

14 – 16 YEARS OLD

Player Characteristics

- ▶ Winning is becoming an integral part of their psyche. This competitive edge must not be blunted, but only encouraged in an age appropriate manner. However, the coach must be aware that some players are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc.
- ▶ Player can be under exam pressure.
- ▶ Understanding of what players are going through; puberty is happening so a lot is going on for the youth. Be aware players can develop at varying rates, (chronological v biological) i.e. players may be the same age but vary in size.
- ▶ Player can crave acceptance from parents, coaches and peers. However, during youth the player seeks more acceptance from their peers than their parents. E.g. they will refuse to listen to what parents say but accept what peers say.
- ▶ Player can have high expectations.
- ▶ Likes playing in a competitive team which share the same objectives.
- ▶ May be quarrelsome and reluctant to communicate.

14 – 16 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ Catching – win your own ball. To do that players must first decide to go for the sliotar.
 - judging the flight of the sliotar.
 - timing your jump to perfection.
- ▶ Over head strike:
 - judging the flight of the sliotar.
 - meet the ball at the highest point possible in your swing.
 - a “nice” and “tidy” swing.
 - follow through properly.
- ▶ Strike from the hand:
 - make room to strike.
 - shorten grip on the run.
 - a “nice” and “tidy” swing.
- ▶ First Touch – constant practice:
 - competing for the high ball / flick in the air.
- ▶ Tackling- blocking / hooking / flicking the ball away.
- ▶ Lift and strike.
- ▶ Hand pass – three variations.
- ▶ How to use the body in the tackle.
- ▶ Shouldering / holding a player off / making space to strike / catch.
- ▶ Sidelines.
- ▶ Free taking.
- ▶ The “Whelehan” lift (see Glossary of Terms).
- ▶ All other skills will be practised during the games.
- ▶ Include occasionally:
 - “Keep Me Uppies” (individual and team).
 - Striking and doubling on the ball as it comes down.



14 – 16 PHYSICAL FOCUS – ABC'S & RJT'S

Movement – endurance built into your sessions through, drill activity small sided, full sided games using the sliotar, in all activities.

- ▶ The ‘window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic and strength training’ occurs during this phase.
- ▶ Optimal aerobic trainability begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV) or the major growth spurt during maturation. Aerobic training should be prioritised after the onset of PHV, while skill, speed and strength should be maintained or developed further.
- ▶ Due to sudden growth spurts, flexibility should be a key aspect for this age level.
- ▶ Proper warm up and cool down activities to take place at every session.
- ▶ Rest is an important component of physical development to allow the body recover and adapt to training. This means that some players have to miss your session or reduce what they do!

Strength

- ▶ Learning correct teaching points of GAA sport specific exercises, under suitably qualified personnel, which will stand the player in good stead throughout his GAA playing days.
- ▶ Stability, balance and mobility work.
- ▶ Bodyweight exercises through such activities as circuit training.
- ▶ Introduce player to the concepts of Functional Movement Screening.
- ▶ Core strength – strength in the centre of the body allows the rest of the body to move more freely - appropriate activities to develop same under a suitably qualified coach.

14 – 16 GAME SPECIFIC

Games

- ▶ “Parish / Street Leagues” – small sided and conditioned with full participation.
- ▶ “Three Goals and In” – all the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game.
- ▶ “Backs and Forwards”.
- ▶ “Four Goal Game” – this is an ideal method for players to learn to hurl with the head up / using space and spreading the play.
- ▶ “No Man’s Land” – striking and catching.
- ▶ “Short Puck Out Game” – if you require “extra” games for your “team”, then do so.

Games Sense

- ▶ Develop principles of play (attacking / defending).
- ▶ Hurl with your head up.
- ▶ Learn how to create space – willing to help out a teammate; willing to make a decoy run.
- ▶ Learn how to close down space – willing to help out a teammate; willing to cover for a teammate.
 - Delay / Deny / Dispossess / Distribution.
- ▶ Team Play – combine with teammates / pass the ball / support on and off the ball.
- ▶ Decision making.
- ▶ Reading the game – clearances from opposition / clearances from your own teammates / players making dummy runs.
- ▶ Developing the ability to know which skill to use in a particular moment in time in a game – hook or block, catch or bat.
- ▶ Develop the ability to time your tackle to perfection.
- ▶ Communication – “One up for the dropping ball”.

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SKILLS TARGETS 14 - 16 YEARS

TARGET 1 - GROUND STRIKING

Three hurling balls are placed on the line four metres apart. Players must run and strike the balls on the ground into the goals. The balls are placed 25 metres from the goals. Repeat on the alternative side.

Score: 5 points per score.
Maximum score: 30 points.

TARGET 2 - FREE TAKING

Two hurling balls are placed on the 21 metre line as follows:
A. 25 metres to right of centre
B. 25 metres to left of centre
Two hurling balls are placed on the 45 metre line as follows:
C. 25 metres to right of centre
D. 25 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.
Score:
10 points per score.
Maximum score: 40 points.

TARGET 3 - JAB LIFT AND STRIKE

Player starts on a 60 metre mark. Sliotar placed out on a 55 metre mark. He runs, jab lifts to gain possession of the ball and then strikes sliotar over the bar before he reaches the 45 metre line. Players to do this at full pace. Balls must be struck from the following positions:

- A. Centre of the goals
- B. 10 metres to right of centre
- C. 10 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar. 3 attempts on each side.

Scores can be deducted, at the coaches' discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.
Score: 10 points per ball right and left side.
Maximum score: 60 points.

TARGET 4 - GROUND CUT

Four hurling balls are placed on 30 metre line as follows:
A. 10 metres to right of centre
B. 10 metres to left of centre
C. 25 metres to right of centre
D. 25 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.
Score:
10 points for A and B.
20 points for C and D.
Maximum score: 60 points.

TARGET 5 - BALL CONTROL

Players attack a low ball struck from 50m away. They must gather possession cleanly through a catch or maximum of "one touch". 5 balls in total are attacked.

Scores can be deducted, at the coaches' discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.
Score: 10 points per controlled ball. 5 points deducted if "two touches" taken. No points if more than "two touches".
Maximum score: 50 points.

TARGET 6 - LONG PUCK

Players must strike a total of four hurling balls from the hand from the end line through a target 10 metre wide. Two strikes from each side. Distance is measured from the first bounce. If end line is crossed prior to striking the ball that puck is null and void.

Score:
60 -75 metres - 5 points per ball
75-90 metres - 10 points
> 85 metres - 20 points
Maximum score: 80 points.

SKILLS TARGETS 14 - 16 YEARS continued

TARGET 7 - CATCHING

Players must catch a high ball within a designated 15m x 15m zone struck from 50 metres away. Players must start outside the zone and judge the flight of the ball as it enters. If the ball does not enter the zone in a correct manner the ball is considered void.

Score: 10 points per ball caught.
Maximum score: 40 points.

TARGET 8 - HOOKING

Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 2-3 metres behind Player 1. On coaches' call: Player 1 sprints off, with Player 2 in hot pursuit. Player 1 can strike the sliotar at any stage before he reaches the 21 to shoot for a point. Player 2 must "hook". Player 1 must try not to avoid the "hook".

Score: 10 points per "hook"
Maximum score: 30 points.

TARGET 9 - BLOCKING

Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 5-10 metres in front of Player 1. On coaches' call: Player 1 sprints off, with Player 2 facing him. Player 1 must strike the sliotar, to score a point while moving at any stage, before he meets Player 2. Player 2 must "block" either directly or by judging the flight of the sliotar.

Score: 10 points per "block"
Maximum score: 30 points.

Maximum Overall Score: 420 points.



**THE PLAYER PATHWAY
IS DESIGNED WITH PLAYER
WELFARE AT THE HEART
OF THE PLAN**