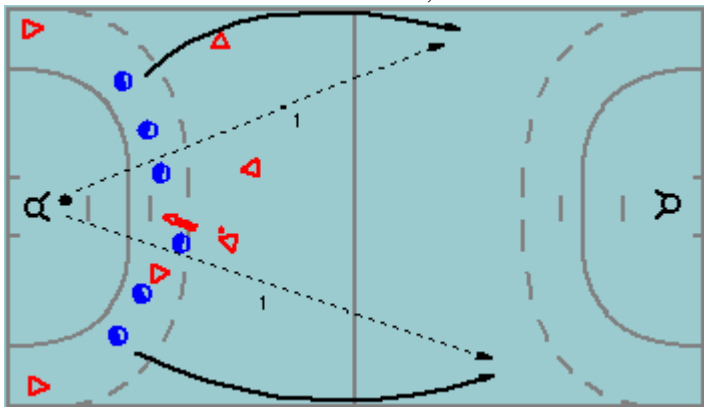


DEVELOPMENT OF FAST BREAK FROM VARIOUS DEFENCE SYSTEMS

As the percentage of goals from fast break is ever increasing, a development of this type of attack from various defence systems has become an important part of handball. Fast break should become a starting point for every attack in modern handball. Fast break can begin from the intercepted ball, after a free-throw, side-throw, referee's throw-in or goalkeepers-throw which occur as a result of different mistakes of the attackers, after a blocked shot or a ball won and after a successful goalkeeper's defence. In the recent years, a so-called "extended fast break" has developed as an intermediary phase between the fast break and the attack against the set zone or combined defence formation. Extended fast break includes all the individual, group or team activities, which attackers perform after the virtual end of the fast break (when there was no possibility for a shot on goal) in the time when defenders have already returned, but have not yet managed to set the defence formation. In this way, attackers are able to surprise defence players, who have not yet achieved a sufficient zone or combined defence formation and adequate level of shared teamwork. In other words, extended fast break is a combination of activities, which are characteristic for both classic fast break and the attack against the set defence formation. As a result of rule changes, related to the first throw-in, fast break occurs also after the received goal. Rapid development of the fast break game in the recent years has happened due to the fact that fast break is the easiest and quickest way to reach a good goal-scoring position. The efficiency in goal scoring is higher from the fast break, compared to the attack against the set defence formation.

Fast break can take several shapes:

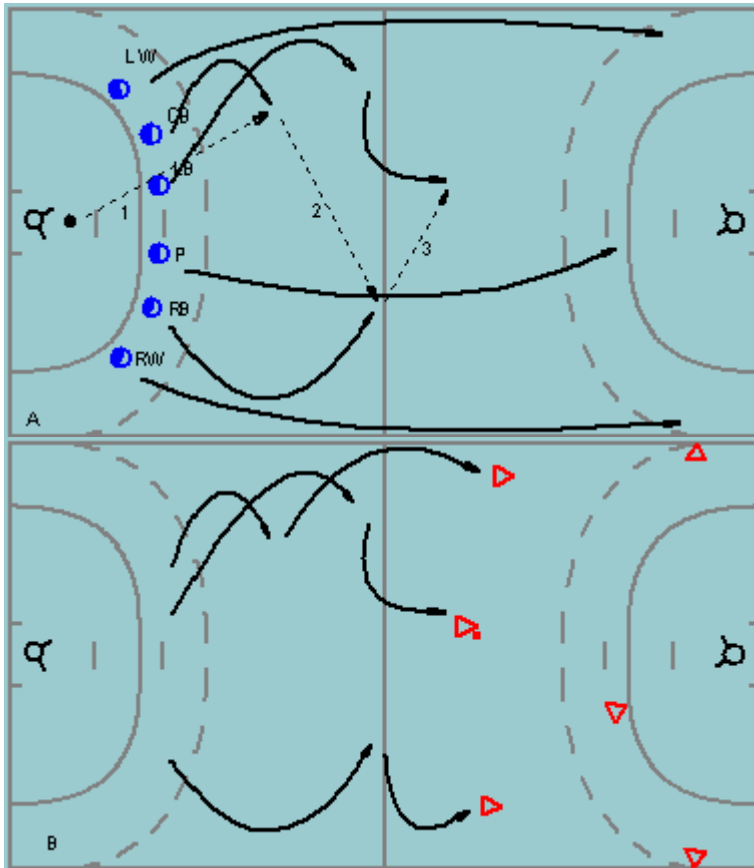
- Fast break with an "escape" of one or two defenders even before it is clear that the defence has won the ball;



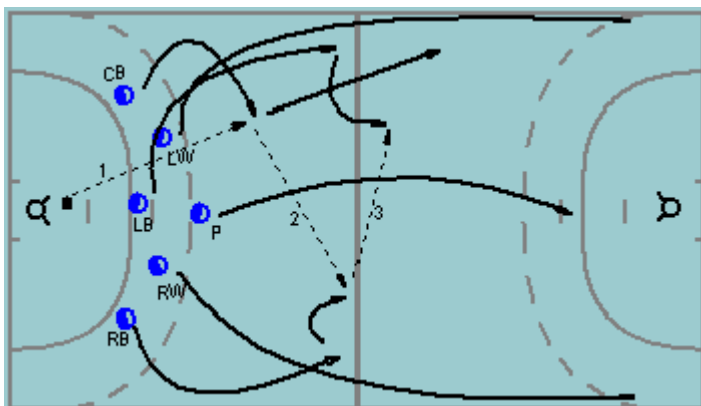
Picture 1: Fast break with an "escape" of one or two defenders

- Team (group or team) fast break, which requires:
 - Precise diagram of leaving of the playing positions in defence. A majority of quality teams has developed an exact concept of leaving of the playing positions in defence after the ball has been won in various typical situations. Generally, the first players to leave a shallow zone defence (e.g. 6:0) should be first left and right defenders (see Picture 2A), whilst in the deep defence (e.g. 3:2:1) players in the slightly more forward initial positions – centre front and both second defenders – should leave first (see Picture 3).

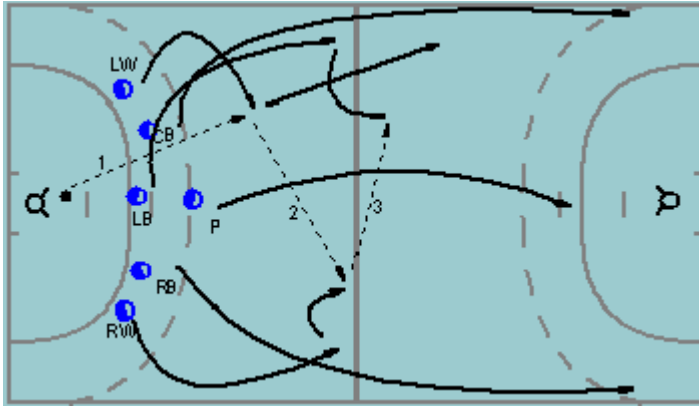
- Remaining players are responsible for a safe and quick transfer of the ball in front of the opposite goal. Similarly happens also from the classic zone defence 5:1 (see Picture 4)



Pictures 2 A and B: Leaving of the defence positions, transition into the fast break, transfer of the ball into the attacking half of the field and setting the positions for the execution of the extended fast break from the zone defence formation 6:0.

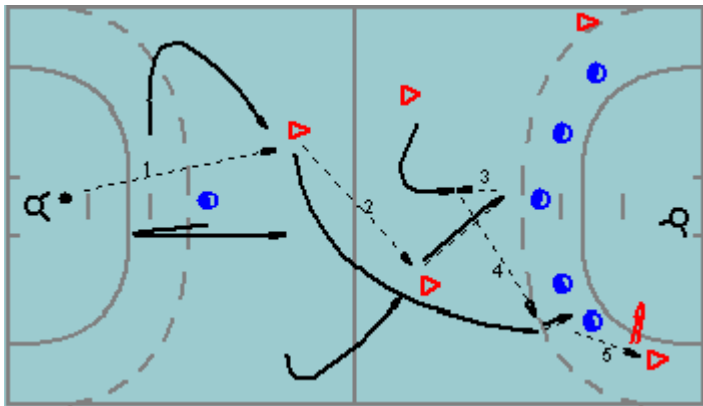


Pictures 3: Leaving of the defence positions, transition into the fast break, transfer of the ball into the attacking half of the field and setting the positions for the execution of the extended fast break from the zone defence formation 3:2:1.



Pictures 4: Leaving of the defence positions, transition into the fast break, transfer of the ball into the attacking half of the field and setting the positions for the execution of the extended fast break from the zone defence formation 5:1.

- Exact system of movement across the length and width of the playing field, which has to be also well-timed between all the players (spatial balance across the whole of the playing field) – good opening-up and teamwork of the attackers; good teams have a set concept for the correct movement of the attackers in the field and their shared commonsense collaboration.
- Set concept of the extended fast break, which can be adapted to the situation according to the particulars of the opponent's return into the zone defence. For example, use of space, which is inadequately marked due to the end of the attack of the opposite players (see Picture 5); similar goes for the use of space at the eventual change of specialised attackers for the specialised defenders.

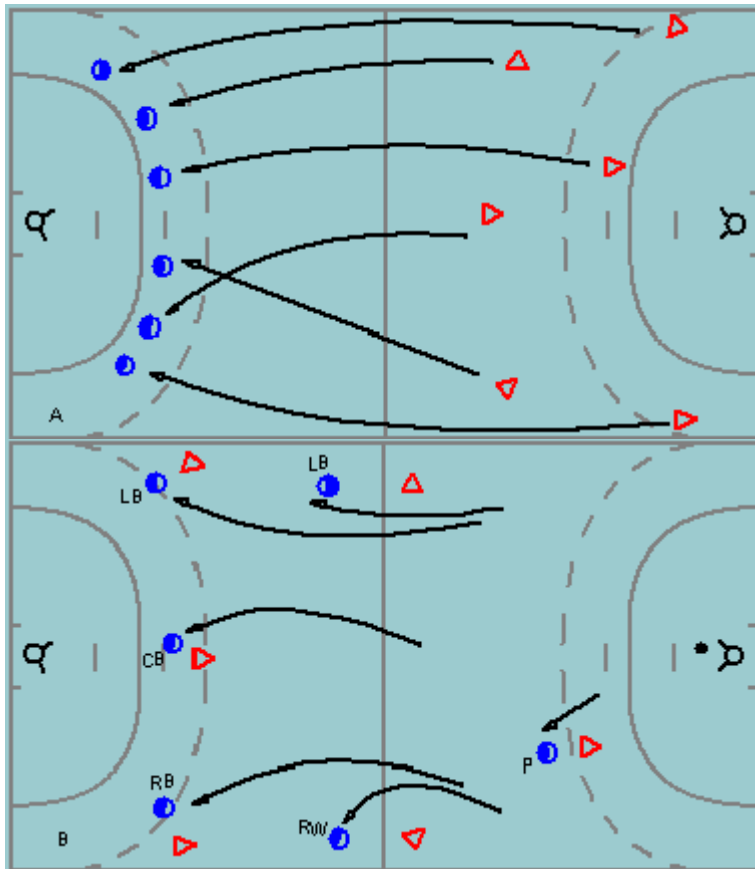


Picture 5: Possibilities for the use of empty space in the part of the playing field, which is not marked by player, who performed a shot on the goal and is late in returning into defence.

As in every phase of the game, also in fast break the players should have a lot of knowledge and practice a good degree of teamwork.

Generally, defence can be divided into the return and the prevention of the fast break (when opponent chooses fast break) type of defence and the game in set defence formation. When returning from the opposite half of the court and preventing the fast break, players usually

stick to the principles of individual defending. Afterward, their aim is to form a zone defence as quickly as possible and to follow the guidelines of such defence. Often a combination of both types of returning can be seen – certain number of players quickly return into the zone defence, whereas one or two use the individual defence in order to prevent the development of fast break, to slow it down and to make it harder for the attackers to cooperate (interceptions of the passes).



Picture 6: Return into the initial defence positions in the zone defence 6:0 (Picture 6A) and the prevention of development of the fast break with individual marking across the whole of the playing field (Picture 6B)

Coaches have to consider above-mentioned facts when teaching and training the fast break. Training of fast break is important also from the point of view of the development of specific endurance abilities, which can be acquired particularly with the fast break exercises.

The purpose of the present article is to explain the rules of transition into the fastbreak after shooting on goal – when goalkeeper performs a throw-in of the ball. Main part of the article is related to the methodology of teaching and training of the fast break. Some basic issues, related to the fast execution of the throw-in of the ball will be considered.

Goalkeeper performs a throw-in of the ball after the save of a shot on goal, when the ball remains in goalkeeper’s possession or passes the outer goal line of the playing field. In both

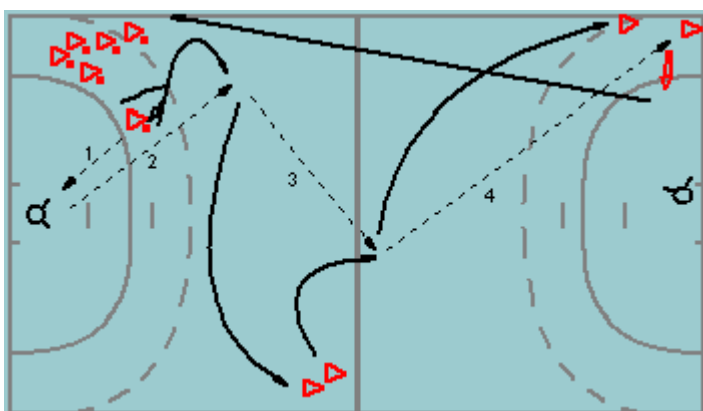
cases goalkeeper have to execute a throw-in as quickly as possible, whilst considering some rules:

- Goalkeeper has to have a good overview of the whole playing field and needs to assess the chances to perform a pass to different team players, depending on their position (opening-up) and their possibilities for appropriate continuation of the game. Inside the goal area, he needs to attain such position, which will allow him to have a good overview of the entire playing field and control of the execution of his throw-in. He needs to stand far enough from the goal-area line, so an opposite player cannot block his view of the field or even intercept the pass.
- Therefore, goalkeeper has to know tactical possibilities of the fast break; his correct pass can help in the execution of the fast break. Naturally, first possibility is a long pass to those players (wings or pivot), standing the furthest away, who could end the fast break on their own after receiving the ball. Such a pass has to be controlled; the positions of returning players and the eventual movements of the opposite goalkeeper (leaving his area to intercept the ball) need to be considered. A good judgement between the risk of performing such a pass and its rationality depending on the positions in the field is required.

METHODOLOGY

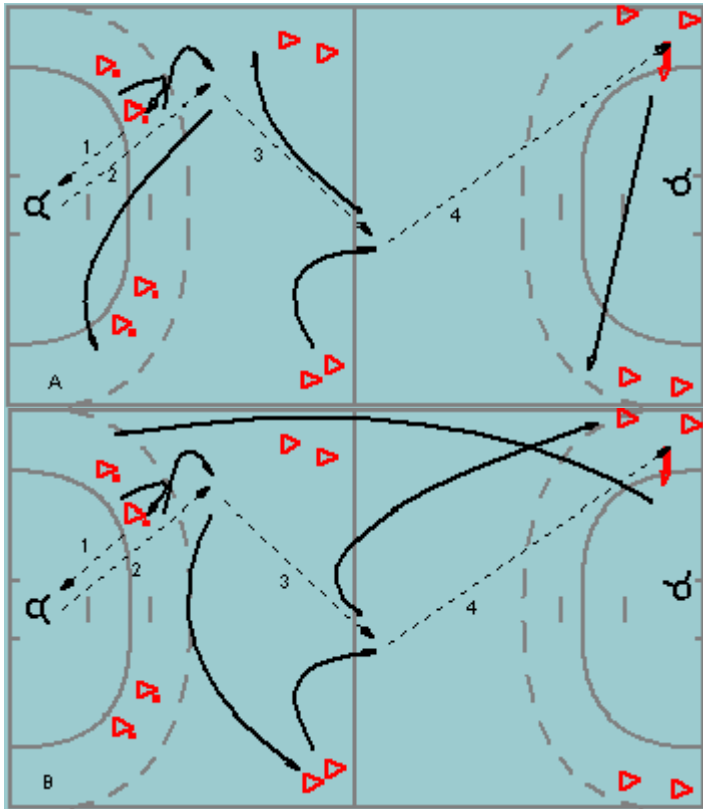
Descriptions of the exercises are explained with the pictures.

Exercise no. 1: One pair of players is positioned in the attacking position of the RB, another pair in the position of the LW, the others are in possession of a ball and stand along the goal-area line with the first player in the position of 2L defender. He passes the ball to the goalkeeper (after executing a run to the 9-metre line and back) and moves wide following a semicircular line deep into the field. Goalkeeper passes him the ball and he immediately passes it onwards whilst running towards the RB attacker. RB player opens up in a semicircular run towards the middle of the court and receives the ball. The exercise is continued with a diagonal pass to the LW, who receives the ball and shoots on goal. After a pass, every player runs in the direction of the ball, thus replacing a player, who received his pass. After the shot on goal, wings run back to the opposite side of the court and join the players waiting in the queue along the goal-area line. Exercise can later be also practiced in the opposite direction (see Picture 7). For better orientation of players, cones can be placed in the court, indicating and helping with correct movements.



Picture7: Exercise no. 1

Exercise no. 2: Two players stand with the ball at the goal-area line on the left and right side of the court, two players stand in the middle of the court (positions of LW and RW in the fast break) and two players stand on left and right wing. Player with a ball passes it to the goalkeeper and opens up to receive a return pass. Afterwards, he passes the ball diagonally to the player in the middle of the court, who is opening up in a semicircular line towards him and then runs to the other side of the court, where he continues the exercise. Back player, who received the ball in the middle of the court, passes the ball in run diagonally to the player on the wing, who receives the ball and shoots on goal. After passing the ball, back player and wing player also run to the opposite side of the court (see Picture 8A). In a variation of this exercise, players continue their run to the position of their pass (see Picture 8B).

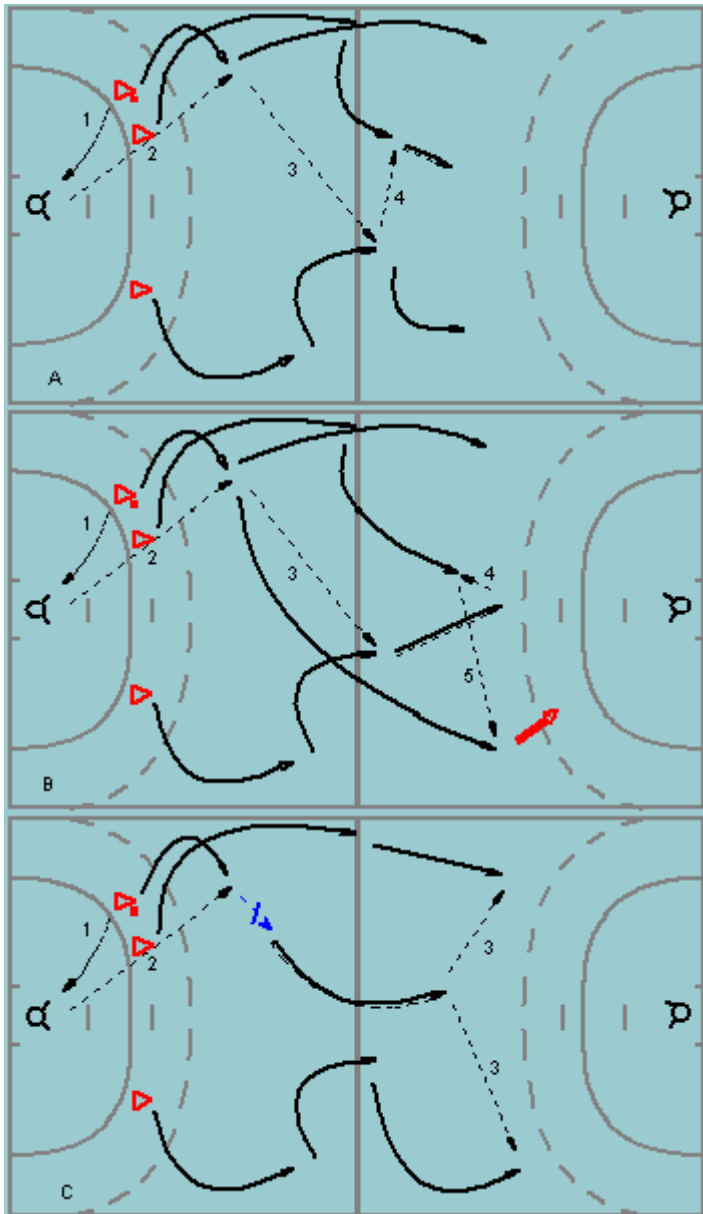


Picture 8 A and B: Exercise no. 2

Exercise no. 3: Three players stand on the goal-area line – MR, ML and OL defenders. OL defender passes the ball to the goalkeeper; afterwards all the players open up into the playing field. Goalkeeper passes the ball to the receiving player and he pass it diagonally to RB attacker. CB attacker (receiving player who is also OL whilst in defence) has two options:

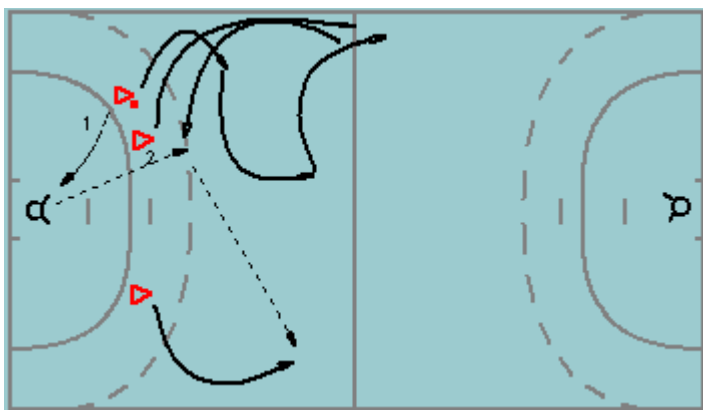
- To change the direction of movement and run to the place of LB, whereas LB runs into the middle and receives the pass from the RB and carries on with an extended fast break (see Picture 9 A);
- Runs after the ball to the place of RB, who moves with a ball and performs a cross with LB (see Picture 9 B).

Third possibility is for CB to feint a pass to the RB attacker and then move with the ball to the other half of the court with LB and RB following him. Once they reach their attacking playing positions, they perform an extended fast break (see Picture 9 C).



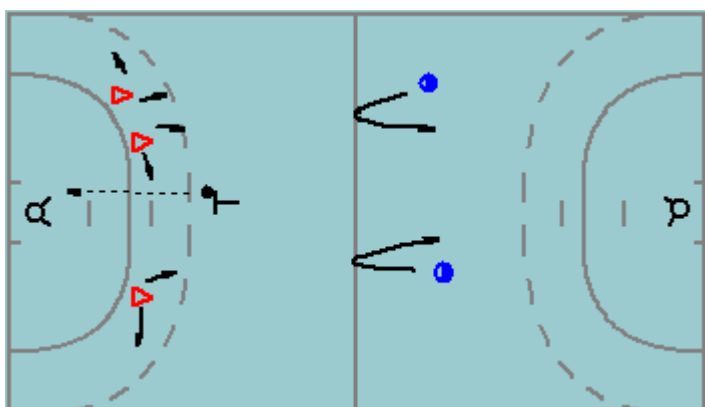
Picture 9 A, B and C: Exercise no. 3

Exercise no. 4: Exercise is similar to the previous one, however the first pass from the goalkeeper is to the LB or RB attacker, who return towards the goal in the semicircular line. Receiving player opens-up into the emptied position deep in the field. This situation happens if the opponent chooses a tight individual marking of the first pass receiver (usually the CB), when the LB or RB attackers have to assume his role.



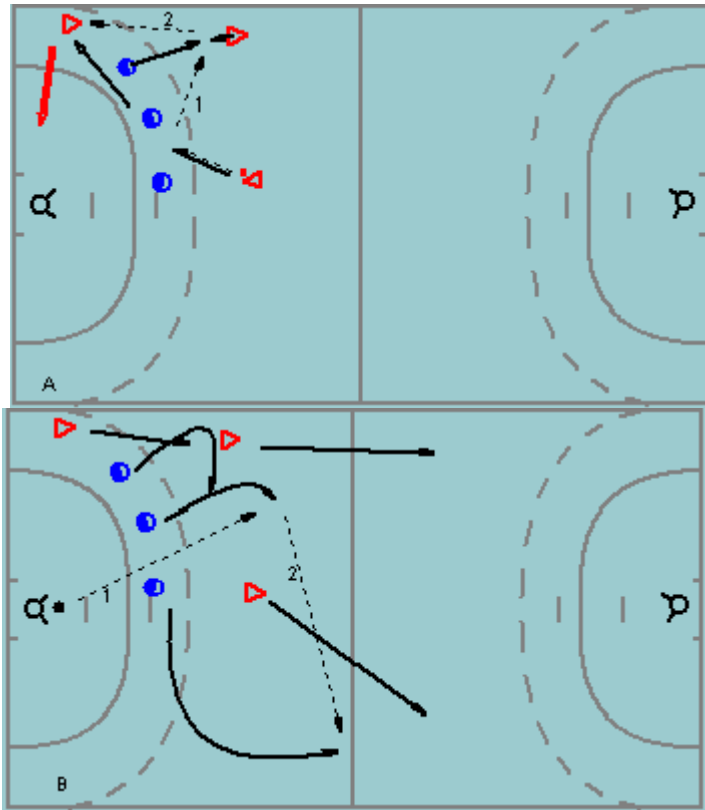
Picture 10: Exercise no. 4

Exercise no. 5: As previously, three players stand along the goal-area line. Two defending players stand on the opposite half of the field three metres from the middle line. Coach has possession of the ball for 6-8 seconds and leads the players through defending movements and then passes the ball to the goalkeeper. This is also a signal for fast break, at the same time defenders on the opposite half of the court run to the middle line and afterwards return to their goal area. Attackers choose one of the described transitions into the fast break and in second phase perform an extended fast break in the game 3 on 2. The three players can be fixed; otherwise two organisers of the fast break can alternately lead the fast break and help the other pairs.



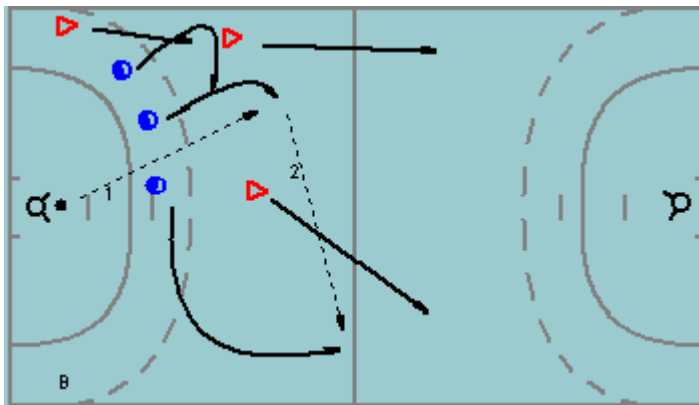
Picture 11: Exercise no. 5

Exercise no. 6: Defenders leave out the attackers and constantly approach them as if they wish to stop the formation of numerical superiority. After 6-8 seconds, attackers shoot on goal and immediately start the return into their own half of the court. Defenders have to organise a transition into fast break and attempt to successfully end the attack in the game 3 on 3.



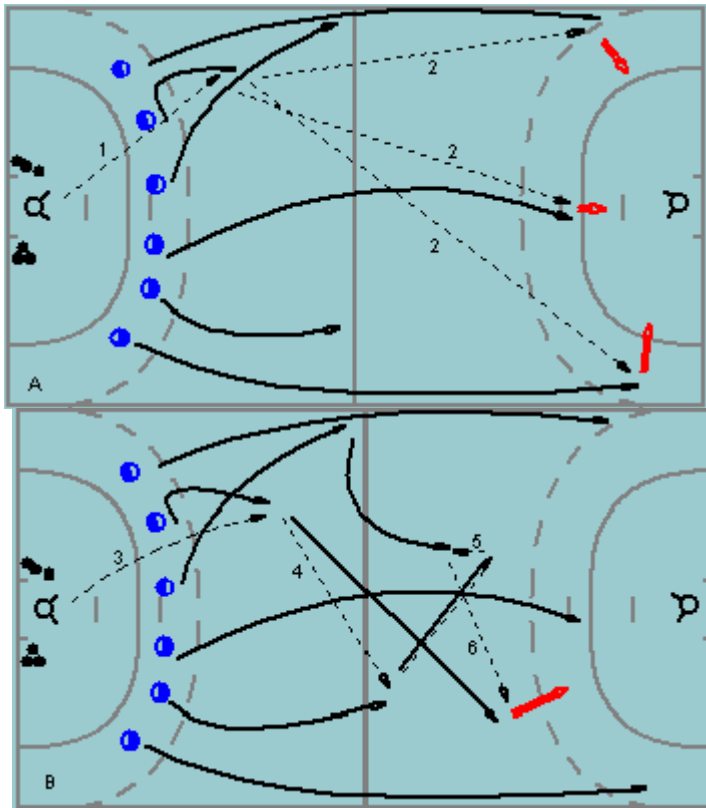
Picture 12 A and B: Exercise no. 6

Exercise no. 7: All six players are included in this exercise. Coach leads them in various defence formations through defence movements for about 6-8 seconds and then passes the ball to the goalkeeper. This is a signal for defenders to leave their positions, run into fast break and then organise it according to the rules of previous exercises, whilst executing one of the fast break combinations.



Picture13: Exercise no. 7

Exercise no. 8: Six players execute a fast break six times in a row without a break. Fast break can be split in two parts. Goalkeeper passes the first ball to receiving player, who passes it to one of the furthest players – wings or pivot – and they attempt a shot on goal. Immediately afterwards, goalkeeper passes the second ball to the receiving player followed by a transition of all players into fast break; extended fast break is executed and ends with a shot on goal.



Picture 14 A and B: Exercise no. 8

Exercise no. 9: All the defenders and attackers are in their initial playing positions. Attackers execute previously agreed combination and conclude the action with a shot on goal. Defenders execute a fast break regardless of a result of previous shot and attempt to score a goal. As the player, who previously shot on goal, is required to perform certain task (push ups, jumps...), players in fast break are numerically superior. Exercise can be practiced from various zone defence formations.

Exercise no. 10: Two teams play a match of handball with adapted rules, which are intended to stimulate the execution of fast break. One of the teams is allowed to score only from a game against set defence (not more than two or three times in one attempt); after the ball is lost, they try to prevent the goal from a fast break. Second team is defending in a zone formation and attempts to score from fast breaks. If the attackers score two or three goals in a row in one attack, defenders can perform a quick throw-in and in this way attempt to score (instead of a classic fast break after the ball is won). After a certain time period, team change their roles.

Conclusion:

Different types of fast break are key elements of attacking activities of all handball teams. The success of the players in this part of the game depends on many factors. Good technical, tactical and physical preparation is of high importance, as all the activities have to be performed in high speed and in the presence of defending players. Handball players are exposed to very high loading; therefore, physical preparation has to be adapted accordingly to enable efficient and precise execution of fast breaks. Present article does not describe the fast break after the received goal, which many teams perform nowadays from a very quick throw-

in. This type of fast break also follows certain rules and requires appropriate tactical preparation.