

Junior Curling Sessions for Intermediate Curlers

WEEK 1

INTERMEDIATE CURLERS

Balanced Delivery Position

Address the kids by their first names.

Stretching/Warmups-see handout (just a couple minutes a week helps them be ready.)

Remind them about clean shoes and keeping the ice clean

1. Balanced delivery position: Have curlers get in the delivery position on the carpet, trailing leg behind them with toe pointed back, and holding their arms out. Point out that the sliding foot must be under the center of the body to maintain good balance on the ice. Most of their weight should be on the sliding foot also.

2. Practice slides with 1 rock and broom from the hack. Don't release the rock.

a. Proper hack position: Ball of hack foot in back of hack.

Feet pointed towards skip's broom.

Sliding foot flat, parallel to hack foot and slightly ahead of it.

Squat in hack resting on heel of hack foot.

Broom braced against small of back.

Broom head slightly ahead of sliding foot, fabric up.

Throwing arm extended slightly in front of hack leg.

Rock directly in front of hack foot.

b. Delivery: Raise the hips, pull sliding foot back slightly, park for a second, then push forward with delivery motion.

3. Practice slides with the rock and then with just a broom. Stress keeping balanced.

4. Practice deliveries releasing the rock.

5. Try the delivery slide without a rock or broom. You must have good balance to do this.

6. Throw draw shots using good form and balanced deliveries. Use sweeper and have a curler holding a broom at the far end.

7. Play an end if all players are ready for it.

WEEK 2
INTERMEDIATE CURLERS
Review Week 1-Balanced Delivery
New-Grip and Turn

REVIEW

1. Stretching/warmup. Do a minimum of arm circles (shoulder warmup) and taking the delivery position on the carpet (hamstring stretch).
2. Review set up position: Ball of foot in back of hack.
Thighs and feet pointed towards skip's broom.
Sliding foot flat, parallel to hack foot and slightly ahead of hack foot.
Broom braced against small of back.
Broom head slightly ahead of sliding foot, fabric side up.
Broom hand far enough down handle so that shoulders are parallel to ice.
Rock in front of hack foot.
3. Review proper delivery motion: Raise hips, rock back (hips must move back)
pause, rock forward, drop hips while sliding foot moves forward and in underneath center of body.
4. Practice deliveries with broom and rock using proper set up position and delivery motion.
5. To check good balance practice sliding with a rock and broom- with just broom- and without rock or broom if kids can do it safely.

GRIP AND TURN

1. Demonstrate proper grip: Fingers slightly back from goose neck.
Handle should be in fingers and not palm.
Fingers and thumb are alongside, none on top, of handle.
Equal pressure applied with thumb and fingers.
Wrist is above handle.
Look for 'V' between thumb and index finger above and in line with handle.
2. Demonstrate 10 O'Clock and 2 O'Clock positions and ask them which is an in-turn and which is an out-turn. A small turn of the handle to the 12 O'Clock position on release will impart the right amount of rotation to the stone.
3. Practice deliveries with proper turns to a short broom (near hog line) being precise about hand position and amount of turn on handle. About one quarter turn of the handle is applied to reach the "handshake position" and imparts 2 to 3 rotations on a full shot.
4. Practice full length shots stressing a balanced delivery and proper turn on the stone.
5. Discuss skip's broom and extended arm. Tapped ice=final rock destination, broom=target to aim at, extended arm=turn to apply to rock.

WEEK 3

INTERMEDIATE CURLERS

Alignment and Slide Line

The 3 elements of a good delivery are a Balanced Delivery, a Proper Grip and Turn on the rock, and Sliding at the Broom (on the Slide Line).

1. Stretching/Warmup

2. Review balanced

SETUP:

- a. Thighs and feet pointed at the target (broom).
- b. Sliding foot flat and slightly ahead ahead of hack foot.
- c. Broom braced against small of back.
- d. Rock in front of hack foot.

DELIVERY:

- a. Sliding foot must move under center of body on forward motion
- b. Ideally the rock, sliding foot and trailing foot should be on a straight line towards the broom.

3. Review Grip and Turn:

- a. Emphasize the 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock handle positions.
- b. Handle should be in the fingers, not the palm.
- c. Fingers and thumb are alongside , not on top, of the handle.
- d. Wrist is above the handle.
- e. Rock stays in 10 or 2 o'clock position until the release when the hand goes to the hand shake position. Continue holding the hand at the target for a few seconds after the release!

3. ALIGNMENT: Stand behind hack until broom/target is put down
Place rock in front of hack on imaginary slide line to broom.
Turn body so shoulders and hips are perpendicular to target line.
Step into hack maintaining that proper body angle and keeping feet and thighs pointed at the target.
Make delivery slide along the imaginary slide line keeping the rock, the sliding foot and trailing foot as close to the slide line as possible.

4. SLIDE LINE: Take sliding foot no farther back than its toe even with the heel of the hack foot. (Place a rock behind the sliding foot so the curlers can feel that limitation.)

The body/hips should shift backwards so the curlers weight is over the sliding foot.

Take sliding foot back parallel to the imaginary invisible line from the hack to the broom.

Pause.

Begin delivery by moving sliding foot forward and slightly to the right (for right handed curlers). This should be a nice, gradual movement.

5. Drills: Take slides at short broom by near hog line.

Use hanging string device, solo cups and laser light as slide line guides.

Set 2 stones on either side of a slide line and deliver a rock without hitting 'guide' rocks

Set up cups, guard stone and target and throw in-turns and out-turns attempting to bury a rock behind the guard.

6. Play an end or two.

WEEK 4
INTERMEDIATE CURLERS
Game Protocol/Etiquette

Assemble 4 player teams for a practice game.

Game PROTOCOL/ETIQUETTE:

Shake hands, wish your opponent "Good Curling".

Thirds flip a coin for the "Hammer", losers pick color of rocks.

Be ready to curl. Clean your rock and place it in front of the hack as soon as the previous player shoots.

Sweepers of the shooting team should be ready at the hog line and off to the side so the shooter can see the skip.

Sweepers of the throwing team should return from the far end of the ice as soon as their rock stops. They should walk down the very side of the sheet so they don't interfere with the other team.

Sweepers of the non-throwing team should always wait outside the hog line.

The only players in the house should be the skips unless the vice-skip (third) is helping with strategy.

After the last rock is thrown in an end the Thirds agree on the score. Rocks are then pushed to the corners and all players return to the proper positions.

At the conclusion of the game teams again shake hands. Losers congratulate winners. Winners thank their opponents for a good game.

Winners clean the sheet, clear the scoreboard and place mats over the hacks.

WEEK 5
INTERMEDIATE CURLERS
Sweeping/Judging Weights

- 1 Stretching/Warmup-see handout
- 2 Review Hack position, Alignment/slide line, proper Grip and Turn
- 3 Practice throwing at short broom for slide line: Sliding foot back no farther than heel of hack foot. Place rock behind hack to prevent this.
Take sliding foot back parallel to the target line
Begin delivery by moving sliding foot forward and slightly to the right (under the body) in a slow and gradual motion.
4. SWEEPING: Curlers will sweep many more rocks than they will throw. It is very important. Sweeping does 2 things-makes rocks go farther and delays their curl. Sweeping stroke must be in front of the rock but not so close you 'burn' it.
5. Sweeping position: One hand palm up, higher on broom handle. The other hand, palm down lower on broom handle. As the curlers get more comfortable putting weight on the broom their hands should move farther down the handle.
Feet and broom head form a triangle.
Head of curler should be above the broom head.
Curlers should shuffle feet or sidestep as they move down the ice and not cross feet over each other.
6. Have one curler throw draw weight shots at a broom and have 2 sweepers sweep them using proper technique. Rotate players so they all throw and sweep.
7. JUDGING WEIGHTS: Curlers need to be able to judge how far a rock will go and therefore when to sweep "for distance".
They also need to communicate this information to the skip.
8. **If they are ready for it, demonstrate stop watch timing. The "Sweeper's Time" is the split from the back line to the near hog line. The Watch Time is used as a backup to the visual judgement of weight and NOT as a replacement for it.
9. Have one curler throw draw weight shots and have two sweepers judge the weight and sweep while calling out "guard", "in house", or "through" to a player in the skip position. Rotate kids so they play all positions; thrower, sweeper and skip.
10. We will start on sheet 8 and test each curler for sweeping efficiency using the "Smart Broom". Have one curler throw draw weight shots and have one curler sweep from hog line to hog line. Record efficiency scores.

WEEK 6

INTERMEDIATE CURLERS

Review Sweeping/Judging Weights and Rhythm and Weight Control

Continue monitoring for proper hack set up and balanced delivery, good grip and turn, adjusting hack alignment for different slide lines.

Sweeping positions: High hand palm up, lower hand palm down and low on broom.
Feet and broom head form a triangle.
Head of curler should be over broom head.
Side step while moving down the ice. Don't cross feet over each other.

Judging weight: Have one junior hold a broom at the far end. Have one junior try to throw a draw weight shot. Have 2 sweepers try to judge the weight of each rock and "yell" out LIGHT, HOUSE or HEAVY to the skip as it moves along.

Sweep the rocks if necessary. Rotate skip, thrower and sweepers on each shot. They should have a good idea of the weight half way down!
Show them how to use stop watches if they are ready for that aid.

RHYTHM: We don't want to be too quick on the 'forward press', 'pull back', and 'park' etc.
Count ONE on the forward press, TWO on the pull back, THREE on the park, and FOUR as they begin the delivery.

1. Start from the proper hack position with sliding foot slightly ahead of hack foot.
2. Push rock and sliding foot forward on ONE.
3. Lift hips up while moving BODY, rock and sliding foot back on TWO.
4. Pause on THREE
5. Push body, rock and sliding foot forward in delivery-FOUR.
6. Sliding foot moves forward along slide line while hips drop down.

Make sure on the park that the hips move back behind their hack foot and are over their sliding foot. DO NOT take sliding foot back farther than the heel of hack foot.

With a "one-one thousand", "two-one thousand", "three-one thousand", "four-one thousand" rhythm practice deliveries.

WEIGHT CONTROL: Lighter weights can be controlled by how far you take your sliding foot back on the PULL BACK or the second count and using about the same kick!

1. Start from the proper hack position with the sliding foot slightly ahead of the hack foot.
2. Make a good forward press.
3. Then deliver rocks from 3 different sliding foot pull back positions.
 - a. Bring the sliding foot back a few inches and throw guards.
 - b. Bring the sliding foot back even with the hack foot and throw draw weight shots.
 - c. Bring the sliding foot back behind the hack foot so the toe of the sliding foot is as far back as the heel of the hack foot and throw hack weight shots.

Week 7

INTERMEDIATE CURLERS

Review and More Leg Drive

Review lessons 1-4: Proper Hack Position
Proper Grip and Turn
Alignment for different slide lines
Sweeping technique

Getting adequate take-out weight is difficult for most intermediates.
Show them how to get more power by:

- A. Hack foot in back of hack with ball of foot on sloped part of hack.
- B. Getting their hips up higher when bringing the rock back to the Park Position.
Legs should be almost straight.
- C. Rocking back slightly on their hack foot so their weight shifts back behind the hack and is over the sliding foot when in the Park Position. Do not let them bring the sliding foot too far back on the pull back. Shifting the weight is the critical element.
- D. Dropping the hips as they push off. Like going down a ski jump.
- E. Releasing the rock earlier than on a draw while the body has the most momentum.
Remind them that we don't want them 'pushing' the rocks down the ice.

Practice without a rock first stressing the technique.

Practice throwing takeouts of a rock in the 8 foot with both in-turns and out-turns while keeping good balance and alignment.