



The Competitive Edge

Get The Edge!

January - February 2011

Volume 7, Number 1

CES's Summer 2011 Training Program

Monday – Thursday
June 20th – Aug. 18th

Skating

Stick-handling

Rapid Shot

Off-Ice Training

Nutrition

Mental Training

Only the elite,
committed, hard
working disciplined &
dedicated sign up!

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In-season Training: Backing off is not option!

By: Jim McKee, MS, CSCS

In the growing world of competitive ice-hockey, more and more players are beginning to utilize the off-season and pre-season to hit the weights, condition hard and participate in programs designed to maximize their physical potential. Given the program is of good design, these players will have made great strides in their strength, power, conditioning and overall athleticism as the emphasis switches to busy practice and game schedules. It is at this transition where many hockey players make the mistake of discontinuing the off-ice training, assuming the gains made in the off-season will carry through the entire in-season. By removing stimuli that have given athletes an advantage over competitors, it is foolish to expect that advantage to “magically” not disappear. Simply put, if you’re not going to use it, you’re going to lose it. In-season off-ice training is essential to not only maintain, but further develop athletes through the season and into the playoffs.

At Competitive Edge Skating, we utilize In-season training for the following reasons:

Injury prevention – When hockey players skate consistently without off-ice training, certain muscles are overused while others are not used enough. This can create weakness, tightness and imbalances that will eventually lead to injuries including groin pulls, hamstring pulls, low back issues and shoulder injuries. Off-ice programs can be very effective at minimizing the potential for these injuries by strengthening and balancing muscle groups.

Continuing player development - At CES, we DO NOT abide by the belief that the in-season is for “maintenance” and should simply be used to “get through” a season. Hockey seasons can be up to 6 months long or more. This is valuable time that can be lost with a “go easy” mentality, especially for kids that are in the prime of their developmental abilities. Adjustments are made to reduce soreness and allow full recovery for games while at the same time working around the mental and physical state of the athletes. With good planning, an athlete should be able to “peak” physically going into the play-offs.

Cont. on page 4

Honors and Accomplishments

- Congratulations to Collin Adams a long time CES student, who already has 70 goals this season averaging 1.5 goals a game! He only is 13 years old and has a bright future!
- Congratulations to Travis Lynch, a CES student, who has committed to play at U of M Ann Arbor next season! We will look forward to seeing Travis in the Wolverine colors!



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CES is helping Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Livingston County!

Help us stuff back packs by donating back to school supplies for kids in need! We need the following supplies:

Backpacks

Notebooks

Binders/Folders

Calculators

Pens/pencils

Highlighters

Glue

Erasers

Protractors

Rulers

Hand Sanitizer

If you are interested in helping with donations, please contact Jennifer at 248-752-4470 or icejen9@aol.com.

Importance of Edge Stability for a Hockey Player's Performance

By: Jennifer Matras, Head Skating Instructor at CES

A hockey player's athletic stability on outside and inside edges, forward and backwards, clockwise and counter clockwise is an essential component in order for a player to be an asset to his/her team. The more competitive level a player gets in hockey, the more crucial edge stability becomes. Here are a few reasons why edge stability will help a player become one of the Most Valuable Players on the ice –

- Greater edge stability allows a player to produce more power through crossovers
 - Every crossover has two pushes - one push from an inside edge and one from an outside edge. The more stability formed on each edge, the more power which can be produced.
- Greater edge stability allows a player to decrease their diameter of their turns, or have sharper turns during turnovers, puck protection or battling situations
 - Being able to turn tighter and repetitively by use of one's edges will help a player stay in the play by maintaining or even increasing their speed through the turns
- Edge stability allows one to skate equally as strong when traveling clockwise or counter clockwise
 - It is important for hockey players to be equally strong on all their edges, in all directions, so they don't take themselves out of the play due to an inability to crossover or turn in a certain direction because of poor edge quality
- Greater edge stability increases agility and scoring chances
 - The more comfortable a player is with their edges the more creative they can be with maneuvers to set up a play or to skate in on a goalie

Cont. on page 4



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Rapid Shot Now Offered at CES!!

Rapid Shot is the batting cage for hockey players!

Located upstairs at KVIH, players can:

Improve accuracy

Improve Shot Speed

Increase their Power

**Quicker release
And much more!**

**Come check out
Rapid Shot at KVIH!**



**Picture from
rapidshot.com**

Finding a Player's Confidence

By: Scott Nelson, skating associate of CES

It is hard for me to believe that I have been giving skating lessons for almost four years now. That may not seem like a long time, but I never thought it would become more than a one or two summer gig. Now I'm teaching almost year round and bringing what I like to consider a unique view to the Competitive Edge team. Being closer to the student's ages and having gone through this program myself, I can connect with the players in ways that Jennifer and Jim might not be able to. It's not better, just different.

This current season I started coaching for Brighton's JV hockey team. What I have noticed over the first half of the season is that confidence is one of the most important things needed in the game of hockey. I've watched some really good hockey players play much poorer than they should be, and in retrospect can attribute this to lack of confidence. Playing with confidence is something that I even struggled with at the High School level.

Growing up and playing travel hockey it was easy for me to play with confidence; everyone was the same age and I grew to six feet tall by the time I was 12. The latter part of that mostly pertains to me, but the first part can pertain to anyone growing up playing hockey. It's relatively easy for kids playing the game to all get along and fit in together. For the most part I don't see confidence's being shot until teens at the earliest. There are unique cases though and I will talk about that a little bit later.

I want to talk about my personal battle with confidence now. Like I mentioned before, growing up it was no problem for me. The problem arose when I made the Brighton Varsity team as a sophomore. Now I was playing against kids older, more physically developed, and with a few years of hockey experience on me. Inside I knew that I had to work hard to play with these types of players, but I also knew that I was good enough to play with them.

Unfortunately my confidence was shot for the first two years of being on the team. I played all right but not great for those two years and then exploded my senior year. I basically doubled the amount of points I had got the previous seasons and was a force all year. After that season was over I had a lot of people asking me why that season was so different than the others and all I told them was confidence. I was the same player, but that season I had it in my head that I was a good player and I was going to prove it to everyone.

Cont. on page 4



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Inspirational Words:

"The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, learn about them, or even seriously consider them as believable or achievable."

~ Denis Waitley,
Motivational speaker

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Backing Off is Not an Option *(Continued from page 1)*

Recovery and soreness reduction – Believe or not, strength and conditioning can be effective in reducing soreness for athletes. Consistent training teaches an athlete's body to handle physical stress and can increase the rate at which an athlete recovers from tough games and practices. Workouts also increase blood flow to sore muscles, stimulate the nervous system and can be designed to stretch tight or overused muscles from excessive skating. This is particularly important for the hip and postural muscles of hockey players.

Without in-season training, hockey players WILL lose the gains built during the off-season. Reaching one's full athletic potential is a year round and life long process. By designating the in-season for the sport exclusively, hockey players are losing a valuable opportunity to continue their development as athletes. While the approach to in-season training may be considerably different than the off-season, the desired outcome is still the same; finishing the season as a stronger, more powerful and better hockey player than where you were at the beginning of the season. Players that maintain, stay the same. At CES, maintaining is unacceptable.

Edge Stability *(cont. from page 2)*

- Greater edge stability decreases the risk of injury
 - The more stable one is on all their edges in any direction or in any situation will increase one's balance, coordination and body awareness which will decrease the chances of one becoming injured.

Players training with CES are constantly introduced to new drills which expose their weaknesses. This helps them become stronger in many areas in different playing situations. Players become stronger on their skates making it more difficult to get knocked off the puck or fall taking them out of the play. Becoming equally strong going in both directions, forwards and backwards and reducing the risk of injury helps players enjoy the game more and reach higher levels that they didn't know were possible!

Confidence *(cont. from page 3)*

So, whether you're a younger player or an older player, I encourage you to surround yourself with people who will help you gain confidence with extra training, talking to your coach, or finding a mentor to help you as well. If your coach is constantly pointing out mistakes you are making, listen to what he/she is saying, work on your mistakes or weaknesses in training and then go out and do your best in the practices and games. Don't get discouraged because you did something wrong. Everyone makes mistakes. What separates the best from the rest are those who not only work on what they are strong at but those who expose their weaknesses and train to make those areas great as well!