**Competition-Coaching Introduction L2T**

# Step 3:

# Evaluating your sport program

**Reference Material
for Dryland Workshop**

National Coaching Certification Program

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## 3.1 The Structure of Your Program

Planning is essential to successful sport programming. The Introduction to Community Coaching and Community Coaching Workshops introduced you to basic planning concepts and seasonal plans for children in the "Active Start" and "FUNdamentals" stages of athlete development. The CCI-L2T (Dryland) Workshop will expand upon previous material and help you organize your coaching sessions to effectively develop athletes in the "Learning to Train (L2T)" stage of development.

The first step in developing a successful plan is to reflect on and evaluate the program that your club currently offers for children at this stage in their development.

### Evaluating Your Program

This section corresponds to the chart in section 3.1.1 in your Coach Workbook. Compare your answers with the information below, and then record your scores in the right hand column of the chart in your Workbook.

| Question | Answer |
|---|---|
| a. | Review the Seasonal Plan Guidelines Chart in section 3.1.1 of this Reference Material. Determine the ideal start-up date for the oldest athlete in your group. Beginning with five, deduct one point for each week following that date that your program did not/has not started. |
| b. | Review the Seasonal Plan Guidelines Chart in section 3.1.1 of this Reference Material. Determine the ideal number of practice sessions and special activities (including competitions) for the oldest athlete in your group. Beginning with five, deduct one point for every three practices/special activities that fall short of the recommended number. |
| c. | Review the Seasonal Plan Guidelines Chart in section 3.1.1 of this Reference Material. Determine the ideal number of pre-ski season (dryland) practices/ special activities for the oldest athlete in your group. Beginning with five, deduct one point for every two dryland practices/special activities that fall short of the recommended number. |
| d. | Review the Competition column on the CCC Athlete Development Grid in section 2.3 of this Reference Material. Determine the ideal number of "competitions" per season for the oldest athlete in your group (the ideal number per season based on a club offering the ideal number of practice sessions per season). Beginning with five, deduct one point for every competition that falls short of the recommended number. |

| | |
|---|---|
| e. | Review the Special Activities/Competitions Chart in section 3.1.2 of this Reference Material. Use columns three and four to determine the ideal number of special activities (do not include competitions in this total) per season for the oldest athlete in your group. Beginning with five, deduct one point for every activity that falls short of the recommended number. |
| f. | An emphasis on group interaction, team building and social activities is essential at this stage if your program is to be successful over the long term. Taking this into consideration, determine the score (out of a possible five points) you think is appropriate. |
| g. | If you offer a workshop on winter safety once every three years, give yourself two points. If you offer a workshop on ski preparation every year, add another three points – one for each year. |
| h. | A well-thought through approach to developing self-reliant athletes is an important consideration when planning your program. Determine the score (out of a possible five points) you think is appropriate. |
| i. | The recommended minimum standard for coaches leading a L2T program is NCCP CCI "in training". This means a coach has successfully completed the L2T (Dryland) Workshop, L2T (On-Snow) Workshop and related tasks. The recommended minimum standard for assistant coaches is NCCP Community Coaching certified. For additional clarification refer to section 11 of this Reference Material. If the coach in charge of the program and the assistant coaches all meet the recommended minimum standards, you score five. For every step that is missing for any of the coaches involved, deduct a point. |
| j. | If your club has established minimum skill standards such as the successful completion of all the components of the Jackrabbit Level 4 program, score five points. If you don't have minimum requirements other than age, your score is zero. |
| k. | If you have an official "catch up" program for athletes not meeting required standards, with one or more coaches dedicated to it, you can score five points. If you are providing additional support to these athletes – such as working with them in addition to regular practice sessions - determine the score you think is appropriate. If you do not offer any additional help, you do not get any points. |

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### 3.1.1    Seasonal Plan Guidelines Chart

| Month | Septemb | | | Octobe | | | | Novembe | | | | Decembe | | | | January | | | | February | | | | Marc | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Week # | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| Active Start Ages 0 to 6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | **8 weeks** 6 practice sessions (40 min) plus 2 special activities Saturday AM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FUNdamentals Ages 6 to | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | **8 weeks** 11 practice sessions (1 hr) plus 5 special activities Tuesday PM Saturday AM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FUNdamentals Ages 8 to | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | **18 weeks** 29 practice sessions (1.25 hr) plus 11 special activities Tuesday PM Saturday AM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Learning to Train* Ages 9 to 12 years | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | **24 weeks** 52 practice sessions (1.5 hr) plus 18 special activities Tuesday & Thursday PM Saturday | | | | | | | | | | | |

*(Left column spans: REGISTRATION – ALL AGES; Right column spans: YEAR END ACTIVITIES)*

*Notes: On this chart the number of recommended "special activities" includes competitions, but is in addition to the number of recommended practice sessions.*

*\* These guidelines are the <u>maximum</u> numbers for the L2T stage, and must be adapted to reflect the developmental age, fitness and skill level of the individual athletes in your group. Group sessions begin September 15th; 3x/wk during fall and ski season; maximum 70 sessions including competitions and special activities.*

### 3.1.2 Special Activities/Competitions Chart

| | Total # Practice Sessions | Dryland Special Activities | On-Snow Special Activities | Competitions | Total # All Sessions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Year #1** | **52** | Day Hike to Lookout Skill Development Camp Ski Preparation Clinic Fundraiser Intro to Kayaking Orienteering Game | SNOW CAMP Treasure Hunt Club Moonlit Ski Christmas Activity Mini Olympics Year End Activity | SKI TOURNAMENT XC SKI CROSS Regional Cup Club Championships Club "Chocolate" Relays Club Time Trial | 70 |
| **Year #2** | **52** | OFF-SEASON CAMP Club Work Bee Canoeing on Lake Road Bike Tour Fundraiser Hike & Camp Out | SKI ORIENTEERING SKI PREPARATION CLINIC Snow Camp Backwoods Ski Christmas Activity Year End Activity | PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL MIDGET CHAMPIONSHIPS Ski Tournament Regional Cup Club Championships Club "Costume" Relays Club Time Trial | 70 |
| **Year #3** | **52** | Skill Development Camp Club Work Bee Winter Safety Clinic Club "Family Hike" Road Bike Tour Fundraiser | BACKCOUNTRY ADVENTURES Ski Prep Clinic Snow Camp Ski Orienteering Year End Activity | PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAM SPRINTS Regional Cup Club Championships Double Cross Club Time Trial | 70 |

*Notes: This chart provides an overview of what a three-year program of special activities for L2T athletes might look like. Note that this chart uses the maximum numbers of sessions for the L2T stage, and must be adapted to reflect the developmental age, fitness, skill level and experience of the individual athletes in your group.*

*Capitalized Activities/Competitions denote Track Attack targets.*

## 3.2 What Is a Sport Program?

A sport program is a planned and progressive sequencing of activities. The nature, number, frequency, duration and content of these activities is adapted to the athletes' stage of development, skill level and sport experience. The goal of the program is to foster athletes' athletic development and sport form over time.

### 3.2.1 The Main Components of a Sport Program

The main components of a sport program are the following:

❏ **Time Dimension.** A program…
- ✓ Usually has a well-defined beginning and end.
- ✓ Is of varying length (ranging from a few weeks to many months).
- ✓ Is part of the long-term development of the athletes: where they're starting; what they've done before; and what they should be able to do at the end of the program are all taken into account.

❏ **Events.** A program consists of different types of events…
- ✓ Sport events (practices, preparatory competition, regular competition, trials, playoffs, championships, tournaments, tests, etc.).
- ✓ Social events (suppers, parties, awards ceremonies, distribution of prizes, etc.).
- ✓ Administrative events (registration, equipment purchase, fund raising, parent meetings, meetings with league/club administrators, etc.).

❏ **Intentions, Objectives and Priorities.** A program…
- ✓ Takes into account athletes, their interests and their individual needs.
- ✓ Takes into account the competitive demands of the sport.
- ✓ Has a clear purpose and philosophy (why it exists), focus (participation, development, excellence), desired outcome (goals and objectives) and method of operating (rules, policies, procedures).
- ✓ Prioritizes objectives, events, time devoted to certain activities, etc., given any constraints that apply.
- ✓ Makes its intentions, objectives and priorities public, which helps justify choices and decisions.
- ✓ Has intentions, objectives and priorities that are consistent with the values of the coach and the organization.

❏ **Structure.** A program…
- ✓ Proposes activities that are organized and planned (level of detail and sophistication may vary).
- ✓ Proposes a framework for providing certain services to athletes.
- ✓ Proposes links and ensures consistency among components (objectives, philosophy, priorities, athlete individual needs, activities, events).

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❏ **Progression.** A program is characterized by…

✓ Intentions, objectives and priorities that may change as the season progresses.

✓ Evolving training activities and content, to reflect the intentions, objective and priorities

that apply at a given time.

❏ **Adjustment and Evaluation.** Within a program…

✓ Athletes progress from a given starting point. This progression may occur in different ways: group/team cohesion; technical/tactical mastery; physical condition and tolerance of fatigue; attitudes (work, athletes' behaviour, commitment, discipline); performance, etc.

✓ The coach must assess the athletes' starting points to identify what can realistically be accomplished in the short, medium and long term and choose the appropriate methods for doing so. Such decisions normally require some form of evaluation.

✓ It must be accepted that adjustments will probably be required en route, even if the initial plans were carefully laid out.

### 3.2.2 Types of Objectives in a Sport Program

The table below lists certain types of objectives that a coach can try to achieve in a sport program. Several objectives can be associated with the same activity. For example, athletes can try to improve while having fun, or experiment while trying to do their best or to win.

| Objective | Comments |
|---|---|
| **General** | |
| Participate | Take part in the event; the performance and result are not important. |
| Gain experience | Experiment with new things; the performance and result are not important. |
| Have fun | Above all, make the experience enjoyable and pleasurable. |
| **Athletic, Physical and Motor Abilities** | |
| Develop/Improve | Try to raise the level of the athletic ability. |
| Maintain | When a given athletic ability is considered to be sufficiently developed, maintain it at that level and prevent it from declining. |

| Technical Elements Specific to the Sport | |
|---|---|
| Acquire new skills | Learn how to correctly perform new movements and skills. |
| Perform the skill correctly | Execute movements well and with correct form. |
| Consolidate the skill | While still maintaining good form in the movement, try to reach a high level of efficiency or precision under variable conditions, which are more difficult and unpredictable. |
| Increase the success rate of skills execution | Try to reach a high level of efficiency or precision while still maintaining good form in the movement; here, the outcome of the action becomes important. |
| **Tactical Elements Specific to the Sport** | |
| Read a situation and react appropriately | In a given situation, observe the right cues, analyze them, make a decision and carry out the appropriate motor response. |
| Vary motor responses according to the situation | Try to increase the number of motor responses in a given situation. |
| **Performance** | |
| Do one's best | Try to do as well as possible, whatever the outcome or result. |
| Personal best | Try to do something better than before. |
| Win | Try to win, to finish in first position. |
| Finish among the first "X" positions | Try to attain a particular ranking with respect to other athletes in the competition. |

## 3.3 Athlete Development Considerations

### 3.3.1 Program Worksheet Instructions

- ❑ **Step 1**: On Program Worksheet #1 fill in the age range, gender breakdown and overall emphasis of your club's current program for athletes in the L2T stage of development.

- ❑ **Step 2**: Record what you feel is the overall emphasis for each of the five components of your program that are identified on the worksheet:

  - ✓ <u>Technique Development</u>. Write down which techniques you think should be emphasized with this group plus any key, related considerations that should be addressed (inadequate equipment, etc).

  - ✓ <u>Physiology, Strength and Flexibility Development</u>. Record what you feel the group should be working on in terms of fitness development. Include your thoughts on how sport specific these activities/exercises need to be.

  - ✓ <u>Mental Skills Development</u>. Record what you believe to be the most important mental skills the group should be working on.

  - ✓ <u>Competitive Activities</u>. Record the competitions you think the group should focus on this season. Be specific about the skills you are targeting for development.

  - ✓ <u>Special Activities/Other</u>. Keeping in mind the importance of both team building and the development of self reliance, write down what you think your program should emphasize that has not already been covered in the other columns.

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Program Worksheet #1 (sample)

**Age Range:**  **Gender: Boys:** _____ **Girls:** _____ .

**Overall Emphasis:** _____

| Technique Development | Physiology, Strength and Flexibility Development | Mental Skills Development | Competitive Activities | Special Activities/ Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Example:<br><br>Good, prolonged execution of the following:<br><br>✓ One-step Double Poling<br><br>✓ Free Skate<br><br>✓ One Skate<br><br>✓ Two Skate<br><br>✓ Step Turn<br><br>✓ Parallel Side Slipping Or<br><br>✓ Diagonal Stride<br><br>✓ Double Poling<br><br>✓ One-step Double Poling<br><br>✓ Free Skate<br><br>✓ One Skate<br><br>✓ Two skate<br><br>Or……. | | | | |

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Program Worksheet #1 (working copy)

**Age Range:** **Gender: Boys:** **Girls:**

**Overall Emphasis:**

| Technique Development | Physiology, Strength and Flexibility Development | Mental Skills Development | Competitive Activities | Special Activities/ Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |

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Program Worksheet #2 (working copy)

| | Technique Development | Physiology, Strength and Flexibility Development | Mental Skills Development | Competitive Activities | Special Activities/ Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Similarities** | | | | | |
| **Differences** | | | | | |

**Age Range:** **Gender: Boys:** **Girls:**

**Overall Emphasis:**

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**REFERENCES**

Coaching Association of Canada*, Basic Sport Programming*, Version 1.1, 2007