

GET BETTER

Good Hockey Habits

With the end of the winter season upon us and the spring season around the corner, it's a good time for a refresher on the good hockey habits that make good hockey players.

Take what is given - Be aware of and take advantage of the opportunities given to you. If you are given a shot, passing lane, dump in, hit, time or open ice, then take it.

Head up - Keep your head up to see the play, read the play and take advantage of the opportunities given to you.

Talk - Talk to your teammates on offense and defense. Hockey is a team sport. Players must talk if they are going to work together.

Hard off - Skate hard when coming off for a line change. Quick changes keep offensive and defensive pressure on the opposition.

Never retaliate - Retaliation will cost your team a penalty. Referees often see the retaliation but miss the first penalty. Do not let the opposition see that they have gotten to you. Keep your emotions under control. Instigate, do not retaliate.

Only captains talk to the referee - Unless you are a captain carrying out your duties, do not talk to the referee. Direct all communications through the coach and captain. This will buy time and show that the team is intelligent and disciplined. Keep your emotions under control.

Show positive emotion - Emotion is good and should be shown when it is positive. Positive emotion will generate positive results. Negative emotions will generate negative results.

PLAYING THE MAN WITH THE PUCK

5-on-5 stick and pin - When playing at even strength, hit your man and pin him, keeping him from returning to the play. Always beat your man back into the play.

4-on-5 stick and move - When playing a man down, hit your man, move on, and quickly getting back into the play. Do not get tied up with your man, giving the opposition more ice and your team less defensive coverage.



PHOTO BY ANDY KAPRIN/MICHIGAN HOCKEY

Keeping your head up to see and read the play is a good hockey habit.

Numbers, go hard - When forechecking and the puck carrier's back is to you, numbers showing, go at him hard, quickly taking away time and space.

Crest, control angle - When forechecking and the puck carrier is facing you, crest showing, control him by angling towards the boards. Make him go where you want him to go. Take away time and space in a controlled manner.

AWAY FROM THE PUCK

Head on a swivel - Keep your head on a swivel to look around, and see and read the play.

Stick in passing lanes - Keep your stick in the passing lane and be ready to intercept passes.

One hand on the stick - Keep one hand on your stick (in the passing lane) presenting a bigger profile and keeping one hand free for making contact with your check.

Back check through the middle - Back check through the middle of the ice all the way to the front of the net. Pick up trailers and help out in front. This allows defencemen to pursue, maintain defensive pressure and perhaps make a quick transition.

Never get caught flatfooted - Stay on your toes with a wide stance and a good knee bend so that you are able to react quickly in any direction.



THE PRE-EMINENT

COACHES

REGISTER EARLY TO QUALIFY FOR A 1-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO
The Hockey News

CLINIC

SPECIAL
3 for 2
OFFER