



TEAM PLAY PACKAGE



TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

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INTRODUCTION

This technical curriculum is intended as a guide and resource for Hockey Alberta members to use in efforts of creating progressive consistent Team Play Guidelines for their association. The information contained in this document will enable a Development Director to provide direction to coaches within their association. This package was developed by former Team Canada Coaches; Hockey Canada is indebted to these coaches that have built a *foundation for success*.

TEAM TACTICS AND PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN PLAY

Principles are general rules which govern and guide the application of team tactics, systems, and strategies.

Four Principles govern offensive and defensive team play:

Offensive	Defensive
Pressure	Pressure
Puck Control	Stall / Contain
Support	Support
Transition	Transition

In review of the principles that guide offensive and defensive team play, these must work inter-dependently of one another. For example, offensive transition can only lead to a quick and effective counteract if there is immediate pressure, good puck control and excellent offensive support away from the puck. If this does not occur, it is possible the opposing team may regain possession of the puck and the attacking team, after giving up possession, is now forced to demonstrate effective defensive transition.

Pressure – Offensive

Offensive pressure is created through a quick player and/or puck movement that forces the defender to react more quickly or in a different direction than they would like. The goal of pressure is to create increased time and space for the attackers.

Pressure – Defensive

Defensive pressure is created through a quick player movement that forces the offensive player to react more quickly or in a different direction than they would like. The goal of pressure is to decrease time and space for the attackers.

Puck Control – Offensive

The principle of puck control is an important factor that contributes to offensive success. A team that can keep puck possession can control the play and create scoring chances.



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Stall / Contain – Defensive

The principle of defensive play where the defensive team will attempt to force the opponent to stop or slow down the speed of an attack to provide time to set up better defensive coverage. This is accomplished by pressuring the puck carrier or deflecting the attack to the outside lanes/ice.

Support – Offensive

To provide offense, offensive players away from the puck must be available as passing options and be a part of the attack. Players must be able to read the intentions of their defensive counterparts and at the same time read and anticipate the movements and the possibilities of the puck carrier.

Support – Defensive

The player defending against the puck carrier requires the support of teammates to ensure that they are active away from the puck carrier and position themselves in a manner that will eliminate the options of the puck carrier. Players must be able to read the offensive options available to the puck carrier and move to a position that minimizes or takes away these options.

Transition – Offensive

Offensive transition is measured in a teams' ability to move quickly from defense to offense when the puck is recovered. All players must be prepared to move quickly to the attack.

Transition – Defensive

Defensive transition is measured in a teams' ability to move quickly from offense to defense should a turnover occur, and the opposing team moves quickly to the attack.

INTRODUCTION: DEFENSIVE ZONE PLAY

The key to any successful defensive system begins with proper positioning by the players involved. Using the key concept of protecting the middle of the ice, then pressure out from there, players will have a foundation from which to start with. To do this it is important to identify a *home base* (see diagram) which is the most critical ice to protect.

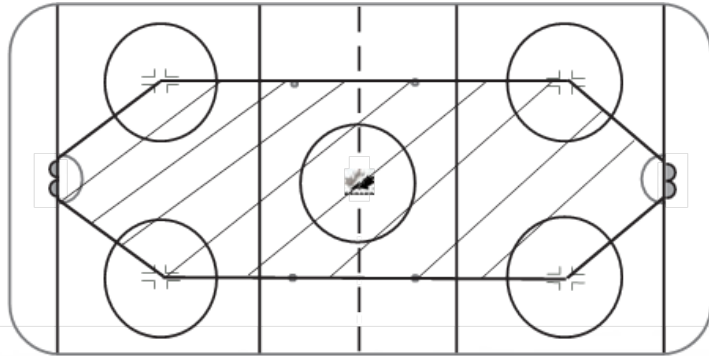
Protecting the middle is essential, but it is important to continue using the principles of pressure to take away time and space and to force the opposition into making poor decisions. The Canadian game plan will always be aggressive and physical all over the ice, but especially when defending in the defensive zone.

Play away from the puck is important. As much as players must be prepared to pressure the puck in one-on-one situations, support away from the one on one is critical. All players must work as a unit and be prepared to defend as a group of five. Communication is a key component in ensuring everyone is clear on their responsibilities and provides support and direction to one another.



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HOME BASE:

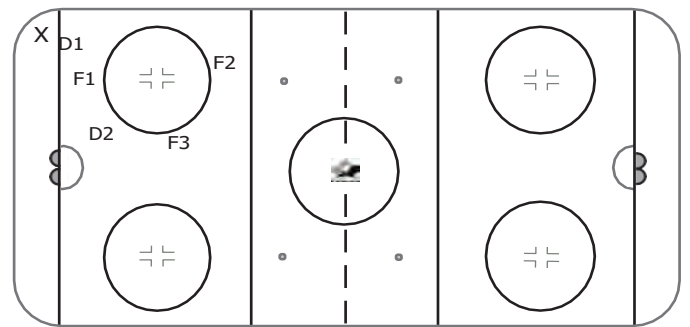


Defensive Zone Coverage

Drill Name & Description

Introduction

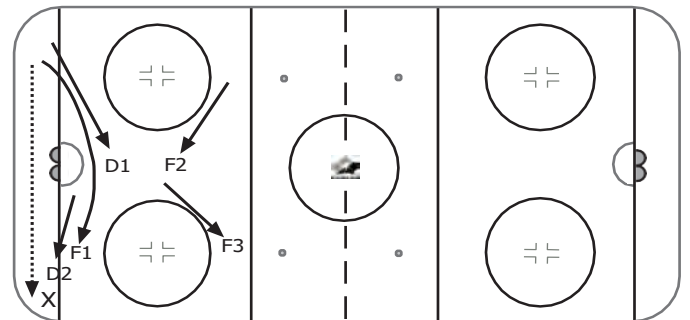
- D1 plays X, hit or contain depending on gap.
- F1 plays support for D1.
- F2 plays inside out and up on strong side D.
- F3 helps D2 and plays outside on opposing weak side D.
- D2 takes front of the net.



Drill Name & Description

Rotation

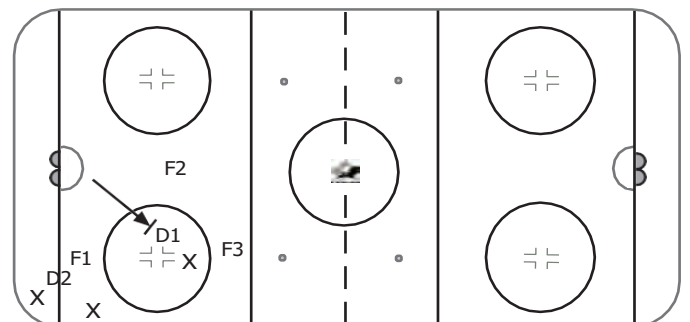
- D1 comes back to net.
- D2 checks off for D1. Unless 100% sure he can get the puck, he must stay until D1 reaches net.
- F2 to high slot.
- F3 to strong side point, inside out.
- F1 support other corner from front of the net.



Drill Name & Description

Shade vs Overload

- Net front D shades toward opposing 3rd forward taking away his space. He is still able to provide help for D2 or F1 if they get in trouble.
- F2 drops down to protect deeper into slot.





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Key Points

- First player on puck carrier approaches their player quickly with stick on puck and play the body.
- Support player must stay off the pile (about stick length) and communicate to player on puck carrier.
- Players must skate in straight lines and reload to the middle if you lose position.
- Strong net front coverage.
- Communicate.
- Provide outlets on puck recovery.

INTRODUCTION: NEUTRAL ZONE COVERAGE

Coverage in the neutral zone is critical to successfully defending in the game since most teams rely heavily on the counter strike mentality. It is imperative to protect the middle of the ice and push the puck to the outside from the dots out.

To forecheck through the neutral zone effectively teams must work as a group of five players. The first forward on the forecheck must work very hard to get pressure on the puck so that they force a poor decision. To get the necessary pressure on the puck, encourage a three-person race to be that first forward, while the two forwards who lose the race fill their roles.

Use the principles of pressure and support when applying a forecheck. When the forecheck is forced to rotate, players must move quickly to their position to defend the next pass. Stick placement is very useful when forechecking through the neutral zone since a well-placed stick will deter a pass through the middle and often intercept a pass leading to a quick transition to offense.



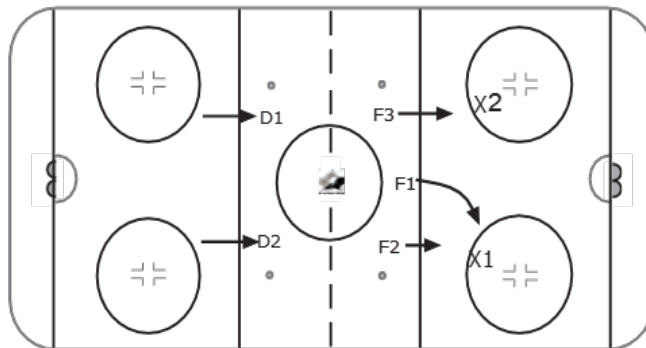
TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Neutral Zone Forecheck 1-2-2 Press

Drill Name & Description

Introduction

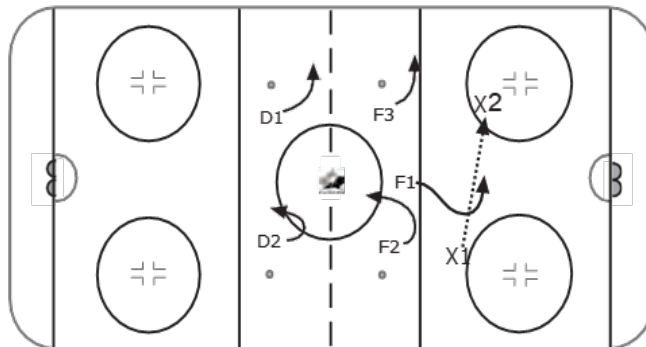
- F1 pressures hard up ice inside out and forces pass.
- F2 and F3 come up ice between dots and adjust according to situation. They stay above opposing wingers.
- D1 and D2 close gap but respect the stretch.



Drill Name & Description

Early Pass

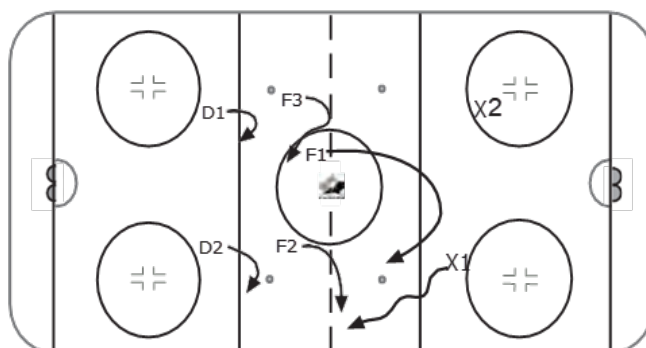
- F1 plays inside out and forces X1 on early pass and takes D to D away.
- F2 & F3 slide with puck movement and take away boards and middle.
- D1 takes away strong side.
- D2 takes away middle and far side.



Drill Name & Description

D carries

- F1 pushes puck up the boards.
- F2 takes the boards and plays zone.
- F3 takes middle and plays zone.
- D2 takes boards and keeps people in front of him.
- D1 takes the middle and far side.
- F2 pinches off X1 and F1 supports.





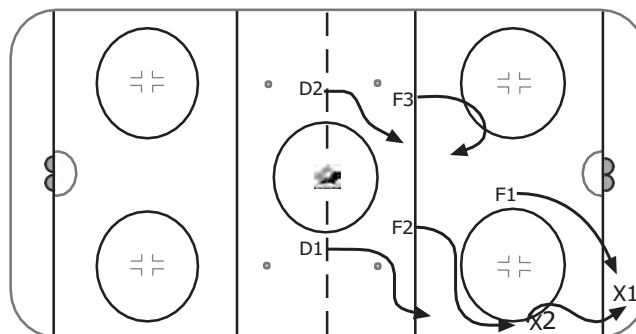
TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

INTRODUCTION: OFFENSIVE ZONE FORECHECK

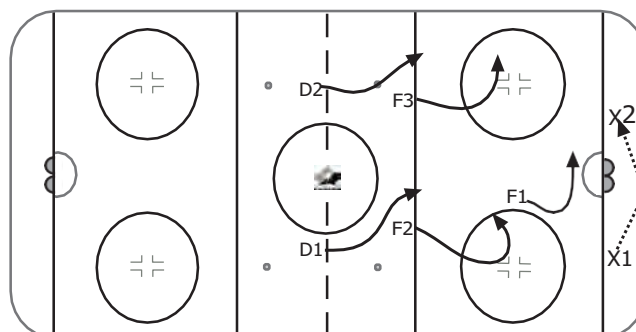
An effective offensive zone forecheck is one of the most important tools a team can have. It is not only a key tactical tool, but it also serves to help develop a team identity. Most defenses are not used to handling extreme pressure therefore, pucks will be turned over. For this to be accomplished, the need to embrace an attack mentality that encourages all five players to get up the ice and in position will be needed. The first forward sets the tone and encourage all three forwards to race to be that first player with the race ending at about the top of the circles in the offensive zone. Three players are difficult to screen off and it gets everyone moving up the ice quickly. The defense must move up the ice and have a very good gap, however, they are responsible to take the opposing forward if he stretches the zone.

Offensive Zone Forecheck 1-2-2 Press

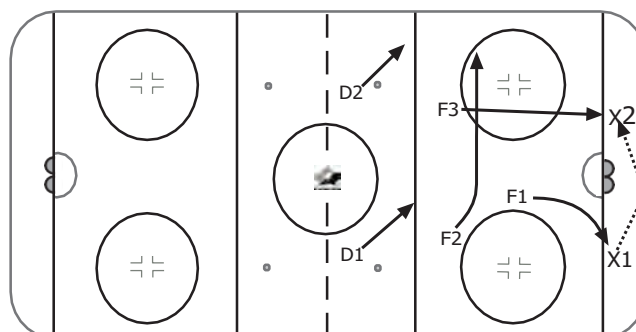
Drill Name & Description
Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F1 pressures hard and tries to make contact coming inside out on X1. F2 stays above X2 and is ready to jump to corner to help on a turnover. F3 stays high and in the middle. D1 and D2 get up on the blue line.



Drill Name & Description
Early Pass
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F1 reads and adjusts his skating pattern and remains the first fore checker. F2 takes away the middle. F3 adjusts and takes away the boards, staying above the puck. D1 adjusts to strong side boards. D2 adjusts to take away middle and wide lane.



Drill Name & Description
Late Pass
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F1 comes back hard through the middle. F3 sees pass and jumps aggressively to X2, looking to finish his check. F2 comes across to take away the board side wing. D1 and D2 get up on the blue line and slide to adjust to the pass.



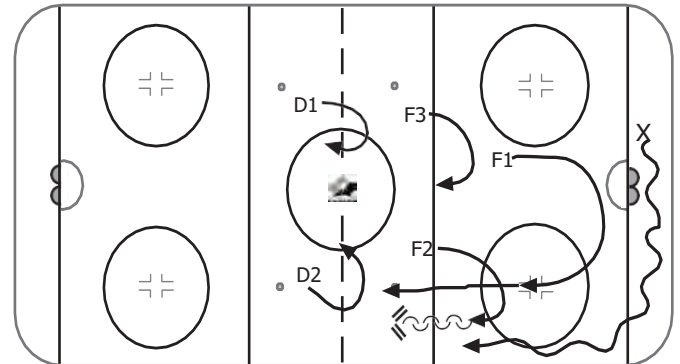


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Drill Name & Description

D Carries

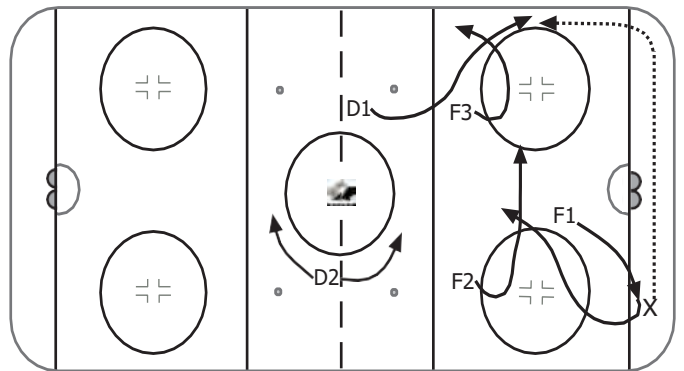
- F1 pursues X and angles him up the boards.
- F2 goes down and gets his gap on X, and gets ready to engage him at or before the blue line, while F1 prevents the inside move and pass to middle.
- F3 fills middle.
- D2 has his gap on the strong side.
- D1 has middle and cross ice pass.



Drill Name & Description

Rim

- F1 forces hard and comes back through the middle after the rim is made.
- D1 can pinch.
- F3 covers for D1.
- F2 comes hard across above the puck.
- D2 supports and protects middle and wide lane.



Key Points

- Defend from the dots out.
- Create a three-player race to be the first fore checker.
- First forward cut the ice in half to force the puck up ice.
- Eliminate gaps in the fore check.
- Good stick placement.
- Move quickly on the rotation.
- Recover to the middle.

INTRODUCTION: TRANSITION

The transition from defense to offense in the neutral zone can help to establish a speed game for your team. Proper support will allow for a very quick transition forcing the opposition to go into transition of their own, from offense to defense. The challenge is which team can force the other to make those decisions under pressure.

Effective transition requires the defense to look for a penetrating pass as their first option always. It should be stated that this pass, while very effective, cannot be forced since it is likely to lead to a turnover. However, if the first pass penetrates the defense, it means you have beaten one, two, or three players quickly and the speed at which they must react is increased significantly. It also allows your team to establish the pace of the attack and not allowing the opposition a chance to fore check.

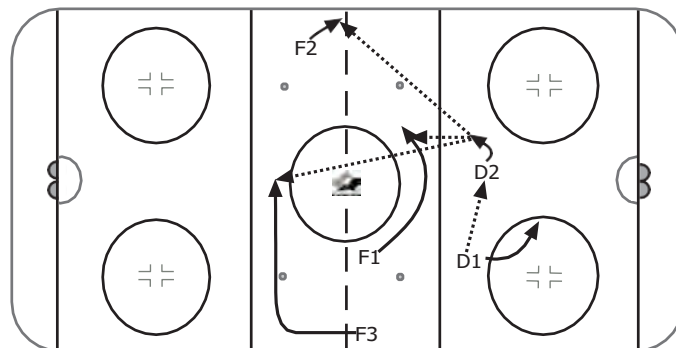
An important key to transition is giving your players the opportunity to build speed through the neutral zone so they can attack the offensive blue line with speed and enter the zone on the attack.

Neutral Zone Transition

Drill Name & Description

"C" Support

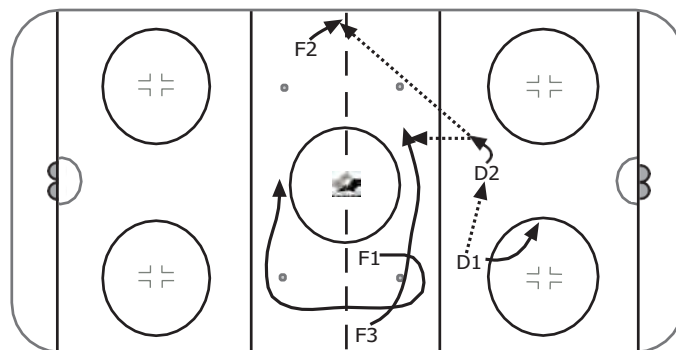
- Has different options available after pass from D1.
- F2 Posting up on wall.
- F1 Supporting the middle of the ice.
- F3 uses width of the ice and stretches to far blueline.
- D1 comes underneath to support partner.



Drill Name & Description

"C" Away

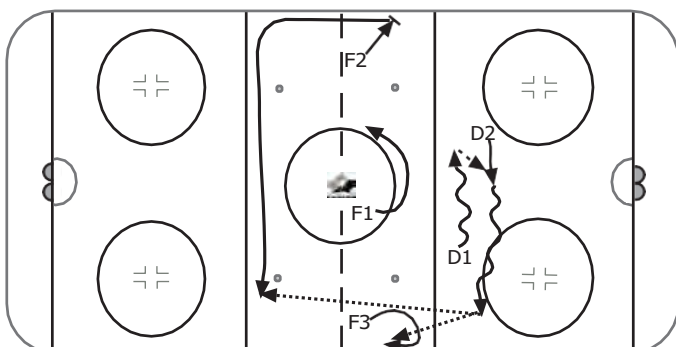
- Same options as above with F1 and F3 exchanging positions.



Drill Name & Description

Reverse

- D1 carries the puck to middle.
- D2 comes underneath and receives a drop pass continuing up ice looking for F2 and F3.
- F1 supports D1 and continues.
- F2 posts then becomes a stretch man.
- F3 pivots to boards and up his wing as an out for D1.



Key Points

- Defense must get back to pucks quickly and forwards to outlet position.
- Defense, check their shoulder when retrieving pucks to read pressure and outlets.
- Defense partner always provide support from the back side (stagger).
- Look for a penetrating pass as the first option.
- Use the full width of the ice.
- Stretch the defense.
- Support the puck on three sides.
- Quick puck movement is the first step in a speed game.



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INTRODUCTION: TRACKING

Tracking is simply another word for back checking. An effective track can take a lot of pressure off the defense and put a lot of pressure on the attacking forwards. It requires us to apply the principles of pressure, support and transition to accomplish an effective track.

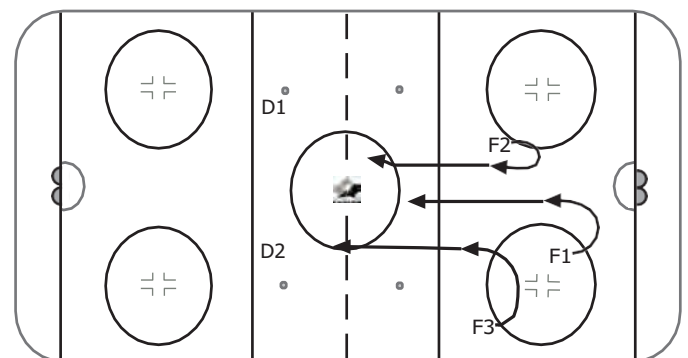
This tactic can be very intimidating to play against since it sends a message to the opposition that we are *all committed* to working to retrieve the puck. It builds confidence with the defense because they know they are getting support from three forwards. It applies pressure on the opposition from the front and back sides, forcing them to make a play with less time and space than they are comfortable with.

This tactic is a very effective way to protect the middle of the ice with the support from the tracking forwards coming through the middle of the ice.

The tracking forwards will find that the better they execute the track, the more effective their transition from defense to offense will be. This is because they are more readily available for a quick pass in transition and, since they have worked hard skating back, they have created separation between themselves and the opposing defense. This will make them more difficult to defend.

Tracking

Drill Name & Description
Introduction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When forwards are on the offensive side of the puck, they track puck carrier from the back side. • They will stay inside the dots when coming back to help take away middle. • They pressure through until the red line when they communicate responsibilities. Back side awareness is critical.



Key Points

- Four or five driving strides in transition from offense to defense.
- Track back between the dots.
- Stick on the ice to take away passing lanes.
- Out number at the defensive blue line.
- Feed the offensive forward into the defender.
- Forward slide in behind for support.



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INTRODUCTION: BREAKOUTS

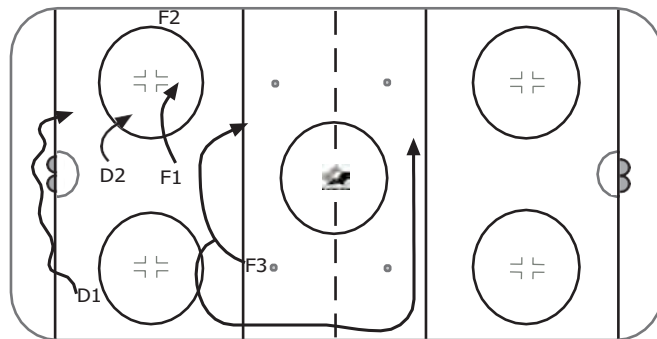
In most breakout situations players are required to read and react to situations quickly. Ideally, the breakout would provide a quick transition to the attack, maintaining puck control and penetrating the opposition's defense putting pressure on them. For a breakout to be effective, the players must have multiple options available to them. To ensure this happens players must use the width and depth of the ice to their advantage to *spread* the defense and provide support on three sides of the puck. Communication is needed to allow for a quick reaction time for the player playing the puck. While reading the fore check as they retreat for the puck, a teammate who communicates will not only save valuable seconds but will also increase the chances of a productive play being made. This will lead to a quicker more productive breakout and therefore a more intimidating attack. Key words for fast breakouts have proven to be useful and therefore we suggest the terms *up, over, wheel, reverse* and *wrap* as the terms introduced to the players.

Breakouts

Drill Name & Description

Wheel

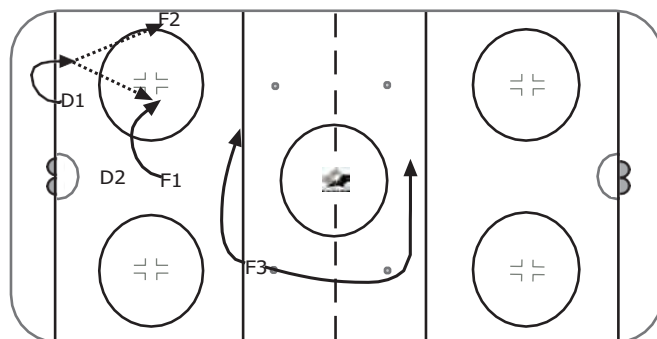
- D1 retrieves puck and wheels the net.
- D2 screens and holds the net.
- F2 anchors on the wall.
- F1 supports through middle and is an option.
- F3 is an option to support or to stretch.



Drill Name & Description

Up

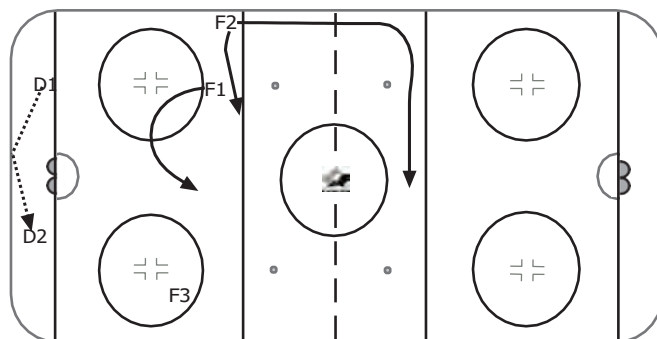
- D1 retrieves puck and turns it up near side.
- D2 screens and protects net front.
- F1 supports low and is an option.
- F2 opens up and is an option on the wall.
- F3 supports coming across or by stretching.



Drill Name & Description

Over

- D1 retrieves puck and passes to D2.
- D2 releases from net front and is an option for D1.
- F3 opens up and anchors on wall.
- F1 supports D and is an option in the middle.
- F2 is an option to support across or stretch.



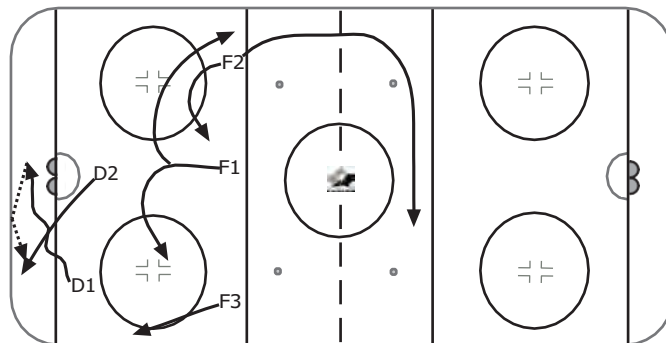


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Drill Name & Description

Reverse

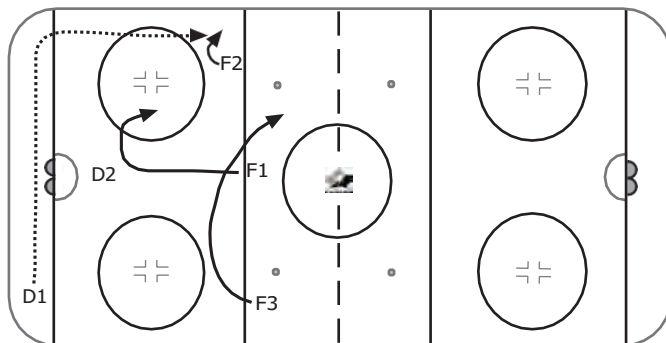
- D1 retrieves puck & begins to wheel net.
- D2 holds net front and calls REVERSE, then leaves to get the puck.
- D1 reverses puck to D2 using boards, then returns to front of net.
- F3 anchors and F1 and F2 can support or exchange lanes.



Drill Name & Description

Wrap

- D1 retrieves puck and reads pressure.
- D2 holds net front and protects middle.
- F2 reads wrap and cuts off support to go to blue line for puck.
- F1 supports below the puck.
- F3 comes hard across and stretches.



Key Points

- Controlled Breakout.
 - Players must provide support from three sides.
 - D2 must be lateral or below his partner.
 - Stick must be available for the pass.
- Up, Over, Wheel, Reverse, Wrap
 - Defense must get back to the puck quickly, checking shoulder for pressure and outlets.
 - Defense partner must screen for their partner or provide an outlet but must always communicate best available option before their partner gets to the puck.
 - Forwards must sprint back to position to provide an outlet.
 - Forwards must read the situation, anticipate the first pass, and react to provide support for second pass option.
 - The quicker the first pass is made, the faster the team breaking out brings its attack to high speed. The two most important factors in this case are communication and puck movement.



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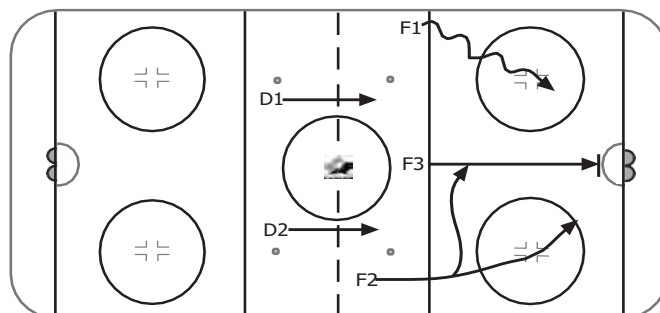
INTRODUCTION: ENTRIES

Entries in the game are critical and special emphasis must be paid to this area. Turning a puck over at the offensive blue line is a critical mistake because the other four players on the ice are thinking attack while the puck is being pushed up the ice the other way. We believe giving players the tools to effectively enter the offensive zone using the principles of support, puck control and pressure allows them to play with a strong attack mentality.

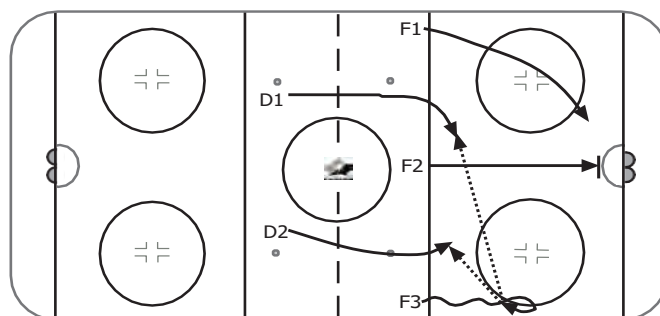
Including a net drive mentality accomplishes several things. It provides an attack mentality, stretches the zone, and forces the defense to make a decision on whether to take the player to the net or protect the slot. It forces the defending team to read and react at a higher speed. It also is intimidating to a goaltender who is facing a shot from the outside while he sees a player attacking the net at high speed. The goaltender's attention may be divided, but certainly must be concerned about the second shot possibility or the pass that may be made. This will force them to play a little deeper in their net.

Entries

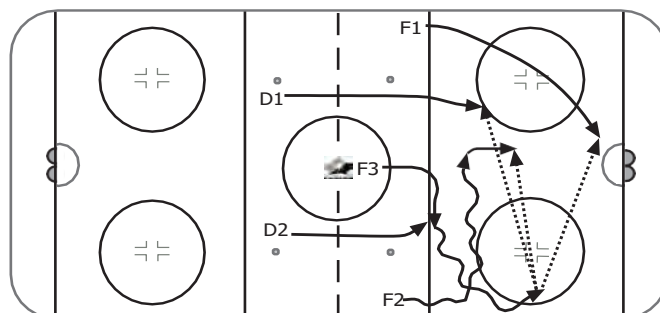
Drill Name & Description
Mid Lane Drive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F1 attacks the offensive blue line and takes puck to the net. F3 drives the mid lane aggressively. F2 reads play and can drive the net or go to slot for high pass. D1 and D2 move up on the play and are available to fill in the high slot if open. Fill the open ice.



Drill Name & Description
Wide Delay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F3 drives wide with puck and reads he is not able to get to the net. He cuts back and protects puck making all options available. F2 drives net through the mid lane aggressively. F1 drives net drawing defenders deep. D1 and D2 activate and are available as high options. F3 becomes the high man after the pass.



Drill Name & Description
Cross
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> F2 looks for the open ice – either in front (soft gap) of or behind the opposing D. F3 reads soft gap and crosses behind F2. F2 either gives puck to F3 or keeps it. Both players continue to attack net. F1 drives the net hard drawing defenders deep. D1 and D2 activate and are available in high slot.



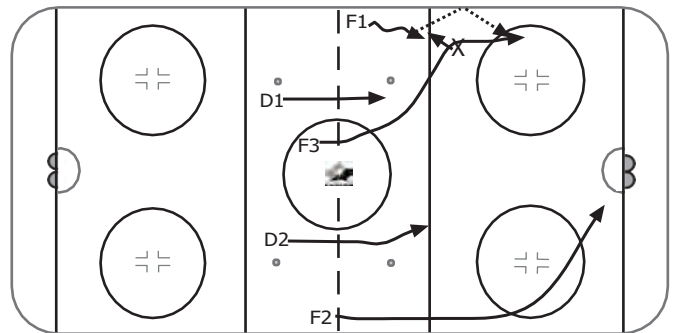


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Drill Name & Description

Chips

- F1 has the puck and is challenged by opposing D.
- F3 reads and provides close support to pick up chip (F3's speed should not be sacrificed).
- F2 drives the net trying to get inside position.
- D activate and are available to find open ice.



Key Points

- The puck must be advanced at the offensive blue line.
- Speed must be maintained.
- There must be an aggressive mid lane drive.
- Five players must be up on the play.
- There should always be a high slot presence.

INTRODUCTION: OFFENSIVE ZONE PLAY

Effective offensive zone play is very much a trademark of Canadian hockey. By enjoying a territorial advantage during a game, the opposition is forced to react to what you are doing. Defending is much more taxing both physically and mentally than attacking and therefore there is an attrition effect as a game goes along.

There are various forms of effective offensive zone play, but while territorial advantage is important, developing scoring chances is the main aim. It should also be understood that good decisions and positioning are also important and so patience is a quality not to be under-estimated.

Effective offensive zone play requires that the principles of pressure, puck control and support employed by all five players on the ice. It is essential that players communicate to each other and work to move puck away from defensive pressure to take advantage of seams that may open up as a result of broken defensive coverage.

Forwards should funnel to the net on all shots with a second shot mentality.

Offensive zone play requires hard work and players willing to jump to opens spaces and moving quickly to areas after they move the puck. There must be a commitment to get pucks through to the net to take advantage of this sprint to the net.



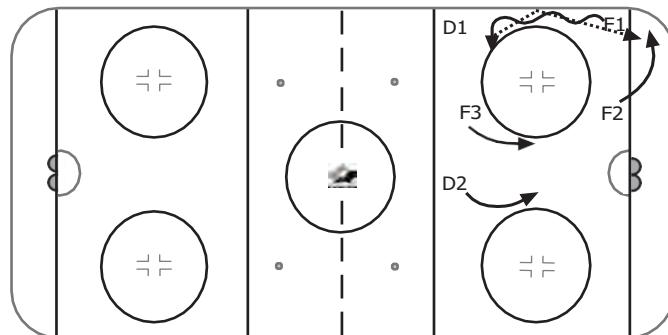
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Offensive Zone Play

Drill Name & Description

High Cycle

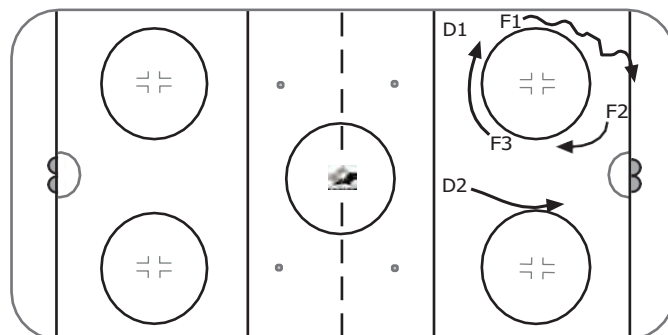
- F1 cycles up and looks to drive high seam to the net. If not, all players available for pass.
- F2 fills in the open ice low and is available if F1 has no direct pass option.
- F3 goes to the net.
- D1 is a safety.
- D2 can activate down back side.



Drill Name & Description

Low Cycle

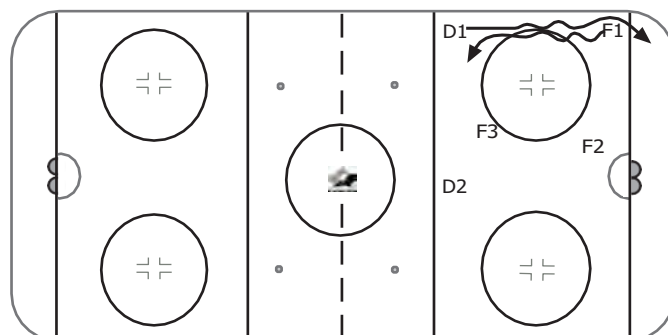
- F1 drives low and looks to go to the net. If there is no drive lane, the cycle begins.
- F2 holds net front, but slides up between hash marks.
- F3 slides to the wall to fill in the open ice left by F1.
- D1 is the safety.
- D2 can activate and read open space.



Drill Name & Description

D Cycle

- This comes from the same formation as the high cycle.
- F1 comes up the wall to the blue line.
- D1 slides down the wall on the board side.
- There is a puck exchange between F1 and D1.
- D1 looks to go to net, or take the option to pass to F2 or F3.



Key Points

- Forwards win the race to the puck.
- Protect the puck.
- Take puck away from pressure forcing the defensive team to adjust.
- Supporting player fill the open ice and communicate.
- Move the puck to the open ice.
- Move to support the puck carrier.
- Attack seams as they make themselves available.
- Do not throw the puck out blindly.



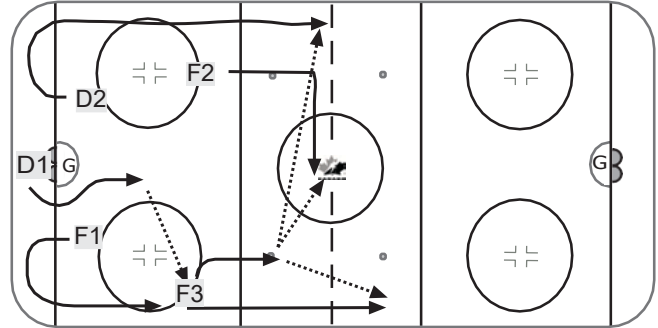
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INTRODUCTION: SPECIAL TEAMS

Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Breakout - Stretch vs Support

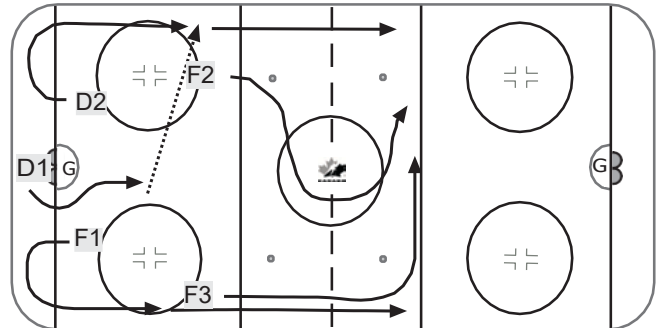
- Stretch when puck carrier is coming your way (ex. F3)
- Support when puck carrier is moving away from you (ex. F2)



Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Breakout - Stretch vs Support

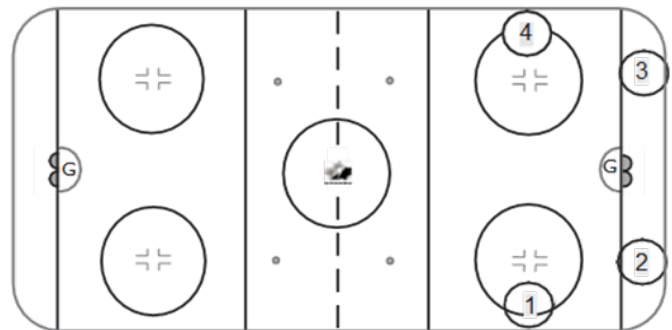
- Timing is crucial. Defensemen need to pass early to give forwards the possibility :
 - To keep speed for entry
 - To establish support
 - To be 1st on pucks on dumps



Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Zone Entry

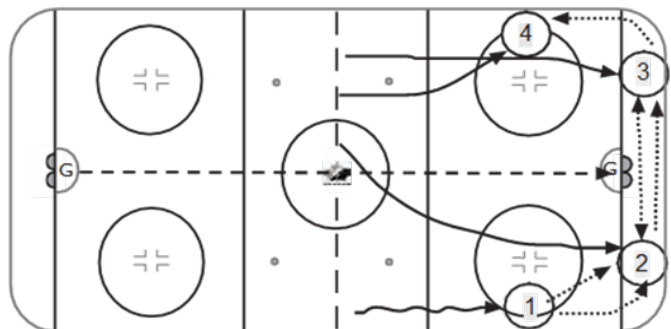
- Goal is to keep control on entry
- 4 main target areas to reach while carrying the puck or to place the puck into (to regain puck)



Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Zone Entry

- Need 2 players on strong side supporting each other and covering #1 and #2 target areas
- Need 2 players on far side to cover the further target areas (#3 and #4)



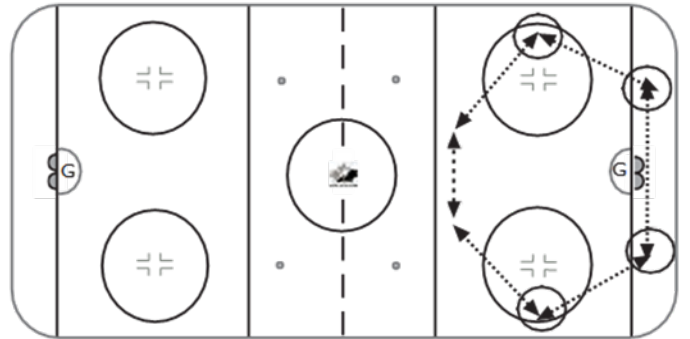


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Zone Entry

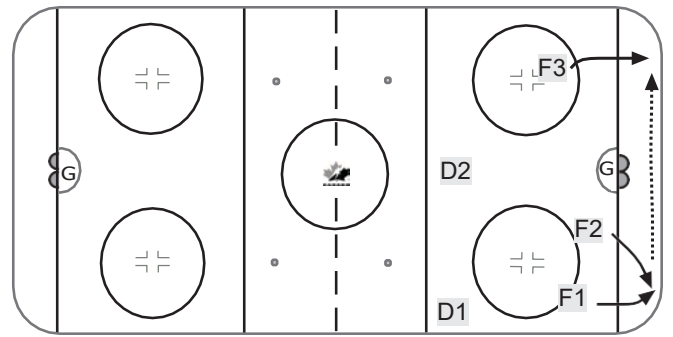
- Can use the target areas to:
 - Start set-up
 - Release pressure
 - Create battles



Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Zone Entry

- On battles you can keep a player wide as an outlet rather than have 3 on the same side. It allows players in the battle to know where to release the pressure.
- The far man still acts as a forechecker in case the opponent carries puck behind the net.

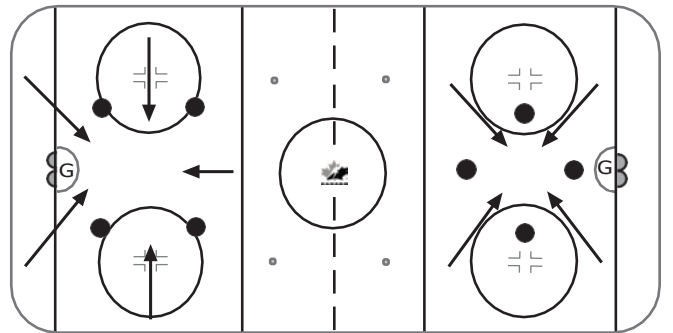


Many set-ups exist and all work well against a particular penalty kill formation. All of them rely on players ability to (a) release pressure, (b) attack seams.

Drill Name & Description

Power Play

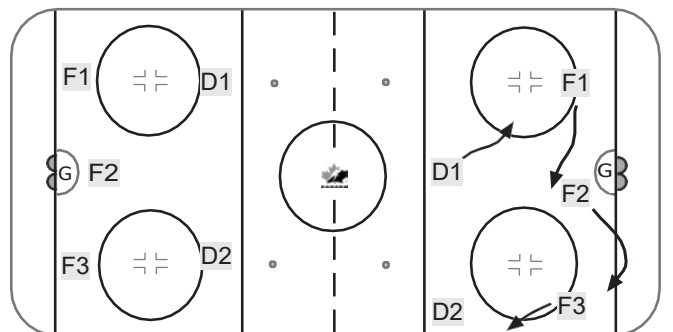
- Attacking seams quickly with:
 - A shot (quick release)
 - A pass (move puck quickly)
 - A carry (move feet)
- Always try to position your body to attack a seam (with or without puck)



Drill Name & Description

Power Play – Spread (3-2) Set Up

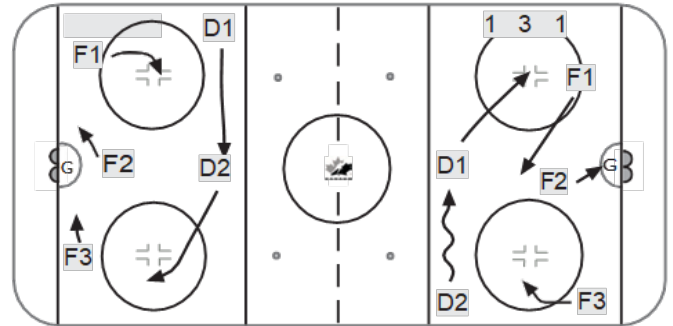
- Very versatile set-up because it can easily turn into:
 - Overload
 - Umbrella
 - 1-3-1



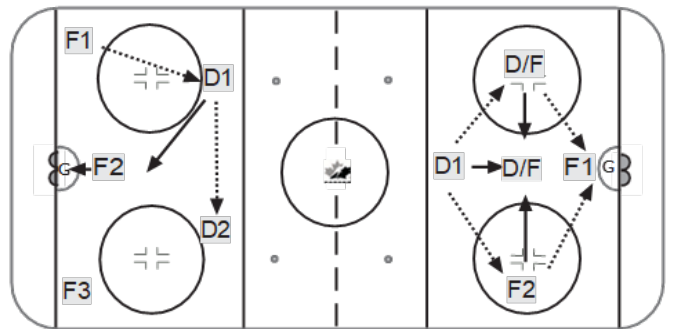


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

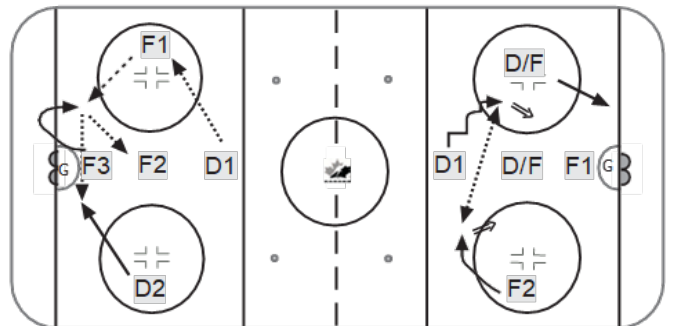
Drill Name & Description
Power Play



Drill Name & Description
Power Play – Example of 1-3-1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need very skilled and quick players • Can be dangerous for turnovers • Need middle man to stay high and back to his position when battles occur • Can provide a “4 man jam” on shots



Drill Name & Description
Power Play – Example of 1-3-1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic plays (with FWD or DEF filling middle) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Walk in ○ Slot pass ○ Back door • High Support





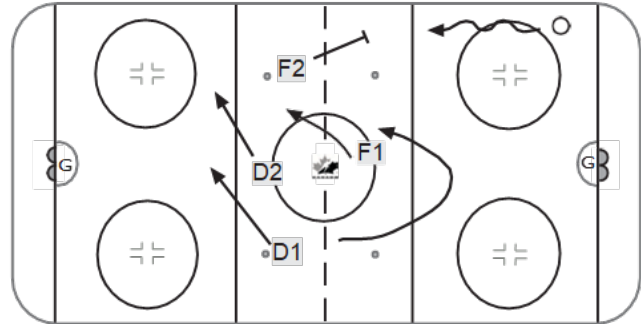
TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Penalty Killing Forechecks

Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing – 1-3 Forecheck

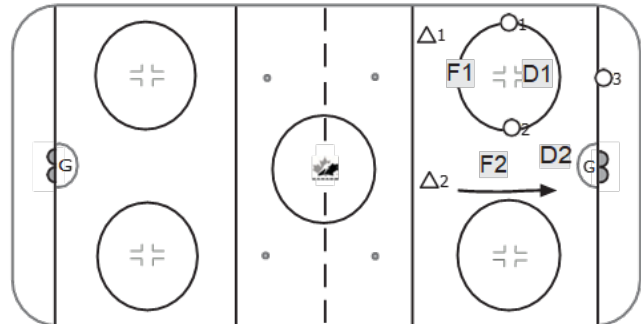
- F1 steers play to one side, then sprints back to support once puck is moved



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing – DZ vs Overload

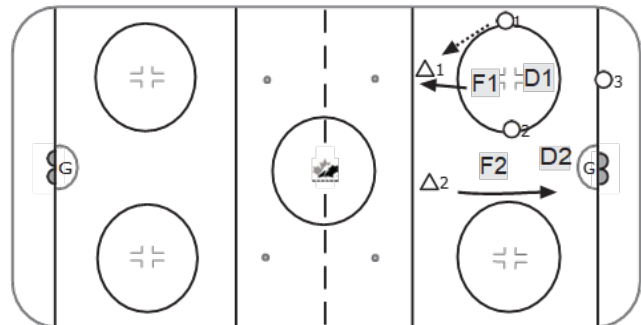
- Key is to take away time and space. Good players will make good plays if they have the time to make them. Force them to make a great play to beat you.



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

- F1 must not allow defensemen to walk blueline with puck. If D walks, we lose pressure. F1 must attack D hard and force play back down to half wall.



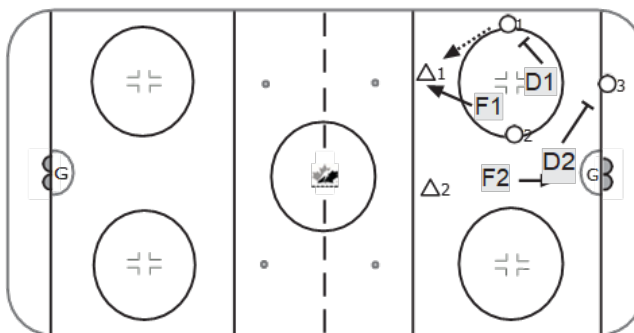


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

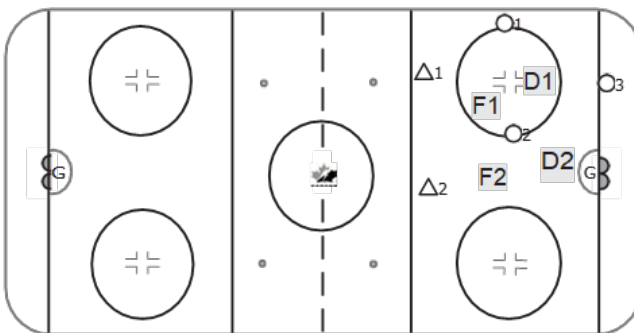
- If opposing F on half wall is above top of circle, F1 must try to press him down the boards, not allowing a pass back to the D at point. If half wall forward receives pass below top of circle, D1 should be in good position to jump and pressure. D2 is cheating to pressure low play. F2 covers net front.



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

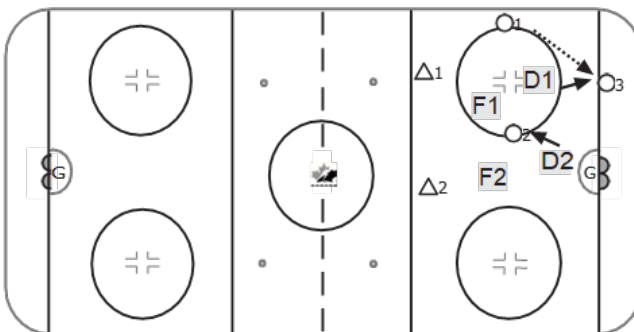
- Key to this PK is when opponent gets set up with full control on half wall. D1 must contain, maintain positioning in shooting lane and inside the dots.



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

- The low play is now imperative. If low opposing F is outside dots when low play is made, D1 plays the 2 on 1 and continues to contain as low F is not a threat.



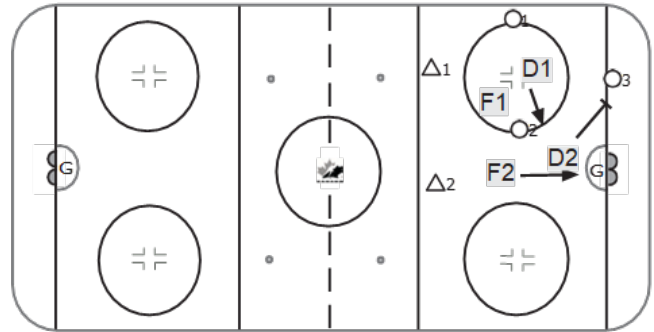


TEAM PLAY PACKAGE

Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

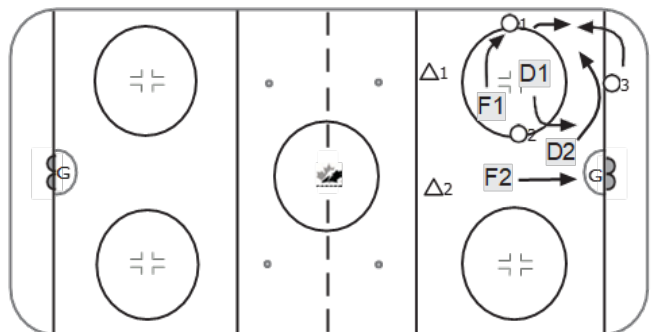
- If low F is in lane or inside dots when low play is made, full court press is on. D2, who is initially positioned on the near post a stick length from opposing F in slot, immediately attacks low F all out with stick on puck. This denies a pass to slot F or backside D who is covered by F2 collapsing to net front.



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

- When pass is made low, D1 must immediately get back towards net front and get his stick in the passing lane from low F to slot forward to deny a quick pass to the slot.



Drill Name & Description

Penalty Killing - DZ vs Overload

- Once pass to slot has been denied, D1 now cheats to corner in support of D2, who should be pressing low forward to the boards. D1 is ready to attack puck if it is cycled. F1 is in position to deny pass to point and deny a walk off the boards. F2 is covering net front and aware of weakside D at all times.
- When executed correctly, this kill is very effective at creating a battle and a turnover.

