



“If their defencemen set up for a defenceman to defenceman pass behind their net, our forecheckers should take this play away before it gets started”

OFFENSIVE ZONE – THE AGGRESSIVE 2 – 1 – 2 SPREAD FORECHECK

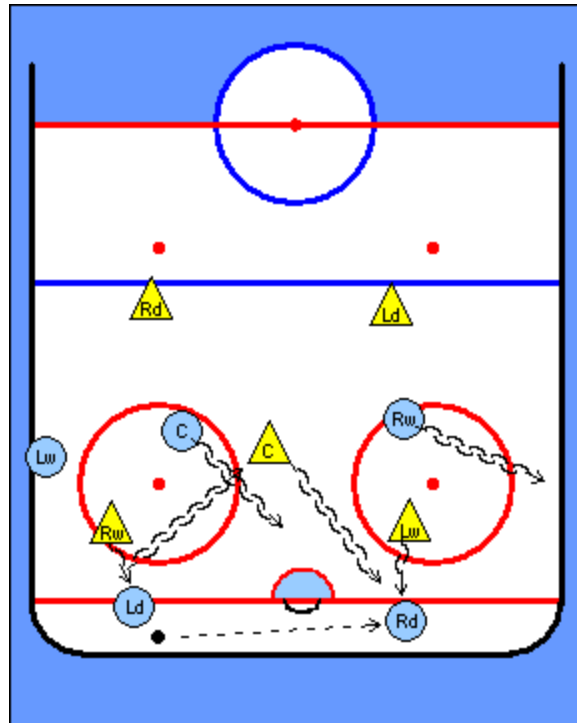
When the puck goes into their corner and our forechecking forwards coming across their blue line can see that one of their defenceman will get to the puck first, and also see their other defenceman going into their other corner to be in position for a defenceman to defenceman pass behind their net, here is a variation of the 2 – 1 – 2 overload forecheck that will work to defeat their intended D to D pass behind their net. It’s called the 2 – 1 – 2 spread forecheck.

Our first forechecking forward on the side where the puck is in their corner, the strong side, should skate as hard as he can, and controlled towards their defenceman going to the puck to make sure that this defenceman has little or no time and space to make any pass or make a misdirection move, that is, fake the D to D pass and skate up ice the other way.

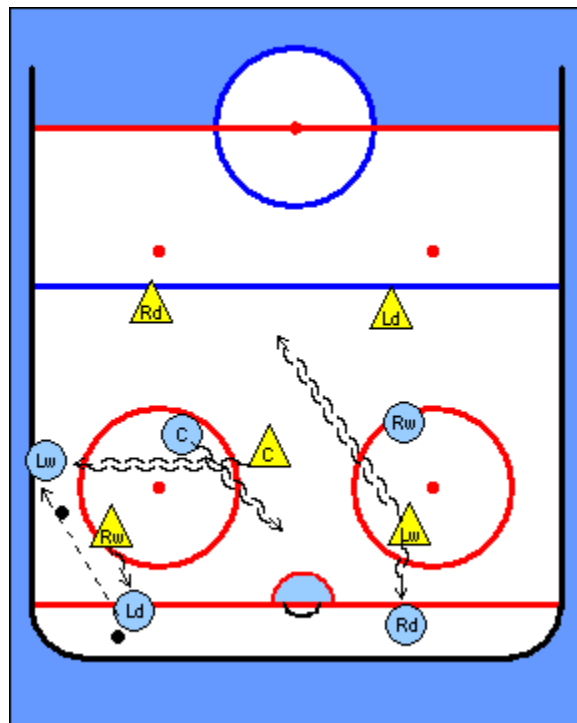
Our second forward going into their zone on the other side, the weak side, and seeing their open defenceman going into their corner opposite from where the puck is, should skate as hard as he can, and controlled towards this defenceman to prevent a pass to him from their other defenceman, to intercept the pass if made, to check their defenceman if he has already received the pass or to anticipate a rim around pass to their right winger at the opposite side hash marks.

Our third forward coming in positions himself high in their slot trying to read what their defenceman on the puck will do. Their centre will probably set up in front of their net as both their defenceman are in their corners (see diagram below).

If their defenceman with the puck tries to make the D to D behind their net pass anyway, our forward in the high slot can go to assist our first forward already down low in their corner covering their defenceman receiving the pass. Our first forward should body check their defenceman as usual with our second forward picking up the puck. Our first forward who has pressed their defenceman making the D to D behind their net pass should rotate back into the high slot in case our 2 forechecking forwards on the other side lose the puck down low (see diagram below).

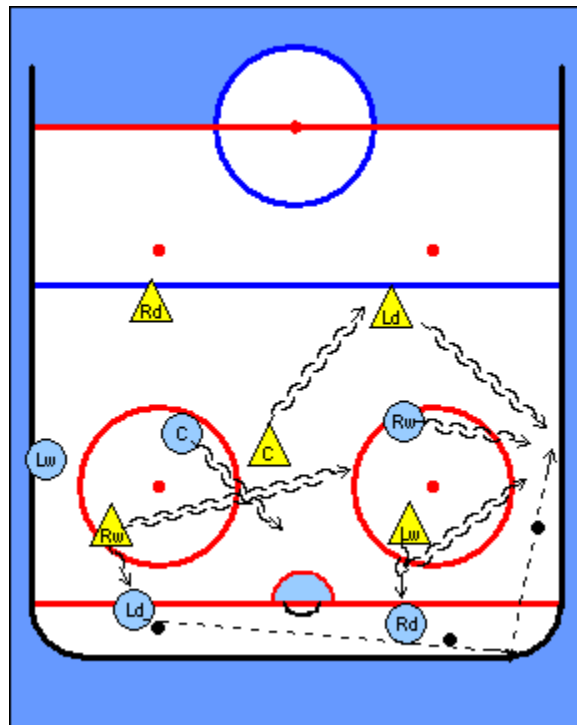


If their Ld in the above diagram sees his intended D to D pass will be covered by our Lw and their Ld decides to fake the D to D behind their net pass and pass the puck up the same side boards to their Lw at the hash marks, our C and Lw will have to read this and rotate to their same side 2 – 1 – 2 forechecking play quickly (see diagram below).





If their Ld in the above diagram sees his intended D to D behind their net pass will be covered by our Lw and decides to rim the puck around hard past their Rd to their Rw at the hash marks on the opposite side, our Lw must try to shut down that play by skating hard to where their Rw is going to pick up the puck. As our Ld sees the puck coming around the boards he must be skating hard towards the puck and assessing whether he can safely pinch and get to the puck before or at the same time as their Rw. If he can do either our Ld should pinch to keep the puck in their zone and our C should be going back hard to cover for our Ld on defence on the blue line (see diagram below).



If our 2 forwards who are 1/2 way to their corners full speed intending to win the puck like this, see their defenceman will be able to complete the D to D or other breakout pass to the half boards, the 2 – 1 – 1 spread forecheck should immediately be converted to 1- 2 – 2 forecheck as described elsewhere in this website. No point in having 1 or 2 of our players caught behind their rush up ice.

UNDERSTAND THEIR BREAKOUT PLAY – READ AND REACT

PRACTICE DRILL:

Run 5 on 5 unit drill with “offensive” forwards and their defencemen starting at the red line in a line across the ice with the centre shooting the puck into the defensive zone. The “defensive” forwards and their defencemen are lined up on the defensive zone blue line so



when the puck is shot in they have the advantage in getting to the puck and their positions before the “offensive” 5 player unit.

The “offensive” unit forechecks and tries to score, and the defensive unit tries to breakout. The “defensive” unit is asked to set up for the defenceman to defenceman behind the net breakout pass and use variations as in the above TIP to confuse the “offensive” forecheckers. 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.

Vary the starting positions of the offensive and defensive units and players (closer together or further apart) to reduce or increase the time the defensive defencemen will have to get puck control in their defensive corner or to go D to D behind their net. This will replicate “real” hockey conditions.

If we are teaching breakout or forechecking systems to players who are not familiar with the options, show them the options off ice on a hockey board, and walk them through the options on ice. Then run this drill with no resistance, then 1 player, then 2 player, then 3 player, and eventually 5 player resistance.

Keep running this drill at every practice so the options chosen both defensive and offensive become second nature depending on offensive and defensive positioning and “time and space”.