GLASGOW  
G13 1PP  
Tel: 0141 950 3426/3167  
Fax: 0141 950 3171

Executive officer  
Camanachd Association  
Algarve  
Badabrie  
Banavie  
FORT WILLIAM  
PH33 7LX  
Tel: 01397 722 722

## Resources

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Team SportScotland | First Shinty: Teachers' and Coaches' manual,<br>Scottish Sports Council. |
|--------------------|--|

Team Sport Shinty coaching manual : level 2 part I Scottish Sports Council.

Although this manual focuses on full shinty it does provide teaching and coaching information that will help to develop the First Shinty coach's knowledge of skills and practices.

## **Website**

The Camanachd Association has a website – <http://www.shinty.com.uk>

This is a valuable and interesting website providing up-to-date information on clubs and schools involved in shinty and first shinty; progress in development of the game; useful contact names and addresses; a bibliography of texts on shinty and other useful information. This is a very good starting point if you want to know more about first shinty or shinty.

## **Newspaper**

*Shinty World* is printed bi-monthly and provides up-to-date information on what is happening in shinty.

It can be ordered from:  
North of Scotland Publications  
Long Stracht,  
Mastrick  
Aberdeen  
Tel 01224 690222.