

### INCORRECT (SWITCHING STICK TO OTHER HAND)



# THE CHANGE OF DIRECTION: LACROSSE'S MOST FLAWED MOVE

**A**TTACK, whether it be through natural selection or intrinsic design, is the glamour position of lacrosse. If Joe Namath had chosen to play lacrosse, he almost certainly would have been an attackman.

Prerequisite for the position is a wealth of talent and confidence. Most attackmen also take pride in their analytical knowledge of the game. That's why it's so difficult to understand why almost every novice attackman cannot make a technically sound change of direction.

To understand this, a slight review of the basic tenets of the game is in order. The key role of an attackman is to create offense. To do this, he must somehow gain steps on his defenseman.

Conversely, the defenseman's job is to stay between his man and the goal—not grant him those precious few steps. If the attackman can gain those steps, he can

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*1979 NCAA Division II Champions*

create an open shot for either himself or for a teammate from whom the defense has slid.

The technique most often employed by an attackman behind the goal is changing direction as quickly as possible. This movement is most efficient, as it enables the attackman to scan the field for open teammates while in the act of dodging.

It is also advantageous in that it strips the defenseman of visual cues to help him play defense. In short, it forces the defenseman to run sideways in a disoriented state.

Why, then, do attackmen find it so hard to beat their defensemen? The answer would not only surprise most attackmen, it would shock them: They are making

moves that are totally destroying their offensive ability!

Check the incorrect change of direction in the accompanying photo sequence. As you can see, the attackman drives his defender to either the right or left of the goal (Photo 1).

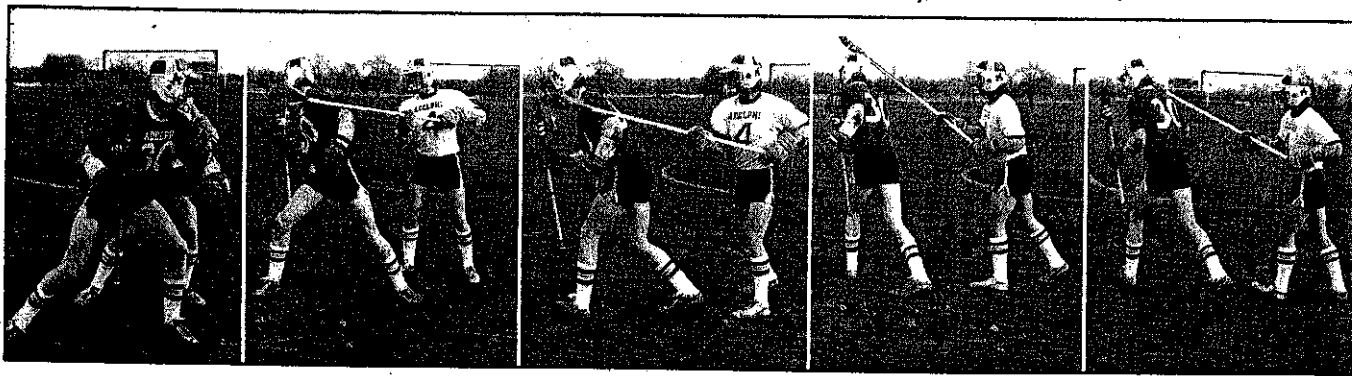
At the point of change, the attackman plants his inside foot and switches the stick to his other hand (Photos 1-3). He then shifts his weight back and reverses in the other direction (Photos 3-5).

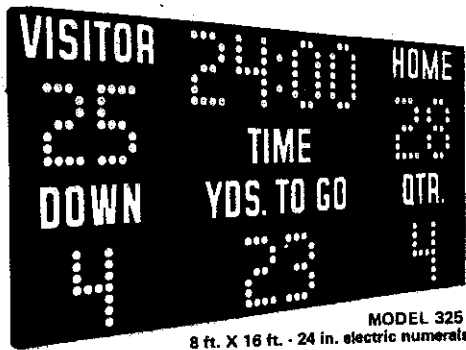
This set of actions is disastrous for several reasons. To start with, the attackman sends a message to the defenseman that he is about to change direction. He does this by switching hands at a point visible to the defenseman.

Secondly, the time he loses by switching hands in the middle of changing direction, is usually just enough time to allow

*(Continued on page 76)*

### CORRECT (KEEPING STICK IN SAME HAND ON CHANGE OF DIRECTION)





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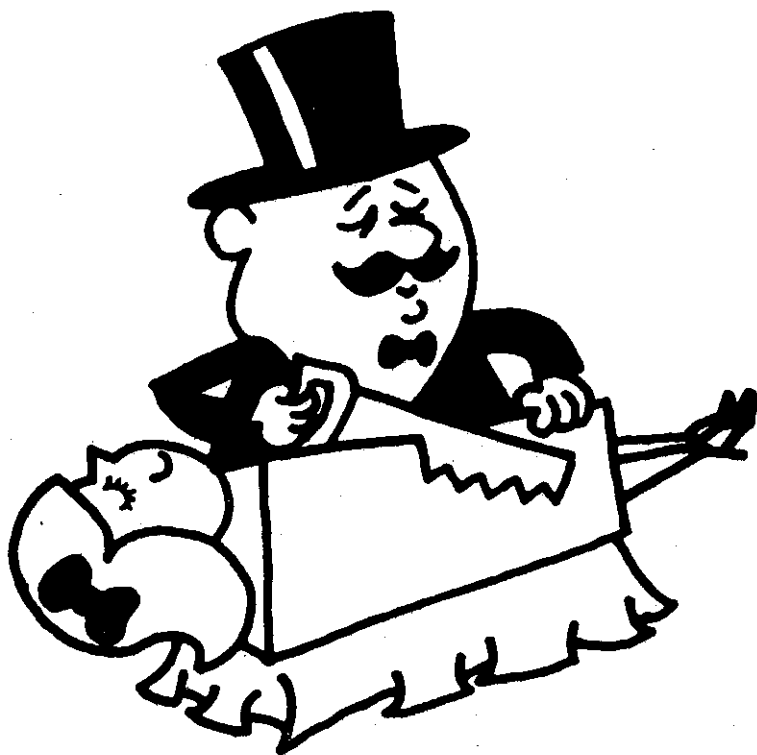
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## Flawed Move

(Continued from page 28)

the defenseman to regain his position.

Finally, this change violates all the rules of stick protection. It exposes the stick to the stick side of the defenseman. The attackman will often hang his stick at this point, allowing even a beaten defensive player to check free the ball (Photos 4-5).

If you're skeptical about attack players doing such a disastrous thing, I challenge you to observe your own attackmen.

Believe it or not, this has become a common method of changing direction. It starts in the early instructional years when players think out each action while playing. It then becomes habit.

The key to successful dodging in any sport is the quickness with which a player can change direction. The rule I would encourage is simplicity itself: *Don't switch hands at the point you intend to switch direction.*

"Though the subject of this piece may seem trivial to you, I assure you that it is one of the most vital — and most incorrectly executed — moves in lacrosse. We know it helped us achieve the Division II-III National Championship as well as one of the most potent attacks in divisional history — 130 goals and 158 assists for 288 points in only 16 games. The pictures in the article were taken by Irene Vogel. Posing for them were Ed Hughes (#30), our Honorable All-American attackman, and defenseman Ed Menegaux." — Kevin P. Sheehan

Notice in the "correct change of direction" sequence that by keeping the stick in the same hand while switching directions, the player not only facilitates his change of direction but protects the stick from the defender with his (attackman's) body. (See Photos 1-3.) The switch of hands can now be made safely two or three steps after the change of direction (Photos 4-5).

Notice that the stick is automatically protected from the defender by the attackman's body throughout the entire action. The change has also been effected much faster. This technique will make even your slowest attackman two or three steps faster.

Conclusion: The present failure of your attack may not be speed, but poor technique.

The breaking of habits, as many smokers have discovered, is not always easy, even when the habit is identified as destructive. It will take work, every day, to

restructure basic behavior patterns. Attackmen must work on their change of direction as intensely as they do on their shot.

Attackmen must also learn to control their body balance during the change. Jerry West would come down hard on his outside leg before a jump shot, so he could explode into his jump with extra force. Attackmen must learn to explode off their pivot leg so that they're practically launched into a change of direction. To think of changing hands at this point of explosion is out of the question.

An improper change of direction is easily detected. It is less easily corrected. The proper habits must be drilled on in team and individual practice.

When drilling becomes tedious for you, remember, the greatest gift you can give an attackman is the "edge" on his defenseman.

## Shot Put

(Continued from page 25)

most elusive.

Moving backward across the ring may seem impossible to the beginner at first, but with careful guidance it becomes an achievable goal. The coach should have the beginner develop a set pattern for ring entry and glide, including the following elements: adjusting the feet correctly, concentrating briefly, lowering the center of gravity, and gliding across the circle.

By repeating this again and again, the beginner will soon get the feel of the movement and achieve the consistency that develops confidence and success.

The timing of the sequential movements through the put is the next goal for the beginner. Youngsters will vary widely in this critical element. We believe that the best results can be obtained by having the putter start slow and accelerate throughout.

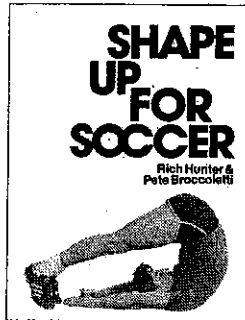
At the conclusion of the glide, the putter should apply a final burst of energy to initiate the release phase. If he has maintained his balance throughout the glide, he'll be ready to pick up the tempo.

In introducing the glide to the beginning putters, the coach should make sure to stress the soundest fundamentals and teach them at a pace that won't overwhelm and thus defeat them. He should guide them step-by-step with as much individual attention as possible.

By working on the basics and the critical timing factors of balance and timing early in the season, the coach will increase his chances of developing a solid group of performers.

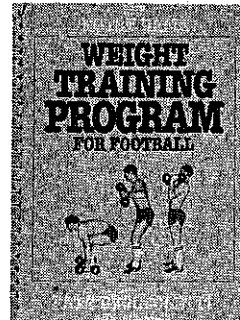
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## Soccer



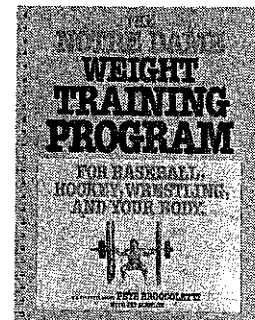
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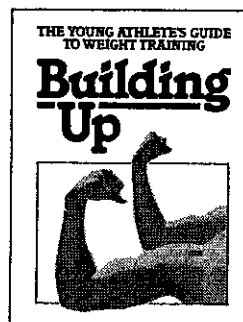


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