

Louis St. Laurent BARONS Hockey Academy - June Prospect Magazine Article

*Repetition leads to habit which leads instinct. This is known as "the third law of learning." You must first develop the proper technique. Begin with knowledge, apply that to technique, and follow up with repetition. Only through repetition will good technique become habit. Only through even more repetition will habit become instinct. The difference between habit and instinct is that habit requires thinking. Instinctive play flows without conscious thought. Instinctive play is the level that we aspire to achieve and is what separates good players from great players. **Marvin Harvey***

DID YOU KNOW?

- The "average" minor hockey player has the puck on his stick an average of **8 to 10 seconds per game** (Hockey Canada) - half of the players are below that average
- Players will take an average of **1 to 2 shots per game** (Hockey Canada)
- Coaches who believe in 'fair ice time' will provide their players with an average of 18 shifts in a sixty minute game (Hockey USA)
- **One efficient practice will give a player more skill development than 11 games collectively** (Hockey USA)
- 99% of feedback coaches give a player is when they have the puck. Ironically players only have the puck on their stick 0.2% of the game (Hockey USA).
- Jaromir JAGR stickhandles daily after practice with a 45 pound weight at the bottom of his shaft
- Europeans assign their players "Hockey Homework" during the season and a 'Summer Program' in the off-season

The '10,000 Hour 10-Year Rule' - Long Term Athlete Development

Research states that it takes a *minimum of 10 years or 10,000 hours of training* for an athlete to reach the most elite levels in their chosen sport. For both the athlete and coach, this translates into slightly more than 3 hours of training or competition daily for 10 years.

Players that get to play a lot by their coaches will be the 'best players' even though athletes generally grow at the same rate as they move through the L.T.A.D. Model Steps together. As coaches we have an obligation to teach every player and to make sure that they all get a fair opportunity.

There are "NO SHORT CUTS" and what we as coaches do with our athletes today will directly affect them in a positive or negative manner in the future.

"SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT"

For arguments sake, let's assume that the best player in any given game controls the puck for an average of one minute each game and let's say that same player controls the puck for an average of 2 minutes during a typical practice. This would mean that during a 60 game and 40 practice season the best player on the team only controls the puck for 2 hours and 20 minutes a season. But what is alarming is the average puck possession per shift is 2.5 seconds (Hockey USA). The numbers show that stick related puck skills can only be minimally developed on-ice over the course of a season.

SOLUTION

Coaches have to be proactive and find ways to improve 'player development relating to puck related stick skills' that is 'affordable,' 'accessible to all,' and keep skill development 'fun.'

Most players will not be able to afford a personal trainer, ice time during the season is extremely limited and minor hockey practices do not typically spend enough time on individual technical and tactical skill development.

Coaches should be assigning their players "**Hockey Homework**" throughout the season and they should assign a "**Summer Program**" to their players at the end of each season. This way, players that don't have access to extra ice time can still perform off-ice skills during and after the season to assist them in the development of their stick related puck skills. The more quality repetitions executed by the player will ultimately make it easier to turn stick related puck skills into '**instinct.**'

If a player works on puck related stick skills for just 30 minutes a day over a 12 week period (summer) that player can duplicate more than 15 seasons of skills development in a single summer!

OFF-ICE HOMEWORK WILL IMPROVE SKILLS!

