



**SMALL  
STICKS**  
HOCKEY NEW ZEALAND  
**YEAR 7 & 8**

*Half the size, twice the excitement!*

***Quality experiences in junior Hockey can inspire a lifelong involvement in the game.***

Small Sticks is based on the belief that small-sided games:

- Require fewer players per team and offer participants full involvement, increased touches of the ball and greater skill development
- Are enjoyable to play for participants of both genders, of all ages and hockey abilities
- Teach common skills and tactics to make the transition to 11v11 field hockey easier
- Introduce development opportunities for playing, umpiring, coaching, managing and leading within hockey
- Are not reliant on full complement hockey facilities or equipment and can be played on fields of various sizes and surfaces
- Aligns to the Balance is Better philosophy offering greater enjoyment leading to higher retention rates.

Key benefits of modified games are:

- More touches on the ball which means more opportunities for development and more goals!
- Promotes instinctive/creative play
- Less players on the field, therefore less complicated decision making.
- Modified equipment and field size – scaled down from the adult version to grow with the participants.
- Modified Rules - By reducing stoppages, maximising involvement, and minimising risks creates a safe, flowing game resulting in a quality experience.

**More touches of the Ball + More Involvement = Better Skill Development**

#### **WHY**

Hockey is a late specialisation sport where players grow and develop at different ages and stages. Our focus is on keeping the quality of the experience with hockey enjoyable, creating balance in sport participation and nurturing talent at the right pace. That's because we believe that people, especially young people, who receive quality experiences in sport become sport lovers for life.

Small Sticks modified games have been developed in accordance with Sport NZ's "Athlete Characteristics and Needs" to provide participants with age appropriate formats. It is based on worldwide evidence compiled to increase the numbers of children in sport, while also assisting them to improve more rapidly, increase their enjoyment level and to ensure they continue to participate in future years.

### The Facts

From June to September 2016 Hockey NSW conducted extensive research to compare differences between Small Sided Games and Traditional 11-a-side Full Field Games.

The results are highlighted in the following statistical findings;

- Player Touches (possessions) – 4.7: 1
- Goal Shots – 4.5:1
- Goals Scored – 3:1
- Passes Made – 4.8:1
- Metres Run – 2.5:1 (no GPS data sort for this cohort)

*#Note: The results were congruent with other international research studies Hockey NSW referenced.*

### **How will these changes affect coaching and umpiring?**

Climate of Development: Small Sticks modified formats require coaches and Umpires to focus more on skill development and tactical awareness than before. Less emphasis should be placed on the result of matches as the key objectives are to accelerate skill development, increase participants overall involvement and make junior hockey more accessible.

## RECOMMENDED FORMAT

### Year 7 & 8 (u13) Kwik Sticks

The module is for participants who are familiar with hockey and have an understanding of the game.

#### SEVEN-A-SIDE

**TEAM:** 8-10 members

**FIELD SIZE:** 45m x 55m approx.

**SUGGESTED PLAYING AREA:**

- 1/2 of a hockey turf
- School hall
- Sports field

**INCLUDES:**

- Team dynamics; decision making; defensive and attacking concepts; positional understanding and concepts of space
- Specialist skills/strategies
- Goals: Standard
- Balls: Standard
- Auto Pass: Yes
- Goalkeeper: Yes
- Penalty Corners: Yes

**DURATION:** 40-45 minutes

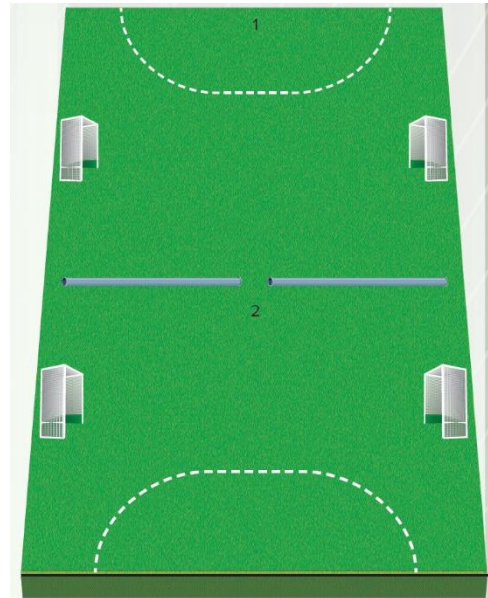
*Example: 2 x 20min or 3 x 15min*

**RULES:**

- Standard FIH Rules of Hockey apply except for only 7 players per team on half field

#### Game Time

Players are exposed to advanced technical skills and will learn by repetition. Player positions may become more specialised, with position specific skills being developed. Team strategies can be developed to encourage structure and the use of the space on the field.



## Year 7 & 8 (u13) Kwik Sticks

### DEVELOPMENT

The development module is for participants new to hockey, it is an introductory module that familiarises participants with hockey.

### SIX-A-SIDE

**TEAM:** 6-10 members

**FIELD SIZE:** 45m x 55m approx.

**SUGGESTED PLAYING AREA:**

- 1/2 of a hockey turf
- School hall
- Sports field

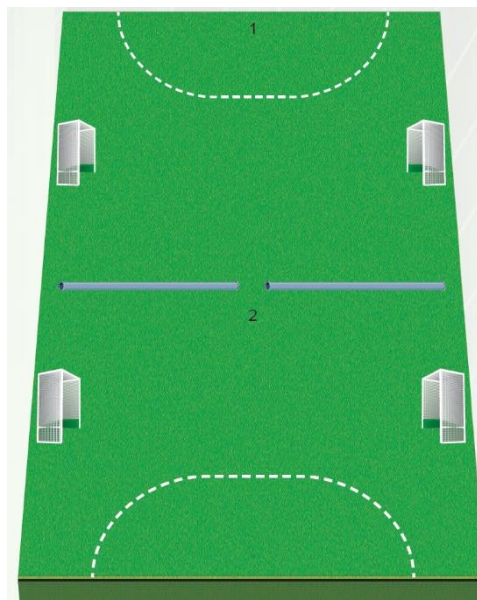
**INCLUDES:**

- Team dynamics; decision making; defensive and attacking concepts; positional understanding and concepts of space
- Specialist skills/strategies
- Goals: Standard
- Balls: Standard
- Auto Pass: Yes
- Goalkeeper: No
- Penalty Corners: Optional

**DURATION:** 40 minutes

**RULES:**

- **Safety Rules:** only play with flat side of the stick, ball must stay on the ground, no “raised sticks”, no hacking on the stick, no tackling from the left (if this causes a dangerous situation), no physical contact with opponent
- The game starts with a push forward or back. Each team must be behind the centre line at the start whistle
- No obstruction
- The ball cannot be deliberately stopped with the foot or kicked. However, when the ball merely touches the foot, play should continue
- Free hit and side-line hit in: only the opponent needs to be 5 metres away
- Penalty corner or, if there are no circles, free hit on 15 metre line (everybody 5 metres away and no direct shot on goal allowed)
- Long corner at 5 metres from corner on the side-line (everybody 5 metres away and no direct shot on goal allowed)
- A goal is scored when the ball is pushed into the goal from inside the circle or inside the 15-metre zone



### Game Time

The children in this age category have good coordination skills and are usually willing to learn. Technical skills should be more advanced than in the younger age group. Expand on what has already been learnt. Player positions should still be rotated, with players being taught the roles of each position. Retaining possession should be encouraged, utilising the width of the field. Individuals understand the concept of achieving an individual goal for the game.