



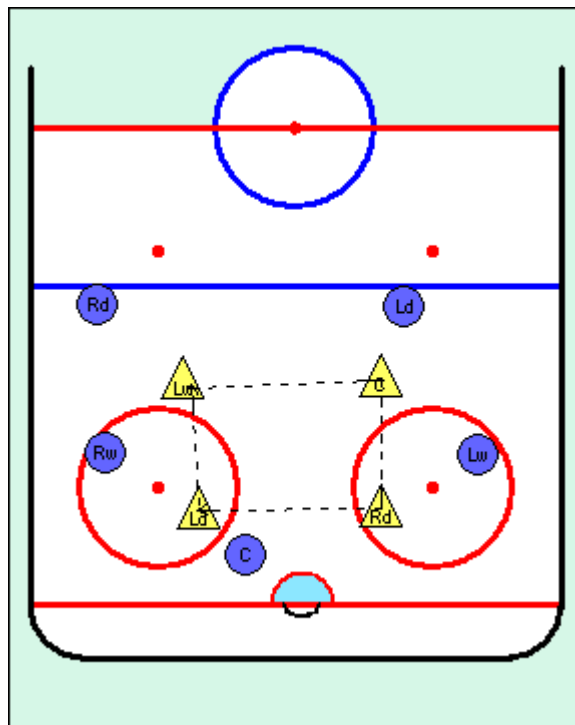
“Stay in the flexible box and force them to stay outside of it so they only get shots from far out”

DEFENSIVE ZONE - PENALTY KILL – 5 ON 4 – FLEXIBLE BOX

When two forwards go out to kill a penalty, they must talk to each other and agree who is going to have responsibility for which side of the ice. Usually a left hand shot will take the left side and a right hand shot will take the right side. If a centre goes out he will take the face offs and the other forward will line up on the wide side wing at the face off.

When the other team has possession of the puck in our zone and is set up in a 2 – 2 – 1 power play structure, we must set up “the flexible box”. It is “flexible” because it expands and contracts depending on where the puck is and which of their players have it. Our 2 defencemen play back at around the bottom edge of the large face off circles on the opposite sides of our net. They cover their players in front but if their forwards set up in the corners or behind our net our defencemen must maintain their box positioning, challenging them a little so they don’t get a good scoring chance or challenging them alot if we are pretty sure we can take or freeze the puck because they have misplayed it, have turned their back or don’t have good solid possession. The big difference for our defencemen is there is no centre to come back to pick up their extra forward. Two of our defencemen must cover 3 of their forwards.

PLACE YOUR STCK ON THE SIDE THEY ARE MOST LIKELY WANTING TO PASS TO AND TRY TO DEFLECT THE PUCK





Our two forwards stay at about the top of or just outside the large circles about 15 feet from their defencemen and between their defencemen and our net. Our forwards should be close enough to their defencemen to be able to block, rush, or prevent a shot from these defencemen but not too close to allow one of their forwards to be open closer to the net.

The flexible box allows 4 of our players to force their players and their passing to outside the box so they do not get any good scoring opportunities in close. It also forces them to waste time and try riskier passes into the slot or the middle of the box. Staying in the box requires discipline in the movements of our forwards so they are not drawn too close to their defencemen and not into our corners and not too far back so that our forwards are in front of our net. If any of these happen, the box has broken down and they will have scoring chances from the slot, not bad angle or long shots. The other team will be trying to make us break the box. Don't.

PROTECT THE SLOT

Our forwards should extend their arms and move their sticks from side to side in an irregular sweeping motion with a wide leg stance and knees bent, trying to force a bad pass or intercept a pass. We should be aggressive but under control. We should not be lunging at anyone, particularly their defencemen, or trying to make the big body check. All that does is help them. Every movement must be controlled and thought about.

Of course any opportunity to get the puck or block or intercept a pass is taken so we can shoot the puck down the ice hard but don't just poke the puck forward and give it back to them. If you can't safely shoot it down the ice knock it into our corner. **THINK.**

When our player returns to the ice, immediately look for opportunities to pass to him. The other team may ignore him for just enough time for him to get open.

PRACTICE DRILL:

Run 5 on 4 unit drill with the 4 player unit (2 defencemen and 2 forwards) at the defensive blue line lined up across the ice and the 5 player unit (3 forwards and 2 defenceman) immediately behind them closer to the red line and also lined up across the ice. The puck is shot into the corner by one player on the 5 player unit.

The 5 player unit forechecks and tries to score, and the 4 player unit sets up the defensive flexible box and tries to get the puck out. Keep score.



Give feedback including whistling the play dead in the middle of it having the players freeze in their positions, and then give feedback.

When the puck is out of the defensive zone or a goal is scored, repeat the drill.

Make sure each unit is wearing different coloured jerseys, and each player in each unit has the same coloured jersey as we want high speed instant peripheral same team player recognition and it is almost impossible to accomplish this without jersey colour recognition.

If we are teaching the defensive box to players who are not familiar with its strengths and weaknesses, show them how it works off ice on a hockey board, and walk them through this on ice.