



“If we have the puck, they don’t”

HOCKEY ANALYTICS – PUCK POSSESSION

Coaches often talk about hockey being a game of puck possession and of course it is at the highest level, but it is also a game of puck possession transition and puck location strategy in certain situations.

Some say just measure the time of puck possession of each team and whoever has the puck the most should win. Not necessarily. It depends on where a team has the puck firstly. And secondly even if one team has the puck more in their offensive zone than the other team has it in their offensive zone, this still may not be determinative as to who will win.

The game is played to see who can score the most goals and let in the least. So, it’s all about shots on net, rebounds, screens and quality shots on net. That’s the issue with CORSI and FENWICK. Shots at the net blocked or missing the net means puck possession time in the scoring zone but these shots **can’t score**. They are like a putt in golf that never gets to the hole and thus has no chance of going in.

Too much puck possession in your own zone can also eventually lead to turnovers and very good scoring chances for the other team. So, the least amount of time you spend in your own zone the better. You don’t want to just get it out all the time but you have to find the balance between passing too much in your zone and getting it out safely.

On power plays, teams have puck possession almost all the time but that doesn’t mean a goal will be scored. Again we come back to shots on net, their quality, location, speed, screen, deflection, rebound and all the factors that make it hard for a goalie to prevent a goal.

Same on the flip side of preventing quality shots by not allowing the opposition puck possession in the first place or allowing him into that location to shoot, and getting a stick on the puck or blocking the shot or preventing a screen or clearing a rebound. These are the little areas that decide a win or a loss for a team, and we will consolidate them into a blueprint for winning later in this website.

In some situations it makes sense to give up possession in the location you are in so they don’t win the puck there but rather they get the puck deep in their zone 200 feet from our net or in the neutral zone rather than in a Grade A scoring area in our zone. Same as when you are coming over their blueline 2 on 4 say, and rather than try to make a play just over their blueline you shoot it on net trying to get a whistle for a faceoff where the odds of you winning the puck for a quality shot are higher than being outnumbered 4 to 2.