



Passing & Playmaking

Tuesday, October 24th, 2023

PRACTICE NOTES

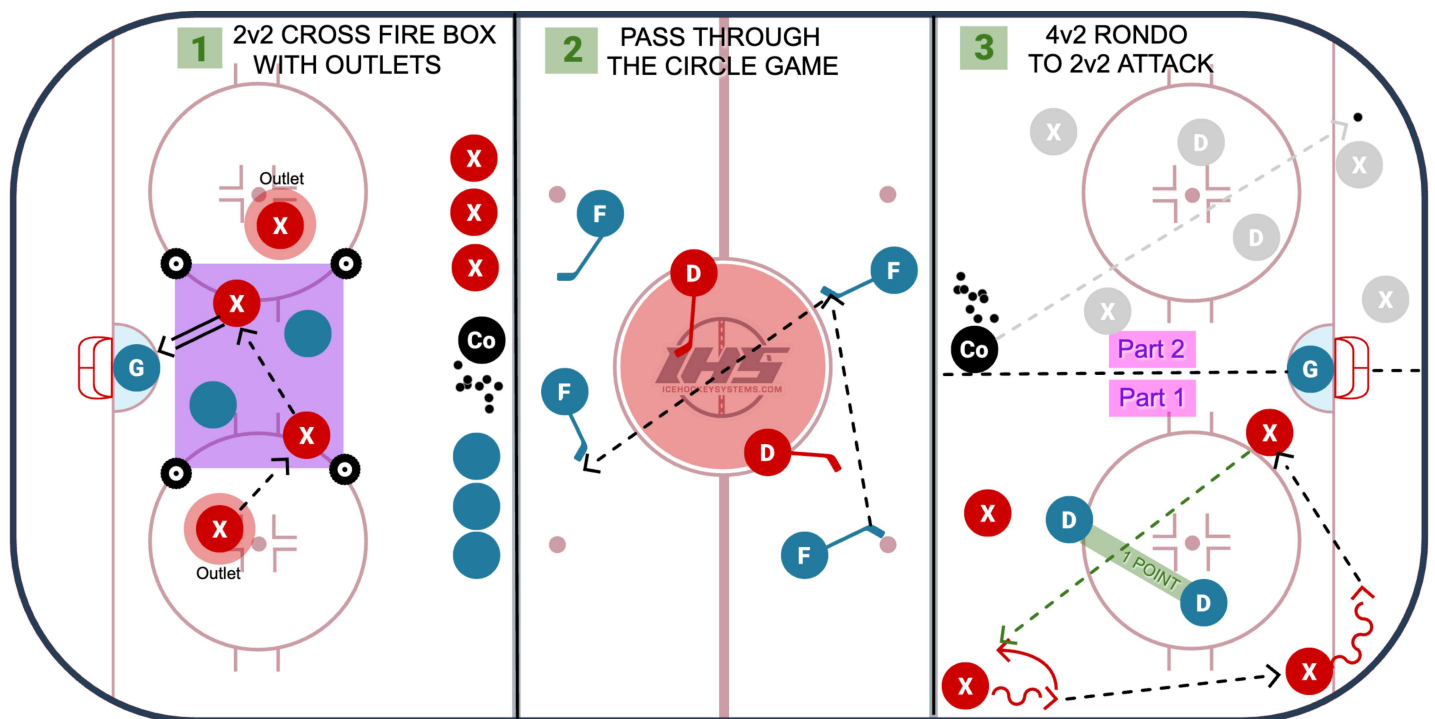
Please Note: The Practice of the Week is designed to bring value across multiple age levels. You can use this to build ideas to develop your own practice. With that being said, we highly encourage you to adjust the drills based on your team's age and skill levels. IHS should always be used as a starting point and you can add/remove constraints to fit your team.

Practice Theme: This is an up-tempo practice designed to stimulate players' awareness, decision-making, and play-making skills. The drills and Small Area Games reinforce the importance of recognizing passing lanes, executing on puck movement, and being a quick support option for teammates.

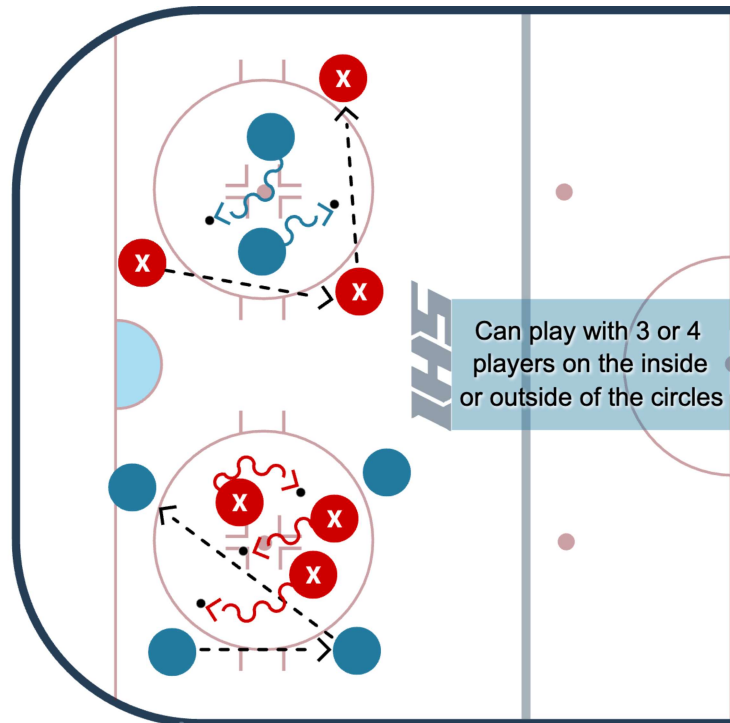
Offensively, players have to be comfortable making and receiving pucks with limited time to make their next play. Players off the puck have to find lanes and become scoring threats as they get into high-quality shooting areas.

Defensively, players should focus on limiting offensive players' space, killing plays and regaining possession.

PRACTICE LAYOUT



Pit Chaos Handling with Passes



The Pit Chaos Handling With Passing drill is an excellent activity that helps players work on awareness, puck handling, and passing skills. This drill can be used as a warm-up in practice or games, or as a drill to reinforce keeping your head up.

Setup

- Setup 2, 3, or 4 players in the middle of a face-off circle. The more players involved will increase the difficulty of the drill because there will be more skaters to pass & stickhandle around.
- Setup 3 or 4 players around the outside of a circle.
- On the whistle, the players in the middle of the circle begin stickhandling within the border of the circle. The players on the outside begin passing the puck to each other.
- After 20-30 seconds, players rotate.

Coaching Points

- Encourage players to keep their heads up and scan the ice.
- Players stickhandling should work to get to open space.
- Players passing the puck scan the ice and think ahead as to where they would pass the puck before they get it.

Variations

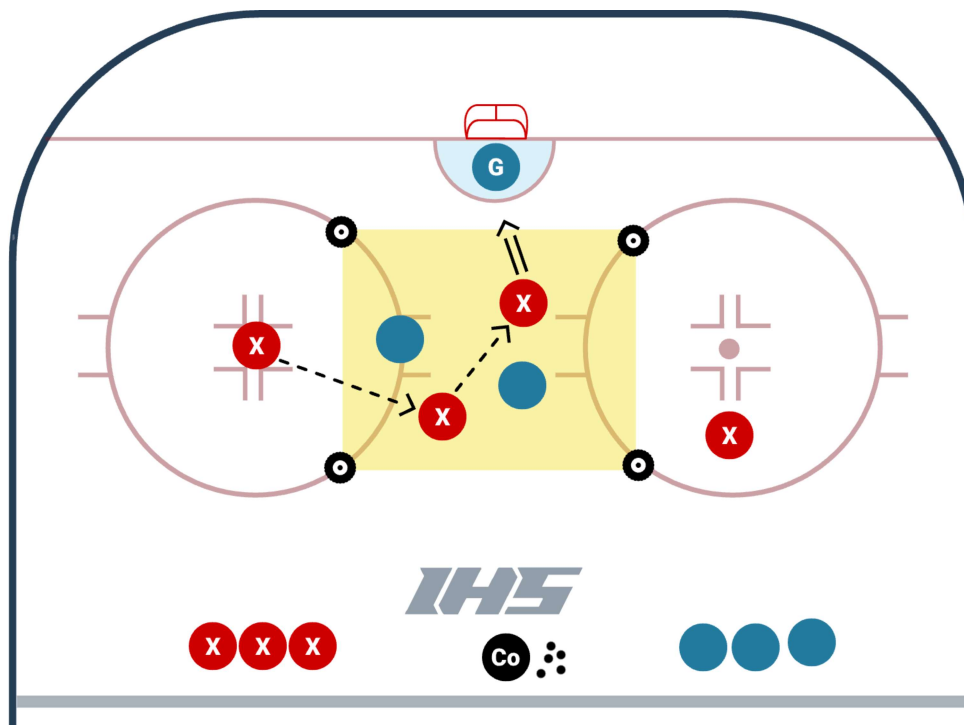
- Can set up in different areas of the ice.
- Coaches can require two touch or one touch passes for higher skilled groups.
- Can increase or decrease the # of players involved. More players inside the circle will make the drill more challenging.

Station Number: Everyone

Coach's Notes:

Start practice with an up-tempo puck control and passing game that gets players hands, feet and eyes going right away.

2 V 2 Crossfire Box Game With Outlets



Crossfire 2 v 2 Box Game helps players practice getting open, and quick touches in tight spaces to try to score in front of the net.

Setup

- Coach creates a "box" with tires or cones in the slot area as shown in the diagram.
- In the box, 2 players start on offense and 2 players are on defense. These players are not allowed to leave the box.
- Outside of the box, on the flanks, there will be 1 player on each side and they are on all time offense. These players are not allowed to enter the box and are not allowed to shoot.
- On the whistle, the 2 offensive players in the box and the 2 offensive flank players try to work together to score.
- The defenders are looking to get the puck, and pass it to one of the flank players. If they are able to do this, the defenders are now on offense with the flank players, and the other 2 players inside the box transition to defense.
- Play 30 or so seconds and then rotate a new set of players.
- Keep score! 1 point for a goal and 2 points for a one timer.

Coaching Points

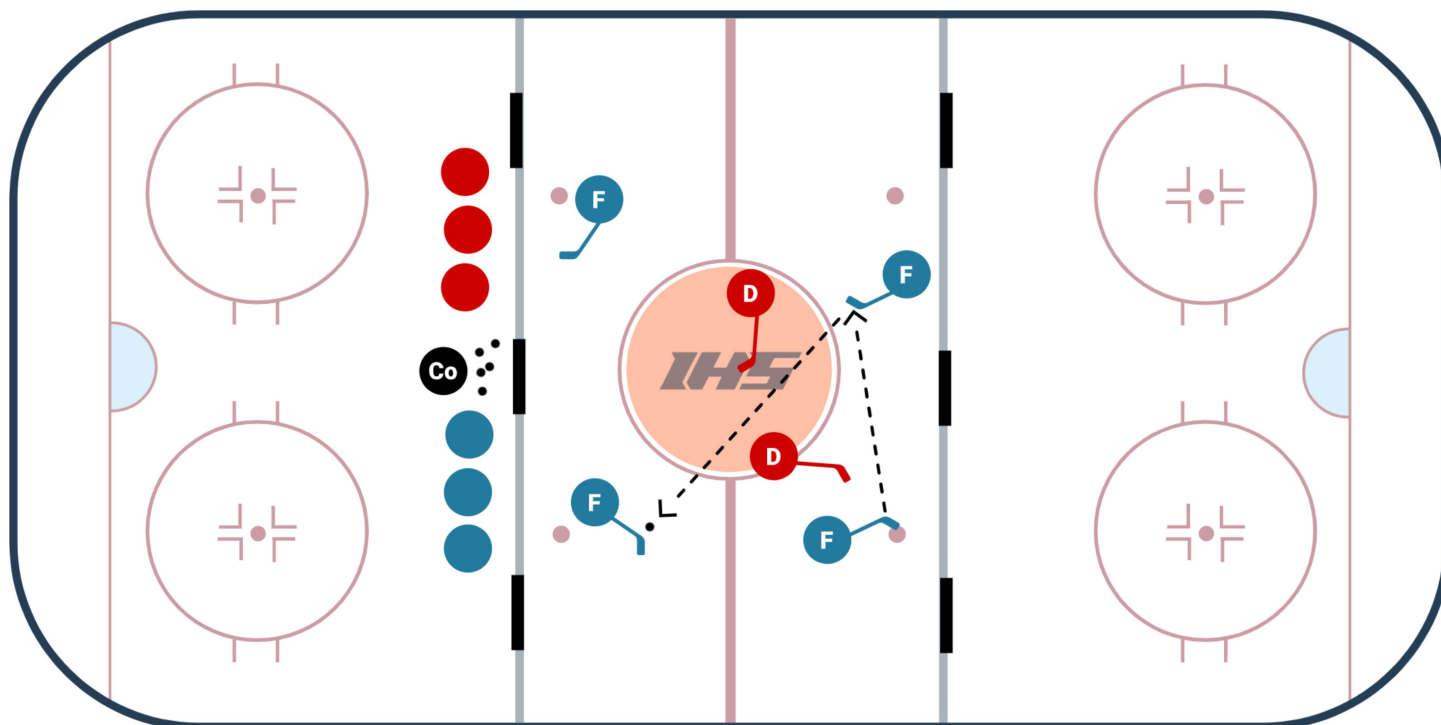
- Offense:
 - Players with the puck should use deception, and quick touches to try and create extra space for themselves and their teammates.
 - Players without the puck should work to get open and keep their sticks on the ice to be an outlet for their teammates.
- Defense:
 - Keep your stick on the ice to block passing lanes.
 - After a puck is intercepted, quickly pass to the flank players and transition to offense.

Variations

- Coaches can make this space smaller for more of a challenge, or larger to allow players to get open more.
- Can add a 3rd flank player on top of the box to allow for more passing options.

Station Number: Station #1

Pass Through The Circle Game



Pass Through The Circle Game is a fun small area game that practices passing, puck protection, decision making and awareness. The offensive players work together to pass through the circle to score points, while the defense tries to gain possession of the puck to score points.

Setup

- Set up a 4 v 2 game around a circle. It can be at the center ice circle or any of the in zone circles.
- On the whistle, the forwards work to keep possession and are able to score points by passing through the circle (the puck can go through any part of the circle, but it must be a completed pass to count as a point).
- Defense tries to break up the play and get the puck out of play. Defense is awarded 2 points if they skate the puck out of play and 1 point for knocking the puck out of play.
- Forwards and defenseman can skate anywhere they want in the playing area (including the middle of the circle).
- Game should go for 30-45 seconds or so before a new set of players jumps in. Keep track of how many points are scored!

Coaching Points

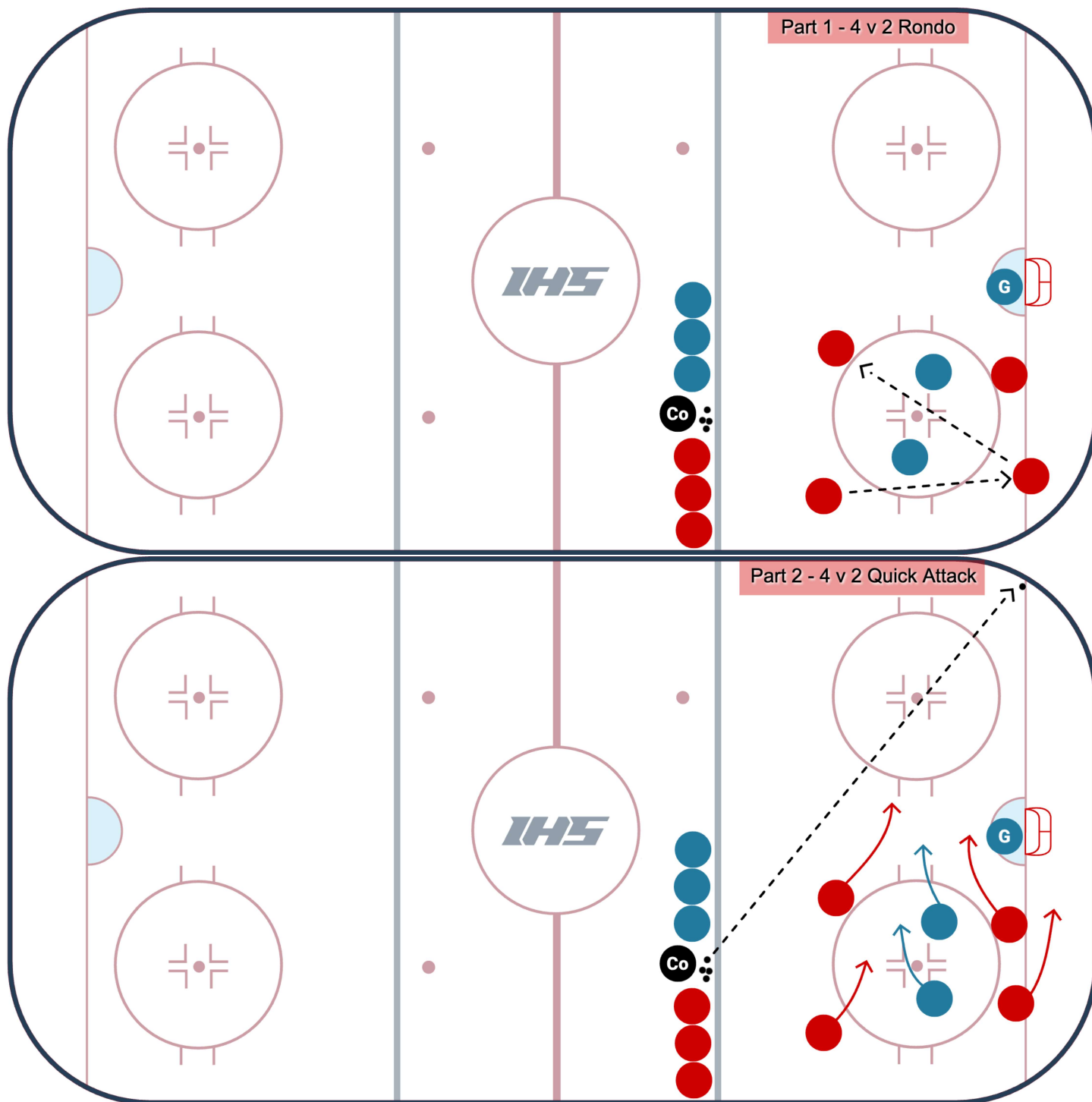
- Offensive players
 - Keep head up to be aware of where teammates are, defenders are, and where the open ice is.
 - Players without the puck should jump to open ice to be an outlet.
 - Players without the puck should be thinking of where they will pass the puck ahead of time if they get the puck.
 - Players with the puck should practice deception with head, body and eyes to make the defenders think the puck is going somewhere else.
- Defensive players
 - Keep sticks on the ice to block passing lanes.
 - Protect the circle and only chase the puck carrier when there is a good opportunity.

Variations

- Can be set up at center ice circle or in zone circles (example of in zone is shown below).
- If it is too easy for the forwards to score points, add an additional defender to make it more challenging (make it a 4 v 3 or a 3 v 2 game).
- If it is too hard for the forwards to score points, have the defenders flip their sticks over.
- Can make the outside boundaries smaller or larger (the smaller the boundary the harder it is for the offensive team).

Station Number: Station #2

4 v 2 Rondo to 4 v 2 Quick Attack



The 4 v 2 Rondo to 4 v 2 Quick Attack from Alyssa Gagliardi is a 2 part activity that helps offensive players practice puck possession and quick attacking concepts while the defending team works on disrupting passing lanes.

Setup

- Set up a 4 v 2 Rondo around one face-off dot in the zone (4 offensive players around the exterior of the circle, with 2 defenders in the middle).
- Extra players and coaches are on the blue line.
 - Part 1: On the whistle, the 4 v 2 Rondo starts. The offensive team is awarded points if they are able to split the defenders. The defending team gets a point if they block a pass and recover the puck.
 - Part 2: On the second whistle, coach dumps a puck into the 4 corner which starts the 4 v 2 Quick Attack. The goal is for the offensive team to get the puck quickly, support each other, and quickly get a shot on net. The offensive team is awarded a s points for a goal and the defending team is awarded 2 points if they can get the puck and skate it out of the zone.
- Rotate players so they get chances at offense and defense.

Coaching Points

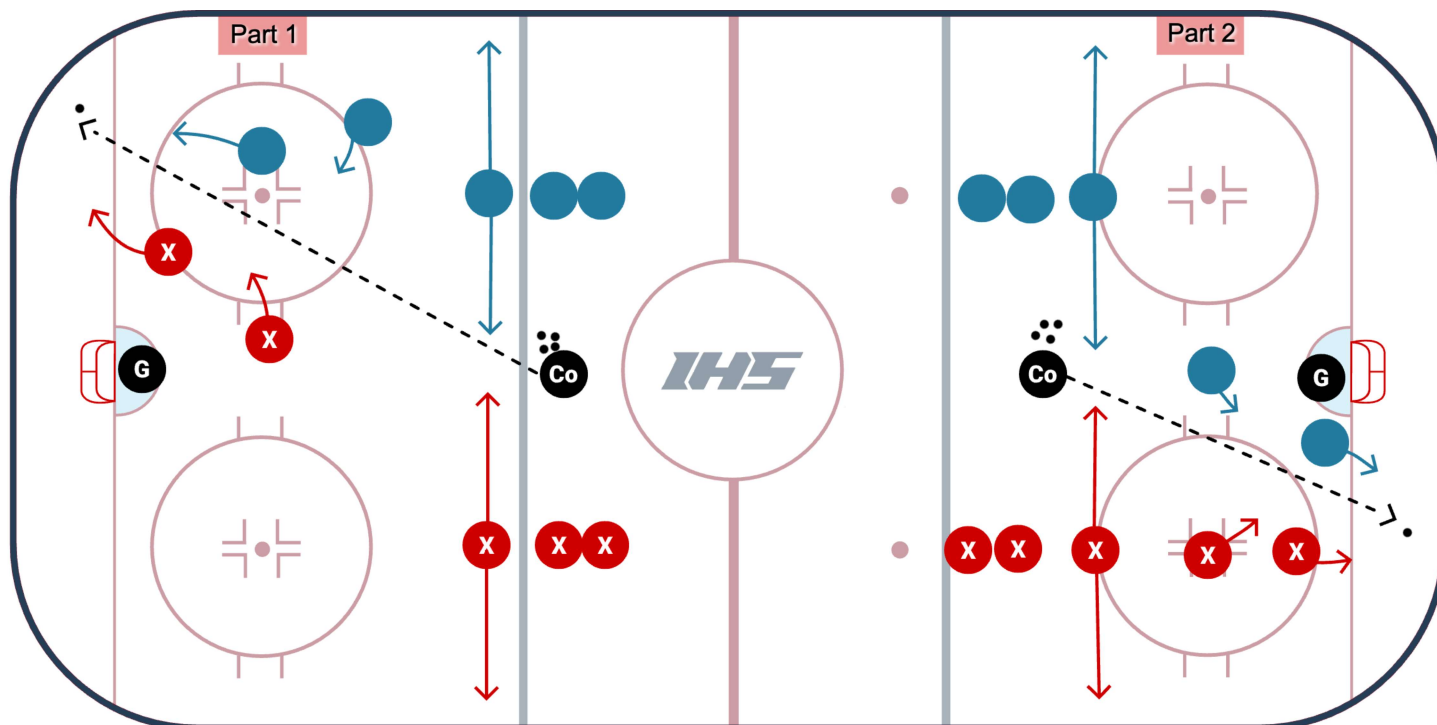
- Offensive team:
 - Keep head up - keep your head up and scan the ice at all times to know where your teammates are, where passing lanes are.
 - Sticks on the ice - keep your sticks on the ice so you are ready to receive a pass and your teammates know where you would like the puck.
 - Support teammates - move to get open to give your teammates a passing outlet.
 - Use deception - use fakes with your eyes, stick and body to fake out the defenders and open up passing lanes.
- Defending team:
 - Keep sticks on the ice: keep sticks on the ice to block passing lanes.
 - Angle: on the 4 v 2 quick attack angle the offensive players with your stick on the ice and try to keep them to the outside of the zone.
 - Communicate with partner: talk with your partner so you are on the same page.

Variations

- This can be set up in a variety of player formats. Can do 4v2 (as shown) or do 5v2, 5v3, 3v2, or 3v1.
- Can set this up into a 1/4 ice station. Part 1 would remain the same, but Part 2 the coach would dump the puck into the same side of the ice.
- Learn more about Rondos and additional Rondo Variations.

Station Number: Station #3

The Box Game



The Box Game from Brad Flynn is a small area game that works on quick decision making, transitions, give & goes and net front play.

Setup

- Teams line up at the blue line.
- Coach dumps a puck in the corner, which starts an in zone 2 on 2.
- The 3rd person in each line jumps into the zone at the point and they are the "slide player" at the blue line. They are allowed to go to the boards, to the coach. The slide player can pass or shoot.
- Anytime there is a change of possession, the team that got the puck must pass to their slide player and work to get open, or get to the front of the net.
- Part 2 progression option: Coaches can move the slide players up to the tops of the circle, so there is a smaller amount of space, which will require quicker decision making and give the slide players more opportunities for quick shots to the net.

Coaching Points

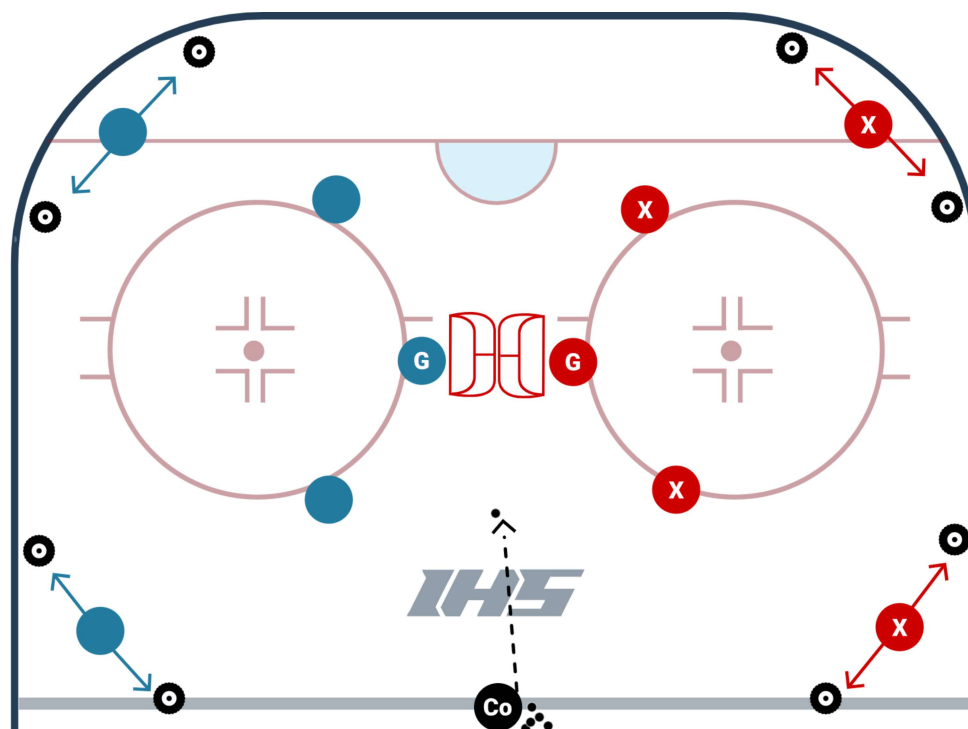
- Defending team: keep sticks on the ice to block passing lanes and angle players to the outside of the ice.
- Offensive team: communicate, practice give & goes, and quick shots on net.
- Slide players: keep your head up and look to make quick passes, or shots on net if there is traffic in front.

Variations

- Can reduce the playing area as shown in the video
- Can make this a 2 v 2 or 3 v 3 game.

Station Number: Everyone

4 Corner Possession Game - Offensive Advantage



The 4 Corner Possession Game (with Offensive Advantage) is a fun small area game that encourages players to use their teammates in the corners for support. The setup of this game allows for a lot of creativity.

Offensive players should focus on give & goes, using their point players, and net front presence to create tips, deflections, and react to rebounds. The defending team should focus on boxing out in front, keeping their sticks on the ice to block passing lanes, and react quickly to clear rebounds.

Setup

- Two nets back to back in the center of the zone (as shown in the diagram)
- 2 v 2 and each team has 2 extra support players in their offensive end
- The support players must stay in their boundary (can be cones or tires)
- Coach dumps puck in to start
- Change players every 30 - 45 seconds - the 2 v 2 players can rotate to become support players, then rotate out
- The defensive point players can only go d to d once then they must shoot or pass to a forward (they can not keep passing d to do over and over)
- The defensive point players can only hold onto the puck for 3 seconds (or less).
- Keep score!

Coaching Points

- Goalies - be aware of the puck at all times, especially with the reversed nets! Practice following the puck when it is in the other zone and be aware of where all of the players are.
- Defense - keep sticks on the ice, and use good angles to block passing lanes & opportunities. Box out the forwards in front of the net. React quickly to clear rebounds.
- Forwards - use your support players and work on give & goes. Utilize the nets in the middle of the ice as areas you can hide behind and then jump to space. Use your point players and crash the net to create tips, deflections, and react quickly to rebounds.
- Everyone - communicate! This is a fast pace game, so make sure to communicate with your teammates.

VARIATIONS

- Can set up to be 2 v 2 (as shown above) or 3 v 3
- Can set up Defensive Advantage - see video here - (place the support players on the defensive side of their zone)
- Can set up Cross-Ice Advantage (place one support player on the defensive side and one support player on the offensive side, but have them on the same side of the ice so they can make cross-ice passes)
- Can set up Cross-Ice Advantage Mixed (place one support player on the defensive side and one support player on the offensive side, but place them on opposite corners of the ice so they can NOT make cross-ice passes)

Station Number: Everyone