

P.E. SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

FLOOR HOCKEY



“Sounds so easy, but there’s no better practice than to always keep playing. No one can pick up a stick and be one of the best ball hockey players in the world after being on the couch for months. It takes a lot of time, effort and practice to get to that point.”

Nick Carter, American floor hockey player, Alternate Captain, Team USA, Strength & Conditioning Coach

INTRODUCTION

Floor hockey is sometimes compared to ice hockey without the ice skates, but there are many differences in the rules. Floor hockey is a fast and energetic sport where much of the playing time takes place near the goals.

Playing floor hockey helps to develop eye-hand coordination, balance, agility, and physical fitness. It also requires teamwork.

The objective of the game is to score goals by hitting a hard rubber disc, the puck, into one of the nets placed at opposite ends of the floor. The players control the puck using a long stick with a curved blade at one end.

The mixture of endurance, power and precision make floor hockey a popular game in schools.

HISTORY

Some believe that floor hockey evolved from ice hockey while others think the game’s ancestor is field hockey. Regardless of its origin, floor hockey is a popular game played by both males and females.

Floor hockey gained its popularity in Europe during the late 1970s. In the early 1980s national associations were founded in many countries. These formal organizations created the structure



that enabled the young sport to grow faster.

The first organized United States floor hockey tournament was held in 1976 in Michigan. Since this time floor hockey has gained in popularity. Many schools (junior high schools, high schools, colleges and universities) have embraced the game.

HOW FLOOR HOCKEY IS PLAYED

Floor hockey is a non-contact sport. Rules of the game vary according to the age and ability of the players and the facility available. The following represents how the game is played on a regulation size basketball court.



Play is started when the referee places or drops a puck for a face-off at the center of the playing area. One player from each team lines up at the center for the face-off. Sticks are placed in a straight line not less than 10 cm from the puck. At the face-off, players from each team must be on their own side of the face-off spot.

Each team has defensive and offensive players. The main responsibilities of the offense are to maintain possession of the puck and to score goals. The main responsibilities of the defense are to prevent the opponents from scoring, regain possession of the puck, move the puck away from the goal they are defending and move it back to their offense.

Each team consists of 6 players. Positions in a typical floor hockey game are the same as those in ice hockey. The offense consists of three forwards - a center (C), a left wing (LW) and a right wing (RW). The defense includes two defensemen (D) and a goalie (G).



The defense cannot go past the center line into offensive areas. It is their responsibility to keep the puck out of their defensive half of the floor.

Forwards work offensively and cannot go past the center line into their defensive area. The Goalkeeper has the most difficult job on a hockey floor team. The goalie

uses his hands, feet or stick to stop shots from going in the net. Goaltending requires alertness, quickness and courage.

A floor hockey game consists of three twenty minute periods (straight time) with a two minute rest between periods.

Rules for floor hockey differ from ice hockey rules in several ways for safety reasons. In floor hockey, no physical contact is allowed. Sticks cannot be carried above the waist or used above the knees when playing the puck. Only wrist shots and push passes are allowed. No swinging or slapping at the puck is permitted and the puck cannot be lifted above knee level.



Floor hockey has many rules in common with ice hockey. No slashing, tripping or hooking an opponent with the stick is allowed. Like ice hockey, a goal cannot be scored by intentionally directing the puck into the net with a foot, hand or any other part of the body.

Penalties are called for various types of infractions. They include: slashing, holding, roughing, body checking, disputing a referee's call, unsportsmanlike behavior, high sticking (a raised stick-tip of blade or more above waist), freezing the puck, catching the puck with a hand, having too many players on the floor and hitting a goalie's glove with the stick--if the goalie has his/her glove on the puck.

No more than two players can be penalized at one time per team (two players off the floor). Penalties include:

1. Two minutes for minor infractions.
2. Five minutes for major infractions.

SKILLS & PLAYING TECHNIQUES

Skills required to play floor hockey include passing, receiving passes, shooting, stick handling, defensive skills and goaltending. Players are allowed to use both sides of the blade of the stick. The front side is called the forehand and the back side

is called the backhand. Usually the forehand is more accurate and more powerful than the backhand.

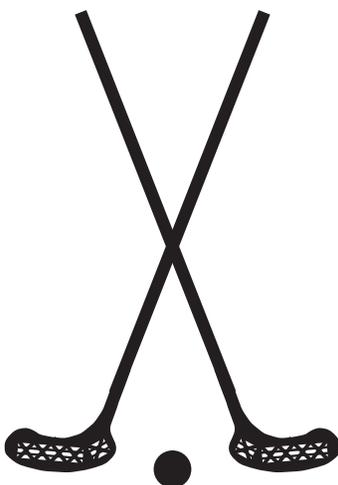
In ice hockey there are several types of passes and shots but, for safety reasons, in floor hockey only the push pass and the wrist shot is used. Both of these require that the puck be in contact with the blade of the stick from the beginning of the pass or shot until the puck is released, as opposed to slapping or swinging at the puck. Receiving a pass is done with a soft touch, “giving” with the stick as the puck meets the blade.

Stick handling involves controlling the puck with the blade of the stick while in motion. This is most effective when using both sides of the stick.

Although body checking (using the body to move an opponent off the puck or out of the play) is not allowed in floor hockey, stick checking is a very effective defensive tactic. The techniques include the poke check and the sweep check. To perform either of these, the defender holds the end of his/her stick with one hand while focusing on the body of the opponent, who is stick-handling the puck. When the opponent puts the ball out in front of him/her, the defender uses his/her stick to poke or sweep the puck away from the opponent.

EQUIPMENT

Plastic sticks and pucks make up the game equipment. Players may wear kneepads and the goalie must wear a goal tender’s mask. The goalie may use a baseball glove or a street hockey trapper.



FLOOR HOCKEY NOTES

The International Floor ball Federation was founded in 1986 in Sweden. Founding nations were Sweden, Finland and Switzerland. In 1994 the first European championship for men took place in Zurich. The following year the first European championship for women was organized. The first world championship for men took place in 1996 in Sweden. In 1997 the first world championship for women was organized. Since then, the world championships for men and women take place in alternating years. There are 27 member countries in the International Floor ball Federation.

Floor hockey is popular in junior and senior high schools. It is played as an activity in physical education classes and as an intramural sport. Floor hockey is also played as an intramural sport by college and university men and women.

The National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association rules are mostly commonly used to govern floor hockey play as an intramural sport. This association is a non-profit professional organization that is comprised of over 2,000 universities, colleges, military installations, YMCAs, health clubs, recreation and park departments and other institutions.

Floor hockey is the only team sport in the Special Olympics Winter Games. Floor Hockey was first introduced as a Special Olympic Sport at the 1970 Special Olympics World Winter Games. Some 50,000 Special Olympic athletes complete in floor hockey.

More information about this sport can be found at:

www.isbhf.com

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ball_hockey

www.specialolympics.org/floor-hockey.aspx