

# Defensive Drills

**Groundballs**

**Transitions**

**Fundamentals**

# Horsey Defensive GB Drill

Here's a series of defensive drills that we're going to do at the beginning of practice or you can do as an individual practice. We could do a series of groundball drills using both right hand and left hand moving forward and backwards.

The first drill is a right-handed groundball using your **RIGHT** hand on the **RIGHT SIDE** of the body. Player has the stick in his **RIGHT** hand, he's going to roll the ball out in **FRONT** of him, pick it up with his right hand on the right side of his body moving forward.

The next variation is going to go **LEFT HAND- LEFT SIDE**. The ball's going to be rolled out in **FRONT** of him. He's going to pick it up with his **LEFT** hand on the **LEFT SIDE** of his body.

The second part of the variation is going to go **LEFT HAND-LEFT SIDE**. The ball's going to be on the **LEFT SIDE** of the player's body, he's going to roll the ball out, pick it up with his **LEFT** hand moving forward. These drills should be done from about the retraining line to the goal line or they can be used for half the field from the end line to the midline.

The next variation is we're going to pick the ball up with our **RIGHT** hand but now the player is going to pick the ball up in **FRONT** of him so it's not to his right side it's going to be in front of him.. As he moves down the field he's going to concentrate on keeping the head of his stick out in front and getting low on the groundball.

# Horsey Defensive GB Drill

Next, the player's going to go **LEFT** hand in **FRONT**, the ball's rolled out in front of him, left hand in front of his body moving about half speed towards you.

Remember to:

- Stay low
- Keep the head of his stick out in front of his feet
- Bend at the waist
- Bending his knees
- Getting through the groundball.

# Horsey Defensive GB Drill

## Part 2

Next progression the player is going to have his stick in his **RIGHT HAND**, he's going to do a right-hand **CROSSOVER** groundball, the ball's going to be on his **LEFT SIDE** of his body, he's going to move down the field, pick it up with his right hand across his body. Again, as he goes down he's going to stay low moving forward. And this works on getting across your body those difficult groundballs.



Figure 1

# Horsesey Defensive GB Drill

## Part 2

In this drill the player is going to have this stick in his **LEFT HAND**, the ball's going to be on the **RIGHT SIDE** of his body, we're going to go left-hand **CROSSOVER** groundball. As he goes on the move the ball rolls out on the right hand side of his body, he brings his hands across, stays low and scoops it up.



Figure 2

# Horsey Defensive GB Drill

Next progression the player is going to pick the ball up with his RIGHT HAND and ROLL AWAY from pressure to his RIGHT, SWITCH hands then roll the ball with his LEFT HAND, pick it up, roll away from pressure and repeat. He's concentrating on:

- Rolling away from pressure after picking it up
- Moving down the field
- Rolls away with the ball out in front
- Pick it up
- Roll away

This is a great drill for a defensemen especially in clearing as the attackmen is pressuring them they can now practice rolling away from pressure looking cross field.

# Horsesey 1v1 with Ball Strip

Here in this drill we're going to have some defense vs offense. The defense is going to:

- Strip the offensive player
- Pick the ball up
- Clear it down the field

This is a great defensive drill because defenders often strip their man but never pick up the groundball and complete the play. This drill is a good one-on-one drill where you practice stripping. The offensive player can also work on his footwork. As the offensive player moves down the field he's rolling back and forth, at any point he's going to drop the ball, defender is going to pick it up and clear the ball.

# Horse 1v1 with Ball Strip

In this drill a defensive player is going to start with the ball and he's going to move in a zig-zag 45 degree angle down the field. We have a riding attackmen who's going to play pressure defense as the defender goes down the field. At some point the defender is going to drop the ball. The attackmen is going to pick it up and then attack the cage on a one-on-one situation with the goalie. We're working on the attackmen playing defense and riding the defender. The defender is working on his good stick work and footwork skills. The defender's going to drop the ball and attackmen is going to pick it up, attack and score.

# Horsey Defensive Combo Drill with Clear

Here's a defensive combo drill where the defensemen is going to work on his foot work as he's playing defense from the top of the box down to about 10 yards in front of the crease. He's going to go from playing defense until the goalie makes a save. He then is going to run his clearing pattern where he's going to curve out just above goal line and then clear the ball.

The defender is going to:

- Stay low
- Hands out in front of him
- Good drop step

He runs out, looks over his right shoulder. When you're doing this drill the defendant wants to:

- Stay low
- Bend at his waist,
- Bend with his knees
- Bottom hands stay out in front of his belly button

When he gets to each cone he's going to drop step but keeping his hands out in front of him making sure he has good pressure on the offensive player as he's coming to the goal. This is a great drill for the defenders to pre-practice as conditioning but also after practice to just work on some stick work with the goalies and the defensemen.

# Horsey Defensive Positioning Fundamentals

As a defender we want to stay low with our feet going towards what we say the pylon or the corner of the field. We want to have:

- Our bottom hand out in front of belly button
- Hands are away from our body
- The stick head is out in front as well



Figure 3

As the attackmen moves in a single-hand cradle we're trying to TIME UP our checks. We're timing his stick. Each time the stick comes in front of him we throw a check. It could be a wrap check or it could be a poke check.

The whole time we need to:

Stay low and have equal pressure with our hands on his body.

**Video**

# Horsey Defensive Positioning Fundamentals

If the attackmen wants to man up the defender on his way to the island, there's a couple different things we need to do. First, we got to have a **GOOD BASE**. Our feet need to be in a good position.

Second, our hands need to be involved in playing defense as much as our feet are. We do not want to use our sticks as a primary source of pressure on the attackmen. So, the wrong way of doing this is as the attackmen gets into our body if we just use our stick to turn him, he's going to run right through the stick or use his footwork to get around and get into the cage.

The correct way to do this is as the attackmen puts pressure on us, step in, we're going to use our hands and our feet to turn him once we reach goal line extended. The defender is in a good body position here as he's got a nice wide base, his hands maintain that space between his waist and out in front of him and we're going to try and turn this attackmen once he reaches goal line back towards X. When the attackmen rolls back towards X we want to trail him to X. We don't want the defender to chase in front of him. If we get too far ahead of him, we'll allow him to roll back. So, we trail him to X where he's no longer a threat.



# Horsesey Defensive Footwork Drills from X

Here's a defensive drill, and individual drill, coming from behind. The defender is going to get in his nice, good defensive positioning, good base, hands out in front of him. We're going to back pedal to the first cone, he's going to then drop step, drop step with his right foot and head right towards the goal line. When he reaches the third cone he's going to turn his hips, turn his hands, turn his body as if we're turning the attackmen back towards X. We stay low, drop step and turn. Again, as the defender is doing this drill you want to keep a nice wide base. We want to keep our chest over our toes or over our knees as we back pedal.

Here's a zig-zag drill from behind. We want to start with the defender as if he's playing the attackmen on the end line, we want to zig-zag through each cone. He's going to turn and run and drop step at each cone and when he gets to the island or just above the goal line he's going to turn the defender with his hips with his feet and with his hands as if he's trying to get him to go back towards X. Stay low, good, hands out in front...we're drop stepping, gets to goal line, turn him and hold. I'm working on our footwork, hands out in front, we're drop stepping. Once he gets here at the goal line we turn him and we want to focus on trailing him to X, we slow down and make sure we don't over commit and beat the attackmen to X.