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USA Hockey Recertification Program

Developing Defensive Tactics

Lesson Workbook



presented by



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Developing Defensive Tactics

Introduction

- Playing good defense is less complicated than offense; no puck skills required.
- Only one key fundamental technical skill required: SKATING.
- There are several tactical defensive skills all of which require sound skating fundamentals.
- Tactical defensive skills include angling, positioning and gapping, play reading, stick checking, body checking and shot blocking.

Environment

- The dots, playing each situation from inside out. (Neutral Zone)
- Playing the lines. (Neutral Zone)
- Defending the prime scoring area. (DZone)
- The area behind the net. (DZone)
- Points (DZone)
- Corners (DZone)

Objectives of Defensive Play

- To limit time and space of puck possession.
- To regain puck possession.
- To force the offense to poor ice position.
- To prevent scoring.

Principles to Realize Objectives of Defensive Play

The objective of limiting the time and space of puck possession will be accomplished by the principle of pressure.

The objective of regaining puck possession will be accomplished by the principles of:

- Approaching the opponent on the defensive side. (defensive side)
- Approaching the opponent from the mid-ice corridor outwards. (inside out)
- Being able to close the gap when ready. (gap control)

The objective of forcing the offense to poor ice position will be accomplished by the principle of:

- Proper angling to delay, deflect and steer the attack.

The objective of preventing the opposition from scoring will be accomplished by the principles of:

- Sound individual and team use of tactics.
- Communication
- Providing support away from the puck. Through triangulation – the width, depth and concentration of the defense.

Decisions to be made on the use of Individual Defensive Tactics

Once the objectives and principles have been clarified, then there are decisions to be made.

Decisions are required on:

- The amount of pressure
- The type of pressure
- Timing and the extent of risk-taking required

In making a decision on the type of pressure to be used in various defending situations, view the type of pressure as a continuum.

Contact

- body check
- body block check
- poke check
- stick check

Non-Contact

- neutralizing
- marking
- sloughing
- influencing

The timing and risk taking decision will be determined by the:

- Coach's philosophy
- Game situation
- Available support

More specifically, timing means having answers to questions such as:

- Where do you want to take your risk taking; in the offensive, neutral, defensive zone?
- How desperate are you?
- How much of a risk must you take?

In terms of decisions, you can help your players with the speed of the game by giving them some simple rules or guidelines:

For example:

Faster decision-making leads to speed of action. If your players know that the first principle is pressure, then the nearest person goes to the puck. Other individual and team tactics flow from the decision.

The Pressure/Patience Decision

The pressure/patience decision will be based upon the:

- Closeness and relation of the offensive player(s) to the the:
 - mid-ice corridor
 - goal
 - slot area
- Danger of the opponent(s) attack on goal
- Number of defenders vs number of offensive players
- Ability to close on a player-relates to a player's gap control skills

Pressure when

- important to pressure
- approaching back of player
- player has poor puck control
- support is available
- opponent is isolated

Contain when

- no immediate goal scoring threat
- puck carrier is approaching
- puck carrier has good puck control
- no support
- team strategy dictates

The Basis for Sound Individual and Team Tactics

1. Defensive or Goal-Side Body Positioning

Goal side body positioning means having positioning between the puck carrier and goal; some cues in helping a player set-up in this position are:

- Take an alignment like the goaltender playing angles
- Protect from the inside-out alignment
- Play from the mid-ice corridor outwards
- Close on the player when ready or when necessary
- Use the appropriate amount of contact necessary

2. Angling to Delay/Steer the Attack

Being able to assert influence on where and how the opponent's attack will occur can be achieved through angling the opponent in order to delay, deflect and steer the attack.

Some points to stress in performing this tactic are:

- Delay the attack to gain support from teammates.
- Protect the mid-ice corridor by deflecting the attack towards the boards.
- Steer or force the puck carrier to unfavorable body or ice position.
- Use triangulation towards the point of offensive attack from the defensive side and inside out positioning.
- Concentrate the defense - mid-ice corridor - slot area - goal area.

3. Gap Control

This refers to all checking situations in terms of taking away time and space to assert the maximum pressure on the offensive player.

Some cues for proper execution are:

- Quick pressure, always hurry towards the puck-carrier.
- Establish the approach angle.
- Get body in control.
- Square body and skates from defensive side body positioning.
- Gap control for initiation of contact or action for contain checking.
- Focus on the body.
- Use the boards as an extra teammate when angling from inside-out positioning.
- One or two hands on stick.
- The opponent stops: you stop.

The bottom line for the coach is to make the game as simple as possible so it becomes automatic for the players to act. Speed and transition are critical to success in the modern game of hockey.

If you can get your players to perform those simple things (defensive side positioning/angling/gap control) at high speed you are going to play good defense and perform sound individual defensive tactics.

Concepts

Time & Space

Time: Get on people quickly before they have a chance to assess the situation and make a play.

Space: Limit the space or deny use of the best space (middle of the ice) until there's enough support to pressure the puck and thereby eliminate time.

Support

- Hockey can be broken down into two basic numerical situations, 1v1 and 2v1's.
- Create numerical superiority whenever possible in the area of the puck. This must be achieved intelligently. Never create numerical superiority away from the dots or the prime scoring area in the DZ unless certain that those areas are covered by other teammates thereby creating the second layer of support.

Transition

Hockey is somewhat unique in that there are constant and countless changes of puck possession. Even though we are talking primarily about defensive play in the section, stay mindful of the fact that team which more rapidly adjusts to changes of puck possession usually has the most success.

Tactical Fundamentals

Reading the Play

- Play swivel-headed; take multiple looks as situations change quickly.
- Playing swivel-headed is a vital tactical skill in defending both the initial rush and in defensive zone play situations.

Positioning

- Between the man and the net, between the puck and the man.
- Shade the most dangerous man.
- Inside out alignments protecting middle of the ice first.
- Gapping both versus the rush and in DZC situations.

Angling

- Stick on the ice protect against cut back in neutral zone.
- In one on one DZC situations drive puck carrier down the wall rather than up the wall; stick position is key in this situation also.

Basic Use of the Stick

- Versus rush one hand, stick blade in front and always on the ice; create triangular defensive posture the three points being the stick and both skates.
- In front of net always start with two hands on stick, stick on the ice.

Body Checking

- Body checking is just one of the weapons in the arsenal required for regaining possession of the puck.
- It can also be used as a psychological tool making the game unpleasant for the opponent to play; few players like to get hit each time they touch the puck; finishing body checks consistently through the course of a game can wear down an opponent physically.
- Checking space: the area between bottom of an opponent's ribs and groin area which is also where the hands will be found when opponent carries the puck.

Body Checking/Rideouts

- This occurs when the opponent is carrying the puck near the boards.
- Approach the opponent from an angle so as to negate a cut back move and keep the stick on the ice if possible; in a game situation as the checker approaches the opponent will often try to make a pass or take a shot; the ideal scenario involves blocking the puck prior to finishing a body check.
- The checker must get hands and shoulders through the checking space, ideally twisting the opponent away from his intended direction.
- To pin the opponent temporarily, you must have one leg in front and one leg behind; after finishing the check and pinning the opponent briefly, the checker must make sure he beats that man back into the play; a heavy check that leaves the checker out of the play and the offensive opponent in the play is not a sound defensive approach.

Body Checking/Open-ice Hits

- The most difficult type of hit because of the space available to the puck carrier to avoid the hit and because angling, anticipation and timing must be perfect.
- The checker must keep the stick and elbows down and try to plant the cap of the shoulder pad into the chest of the opponent.
- These types of hits usually occur when an opponent carrying the puck moves laterally through the neutral zone.

Shot Blocking

- First key to shot blocking has to do with positioning; it's much easier to block a shot if your are between the man and the net.
- The second key is closing on the opponent rapidly through the shooting lane and is no different than a goalie coming out to cut down the angle.
- Use the stick first as it provides a yard and 1/2 of additional reach.
- The stick can be used to block or deflect the puck away from the net by angling the blade; Using this technique, the defender would be approaching the shooter from the side.
- Avoid leaving the feet to block a shot; Once prone on the ice, a fake shot renders the shot blocker useless.
- If you do go down to block a shot, it is best to go down on just one knee thereby retaining mobility; if you choose to down on both knees or slide, it's all about timing.

Key Points

- Anticipate the shot as timing of the block is critical. Work hard, but work smart. Choose the moment when the offensive player really doesn't have any alternative but to shoot.
- If possible, go in the same direction as the shot is being executed.
- Whenever possible execute the block by leading with stacked legs into the shot.
- Use the upper body and stick to prevent being beaten by a fakeshot deke.
- The shot blocker must ensure that the puck does not get past him/her.
- The defender may use a single knee drop technique and directly face the shooter in a compact body position.

Rush Situations

1. General Positioning

Some fairly basic points to head/eye, body and stick positioning are:

A. Head/eye:

- Scan the ice from side boards to side boards to make a mental map of all players from both teams in order to establish the game situation. (i.e. 1vs1, 1vs2, 2vs2, 2vs3, 3vs3, 3vs4, etc) (wide focus)
- Look through the attack to see what is coming; for example, being able to recognize that the first player through is intending to throw a screen rather than attack with a straight 1vs1. (wide focus)
- Face play; head up.
- Spatial awareness on ice surface, being aware of the mid-ice corridor, diamond, lines, tops of circle and face-off dots. (wide focus)
- Concentrate on chest of attacker...body. (narrow focus)

B. Body:

- Alignment on defensive side, inside out positioning with outside shoulder of defender. aligning with inside shoulder of attacker.
- Delay and deflect/steer attacker to where you want him to go.
- Readiness position.
- Force to disadvantage with overplay.
- Square up body/leg position – pin/seal/neutralize/body check/poke check/body block, etc... from readiness position to finish of play.

C. Stick

- Position to threaten, challenge or influence attacker/force attacker to poor puckhandling, passing or shooting position.
- Decoy attacker, keep the elbow cocked in readiness for poke check .
- One hand holding the stick.
- Other free hand pointing at chest as a distractor.
- "Split Vision" (use peripheral vision) to move stick to threaten or poke check puck off attacker's stick.

2. Closing the Gap

The space between the defender and attacker is critical, some suggestions for controlling this gap are:

- Pressure the attacker early and maintain close contact by closing the gap.
- Adjust speed and position as necessary.
- Decision time...neutral zone/blue line dots/top of circles.
- Be aware of subtleties: offensive tendencies, off-wing shooter, change of pace, support etc.
- Team strategy: both defensively and offensively.

3. Stick and Body Contact Decision

Some suggestions for helping your players with this decision are:

- The closer the attacker gets to the net, the more definite, necessary and automatic that body contact occurs. Use body block, body check and sustained contact to eliminate attacker and/or attacker's stick from being involved in the play.
- When there is good gap control: Every defender can be more aggressive with stick and body contact when they can close the gap.
- When the opponents are covered 1vs1 and there is no one left unchecked then all defenders can be more aggressive.
- Prevent the re-entry of the opponent back into the play...skewer/seal/pin/body block/body check and maintenance of defensive side positioning on recovery.

Rush Situations

1v1

- Skating posture: Upper body erect, knee and ankle flexion, stick directly in front of the body with blade of stick on the ice held with one hand; top hand should be tucked on the hip or close so that poke checks can be used without a forward lunge of the upper body; good stick position keeps the attacker out of the defenders personal space allowing him time to pivot should the attacker attempt to beat him wide; stick in front also discourages use of the middle of the ice and subsequent crossing attacks which are more difficult to defend; skates no wider than shoulder width apart, otherwise difficulty in pivoting.
- Outside shoulder lined up with inside shoulder; eyes on chest; can see puck through split vision.
- Gapping: Tow stick lengths ideal, no more than 1/2 zone; backward skating speed equal to or slightly less than the forward skating speed of attacker; tight gaps deny space and time to puck carrier and limit crossing type attacks.
- When attacker goes wide pivot using a mohawk technique rather than cross under; pivot so as to return on a straight line to the near post, effectively cutting off the path to the net for the attacker.

2v1

- Good gap essential as soon as play is identified as 2v1; this limits play options and slows attack the fewer passes they are allowed to make the easier it is for the goalie who doesn't have to constantly reposition himself.
- Positioning is between both attackers initially; Initially one hand on the stick, stick in front of the body.
- Defenseman must constantly re-check position of player without the puck. (Swivel Headed)
- Can use false information, fakes to push puck carrier wider or entice him to make a pass before he's ready.
- As play progresses below the tops of the circles, stick should be pointed a bit more toward the puck carrier than directly in front of the body; this closes the space between stick and skates that attacker could use to pass the puck; At this point shading slightly toward the player without the puck should occur; goal must be not to allow a pass to get through once the puck is below the tops of the circles.
- If play continues below the dots, two hands on the stick; this allows for optimum reaction time on attempted passes; body must be turned to roughly 45 degree angle denying pass; At this point, the player with the puck will be forced to shoot; defenseman now with two hands on his stick must not mark either player but prepare himself to react to the rebound.

2v2

- Played as two 1v1's.
- Gap is essential as it denies crossing attack options.
- If attackers succeed in crossing, hold positions.

3v2

- Played as a 2v1 on the puck side, 1v1 on the weak side.
- Back diagonal with wide side forward driving net is easiest to defend.
- Middle lane drive with weak side forward staying high and wide most difficult to defend. If this happens, weak side defenseman must release player going to the net and challenge shooter.

3v3

- Backchecking forward must come back through the middle of the ice. He's responsible for whoever winds up as the high man in the attack, defensemen cover puck carrier and player going to the net.

4v3

- Must be played as a triangular zone defense; key is recognition that is in fact a 4v3.
- Backchecking forward responsible for slot and denying any lateral passes through the high slot to the weak side.

Defending the Shut Down or Curl Up

- A play that Gretzky made popular where the puck carrier turns up at the blue line and teammates head to net while other teammates come late.
- If the gap is good the defenseman can stay on the puck carrier who shuts down. If gap is poor, a backchecking forward should take the puck carrier and allow the D to retreat towards the net, their natural area of positioning.

Defensive Zone Coverage

Transition from Backcheck to DZ coverage

- Verbal communication a must both on the rush and once the play has evolved to a DZ coverage situation.
- Always backcheck through the middle of the ice through the slot; from there the DZ coverage positioning can be formed from inside out.
- First forward back becomes low forward or center if you wish to call him that.
- Second forward back covers the high slot initially.
- Third forward back covers strong side point.

1v1's Low

- Know when to contain and when to press hard; if puck carrier has full possession and is already turned toward the net, the defender will have to contain with proper positioning, stick positioning and angling; a rapid force in this situation can result in the puck carrier toasting the defender.
- When puck carrier has back turned, or fumbling with possession of the puck, a more aggressive approach should be taken.
- Always approach with stick on the ice, it's a yard and 1/2 of extra defense; use the stick to angle, deny, and block passes; When chasing someone down in this type of situation use one hand on the stick and poke check before finishing a body check.
- Pick an angle that drives the puck carrier down the boards toward the goal line rather than up the boards toward the seam between point coverage and low coverage.

2v1's Low

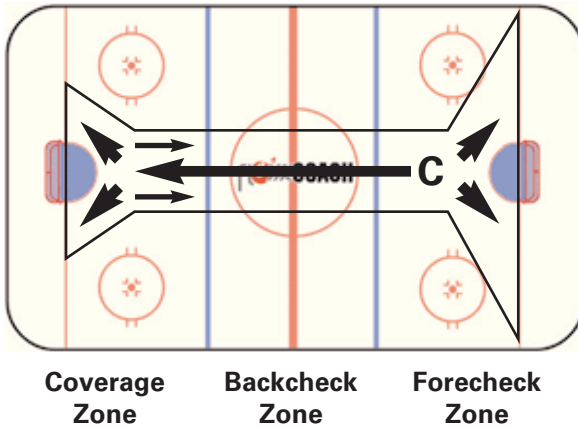
- Invariably during the course of a game someone will make a mistake in coverage leaving a quick 2v1 around the net.
- Keys to successfully playing this situation are: a) two hands on the stick, stick on the ice, position between the two, player body turned at 45 degree angle; If shot must be allowed, allow the one from the angle; just like on the rush, don't allow a pass and force your goalie to move.

Net Front Coverage

- It is very important for defensemen and low forwards in DZ coverage not to allow themselves to be tied up with any one player unless the puck is right in that area.
- Must have head on a swivel and stay between the puck and the man and the man and the net. There are times when staying between the man and the net are not as important.
- Defensemen typically like to hammer people at the net front; some of that is ok, but he must push and get free, always with two hands on the stick and the stick returning to the ice.
- On point shots, if you can move an opponent from the shooting lane so that the goalie can see the puck that's great, though sometimes impossible. Use leverage to move an opponent who is bigger by turning the skates and then pushing; at the moment of the shot, look to tie up sticks quickly and then recover to react to rebound.

Point Coverage

- Player covering strong side point should be roughly near the top of the circle and even with the dots initially. If the puck does come to the point he's already in the shooting lane of the point man. He can tighten his coverage as the play dictates.
- Player covering weak side point man sags to support in defending the high slot. If that point man goes back door it is his responsibility.
- If the opponent executes a switch where the puck carrier skates up the boards toward the blue line and leaves a drop pass for the defenseman skating down the wall, the forward on the side should hold his position and let the defenseman or low forward pick up the D while he covers the forward who has now assumed position at the point.



Centers-Defensive Responsibilities

Offensive Zone-Forecheck

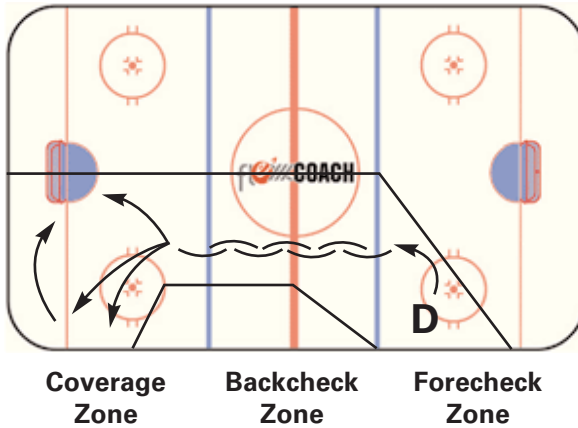
1. Backup the win (1st forechecker) who is on the puck carrier.

Neutral Zone-Backcheck

1. Cover middle lane, force puckcarrier to outside lane.

Defensive Zone-Coverage

1. Puck Low:
 - Cover front of net (below face-off dots).
 - Back up "strongside" defenseman in corner.
2. Puck High
 - Cover slot (middle), from "hash" marks to top of circle.



Defensemen-Defensive Responsibilities

Offensive Zone- Forecheck

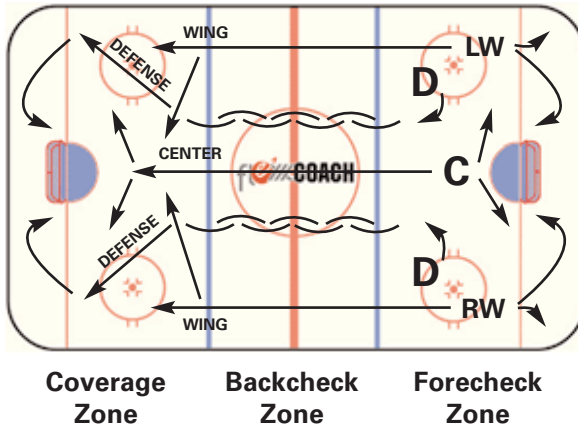
1. Defensemen hold the blueline till puck is between face-off dot and top of circle.
2. Middle D plays a s "free safety", keep all five of the opponents in front of him.

Neutral Zone-Backcheck

1. Each defenseman plays the seam 9imaginary line drawn through face-off dots), to the middle of the ice.

Defensive Zone-Coverage

1. Force play to outside.
2. Strongside D on puck, block out puckcarrier from going to the net.
3. Weakside D cover the front of the net, start on the weakside post of net.



Defense

Is the phase of the game during which the team is not in possession of the puck. It begins when the team loses possession of the puck and ends when the puck has been recovered.

Key Elements

1. Individual Skills

- Checking the puckcarrier, "angling".
- Intercepting passes or cutting off passing lanes.
- Covering opponent.
- Blocking shots.

2. Team skills

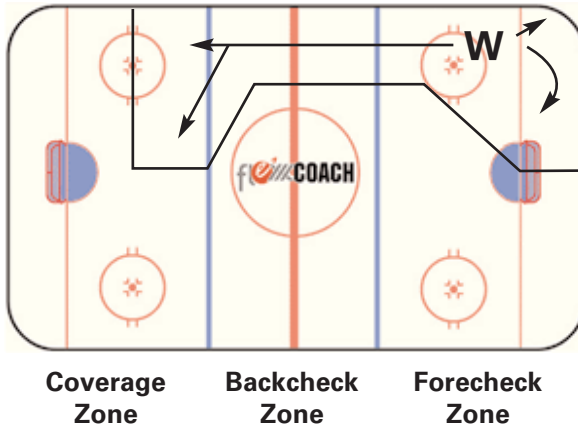
- Carrying out lane responsibilities in all three zones.
- Pressure, out number opponent at puck.

3. Defense is a matter of pride

- To take an oath that what has to be done will be done.

4. Give 100 percent

- Effort and energy are a matter of will.



Wings-Defensive Responsibilities

Offensive Zone-Forecheck

1. Strong-side wing forces puckcarrier from an angle.
2. Weak-side wing plays on top of the circle inside of face-off dot.
 - If puck moves to weakside, wing moves in on angle and takes puckcarrier.

Neutral Zone-Backcheck

1. Both wings backcheck the outside lane on their side.
 - Always stay between the opponent and puck, inside position.

Defensive Zone- Coverage

1. Backcheck the opponent all the way in, till play is forced into the corner.
2. Puck Low:
 - Strong-side wing on boards between face-off dot and top of circle, cut off passing lane to point.
 - Weak-side wing covers slot (middle), from hash marks to top of circle.
3. Puck High
 - Strong-side wing covers board point.
 - Weak-side wing covers middle point.



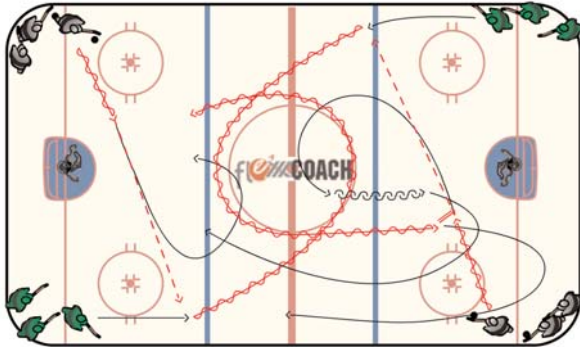
Coaches' Clipboard

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Drills

2 on 2 Read the Rush



Objective

- Reading the rush

2 lines of forwards in diagonal corners of rink and 2 lines of defensemen in the opposite diagonal corners of the rink. On whistle, one end starts by the defenseman skating towards middle of ice and passing to forward skating up boards. Forward skates around center circle and comes back against defenseman 1 on 1. On next whistle, other end begins same sequence. At same time, the defenseman who just played the 1 on 1 tries to join the rush and make a play with forward from the opposite end. The original forward has to backcheck. The drill is continuous with whistle starting the alternate end.

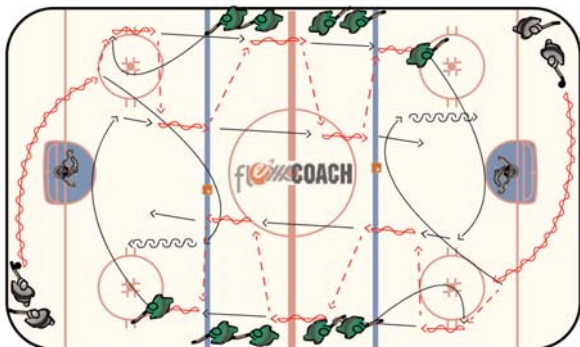
Key Elements

- Defensive awareness
- Communication
- Offensive awareness
- Reading the rush
- Gap control

Goalie

- Situational awareness; communicate with the defenseman

2 on 1 Gap Control



Objective

- 2 vs.1 tactics/Gap Control

4 forward lines on the blue lines. 2 Lines of Defenseman in opposite corners. on whistle, 1 Defenseman from each end skate behind net and breakout 2 forwards who come down from the neutral zone. Weakside forward comes across ice to offer support for breakout. 2 forwards go down ice on their half of ice and execute 2 on 1 on the defenseman from other end.

Key Elements

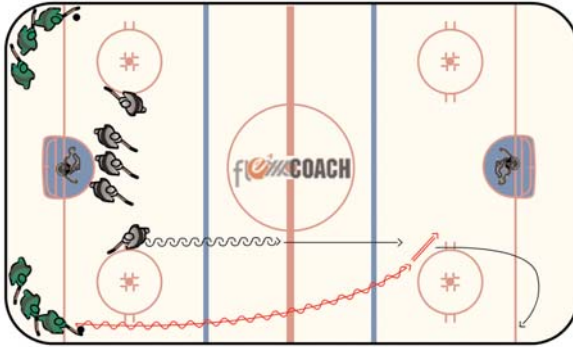
- Breakout -forwards skate inside-out
- Weakside forward support Breakout
- Gap Control
- Shoot to score
- Passing/Receiving

Goalie

- Play 2 on 1 with Defenseman
- Awareness
- Communication

Drills

1 on 1 Out of the Box



Objective

- Proper Angling Separate Man from puck

Forwards positioned at one end of the rink behind the goal line, defenseman at the face off hash marks in front of the net at the same end. On the whistle the forward skates full speed down the ice 1 on 1 on the defenseman that starts backward and can't turn until the red line with a proper pivot.

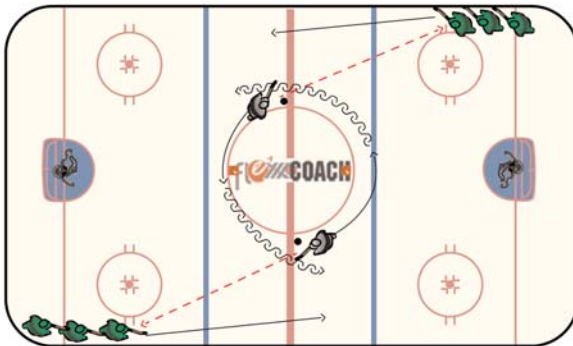
Key Elements

- Proper angling
- Separation technique
- Body contact
- Puck handling
- Skating

Goalie

- Game like situation, play the 1 on 1 situation, Fight through screen, Rebound control

1 on 1 Circle Drill



Objective

- Good pivots, Skating speed, Proper Angling

Forwards at opposite corners, defenseman in the middle of the ice positioned at the red line on the out side of the face off circle. On the Whistle both defenseman pass the puck to forwards they are facing, then skate the other direction around the cone pivot and take the other forward 1 on 1 down the other side of the rink.

Key Elements

- Pivots, Forward to Backward
- Skating speed
- Separation Technique
- Puckhandling
- Proper angling

Variations

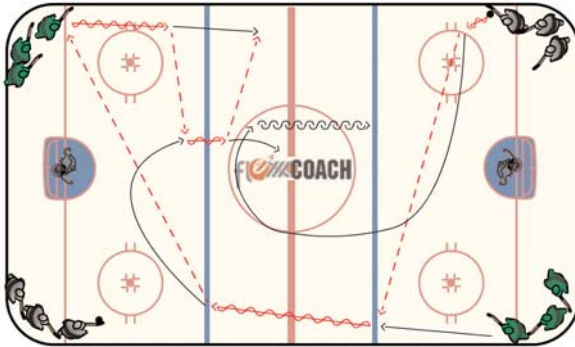
- Add cones in between face off circles, On second whistle defense regap up ice, Forwards continue around cone 1 on 1 down the other side against the regaping defenseman

Goalie

- Game like situation, play the 1 on 1 situation, Fight through screen to see the puck, Rebound control

Drills

Loop 2 on 1



Objective

- Gap Control, Create a Scoring Chance

Forwards in two line in opposite diagonal corners. Defenseman in two lines in the other opposite corners. Defense starts the drill by making a pass to the forward on the far boards, this defenseman gaps up past the redline to take the rush back 2 on 1, the forward that receives the pass from the defenseman skates up the far boards, and passes to the next forward in line at the opposite diagonal corner. That forward that receives the puck starts skating out of the corner and passes back to the forward that passed it to him and continues up the ice 2 on 1 against the defenseman that has gapped up in the neutral zone. After they cross the redline, the next group at the opposite end starts, with the defenseman making the wide pass to the next forward in line on the far boards. A continuous drill.

Key Elements

- Skating/Gap control
- Defensive Positioning
- Shooting/Scoring
- Receiver creates good angle
- Passing While in Motion

Goalie

- Game like situation, must be focused on puck carrier, yet be prepared with a response to a quick pass to open man. Rebound control, possible tip situation.

Breakout, Regroup, Attack 5 on 2



Objective

- Team Concepts, Good Puck Support

All players on the bench except the group of five breaking out and the two defenseman. Coach dumps the puck in and the unit of 5 retrieves and breaks out attacking the other end 5 on 2, for a shot on goal. On the whistle the coach spots a second puck just inside the far blue line and the unit regroups and attacks again 5 on 2. On the second whistle, the coach spots a third puck in the neutral zone, the unit again regroups with the forwards having to get back on side very quickly, for a quick counterattack, 5 on 2 again. Next unit of 5 begins at the other end.

Key Elements

- Passing/Receiving
- Timing
- Proper Receiving Angle
- Regrouping
- Transition

Goalie

- Read the rush, puck carrier has several options, can also get involved in starting the breakout.

Drills

Backcheck, 2 on 2



Objective

- Defensive Awareness, Backchecking

Two lines of players at the red line facing the same direction, pucks at one of the lines and also at the opposite blueline with the coach. The first two players in each line start by passing the puck two on 0 down the ice toward the goal for a shot on net, both players turn to the boards skating down to the other end. The next two players in line follow the first two players to just inside the blue line then pick up the first players on a backcheck down the ice. As the first two players enter the zone the coach throws the puck into one of the corners for the first two players to retrieve the puck and try to score vs the two backchecking players two on two in the zone.

Key Elements

- Skating
- Defensive Positioning
- Compete, Battle 2 on 2
- Skating Speed, Angling
- Protecting the puck

Variations

- If a goal is scored quickly the coach can add a second puck

Goalie

- 2 on 0 at one end and game like situation 2 on 2 at the other end. Switch goalies half way through the drill.

3 Group 1 on 1



Objective

- Create scoring chances 1 on 1

3 pairs of players play 1 on 1 in the end zone with two nets positioned at the side boards. 3, 1 on 1 games at the same time if a goal is scored, two new players join in to continue the drill.

Key Elements

- Skating
- Puckhandling/Protection
- Body Positioning
- Compete
- Proper angling

Goalie

- Develop awareness to various situations. Quickness, agility, balance. Quick reaction to a lot of shots.

Drills

3 on 2 Backchecker



Objective

- Create scoring chances 3 on 2

Two lines start at the center red line facing opposite directions against 2 defenseman that are positioned at each blue line. Pucks are at the center. Both centers have one puck. On the whistle the designated three forwards attack the 2 defenseman 3 on 2 trying to create a scoring chance until a whistle. On the whistle the 3rd man high in the zone becomes a backchecker against the next 3 forwards at the center red line attacking the opposite 2 defenseman, 3 on 2, the backchecker can make it a 3 on 3. Play it until a whistle and 3rd man high becomes the next backchecker against 5 new players who have come off the bench. This is a continuous drill.

Key Elements

- Create width and depth to attack
- Drive center lane
- 3rd man high as a trailer
- Shooting/scoring
- Game like situation for goalie

Variations

- The other 2 forwards can backcheck to the center red line.

Goalie

- Game like situations; 3 on 2 and 3 on 3.
- Communicate with your defenseman.

Drills

One Puck Continuous Drill 2 on 2



Objective

- Game Simulation 2 on 2, 3 on 2

Four even groups of forwards positioned at the bluelines, two defensemen starts at one blueline. The goalie starts with a puck on the whistle two forwards at the same end on the blueline as the defensemen skate into position on the half boards to receive the outlet pass from the goalie. The two forwards attack the defenseman 2 on 2 down the ice to the other end as they enter the zone the two forwards at this blue line skate into position along with the next defenseman that will play the following 2 on 2 back the other way.

1. Goalie can make the outlet pass.
2. Loose puck can be taken by waiting forwards
3. Offensive forwards pressure the puck or continue play until puck clears the blueline.
4. if a goal is scored the puck is retrieved by the defenseman and is to break out the forwards that are on the half boards in position.

Key Elements

- Puck Support/Move puck quickly
- Attack w/speed and at 1 defenseman
- Use of open space and indirects
- Gap control / defense on a hinge
- Outlet pass under pressure

Variations

- Add 3 forwards to create 3 on 2 situations

Goalie

- Game like situation 2 on 2, Goalie can make the outlet pass to the forwards.

Drills

4 Spot 1 on 1, 2 on 1



Objective

- Competition, Create Scoring Chances

1 on 1, four forwards get into position as shown. F1 Passes to the defenseman and the defenseman passes it right back and the two play it 1 on1. each defenseman plays all four forwards then change the defenseman.

2 on 1, four forwards get into position as shown. F1 Passes to the defenseman and the defenseman passes it right back and the two forwards skate off the boards to attack the defenseman 2 on1. Each defenseman plays all four 2 on 1's then change the defenseman.

Key Elements

- Quick feet drill for defenseman
- Offensive tactics 1 on 1, 2 on 1
- Proper body position
- Competition Battling
- Strong with your stick, take away the passing lanes

Goalie

- Game like situation, fight to find the puck thru traffic, Screen shots. Quick attacks from different angles, read, support and position yourself accordingly.

3 on 3 Attack the Same Net



Objective

- Stressing Puck Support

Divide players equally into two groups along the blueline. 3 on 3 attack the same net. The players must exchange the puck with the coach on a change of possession. If the puck comes out of the zone or a goal is scored quickly, the coach can add another puck. Shifts should last 30 seconds.

Key Elements

- Defensive Awareness
- Offensive Creativity
- Creating space for a teammate
- Puck Protection
- Passing/Receiving one-touch passes

Variations

- Use the stationary coach to relieve pressure, when a team has control of the puck.

Goalie

- Game like situation, communicate with teammates, read and react to all situations.

Drills

Cunny Continuous 2 on 1 Regroup



Objective

- Create Good Scoring Chances, Quick Transition

Forwards and defensemen are positioned in the area between the blue lines. Drill begins with a forward throwing the puck around the boards so that the goalie can trap the puck. One defenseman retrieves the puck from goalie and makes a breakout pass to one of two forwards who has come down from the neutral zone to support. Pass is made from the defenseman to the forward posted on the wall. The other forward comes across to support and both forwards move ahead through the neutral zone making passes. As they cross the red line they make a pass to a 2nd defenseman who has moved to a position at the far blue line. The two forwards then regroup on that defenseman, get the puck back and attack the same end they broke out from against the defenseman who made the first breakout pass. Meanwhile at the other end a new puck has been slid behind the net for the goalie to trap and the defenseman who made the regroup pass for the first two forwards now retrieves the puck and starts to new forwards on a breakout.

Key Elements

- Puck Possession/support
- Gap control
- Read the rush
- Positioning with Good Support
- Transition

Goalie

- Game like situation 2 on 1, Goalie can make outlet pass to the forward.

Drills

4 1 on 1's



Objective

- To Defend prime scoring area

Two lines of forwards at the center ice face off dot with pucks, Two lines of defenseman at opposite diagonal bluelines. One defenseman starts at both opposite bluelines directly in front of and facing the forwards on the whistle the each defenseman plays 4 1 on 1's . After playing this first 1 on 1 forcing the forward out of the quality scoring area. The defense stops and regains his ice to play the next forward in line until he has played 4 different forwards.

Key Elements

- Skating Agility
- Strong Active Stick
- Proper Body Position
- Competition Battling
- Gap Control

Variations

- Can also develop into a 2 on 1 with 2 forwards attacking the one defenseman.

Goalie

- Game like situation 1 on 1, fight to see the puck thru traffic, screen shots, quick attacks from all different angles. Position yourself accordingly.

2 on 1 With a Backchecker



Objective

- Read the Rush, Force the puck out side for a poor angle shot

Two groups of forwards at opposite diagonal corners and the defenseman at the same opposite diagonal bluelines. Three forwards start two positioned at the faceoff hash marks with one puck and one as the Backchecker at the bottom of the circle against one defenseman at the top of the circle. On the whistle the two forwards take off and attack the defenseman 2 on 1. The forward at the bottom of the circle is the backchecker and leaves at the same time and tries to catch up communicating with and helping the defenseman.

Key Elements

- Gap Control
- Positioning
- Stick Position
- Center Lane Drive
- Create Scoring Chances with odd man

Goalie

- Game like situation 2 on1, read the rush adjust position accordingly

Drills

2 on 1 Defense Joins the Rush



Objective

- Activate the weak side Defnseman into the attack offensively

The defenseman are positioned at the red line along the boards and the Forwards are divided into two groups on the other side of the ice at both blue line along the boards. Coaches are positioned in the corners with pucks. The first two forwards from one line start skating into the zone to recieve a puck from the coach to attack the one defenseman 2 on 1. After the shot is taken the player that played defense jumps into the offense heading the other way as one forward comes down into position to join the defenseman the other way while another player from defense line jumps out to take the 2 on 1.

Key Elements

- Good Gap control
- Posiotioning between both attackers
- Force puck carrier to the outside
- Skating speed on the attack
- Attack offensive zone. go to the net

Variations

- Can develop into a 3 on1 or 3 on 2 by adding a forward and /or a defenseman.

Goalie

- Read the rush adjust your angles accordingly and square to the shooter.

2 on 2 Regroup Attack



Objective

- 2 on 2 Game simulation

Four even groups of forwards positioned at the blue lines, two defenseman starts at one blue line. The Coach starts with a puck in the corner on the whistle two forwards at the same end on the blue-line as the defenseman skate into position on the half boards to recieve the outlet pass from the coach. The two forwards attack the defenseman 2 on 2 down the ice; on the second whistle the forwards turn back and pass the puck back to the coach and regroup as the defenseman retake the ice to gap up while the coach passes the puck back to the forwards for a 2 on 2 attack down the ice for a shot on goal.

Key Elements

- Play as 2 1 on1's
- Gap Control/Defense on a hinge
- Puck Support
- Quick puck movement
- Attack with speed at one defnseman

Goalie

- 2 on 2 game like situation. Read the rush and adjust to the situation.

On Ice Presentations









On Ice Presentations









On Ice Presentations





