

S&DMHA

Player Development Program

Book Six - Team Tactics



Compiled by Wayne King to be used as reference for all minor hockey coaches

S&DMHA Development Program

Team Tactics

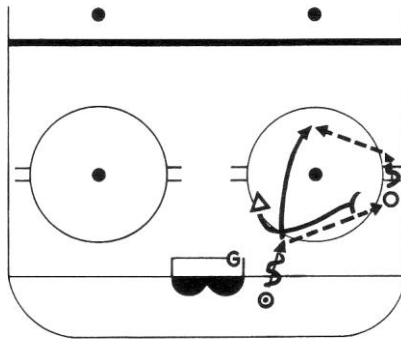
Offensive Team Tactics

2 on 1 Attack

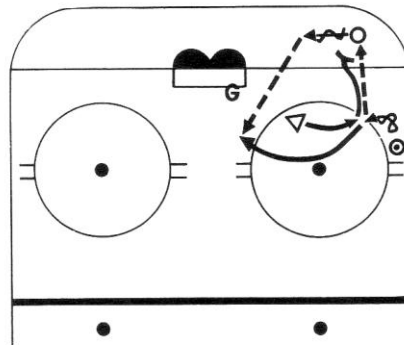
When a 2 on 1 situation is created against a defender, a number of tactics can be utilized to advance the puck past the defender.

Give and Go

- The puck carrier attempts to force the defender to commit by threatening to attack with the puck.
- A teammate moves to a position of support to create an open passing lane.
- The puck carrier passes to the teammate and accelerates into an opening for a return pass.



Give and go (2 on 1) Defensive Zone Breakout



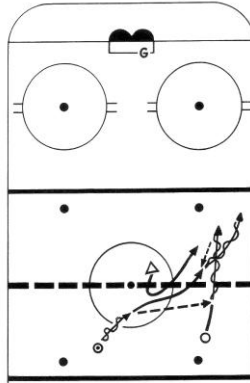
Give and go Offensive Zone Attack

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Team Tactics

Give and Follow

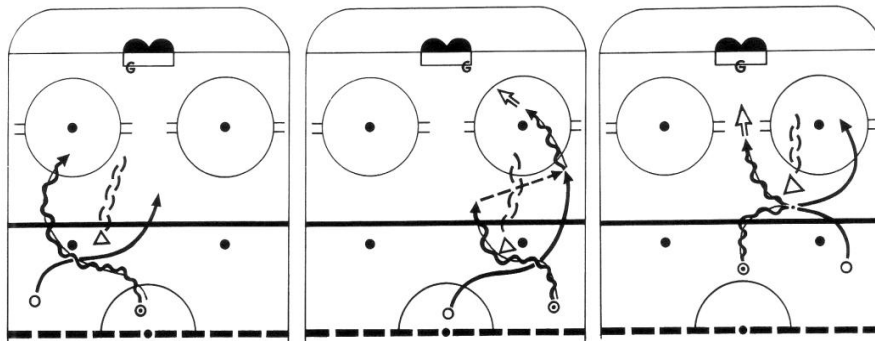
- Puck carrier attempts to force the defender to adjust position by threatening with the puck.
- The puck carrier passes to a teammate who has opened up a passing lane.
- The puck carrier moves in the direction of the pass receiver to a position of support for a return pass (e.g., back or drop).



Give and Follow

Cross

- A cross can be initiated either by the puck carrier or a teammate.
- It involves an exchange of position by two offensive players who try to isolate a defender and force a decision by the defender.
- It is critical that the cross forces the defender to adjust position by moving laterally rather than diagonally.
- By cutting across in a flat arc the attacker is better able to protect the puck and also prolong the decision of the defender.
- The puck carrier should attempt to establish an outside position initially in order to increase the adjustment for the defender once the cross is executed.
- A number of options are available to the puck carrier (i.e., lateral feed, drop or back pass, hold puck and accelerate into opening) as a result of a cross.



Cross

Cross (lateral feed)

Cross (drop after the cross)

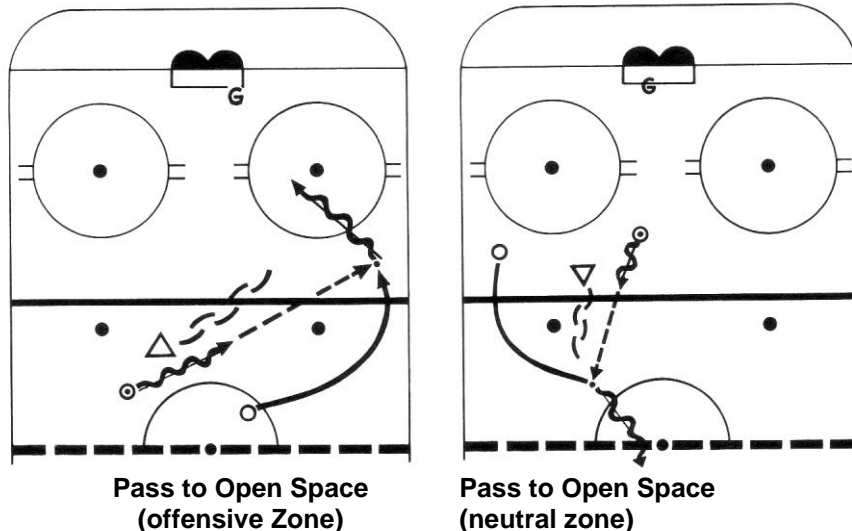
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Team Tactics

Pass to Open Space

The puck carrier by passing to open space instead of attempting a devious pass to a teammate who has arrived at a particular location does so in such a manner which is difficult for the defender to block. This tactic is difficult to defend against and enables the pass receiver to take the puck at speed.

- The offensive players read the checking pressure and positioning of the defender.
- The player away from the puck initiates the play by attempting to move to open space behind the defender.
- The puck carrier reads the movement of the second attacker and passes the puck into this open space.
- A soft pass is utilized in order to ensure that the puck can be retrieved by the player moving to open space. The boards may also be used to get the puck to open space (e.g., dumping the puck).
- Passing to open space instead of attempting to complete a pass once the teammate has arrived at a particular location, the puck carrier makes it difficult for the defender to block this passing lane.
- This tactic is difficult to defend against since it permits the pass receiver to take the puck at speed.



Open Ice Tactics

In open ice, a number of passing tactics can be used to maintain puck possession, and apply the offensive principles previously described as well as the following tactics:

Headman

- The attack is quicker by using a headman pass to a teammate either higher in the same zone or in an advanced zone.
- This manoeuvre forces the defence to adjust their position by changing the point of attack and thus opens up space offensively.
- It is important the attackers move quickly to support the puck carrier.

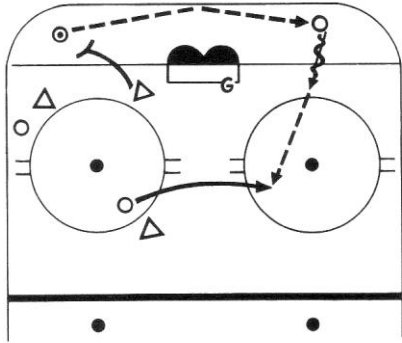
Wideman

- A wideman pass can be used effectively in situations in which the defenders are overloaded in the same lane as the puck carrier.

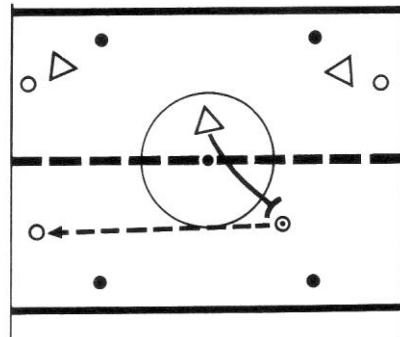
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Team Tactics

- The puck carrier either reads an overload situation or attempts to draw the checking pressure.
- By moving the puck quickly to a teammate across the width of the ice, the point of attack is changed and the receiver can now use open space to advance the puck.
- Again the defence is stretched as it attempts to adjust its position to counter this tactic.



Wideman (offensive Zone)



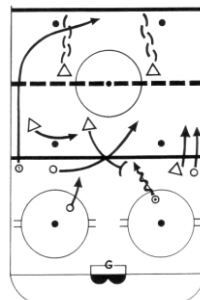
Wideman (neutral zone)

Backman

- In certain situations it may be advantageous for the offensive team to pass the puck back in the direction of their own goal in order to maintain puck control.
- Once again this should result in stretching the defence thus creating additional space to generate an attack.
- This tactic also creates additional time for the offensive team to regroup and begin a new attack.
- A backman pass is often used to start a counterattack after a turnover in the neutral zone.

Stretch Skating

- This is a variation of the headman tactic which can be used again to stretch the defence in the neutral zone.
- As the puck carrier begins an attack from the defensive zone, a teammate (D) moves quickly up the boards and cuts laterally just outside the offensive blue line.
- This creates an offensive threat which the defenders must respect by sagging deeper, otherwise, a headman pass can be executed.
- By forcing defenders to retreat, additional space is created in the mid-ice zone.
- The defenders must then either honour this threat by backing off their own blue line or risk being caught without speed against the attackers.



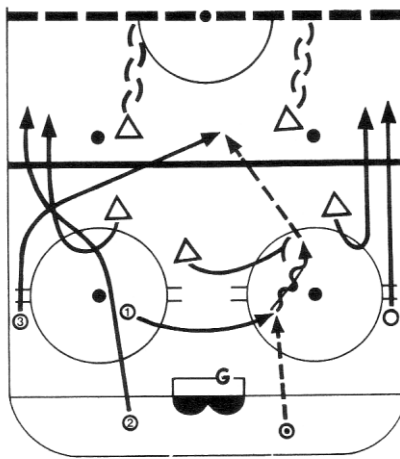
Stretch Skating

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Team Tactics

Mid-Lane Support

- This tactic is particularly effective on the breakout.
- As the puck carrier advances in an outside lane, a weak side winger or a player away from the puck skates into the mid-lane in order to provide close and quick support for D.
- In order to maintain balance in the attack, another offensive player should move to fill the vacated outside lane.

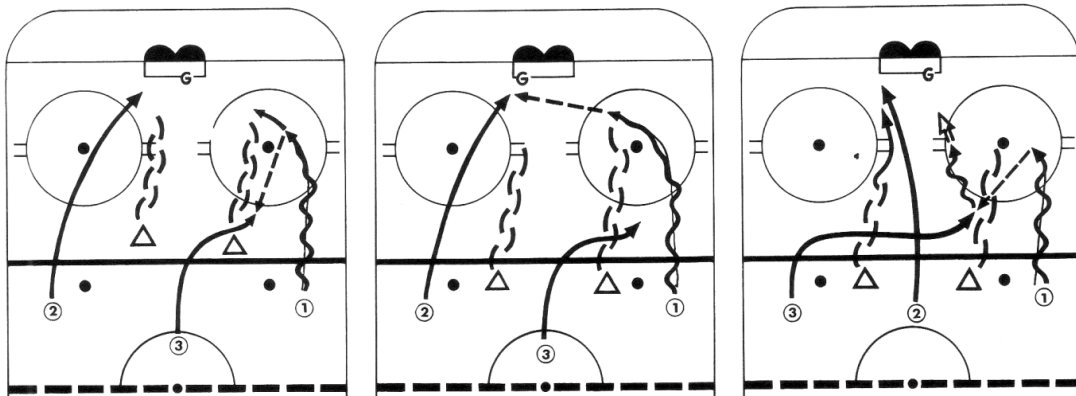


Mid Lane Support

Attacking Tactics

1, 2, 3 Principle of Attack

- The 1, 2, 3 principle of attack respects the offensive principles of puck control, pressure, triangulation, and balance.
- The puck carrier must be a threat to attack the net. This will usually take the form of a “driving to the net” action which forces one defender to go with the puck carrier.
- A second attacker pressures the net (backside post) in order to create a passing option for the puck carrier or to draw the second defender deep into the zone.
- A third attacker takes up a trail position by slowing down and drifting towards the puck carrier's lane. This establishes depth to the attack and also puts the third attacker in position to provide good defensive support if the attacking team loses possession of the puck.
- A number of play options can be executed using the 1, 2, 3 principle of attack.



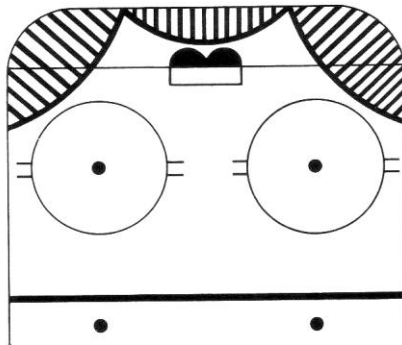
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Team Tactics

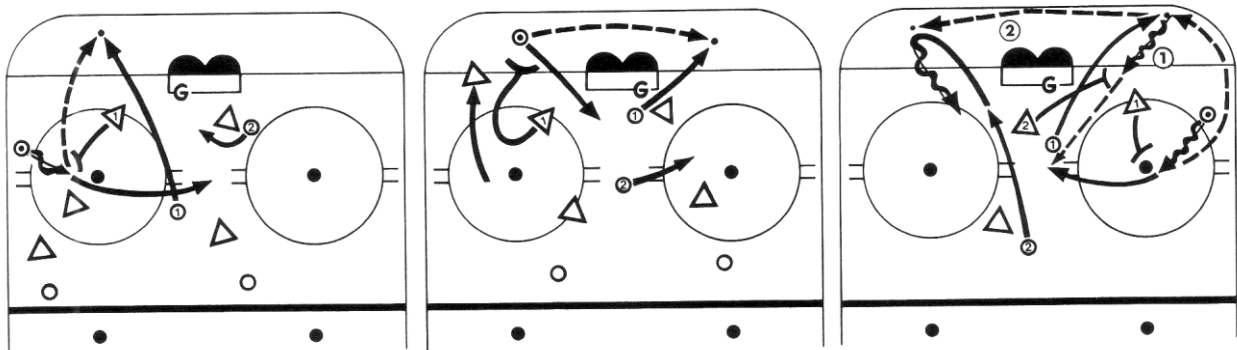
1,2,3 Principle of Attack

Quiet Zones

- In order to maintain possession of the puck in the offensive zone, the puck can be moved to specific areas of the ice which are considered non-threatening by the defenders. These areas exist in the corners and behind the net
- In an attempt to move towards the prime scoring area, the puck carrier may be cut off by a defender. Rather than throwing the puck blindly to the slot, the puck carrier dumps or reverses the puck into one of these quiet zones.
- A teammate must anticipate this action and begin moving into the area to retrieve the puck.
- The initial puck carrier must then cycle into the slot area in order to create a passing option with a good scoring position.
- The third offensive player is also a scoring threat by taking up a position for a possible pass from the initial puck carrier or the player retrieving the puck from the quiet zone.
- If the new puck carrier is also pressured before being able to make a high percentage pass, the same tactic can be repeated with another teammate moving into the quiet zone to retrieve the puck.



Quiet Zones



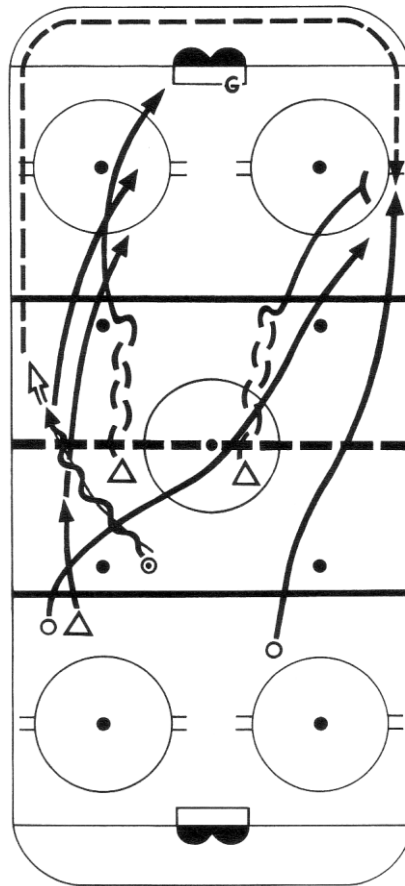
Attacks exploiting quiet zones

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Team Tactics

Wide Rim

- It may not always be possible to carry the puck into the attacking zone.
- In order to respect the principle of puck control (i.e., maintain possession) a wide rim tactic may be used.
- The puck carrier skates to the centre red line either already in an outside lane or drifting towards an outside lane.
- On reaching the centre red line, the puck carrier shoots the puck hard into the zone around the boards.
- It is essential that the puck be shot with enough speed to prevent the goaltender from being able to stop the puck behind the net.
- A second and third attacker anticipates the movement of the puck and breaks immediately for the boards on the far side in the vicinity of the hash marks in order to trap the puck.
- A third attacker moves quickly into a position of support to assist the player retrieving the puck.



Wide Rim

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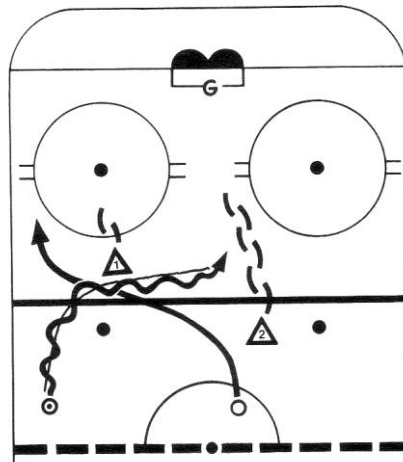
Team Tactics

Defensive Team Tactics

Defending 2 on 2

Switching

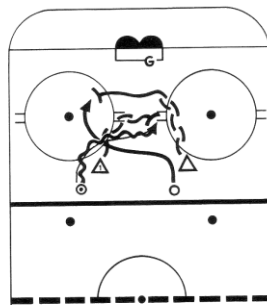
- When the attacking team interchanges position at the point of the attack, it may be necessary for the defenders to switch responsibilities
- As the puck carrier moves across the face of the defender towards a second defender the first defender calls or signals for a switch.
- The defenders then switch checking responsibilities, staying in their respective lanes to be in proper position to check both the puck carrier and the second attacker who fills the lane vacated by the puck carrier.
- A switching of responsibilities is the preferred tactic when the puck is outside the top of the faceoff circle.



Switching

Man-to-Man Coverage

- When the attack results in an interchanging of positions inside the top of the circle, the first defender must challenge the puck carrier and close the gap quickly.
- The second defender then sags in order to be in position to shift laterally to check the second attacker moving into the vacated lane.



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Team Tactics

Man to Man Coverage

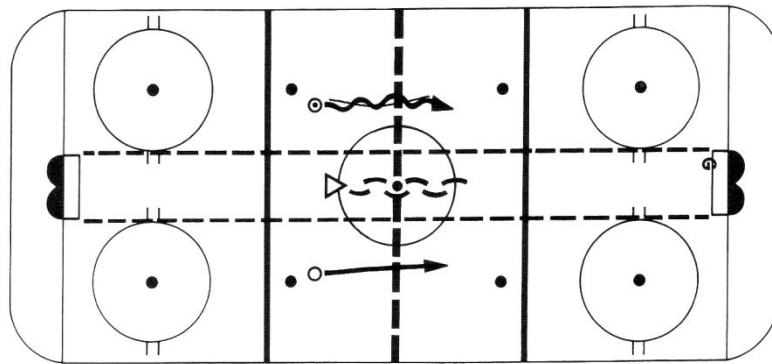
Defending 2 on 1

In general, the defender stays between the two attackers to prevent passing by the attackers. However, from the top of the circles a 2 on 1 attack should actually be regarded as a 2 on 2 situation, with the goaltender and the one defender working together as a defensive unit. It is important for a team to have a clear defensive philosophy regarding the respective responsibilities of the two players in defending a 2 on 1 attack.

2 on 1 Middle

i. Mid-Ice Zone

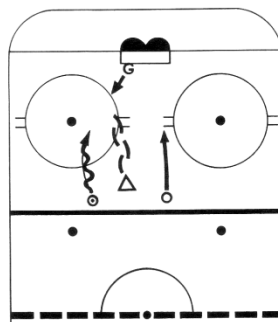
- The defender stays between the 2 attackers maintaining position in the mid-lane.
- A good visual cue for the positioning of the defender is to stay between the imaginary lines extending from the goal posts.
- The defender keeps a tight gap on the puck carrier in an attempt to delay the attack.
- The defender maintains the same speed as the attackers.
- The second attacker must not be allowed to move to a space behind the defender for a possible pass.



Defending 2 o 1 – Mid Ice Zone

ii. Inside Blue Line

- As the play enters the defensive zone, the defender gradually slows down attempting to delay the attack for possible support from other backchecking defenders.
- The defender tries to force the puck carrier outside to a poor shooting angle while protecting against a pass to the second attacker.
- The goaltender has primary responsibility for the puck carrier and moves out to cut down the shooting angle.
- The defender has primary responsibility for the second attacker if a pass is made.
- If the puck carrier elects to shoot, the defender covers the second attacker to protect from a possible rebound while at the same time being aware of the puck and the shooter.



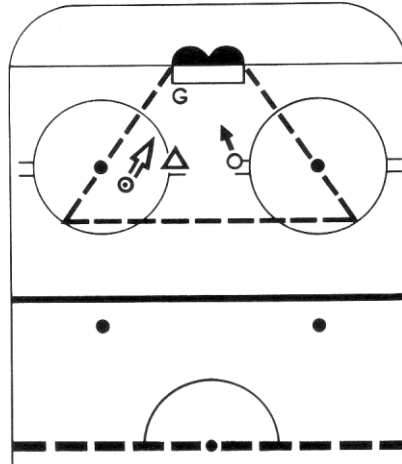
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Team Tactics

Inside Blue Line

iii. Prime Scoring Area

- If the play moves inside the prime scoring area, the defender must exert some pressure on the puck carrier while still guarding against a possible late pass.

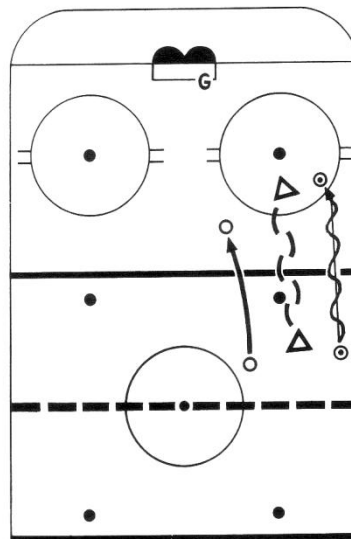


Prime Scoring Area

2 on 1 Outside

i. Mid-Ice Zone

- The defender stays between the 2 attackers, maintaining position in the midlane.
- The defender keeps a tight gap on the puck carrier, skating at the same speed as the attackers.



Mid-Ice Zone

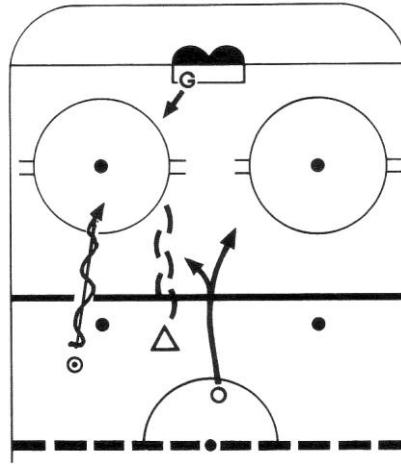
ii. Inside Blue Line

- The defender begins to slow down in order to delay the attack.
- The defender protects the mid-lane, keeping the puck carrier to the outside, and preventing a possible pass to the second attacker.

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Team Tactics

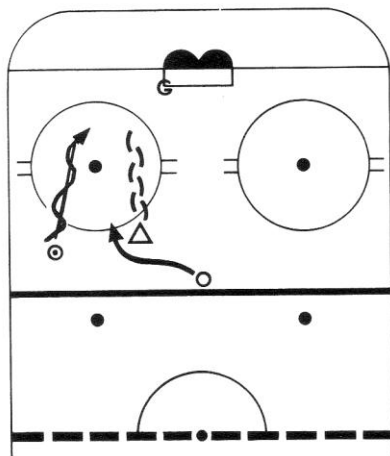
- The goaltender has primary responsibility for the puck carrier and moves out to cut down the shooting angle
- If the puck carrier shoots, the defender moves to cover the second attacker and protect a possible rebound.



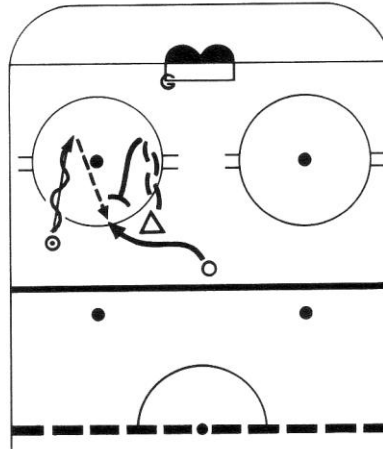
Inside Blue Line

iii. Prime Scoring Area

- If the play moves inside the top of the circle, the defender maintains a tight gap to prevent the puck carrier from driving to the net.
- At the same time, the defender should try to stay square and avoid pivoting to turn with the puck carrier as this will leave a passing lane open for a trailer pass to the second attacker.
- If a trailer pass is made, the defender should quickly stop and close the gap on the pass receiver.
- The goaltender plays the puck carrier for a possible quick shot or drive to the net.



Prime Scoring Area



Prime Scoring Area

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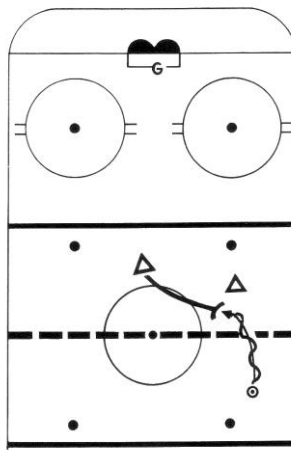
Team Tactics

Defending 1 on 2

Whenever the defenders outnumber the attackers, the defenders should always attempt to maintain a zone by pressuring the puck carrier and forcing the play early. Completing a check in the attackers' half of the ice removes the option of dumping the puck into your end in the same way. Forcing the play outside your blue line prevents the attacker(s) from setting up in your zone.

Overplay

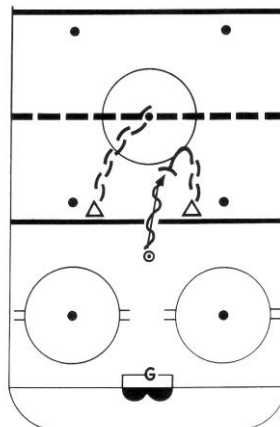
- When the puck carrier is attacking from an outside lane and there is defensive support nearby (i.e., 1 vs. 2) the defender may decide to overplay the puck carrier to encourage the attacker towards the middle.
- The second defender approaches the puck carrier on an angle and completes the check.
- If the puck carrier stays outside, the first defender is in position to complete the check using a shoulder or hip check and pinning the puck carrier against the boards.



Overplay

Middle 1 on 2

- As the puck carrier approaches, a defender closes the gap attempting to pressure the puck carrier to make an early decision.
- A supporting defender sags slightly and shifts laterally a few steps in the direction of the puck carrier.
- If the first defender is beaten, the second defender is in position to check the puck carrier.
- This tactic is particularly effective in forcing the play in the offensive half of the ice.



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Team Tactics

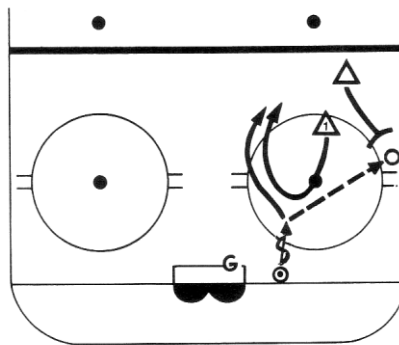
Middle 1 on 2

Defending Against a Second Wave

- A defensive player coming back into the defensive zone and seeing a 2 on 2 attack should use the "head on a swivel" technique to look for the next or third attacker coming into the play.
- This defender, in order to prevent the third offensive player from joining in the attack unchecked, then picks up this attacker.
- A defensive player coming back towards the defensive zone and recognizing a 3 on 3 attack should be aware of a fourth or fifth attacker moving up quickly to create a second wave of attack.
- Again, the defender in such a situation must maintain close contact with the fourth or fifth attacker to prevent this attacker from penetrating unchecked into a high percentage scoring area.

Riding your Check

- This defensive tactic is effective in countering both the give and go and quiet zone offensive tactics when there is close coverage.
- A player with defensive support pressures the puck carrier quickly, thus, forcing a pass to a teammate.
- Instead of turning towards the pass, the defender maintains close contact with the passer.
- The defender is then in a position to control the opponent's stick and body should a return pass be attempted.
- The supporting defender tightens the gap against the pass receiver and attempts to complete the check and momentarily stays with him to prevent a give and go.

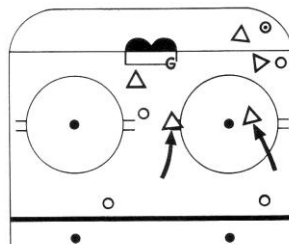


Riding your Check

Defensive Zone Tactics

Sagging

- When the puck is deep in the defensive zone, the defenders in the area of the puck, provide tight coverage against the opponents.
- To provide additional concentration of defenders, those defenders responsible for the opponents furthest away from the puck will sag toward the puck.
- This results in added defensive support in the prime scoring area.



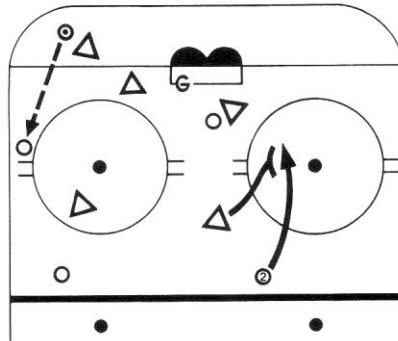
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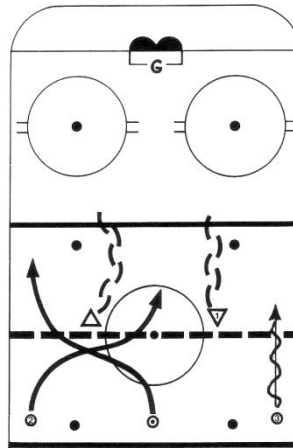
Sagging

Backside Coverage

- Although the defence will be concentrated in the area of the puck, the defenders must also be aware of the movement of players away from the puck.
- By either facing up ice and/or using the "head on a swivel" technique, the defenders must protect the backside by moving to provide tighter coverage of an opponent moving into a scoring position from the backside.
- This can occur anywhere in the defensive zone as well as in the mid-ice zone (i.e., offensive players filling an outside lane away from the puck).



Backside Coverage



Backside Coverage

SUMMARY

- Team tactics can be identified as either offensive or defensive.
- It is important for players to understand the basic offensive and defensive principles that govern team tactics.
- Players should be able to select the appropriate offensive (defensive) team tactics to counter any defensive (offensive) situations.