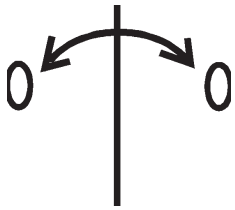
OFF-ICE QUICKNESS TRAINING DRILLS

"RUN THE SQUARE"

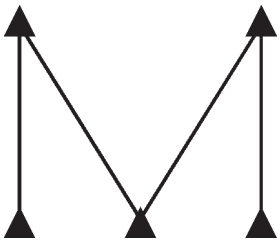
Can be done anywhere, but preferably on grass (your backyard?). Establish in your mind a small box approximately six to 10 feet square. Run forward quickly to one corner of the box, then go 90 degrees to the right and "shuffle" sideways until you get to another corner. Now, run backwards to the third corner of the box and finish up by shuffling back to your left. You have now "run the square" one complete time. Do this 2 or 3 times each way as a means of warming up for the day's activities. Remember to "think quick."

"JUMP THE LINE"



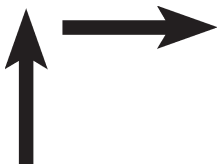
This activity builds leg strength and is a tremendous conditioning exercise as well. Simply stand on one leg, load up the knee joint, and "pop" side to side over a two-foot expanse. Attempt as many jumps as possible in a 10-second time line, rest until recovered, then continue with the other leg. Count how many jumps you can make with each leg, and do three sets per leg. You must attempt to load the knee joint as close to 90 degrees as possible.

"M RUN"



Put 5 pylons (or any suitable markers) over a 25-30 foot "M" course. Start by running forward to the first pylon, pivot, and run backwards to the next, pivot to forward and so on. It is a quick, explosive drill with emphasis on fast feet. Once you get to pylon five, stop and walk back to the first pylon. Complete 10 passes through the course. Have a partner time your runs, and see the improvement that is made over a summer (remember, one tenth of a second is a lot of ice space).

"DOWN AND OUTS"



At top speed, sprint 20 yards and cut 90 degrees. Yes, looks a lot like a football drill for wide receivers and/or defensive backs doesn't it? Well, Dieon Sanders is pretty quick, isn't he (and not just to the bank). The drilling that these players use to affect quickness can be a great benefit to hockey players as well.

"DOWN HILL OVERSPEED"

Find a hill or road which has a slight incline associated with it and do a series of flat out sprints while running down hill. Why? Because it will force you to pick up your feet at a quicker pace in order to accommodate gravity. A word of caution ... I wouldn't try a 45-degree slope right off the bat as you might find yourself head over tea kettle down the slope! What we are looking for is a gentle decline that will challenge you in a reasonable way. Certainly, the quicker you become, the more challenge you can look for!