



The Hockey Play Book: Teaching Hockey Systems

By Michael Smith



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The bible for hockey coaches at all levels of competition.

The Hockey Play Book is a practical handbook for coaches seeking better players and better team-play.

The book features systems for defensive, offensive and special-team situations, all accompanied by annotated, easy-to-understand diagrams. The systems range from conservative to aggressive -- some are intended for big, physical teams; others for fast-skating and highly skilled teams; and some work for both. Also included are teaching methods and drills for honing specific skills.

The first challenge for every coach is to determine the abilities of each skater. The approach in **The Hockey Play Book** is effective with players of all ages and levels of ability. Coaches can match systems with team strategy, bringing a special creative magic to one of the fastest team sports in the world.

The Hockey Play Book includes:

- 500 step-by-step diagrams
- Dozens of plays and skill-building drills
- Conservative and aggressive systems
- Teaching strategies for all levels of play

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Michael A. Smith has been involved in hockey for over 40 years as a player, as a coach and as general manager of the New York Rangers, Colorado Rockies, Chicago Blackhawks and Team USA. He was an adviser for the National Hockey League and has traveled extensively as a lecturer and studied European training methods in Russia and Sweden. The author of six books on hockey, he lives in West Tisbury, Massachusetts.

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General Introduction

Hockey is a game played by young athletes and a game in which youth is not entirely determined by age. NHL players bring the same enthusiasm to the rink as eight-year-olds, and no matter what level the players, it is the coach's responsibility to create an atmosphere and environment that gives shape to that enthusiasm. Games are fun. That is why people of all ages play them.

The techniques explained in these pages are cut-and-dried; the diagrams and text are brief and to the point. Coaches reading this book, however, need to remember that their job is to bring these plays to life and that the lessons contained in this book are intended to channel players' excitement, never to stifle it.

This book focuses on the different systems that are part of hockey. There is no one system, no best system, no secret system. Hockey systems are not complex or difficult to learn, although some, it is true, can be challenging to execute. They do take teamwork, though, and it is part of the coach's job-actually, a major part-to foster an eager and effective team spirit and, once it exists, to orchestrate its actions.

When I started coaching in the early '70s, I thought the road to being a good coach was straight. If I learned A and then B and C, and so on, I would become a skilled coach and know everything I needed to know. But I discovered that the more I learned, the less I knew for sure. What once looked clear and simple often became gray and diffused.

I concluded that a good coach had to become an artist and that the process of guiding a hockey team was subjective. I learned that a good coach must constantly create if he is to enable his players and his team to grow.

The purpose of this book, then, is to provide resources for coaches who are caught up in their own creative efforts. These chapters include different systems for hockey's defensive, offensive and special team situations. Teaching methods and drills are provided, and the systems run the gamut from the conservative to the aggressive. Some systems are designed specifically for big physical teams or for fast-skating and highly skilled teams or for teams that have both. In this book, there should be a system for every coach.

But here is a warning. Despite the look of this book, hockey is definitely not a game of x's and o's. Diagrams help, but a coach is in trouble if ever he thinks players can learn the game from a chalkboard. It is vital not to make hockey rigid. It is a fast-flowing game with the opportunity for physical confrontation, and it is important for the coach to incorporate both the flow and the physical elements into his plans.

In a sense, the game of hockey resembles jazz. Talents and skills are necessary, but a basic framework is required within which to exercise these abilities. Both jazz and hockey demand improvisation; the individual player doing the extra unexpected bit makes the system work. The individuals play off each other and constantly adjust to one another, and in hockey, just as in jazz, too much planning can ruin everything.

There is no perfect system. Different coaching philosophies emphasize different techniques. Coaches who believe in aggressive, attacking play proceed differently than coaches who believe in a conservative, close-checking approach. Some coaches want aggression in some zones and conservative play in others, and a coach must come to grips with his philosophy of the game before selecting specific systems for play in any one of them.

Once a coach has decided what kind of team he has at his disposal and knows roughly how he wants to proceed, this book can help him lay out his plans. It can help with adjustments to his present techniques, and maybe contains a couple of ideas he hasn't thought of before. Later in the season, when the team is in a slump and enthusiasm is slipping away, perhaps this book can even supply a little of the creative magic that every coach should always be looking for.

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Users Review

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Cinthia Beltran:

As people who live in often the modest era should be up-date about what going on or facts even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era and that is always change and make progress. Some of you maybe will update themselves by studying books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know what one you should start with. This The Hockey Play Book: Teaching Hockey Systems is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and need in this era.

Melissa Jackson:

The reason? Because this The Hockey Play Book: Teaching Hockey Systems is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret the idea inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who write the book in such remarkable way makes the content within easier to understand, entertaining way but still convey the meaning fully. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This excellent book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book include such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I were being you I will go to the guide store hurriedly.

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