



National
Coaching
Certification
Program










Coaching
Association
of Canada



Competition Coaching Introduction
Learning to Train (Dryland)
Cross-Country Skiing
COACH WORKBOOK

The National Coaching Certification Program is a collaborative program of the Government of Canada, provincial/territorial governments, national/provincial/territorial sport organizations, and the Coaching Association of Canada.

Partners in Coach Education and Training

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The “Learning to Train” stage of athlete development is an important period for motor development and an optimal window of trainability for motor-coordination. Children are developmentally ready to acquire the general sport skills that will be the cornerstone of their athletic development.

Prepared under the authority of
Cross Country Canada’s
Coach and Athlete Development Committee





Illustration by barnstorm creative group



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Total course time is approximately 16.5 hours

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Photo Credit - Jo-Ann Holden





Introduction

The objectives of this section are to:

- ❑ provide an introduction to the Competition Coaching Introduction (CCI) context of the National Coaching Certification Program; and
- ❑ provide an overview of the goals and objectives of the “CCI - Learning To Train (Dryland) Workshop”, the third step in Cross Country Canada’s NCCP progression.

Cross Country Canada’s Competition Coaching Introduction (CCI) program is a four-step progression of coach education and development opportunities that builds on the first context of the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) – the Community Coaching (CC) program.

The CCI program provides tools and develops skills that a coach can use to:

- ❑ create a fun, team-oriented environment that will motivate skiers to achieve their personal goals in sport;
- ❑ motivate skiers to develop a lifelong interest in the fitness and health benefits of cross-country skiing;
- ❑ effectively teach intermediate and then advanced technique; and
- ❑ teach skiers in the areas of nutrition and physical and mental training, as appropriate according to age.

The first two steps/workshops provide essential information for coaches working with skiers in the Learning to Train (LTT) stage of athlete development. The second two steps/workshops prepare coaches to work with athletes in the Training to Train (TTT) stage of development.

Competition Coaching Introduction (CCI) - Learning to Train (Dryland) Workshop

- ❑ **Workshop Goals.** This workshop is designed to teach experienced community coaches how to work with young skiers in the “Learning to Train (LTT)” stage of athlete development using a well-rounded sport program with an emphasis on skill development (e.g. CCC’s Track Attack program).





- ❑ **Workshop Objectives.** Having successfully completed the “CCI - Learning to Train (Dryland) Workshop” (abbreviated as CCI-LTT (Dryland) Workshop), a coach should be able to:
 - 1) Teach an effective series of skill development sessions for children in the LTT stage of athlete development.
 - 2) Work effectively with others in the club and integrate external resources in order to provide a learning environment that is:
 - **Enjoyable.** The program is fun and comprised of activities that: are stimulating and novel; contain an appropriate degree of challenge; fit into the “overall picture”; provide the opportunity for progressive improvement; and involve action.
 - **Ethical and Safe.** The program ascribes to the NCCP Code of Ethics and incorporates appropriate safety and risk management procedures.
 - **Age-Appropriate.** The principles of CCC’s Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model are carefully followed.
 - **Motivating.** Children will recognize progress in their skiing abilities and physical development, and will be led in a manner that will motivate them to learn more, ski more and explore their technical and physical limits.
 - **Encouraging Self-Reliance.** Children will progressively develop skills that enable them to prepare and take care of their own ski equipment and set objectives for and complete “targets” without constant assistance and supervision from adults.
 - **Adaptable to Varying Interests.** The program provides opportunities for children to develop skills that will allow them to enjoy the full spectrum of cross-country skiing activities.
 - **Open and Communicative.** Active communication between the skiers and coaches relating to goals, objectives, needs and progress is encouraged.
 - **Team and Club-Oriented.** The support structure of the team and club is valued and developed.
 - **Parent Supported.** Parents are engaged and supportive of the objectives and methodology of the program.





- 3) Pursue continuous improvement by monitoring and evaluating the progress of the program in achieving its goals.
- 4) Pursue continuous self-improvement (developing his/her teaching abilities, general coaching abilities, personal technical skills and knowledge and understanding of competitive skiing).

This workshop is intended to support coaches by providing them with an opportunity to learn and improve their skills. Congratulations and thanks go to those who are taking this step and giving their time to develop cross-country skiing for children in Canada.

Getting to Know the Workshop Materials

The following materials are provided to coaches at this workshop:

- CCI-LTT (Dryland) Workbook;
- CCI-LTT (Dryland) Reference Material; and
- Track Attack Log.





Step #1 - Setting the Scene

The objectives of this step are to:

- provide an opportunity for you to reflect on your role as a coach at this stage;
- develop a better understanding of how to work effectively with parents to help achieve your shared goals; and
- present an overview of some key functions and tasks that coaches at this level undertake.

1.1 Reflections on Coaching

1.1.1 What are your reasons for wanting to coach children in the LTT stage of athlete development?

1.1.2 Have your reasons for being involved changed since you began coaching?

1.2 Your Major Functions and Tasks as a Coach of Athletes in the LTT Stage of Development

1.2.1 Pair up with another coach and review the section on “*Reasons for Being in Sport*” and “*Reasons for Being Involved in Cross-Country Skiing*” in your Reference Material (sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2). Together discuss ways in which you feel you could improve your coaching to better motivate your athletes to stay in your program. Write down the two improvements/changes that you think are the most important.





a.

b.

- 1.2.2 Refer to and review “*Functions and Tasks as a Coach of Athletes in the LTT Stage of Athlete Development*” in your Reference Material (section 1.2.3). This section outlines five key functions that coaches generally need to fulfill when they work with athletes involved in sport programs (in larger clubs some of these functions may have already been established and designated volunteers may already look after some of the administrative requirements).
- 1.2.3 For each key function, check off the tasks that seem to be the most important in your own coaching situation.

1.3 The Parent/Coach Relationship

- 1.3.1 In groups of three discuss your previous experiences in working with parents, and how you have made the best use of this resource.
- 1.3.2 Refer to the “*Sample Letter to Parents*” and “*Sample Pre-Season Questionnaire for Parents*” in the Reference Material (sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2). You may wish to adapt and use these documents to help you learn more about the expectations of the parents of the children you are coaching.
- 1.3.3 Record on your Action Card at the end of this Step any specific points you wish to remember.





ACTIONS FOR SETTING THE SCENE

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: During this stage children should play a variety of sports and focus on developing skills in three sports in particular.





Step #2 – Athletes and Their Sport Needs

The objectives of this step are to:

- provide you with an overview of the LTAD progression for cross-country skiing;
- review the growth and development characteristics for the LTT stage of athlete development; and
- present you with tools to assist you in making developmental age-appropriate choices with your coaching.

2.1 Stages of Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)

2.1.1 Pair up with another coach and review “*Stages of LTAD*” in your Reference Material (section 2.1). Note that the first three stages of the LTAD framework encourage physical literacy and “Sport for All”. Then discuss the following questions:

- a. Why is it important for all children to develop physical literacy before the onset of the adolescent growth spurt?
- b. Do you feel that your club’s skill development programs play an important role in developing the physical literacy of the children enrolled in those programs?
- c. What are the optimal windows of accelerated development (trainability) that occur during the “Sport for All” stages of the LTAD, and how does your program address these opportunities?
- d. According to the LTAD, what should your program emphasize most during the LTT stage of athlete development?
- e. Following the first three stages there is a transition to further development and (eventually) excellence in cross-country skiing, or life-long participation in skiing and/or other sports. How well do you think your club program prepares children for subsequent stages in the LTAD (Training to Train or Active for Life)?





- f. Based on this information, how would you adapt your coaching to better serve the needs of children in the “Sport for All” stages of the LTAD? Record the key points on your Action Card.

2.2 Learning to Train Stage of Athlete Development

- 2.2.1 The Facilitator will provide an overview of the growth and development characteristics of children in the LTT stage of development and lead a short discussion on the implications for coaches working with this age group.

2.3 Developmental Age (Maturation)

- 2.3.1 Together with your partner coach have a look at “*Developmental Age (Maturation)*” in your Reference Material (section 2.5) and discuss ways in which you might apply this information to the group with which you work.

- 2.3.2 The Facilitator will lead a short question and answer period.

2.4 Trainability

- 2.4.1 In section 2.1.1.c above, you identified the optimal windows for trainability (OWT) that occur in the first three stages of the LTAD. Review the section on “*Trainability*” in your Reference Material again (section 2.6).

- 2.4.2 The Facilitator will now lead a group discussion on how to successfully implement what you have learned.

2.5 Mental, Cognitive and Emotional Development

- 2.5.1 For an overview of the mental, cognitive and emotional development of children, refer to sections 2.7.2 and 2.7.3 in your Reference Material.

- 2.5.2 After reading this material, list what you think are the five areas that are most important for you to focus on to improve your coaching. Rank them in order of importance.

- a.





b.

c.

d.

e.

2.5.3 Assuming a major objective of your sport program is to ensure a holistic approach to athlete development (emphasis on ethics, fair play and character building), how would you design your program differently to take into consideration your athletes' cognitive ability to address these concepts?

2.5.4 Record on your Action Card at the end of this Step any points you wish to remember.

2.6 Developing Self-Reliance

2.6.1 The Facilitator will break you into sub-groups of three or four to discuss ways in which coaches can encourage the development of good self management skills in young skiers during the first three stages of the LTAD progression.

2.6.2 Your sub-group will be assigned to a specific stage of development and asked to put suggestions on a flip chart. When this step is completed, the sub-groups will be asked to present recommendations to the larger group for further discussion.

2.6.3 Compare the information on the flip charts with the information provided in "*Developing Self-Reliant Athletes*" in your Reference Material (section 2.8) and the "Target" checklists in your copy of the Track Attack Log.

2.6.4 Jot down on your Action Card any points you wish to remember.





ACTIONS FOR ATHLETES AND THEIR SPORT NEEDS

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: During this stage children should be doing sport-specific practice sessions three times a week and participating in other sports three times a week.





Step #3 – Evaluating Your Sport Program

The objectives of this step are to:

- help you analyze your present program for children in the LTT stage of athlete development; and
- assist you in determining how your program reflects the guidelines outlined in Cross Country Canada's LTAD model.

3.1 Reflections on the Structure of Your Program

3.1.1 Is your program structured to support skiers in the LTT stage of development?
Note your answers below.

	Question	Answer	Score
a.	When does your program start up in the fall?		
b.	How many practice sessions and/or special activities does your program offer in a season – in total?		
c.	How many of these sessions are held prior to the snow season?		
d.	How many cross-country ski competitions (including entry level programs such as Racing Rocks! activities) are scheduled into your program annually?		
e.	How many special activities <i>in addition</i> to competitions does your program offer annually?		





	Question	Answer	Score
f.	Are group interaction, team building and social activities program priorities?		
g.	Does your program include education on winter safety and ski preparation?		
h.	Is your program designed to encourage self-reliant athletes?		
i.	Does your club require the minimum NCCP training standards recommended by CCC for coaches working with this age group?		
j.	Does your club have minimum skill standards (established pre-requisites) for participants entering Track Attack program – for example have the participants successfully completed all components of Level 4 of the Jackrabbit program?		
k.	Does your club have a “catch up” program that allows children to enter the sport between the ages of nine and twelve without compromising the mainstream program?		





- 3.1.2 Review section 3.1 in your Reference Material. Compare your answers in section 3.1.1 above with the information provided in section 3.1 of the Reference Material. Now score your club program against the standards in the Reference Material, with 5 being the highest score and 0 the lowest score.

Total Score = /55

- 3.1.3 In groups of three discuss what you have been doing in your club and if there are any changes you should be making to your respective programs.
- 3.1.4 What did you learn from this exercise? Make applicable notes on your Action Card at the end of this Step.

3.2 Athlete Development Considerations

- 3.2.1 Pull out “*Program Worksheet #1*” from section 3.3.2 in your Reference Material and fill it in following the instructions outlined in section 3.3.1.
- 3.2.2 Return to your groups of three and compare/contrast what you noted in each column of the Worksheet with the corresponding column in the CCC Athlete Grid in section 2.3 of your Reference Material. What are the differences? What is the same?
- 3.2.3 Pull out “*Program Worksheet #2*” from section 3.3.2 of your Reference Material and fill in the answers to section 3.2.2 above.
- 3.2.4 The Facilitator will lead a group discussion where you will be asked to present to the others how your program corresponds to the guidelines in the CCC Athlete Grid and what you learned from this exercise.
- 3.2.5 Spend a few minutes on your own and note on your Action Card at the end of this Step any specific points that you want to remember.





ACTIONS FOR EVALUATING YOUR SPORT PROGRAM

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: Cross Country Canada's Track Attack program is designed to promote the continued development of physical literacy and fitness, and to enhance competence in the basic skills required to excel in cross-country skiing.





Step #4 – Athletic Components

The objectives of this step are to:

- introduce you to the athletic components you need to consider when designing your program;
- assist you in selecting age-appropriate games/activities that develop aerobic fitness (aerobic stamina/endurance); and
- prepare you to teach your athletes age-appropriate flexibility and strength exercises.

4.1 Aerobic Fitness

4.1.1 Pair up with another coach, review and discuss the section on “*Aerobic Fitness*” in your Reference Material (section 4.2). Use the Reference Material to help you answer the following questions:

- a. What is the difference between the aerobic system and the anaerobic system?

- b. For longer durations of effort, which system produces more lactic acid, aerobic or anaerobic?

- c. When (the developmental age) is it appropriate to begin measuring heart rates, and what would be an appropriate method for doing so.

- d. What are some appropriate ways to improve the aerobic fitness of athletes in the LTT stage of development?





4.1.2 When you have completed section 4.1.1 above the Facilitator will lead a group discussion on aerobic fitness.

4.1.3 Use your Action Card to note ways you might design your program differently in the future.

4.2 Flexibility

4.2.1 Together with your partner coach review and discuss the section on “*Flexibility*” in your Reference Material (section 4.2). Record below what the primary emphasis should be during the LTT stage of athlete development.

4.2.2 The Facilitator will:

- a. lead a session on static and dynamic stretching exercises that are applicable for children at this stage; and
- b. lead a short discussion period on developing flexibility.

4.3 Speed

4.3.1 With your partner coach review and discuss the section on “*Speed*” in your Reference Material (section 4.3).

4.3.2 Based on this information, what should you be doing to develop speed in children during the three “Sport for All” stages of the LTAD, and in particular during the “FUNdamentals” stage? Record your comments in the space below. Include three games you might use to stimulate the development of this athletic component?

4.3.3 What is the age difference between male and female athletes at the onset of the second speed training window?





4.3.4 The Facilitator will lead a short group discussion on the development of speed.

4.4 Skill

4.4.1 Agility, balance and coordination (the ABCs of athleticism) are important aspects of technique and performance in cross-country skiing. Check the Reference Material section “*Skill*” (section 4.5) for more information. For further clarification of the information you have just read please ask your Facilitator.

4.4.2 Share with the other coaches your ideas on suitable activities/games (both dryland and on-snow) that could be used to develop the ABCs of athleticism during the LTT stage of development.

4.4.3 Record on your Action Card what you might change or add to your program in order to improve it.

4.5 Strength

4.5.1 Together with your partner coach review and discuss “*Strength*” in your Reference Material (section 4.5). Then record below two reasons why “core” strength is important.

a.

b.

4.5.2 The Facilitator will:

a. lead a practical session on core strength exercises as well as general strength exercises that utilize medicine balls, Swiss balls and the child’s own body weight; and

b. lead a short discussion period on developing strength in athletes during the LTT stage of development.

4.5.3 Spend a few minutes on your own and note on your Action Card what you learned during this Step.





ACTIONS FOR ATHLETIC COMPONENTS

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: Develop strength using exercises that incorporate the child's own body weight as well as medicine balls and Swiss balls.





Step #5 – Nutrition

The objectives of this step are to:

- provide you with general information on nutrition;
- provide you with information on the pre-competition and post-competition nutritional needs of cross-country skiers; and
- provide guidance to assist you in educating parents on the nutritional needs of athletes participating in an endurance sport.

5.1 People Ask You Questions...

- 5.1.1 During a pre-season information session with parents, someone asks you whether cross-country skiers should eat differently from other people. Someone else asks what endurance athletes should eat to be in the best possible condition to practise and compete, and whether or not you will be covering this in your program. In the left-hand column of the table at section 5.1.1 in your Reference Material, note what you would say to these parents.
- 5.1.2 Talk to some of the other coaches about this, and write ideas you want to add to yours in the left-hand column of the table.
- 5.1.3 Consult section 5.1 of the Reference Material. What changes would you now make to your first answer? Note them in the right-hand column of the table.

5.2 Eating Well Before, During and After Activity

- 5.2.1 Take a few minutes to read the three scenarios below, and choose one for the exercise in section 5.2.2.
- a. **Nutrition before competition.** Your team is staying in a motel in a community 30 minutes from the competition site. In order to ski their competition course and prepare for their event, the athletes arrive on site one hour and 15 minutes before their event begins. The ski area has a daylodge, but the snack bar only serves coffee, juice and water.
 - b. **Nutrition between competitions.** Your team is taking part in a Sprint competition at a ski area where there is a daylodge with a small snack bar.





At the snack bar, they only offer hot dogs, chips, candy, bottled water, soft drinks and coffee. You only have one and a half hours between the first and second competitions, so your athletes won't have time to go back to the nearest town and pick up food.

- c. **Nutrition following competitions.** Your athletes have taken part in a two kilometre competition in minus 12 degree weather. After the race they follow their normal warm-down routine. The shelter at the ski area does not offer refreshments. The athletes don't leave the site until after the medal presentations that are held two hours after the end of their own event.

- 5.2.2 Team up with another coach who has chosen the same scenario as you. Working together, identify how you could help athletes make the best possible choices, given the information presented in the scenario. Record these ideas on the left side of the table at section 5.2.1 in your Reference Material. Think about what to eat, when to eat (i.e. how long before or after activity) and what and how much to drink.
- 5.2.3 Consult section 5.2 of the Reference Material. Once you have read this information, change your first suggestions as required. Write your revised suggestions in the right-hand column of Table 5.2.1.
- 5.2.4 In the table in section 5.3.1 in your Reference Material, write down any key points you have picked up about the other two scenarios.
- 5.2.5 Take a moment and jot down on your Action Card ideas you would like to put into practice.

5.3 Getting the Message Across

- 5.3.1 In the table in section 5.4.1 in your Reference Material write down some ways you could keep your athletes and their parents informed about: (1) the importance of good nutrition for cross-country skiers; and (2) the basic principles to respect before, during and after activity. Concentrate on how to get your message across, rather than what message to deliver.

5.4 Self-Assessment

- 5.4.1 Complete the Self-Assessment Sheet (section 5.5.1) in your Reference Material.





ACTIONS FOR NUTRITION

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: During this stage mental, cognitive and emotional development are integrated.





Step #6 – Designing Your Own Sport Program

The objectives of this step are to:

- help you develop a sport program that meets the development needs of your athletes;
- recommend the type of activities you should include in your program; and
- provide tools to assist you in designing a progressive seasonal plan.

6.1 Knowing Your Athletes and Your Program

6.1.1 Refer to your Track Attack program materials and read the Introduction. Note that the program is broken down into five categories of activities. Within each category there are three targets, one for each year of the program.

6.1.2 Together with a partner coach discuss some different ways you could implement this program over a three year period. Record below the plan that you would like to try:

a. Year One (five targets):

b. Year Two (five targets):

c. Year Three (five targets):

6.1.3 Record essential information about the athletes in your group on your “*Athlete Information Chart*” in your Reference Material (section 6.1.2).





- 6.1.4 Given the athletes you coach, what should you emphasize most, and try to achieve, when you implement your program? Refer to the “*Orientation Chart*” in your Reference Material (section 6.1.3). For each of the four categories provided, choose the statement that best describes your program’s orientation in that area. Check only ONE statement for each category.
- 6.1.5 Refer to the CCC Athlete Grid in your Reference Material (section 2.3) for guidance on setting up your program. To assist you with your planning throughout the rest of this Step, the Facilitator will hand out a current calendar and Competition/ Special Activity Schedule for your region and/or province/territory. Then answer the following questions:
- When is the first time you supervise your athletes. What is the date of the first practice session in the program?
Month: _____ Day: _____
 - When is the last time you supervise your athletes (practice session, competition, special activity such as a Year-end Fun Day)?
Month: _____ Day: _____
 - How many weeks are between these dates? _____
 - What about breaks or interruptions in the program? Write down the number of weeks when there are no practices, special activities or competitions (for example, Christmas vacation): _____
 - Can your program start earlier or finish later? Check off the answer that applies to your program:
 It is not possible for me to extend my program;
 I could extend my program without too much difficulty by:
 - starting _____ weeks earlier; or
 - finishing _____ weeks later.
 - What is the actual length of your program in weeks, taking into account all the breaks or interruptions (section 6.1.5.d above) and factoring in any program extension (section 6.1.5.e above):





- Date of start: _____ End: _____
- Length, excluding breaks and/or interruptions: _____ weeks.

6.1.6 To complete the next exercise, follow the instructions in “*What Special Activities/Competitions Are There in Your Program*” and fill in the “*Planning Calendar Worksheet*” provided in your Reference Material (sections 6.1.4 and 6.1.5).

6.2 Analyzing Your Program

- 6.2.1 You will now use the information in your planning calendar to calculate different indicators for your program. These indicators include the number of special activity days including camps and competitions, the number of practice days, and the percentage of the overall program devoted to special activities including competitions.
- 6.2.2 Using the table in section 6.2.1 of your Reference Material, calculate the number of special activity (including competition) days in your program.
- 6.2.3 Using the table in section 6.2.2 of your Reference Material, calculate the number of practice days in your program.
- 6.2.4 Refer to the table in section 6.2.3 of your Reference Material. For each statement in the column “*Key Element in Your Program*”, circle the entry in the column (A, B, or C) that best corresponds to the data for your program. For example, if your program is 26 weeks long, circle the Row 1 entry 20 and 32 in column B. Use the information in sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2 of the Reference Material to do this analysis.

6.3 Athletic Abilities: Growth and Development Considerations

- 6.3.1 The table in section 6.3 of your Reference Material presents information on when to emphasize and when to avoid training certain athletic abilities. These guidelines represent the opinion of experts in the fields of growth and development and training; as such, they apply to most sports.

Note that at the same chronological age (e.g. 12 years of age) there can be significant differences in physical maturity. It would not be unusual for some athletes to be ahead of or behind the general training guidelines for their age by two or more years.





6.4 Reflections on Your Program: Issues and Solutions

6.4.1 In section 6.2.3 in your Reference Material you circled entries in columns A, B or C that best corresponded to the data for your program. For most programs, sports and age groups:

- a. Circling an entry in Column A means your program is asking too little of your athletes.
- b. Circling an entry in Column B means your program is appropriate for your athletes.
- c. Circling an entry in Column C means your program is asking too much of your athletes.

6.4.2 Based on what you've learned about long-term athlete development in this workshop, the data you have assembled about your program in this Step and the information in the CCC Athlete Grid, assess whether your sport program:

- () features the necessary development opportunities to prepare athletes for the subsequent stages in the athlete development progression (Training to Train and/or Active for Life); or
- () contains significant gaps as far as opportunities for athletic development are concerned.

I think this happens because ...





6.4.3 How do the major orientations of your sport program (section 6.1.4 above) compare with the model for long term athlete development you've learned about at this workshop?

() They seem appropriate.

() They should be revised.

Because ...

6.4.4 The table in section 6.4.1 of your Reference Material proposes two or more solutions for a number of issues common to sport programs. Take a few minutes to record which solutions seem appropriate for your program and how you would implement them. After you have completed this exercise, get together with two or three other coaches and identify other possible solutions. Record your ideas in the table.

6.4.5 Record on your Action Card any changes that you would make in the future with regard to the design of the program for the group with which you work.





ACTIONS FOR DESIGNING YOUR OWN SPORT PROGRAM

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: Emphasize group interaction, team building and social activities in your program.





Step #7 – Introducing Adventure-Based Activities

The objectives of this step are to:

- ❑ assist you in selecting age-appropriate adventure-based activities for your group; and
- ❑ provide you with tools to help you offer these opportunities to your athletes.

7.1 Camps: On-Snow and Off

7.1.1 In groups of three, discuss what you think athletes in the LTT stage should learn from a dryland camp that is held early in the fall. Rank the top five camp objectives in order of importance.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

7.1.2 How do your reasons compare to the information provided in the section on “Camps” in the Reference Material (section 7.2)? Note on your list any additional points you would like to remember.

7.1.3 Pull out a copy of the “Camp Worksheet” in the Reference Material (section 7.2.4) and develop an agenda for a fall dryland camp for a mixed group of 24 male/female athletes in the 9 to 12 age range.





- 7.1.4 Share your ideas with other coaches, and see if there is anything else you would like to add to your plan for the camp.

7.2 Ski Orienteering

- 7.2.1 Review “*Ski Orienteering*” in your Reference Material (section 7.3). Regroup with the two coaches you were working with earlier and discuss the various athletic components that can be developed by incorporating this activity into your plan for the season: speed, aerobic fitness, tactics, etc.

7.3 Backcountry Adventures

- 7.3.1 Together with your partner coaches have a look at “*Backcountry Adventures*” in your Reference Material (section 7.4).
- 7.3.2 As a group discuss the learning outcomes that athletes at the LTT stage of development could take away from this type of experience, and some of the different possibilities for backcountry ski excursions that are available to you in the region of Canada where you live.
- 7.3.3 The Facilitator will now lead a short discussion on the importance of integrating adventure-based activities into your LTT programming and the use of the Track Attack program to facilitate these type of activities.
- 7.3.4 Spend a few minutes on your own and note on your Action Card what you learned during this Step.





ACTIONS FOR INTRODUCING ADVENTURE-BASED ACTIVITIES

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: Utilize games to develop skills, speed, power and fitness/endurance.





Step #8 – Safety and Risk Management

The objectives of this step are to:

- help you identify and consider appropriate approaches to safety and risk factors that you encounter in your coaching;
- introduce you to safety considerations with respect to cold weather and competitions; and
- introduce you to safety considerations with respect to backcountry skiing.

8.1 Safety Considerations in Your Program

8.1.1 In the Introduction to Community Coaching (ICC) Workshop you created an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to help you effectively respond to emergency situations that may occur while you are coaching. Now that you are working with older children and in different circumstances, list the additional risks that the skiers may encounter and actions that you should take to minimize these risks. Feel free to pair up and work with another coach.

Additional Risk Factors	What I Do To Control This Risk





- 8.1.2 Have a look at “*Sport Safety*” in the Reference Material (section 8). Based on this information, add any risk factors you may have missed in section 8.1.1 above.
- 8.1.3 Below are situations that could occur when you are coaching. How would you respond?
- a. Two of your athletes turn up to a roller ski session without a helmet or reflective vest.
 - b. You are an assistant coach at a regional camp. During a bike tour on a back road the head coach asks you to take a short cut and lead one group of athletes through a rough trail in the woods.
 - c. You are the head coach at a regional camp and the other coaches approach you about holding a relay that includes swimming across deep water. No one at the camp is a trained lifeguard.
 - d. You are leading your team on a long hike on a cloudy day. During the hike the sun comes out and the day becomes unexpectedly hot. The athletes begin to strip off their extra clothing.
- 8.1.4 The Facilitator will now lead a group discussion on appropriate ways to handle each of these situations.





- 8.1.5 Assume you are leading a session on roller skiing and one of your skiers overbalances backwards banging his/her head. The skier appears to be unconscious. In the space below write what you would do, step by step, if you were faced with this situation.
- 8.1.6 Now review “*Head Injuries and Concussions*” in section 8.1.4 of your Reference Material and add any points you may have missed.
- 8.1.7 Note on your Action Card at the end of this Step any points you wish to remember.

8.2 Cold Weather and Competitions

- 8.2.1 Pair up with another coach and review “*Cold Weather and Competitions*” in your Reference Material (section 8.1.6). Together discuss what you think is important to teach children at the LTT stage of development. Write down the five most important points you think you should teach your athletes at this stage in their development:
- a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.





8.2.2 The Facilitator will ask you and the other coaches to share your list with the group and then lead a short discussion on ways to teach this information to the children you coach.

8.3 Backcountry Safety

8.3.1 Together with your partner coach, review “*Backcountry Adventures*” in the Reference Material (section 8.1.7) and discuss how you would handle the risk factors if you organized an age-appropriate backcountry excursion for your group of skiers. Record the key points below:

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

8.3.2 If children are taught cross-country ski skills that will allow them to access the backcountry in winter when they are adults, they should also be taught about the inherent risks associated with this type of activity. The Facilitator will now lead a discussion on your far-reaching responsibilities as a cross-country ski coach.

8.3.3 What did you learn from this Step? Make applicable notes on your Action Card at the end of the next page.





ACTIONS FOR SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: During the LTT stage the on-snow focus is balance, agility and rhythm.





Step #9 – Skill Development - Dryland Techniques

The objectives of this step are to:

- ❑ provide you with a basic understanding of how to select roller ski equipment appropriate for the age and skill level of the LTT athlete; and
- ❑ prepare you to introduce fundamental ski simulation techniques, including roller skiing, to the athletes you coach.

9.1 Introduction to Roller Skiing

- 9.1.1 Together with a partner coach review and discuss “*Introduction to Roller Skiing*” in the Reference Material (section 9.1.1).
- 9.1.2 The Facilitator will now provide an overview of how to select roller ski equipment that is appropriate for the age and skill level of the athletes you are coaching, how to maintain the equipment and when and how to incorporate this activity into your season plan.
- 9.1.3 Jot down on your Action Card any points that you wish to remember.

9.2 Introduction to Ski Walking and Ski Striding

- 9.2.1 The Facilitator will provide an overview of two ski simulation techniques/exercises - ski walking and ski striding.
- 9.2.2 Review “*Introduction to Ski Walking and Ski Striding*” in the Reference Material (sections 9.1.2 and 9.1.3). Discuss as a group what would be appropriate to teach children in the LTT stage of development.
- 9.2.3 The group will now prepare for the outdoor sessions.
- 9.2.4 The Facilitator will lead sessions on roller skiing, ski walking and ski striding. After the outdoor sessions, the group will return to the classroom.
- 9.2.5 Spend a few minutes on your own and note on your Action Card at the end of this Step what you learned on this subject.





ACTIONS FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT DRYLAND TECHNIQUES

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: Include adventure-based activities in the seasonal plan.





Step #10 – Planning a Practice

The objectives of this step are to:

- ❑ help you further your ability to develop effective practices; and
- ❑ provide tools and information that will assist you in providing a motivating practice environment for your athletes.

10.1 The Logistics of Your Practice Sessions

10.1.1 Pull out a copy of the “*Logistics Chart*” from section 10.1.2 of the Reference Material. Describe on it the facilities, equipment and time available to you for your practice sessions in the three different scenarios you work with - dryland, on-snow and indoors.

10.2 Planning a Practice Session - Your Starting Point

10.2.1 Using the “*Practice Planning Sheet #1*” from section 10.1.3 of the Reference Material, spend a few minutes on your own to plan a practice session for your athletes. Include an activity aimed at developing a basic skill. Make sure your plan takes into account the logistics of your practice.

10.2.2 When you were planning your practice in section 10.2.1 above, what questions did you ask yourself (other than the questions about logistics)? What other information do you need to be able to plan your practice?

10.2.3 Compare what you wrote with what the other coaches wrote and add to your list any new ideas you learned from this exchange.

10.2.4 Examine “*My Practice Plan*” in section 10.1.4 of the Reference Material. Add to your own plan additional points that you may have overlooked and that you might want to take into account when planning future practice sessions.

10.2.5 Review “*The Parts of a Practice*” in the Reference Material (section 10.1.5). How does the structure of the practice session you developed compare to the model practice outlined in the Reference Material (i.e. introduction, warm-up, main part, cool-down and conclusion)?





10.2.6 Use your Action Card to note what you will do differently when structuring future practice sessions. Also note that you should review the material in section 8 of the Reference Material as well as section 6 of the ICC Reference Material. These two sections outline the risk factors that can be encountered in skiing.

10.3 Developing a Basic Skill

10.3.1 When you planned your practice session in section 10.2.1 above, you were asked to include an activity to develop a basic skill. Describe this activity in full detail on your “*Activity Worksheet*” in section 10.2.2 of the Reference Material. If necessary, include diagrams so that another coach who is filling in for you would be able to take your description and run the activity.

10.3.2 Review “*Stages of Skill Development*” in section 10.2.4 of the Reference Material.

10.3.3 Based on this information, indicate the stage most of your athletes are at for the skill you decided to develop through the activity you selected in section 10.3.1 above. What evidence did you use to reach this conclusion? Record your answers in the table below. Your athletes’ abilities may be spread across several stages of skill development (e.g. from Initiation to Consolidation). For the activity you have described in section 10.3.1 above, is there another stage of skill development that many of your athletes are at? If so, note on the table below the stage that applies to the second group.

Stage of Development	Evidence That Enables You to Reach This Conclusion
Stage of development most of your athletes are at for learning this skill: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiation <input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation	
Stage of development the second largest group of athletes are at for learning this skill: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiation <input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidation	





10.3.4 “*Designing Activities for Practices*” in your Reference Material (section 10.2) outlines a number of variables that can affect the conditions in which athletes practice and describes how those variables may change with the athletes’ stage of skill development.

10.3.5 Based on this information, analyze the activity you have described on the Activity Worksheet in section 10.3.1, and determine if it is appropriate for the stage of skill development most of your athletes are at.

- If it isn’t, adjust your activity so that it matches the guidelines for the stage most of your athletes are at.
- If it is, adjust your activity for the stage of skill development the second largest group of athletes is at.

10.3.6 The Reference Material section “*Classifying Sports Skills*” (section 10.2.3) shows two ways of classifying skills. First check whether the skill you’ve chosen to develop in your activity is an open or closed skill; then determine whether it is a discrete, serial or continuous skill:

Skill that you are developing in your activity. This skill is:

Open or Closed

Discrete or Serial or Continuous

10.3.7 To ensure that athletes learn the most from the activity you have planned for developing a skill, you need to ask yourself the three questions listed on the following page. To assist you in this reflection, check the Reference Material cited under the question, and keep in mind the stage of skill development most of your athletes are at (refer back to 10.3.3 above). Check one answer box per question.

Practice Planning Question: Should I break this skill into parts to help the athletes develop it? Check section 10.2.5 (b) in your Reference Material.

Part or Progressive part or Whole

Practice Planning Question: Should there be pauses between trials, or can lots of trials be done one after the other without rest? Check section 10.2.5 (c) in your Reference Material.

Massed or Distributed





Practice Planning Question: Should all trials be done in the same conditions, or should there be some variety? Check section 10.2.5 (d) in your Reference Material.

Constant/blocked or Variable or Random

- 10.3.8 Based on the analysis you just did in section 10.3.7 above, select the type of practice that seems most appropriate given the nature of the skill being developed and the stage of skill development most of your athletes are at. Adapt your activity once more, and make it consistent with the guidelines pertaining to this type of practice.
- 10.3.9 Review “*Important Notes*” in section 10.2.6 of the Reference Material and then use your Action Card to note what you will do differently in the future with regard to planning an activity for developing a basic skill.

10.4 Putting It All Together

- 10.4.1 We all talk of the importance of making practices fun and motivating for the athletes, but what does this really mean? Complete this sentence in as many ways as you can:

Athletes are motivated at practice when:

- 10.4.2 Compare your notes with those of other coaches, and consult “*Five Criteria to Develop Challenging Activities that Motivate Athletes to Learn*” in your Reference Material (section 10.3). Can you add ideas to your list?
- 10.4.3 Using the “*Practice Planning Sheet #2*” from section 10.3.2 of your Reference Material and design a practice that is consistent with the work you have done throughout this workshop. Use the “*Practice Planning Checklist*” in section 10.4 and “*Practice Planning Tips*” in section 10.5 to guide your planning. Take into consideration the guidelines that apply to athletes in the LTT stage of development and the abilities you want to train.





- 10.4.4 Once you have finished pair up with another coach and assess each other's practice session based on the criteria in the "*Practice Planning Checklist*" (section 10.4) and the information on growth and development in sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 of your Reference Material.
- 10.4.5 Compare the practice you designed in section 10.2.1 above with the one you just designed.
- 10.4.6 Note the changes you've made and/or aspects you will now consider when planning future practice sessions.

10.5 Self-Assessment

- 10.5.1 The Self-Assessment Sheet in your Reference Material (section 10.6) will allow you to reflect on your current coaching practices. The items that are listed in the self-assessment are the evidences that an Evaluator will be looking for during assignments and observations. They will help determine if you have the required abilities/competencies. The self-assessment form will help you identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.





ACTIONS FOR PLANNING A PRACTICE

GREAT IDEAS:

I INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THEM BY:

Coaching Tip: “Learning to Train” is a major skill learning stage; all basic movement skills and sport skills (physical literacy) should be learned before entering the “Training to Train” stage.





Step #11 – Workshop Wrap-up and Evaluation

The objectives of this step are to:

- ❑ provide an overview of the next steps in the CCI context;
- ❑ provide guidance to help you with the CCI certification process; and
- ❑ provide an opportunity for you to provide feedback that will help improve future workshops.

11.1 The CCI Certification Process

- 11.1.1 Refer to “*CCI Coaching Certification Process*” and “*CCI Flowchart*” in your Reference Material (sections 11.1 and 11.2) to find an outline of the next steps in the CCI context.
- 11.1.2 The Facilitator will lead a discussion on what needs to be done to complete the certification process at this level.

11.2 Evaluation

- 11.2.1 Complete the “*Self Test*” found at section 10.4 in the Reference Material.
- 11.2.2 Take the “*Self Test*” to the Facilitator.
- 11.2.3 Take a few minutes to share ideas that you have learned and exchange contact information with the other coaches.
- 11.2.4 Please complete the “*Evaluation Form*” also found in the Reference Material (section 11.3). Your feedback is important.
- 11.2.5 Take the “*Evaluation Form*” to the Facilitator.

Cross Country Canada and the National Coaching Certification Program thank you for the time you dedicate to coaching. Your efforts make a difference in the lives of those you coach. Congratulations on completing the workshop!





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