



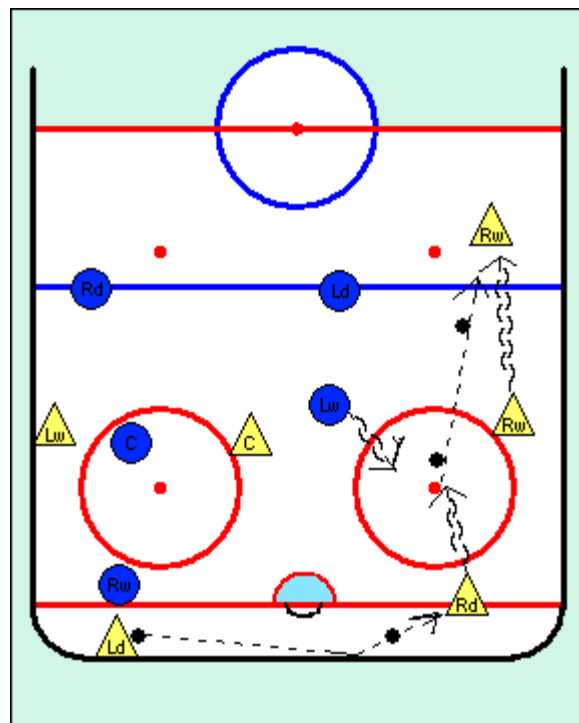
“Speed, agility, good passing and pre-planned plays can defeat constant heavy body checking”

ALL ZONES – BEATING HEAVY BODY CHECKING – 7 PLAYS

Sometimes we play teams whose dominant game plan is to body check our players every time we have the puck in order to try to intimidate our players and disrupt our systems. Besides returning the favour and being disciplined enough to wait for the penalties that will come and then score on the power plays, there are plays we can design to take advantage of high risk heavy body checking. Here are a few:

(1) D To D Behind Our Net

In our zone after they shoot the puck in and are chasing down our defenceman in our corner close behind him, just before they lay on the heavy hit, our defenceman should take a quick look into the opposite corner to make sure his defensive partner is there and fire a hard pass behind our net to this defenceman. Our defenceman should then carry the puck out of our corner drawing their player to him and then making a pass to one of our forwards.

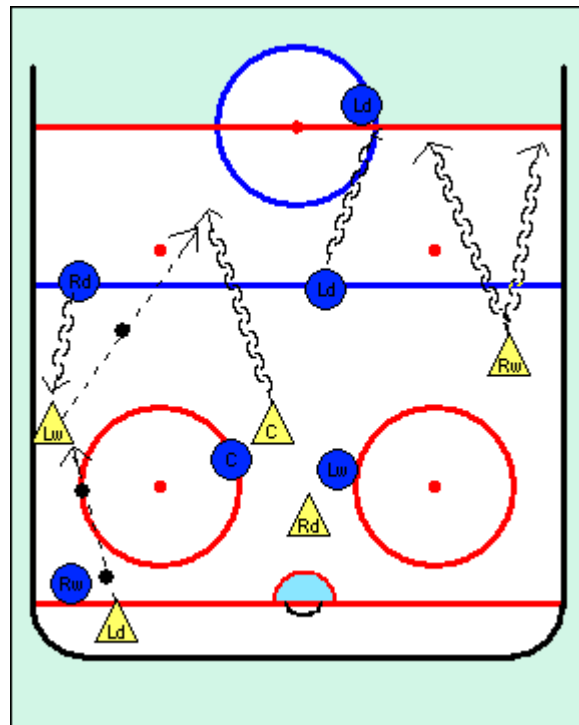




(2) At Our Blue Line

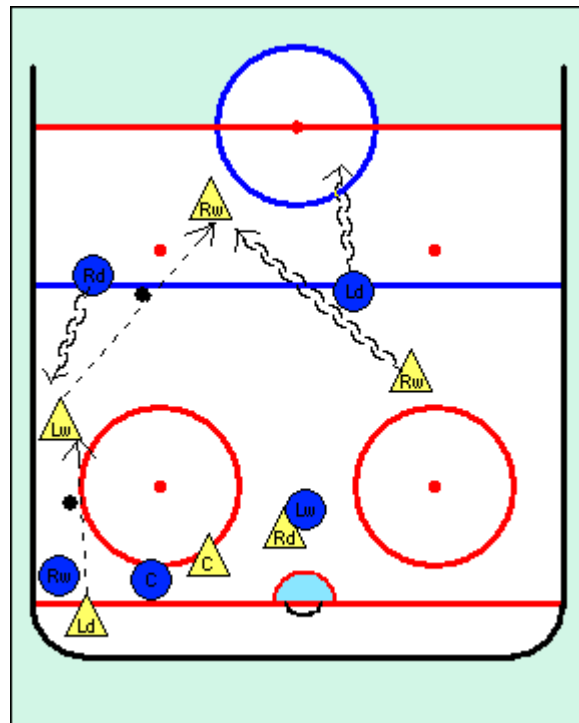
When the puck comes around the boards to our winger around the hash marks in our end and their defenceman comes in hard to administer the hit, their defenceman has just left two gaping holes: first, between him and their other defenceman, and second off the boards behind this defenceman.

Their defencemen may come right along side the boards to block the off the boards pass but he can't protect against the pass between him and his defensive partner. Our centreman should be there for this pass and the off side winger should help open this up by skating hard into the deep middle or down the wide side boards drawing their other defenceman with him. If both their defencemen stay around our blue line the wide side winger will be wide open on a break away especially if there is no red line in play for the two line off sides rule.





If our centreman is caught too low in our zone to get between their defencemen at our blue line fast enough to receive a pass, the wide side winger should cut across our blue line to take the pass from the other winger in stead of our centreman.

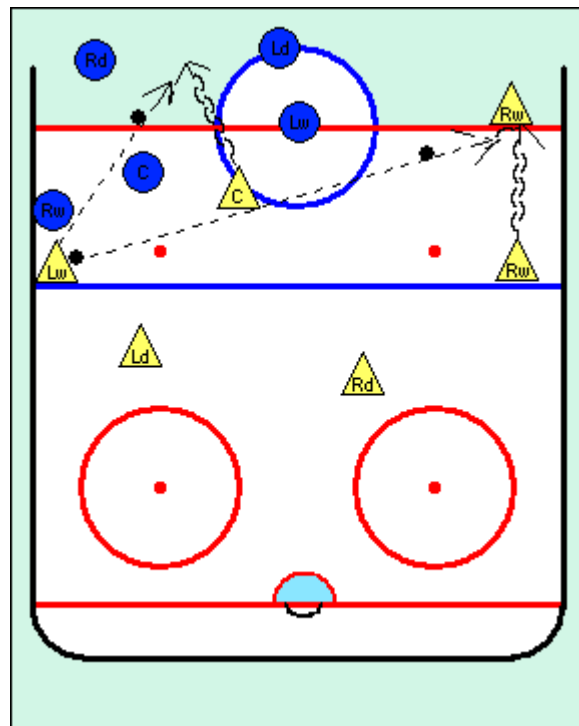


If neither our centreman nor our wide side winger can get to the right spot between their defencemen soon enough, our winger can still put the puck between their defence and safely out of our zone.



(3) In The Neutral Zone Just Outside Our Blue Line

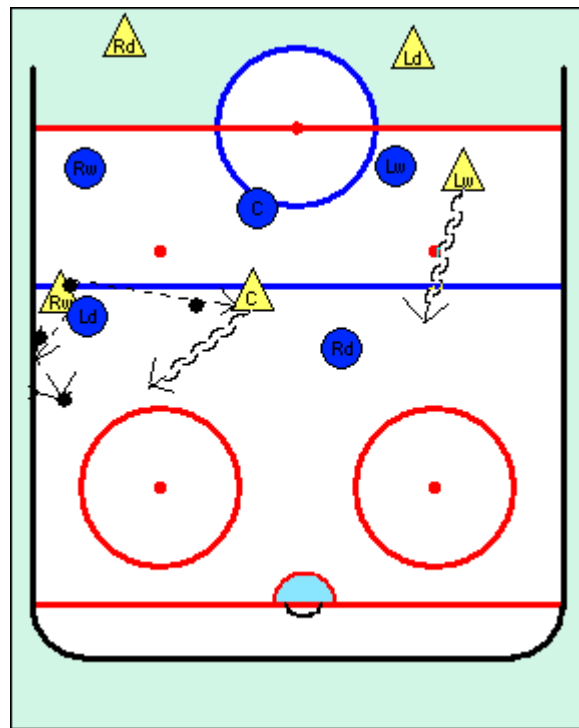
When one of our forwards on the left hand side has the puck just outside our blue line in heavy traffic, he should look to pass the puck to our centreman skating hard up the middle or to the far side winger who should stay close to the boards on the far side and be skating hard. Most times the middle will be clogged up so the far side winger should be open.





(5) At Their Blue Line

When our right winger has the puck skating hard at their blue line on the right side close to the boards, many times their defenceman will try to administer the heavy hit on our right winger into the boards. If we have a designed play in advance for our right winger and centreman to expect this to happen, our right winger can pass the puck to our centre skating hard in the middle crossing their blue line just as the body check is about to happen, or our right winger can chip the puck behind this defenceman into their zone for our centreman to pick up.



(6) Shoot The Puck In

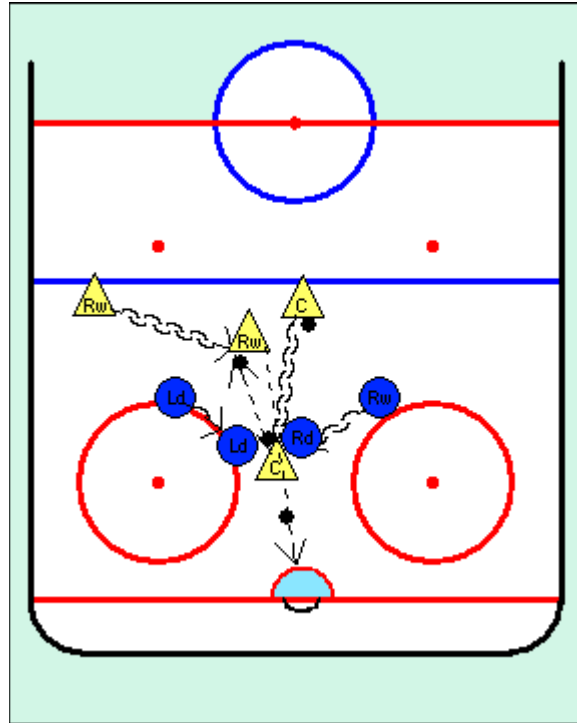
If none of the above plays at their blue line look like they will work, shoot the puck in to the side from which their defenceman is coming to you. Our forward on that side should be able to beat their other defenceman to the puck in their corner.

(7) Drop Pass In Their Zone

When one of our forwards, say our centre has carried the puck across their blue line, he can intentionally skate at one defenceman or in between the two of them. When our centre is about to get body checked by one or both of them he can drop the puck to one of



our forwards (in the diagram below our right winger) coming late behind our centre. Our right winger taking the pass should be shot ready. Our right winger then shoots a slap shot through the screen in front of him. If the puck gets through and is hard and low and on net, it will be a difficult save for their goalie to make.



ANTICIPATE THE HIT AND PASS OFF JUST BEFORE THE HIT