

Coaches Post-Practice Checklist

A Hockey Coaching Tool from Greg Siller of Pro Learning Systems

Once the team steps off the rink, the practice is over. However the learning from that practice should not be. It is important that the coaches determine whether the practice goals were fully met, assess how they performed in terms of leading the drills, and consider what future steps should be taken to move the next practice toward that *Great Hockey Practice*.

Additionally, players need to leave each practice hearing how they did (external feedback), be given time to assess their own barometer (internal feedback), and understand how they can apply the knowledge and experience gained from today's practice toward subsequent practices and games to improve their individual, positional, and team effectiveness (player and team learning).

In my book, entitled *The Hockey Practice Playbook*, I outline several questions that the coaching staff needs to address with both coaches and players to ensure that their post-practice discussion and learning is effective. The questions to deal with include;

Teaching and Learning

- Did you reference your *Season Practice Plan* when developing the goals for this particular practice? (refer to chapter #3 of *The Hockey Practice Playbook*)
- Did you develop a specific plan for this practice?
- Did you use a flexible practice agenda for this practice?
- Did you establish and meet the goals of this practice?
- Were the drills used in this practice developed to provide game-like training?
- Did you teach, and reinforce, effective individual skills, tactics, and strategies?
- Was your practice geared toward the appropriate Age, Ability, Physical, and Mental Development (AAPMD) level for your players?
- Did you teach, and have the players demonstrate, appropriate reading, reacting, and anticipation skills during this practice?
- Were new drills introduced and demonstrated effectively?
- Did you ensure that your practice provided for learning in a variety of ways?
- Were player assessments performed? If so, was appropriate feedback provided?
- Were rules taught during this practice? If so, did appropriate learning take place?
- Did you follow my "*Mistakes to Avoid During Practice*" guidelines described in Chapter #5 of *The Hockey Practice Playbook*?
- Did you keep a record of this practice?
- How will you and the players apply what you learned to the next practice and game?

Communicating and Sharing Information

- Did you share your practice agenda with the players prior to this practice?
- Did you confer with the coaches to fine-tune the practice agenda before/during the practice?
- Did the players work hard and give their best effort during the full practice? Did the coaches acknowledge that consistent hard work? Or is there work needed in this area?
- If there were any issues with the rink, did the coaches talk with rink management to immediately address these issues?
- Were there any conduct issues that needed to be addressed during the practice?
- Were the player's on-time for practice? Was their equipment in good working order?

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Fun During Practice

- Did this practice incorporate competitive drills?
- Did the practice include timed or accuracy drills?
- Were drills included that the players consider *fun*?
- Did the practice integrate time for a scrimmage or other team activity that is considered *fun*?

Effective Resource Utilization

- Was the full practice time used effectively?
- Did the coaches, assistant coaches, managers, and any parent/player helpers manage drill execution correctly?
- Did the coaches use the rink space effectively during the drills?
- If there were any injuries during this practice, did the coaches address them in a timely manner?
- Did the coaches ensure that their equipment (any required equipment that is worn on the rink as well as whistles, pucks, whiteboard, water bottles, etc) is available and practice-ready?
- Did the coaches control the pace of the practice and player involvement levels during drills so that the players (and practice) did not get out-of-control?

Channeling Players' Emotional Energy

- Were the players challenged effectively?
- How did the players handle the competitive elements of the practice on an emotional level?
- Did the players work hard and give their best effort even when tired and during drills/scrimmage-time late in the practice?
- Did the practice help foster player confidence, teamwork, sportsmanship, and respect?
- During the competitive drills and/or scrimmage, did the players keep any negative emotions in check?
- Did the coaches observe good player and team chemistry during the practice? How will the coaches use this information to establish line pairings, power-play, and penalty-kill situations?
- Who are the players that are exhibiting leadership? How will the coaches incorporate this information into future practices and games?

Use these questions above as a guide to ensure that the experiences and learning's associated with each practice are carried forward to future practices and games.