



“Down one player 5 on 4 on a penalty kill, it’s very hard for 4 players to cover 5 at a faceoff in the defensive zone, but some options have less risk than others”

DEFENSIVE ZONE – PENALTY KILL FACEOFF POSITIONS – 5 ON 4

OPTION 1

One option lining up in our own zone when they have a 5 on 4 power play against us is to line up as in the diagram below: our left winger (yellow) is in his usual position, our right defenceman is in the right winger’s usual position and our left defenceman is back towards the corner to the left of our net and behind our centre.

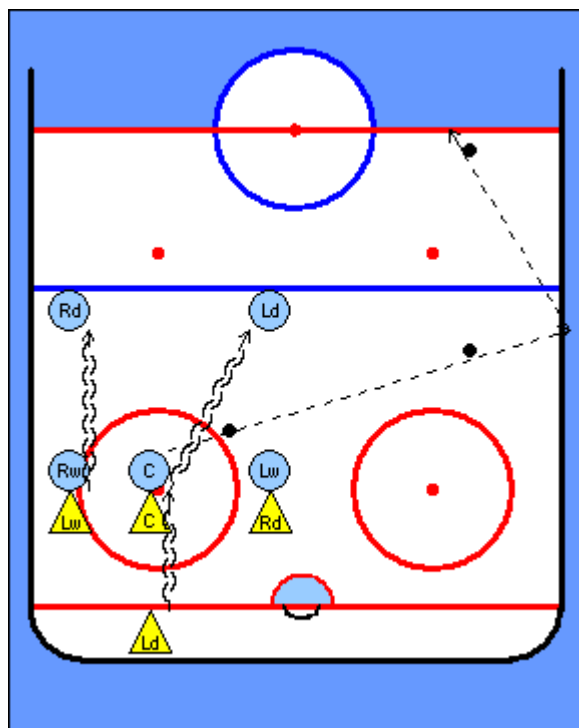
Our centre’s job is to tie up or lock up their centre without getting a faceoff interference penalty and prevent their centre from winning the draw back to either of their defencemen. So our centre in stead of trying to win the draw simply lifts the stick of the other centre off the ice when the puck is dropped and moves into their centre at the faceoff dot, so the puck just sits in or around the faceoff dot and doesn’t go anywhere. Or our centre figures out which way their centre is going to draw the puck back by the way their centre’s body, skates and stick are positioned and at the drop of the puck slaps their centre’s stick the opposite way from the way their centre wanted his stick to go. Again, our centre moves into their centre at the faceoff dot and leaves the puck sitting in or around the faceoff dot.

Our left defenceman knowing our centre is going to do the above, goes hard to the faceoff dot immediately as the puck is being dropped so he can shoot the puck out of our zone hard off the boards to the weak side away from any of their players, or hard up the middle between their two defencemen or hard off the boards on the strong side, depending on which lane is available to get the puck out of our zone.

Our left winger goes hard to cover their right defenceman in case our centre loses the draw, and our centre goes hard to cover their left defenceman if the draw is won back that way.

The problem with this line up is if our centre gets blocked out in trying to cover their left defenceman, and doesn’t get to him in time to stop or block their left defenceman’s shot on goal.

Now we could send our right defenceman in stead of our centre out to cover their left defenceman but then our right defenceman would be out high in our zone and our centre would have to play D down low until they could switch. This may cause confusion so it is not recommended. Better to send our centre to cover their left defenceman.



OPTION 2

A second option lining up in our own zone when they have a 5 on 4 power play against us is to line up as in the next diagram below: our right defenceman (yellow) is in the right winger's usual position, our right winger is just to the right of our right defenceman, and our left defenceman is back towards the corner to the left of our net and behind our centre.

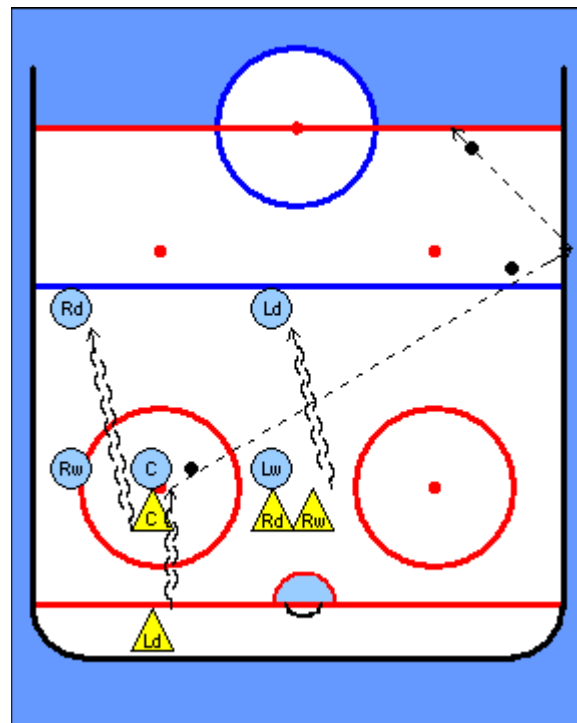
Our centre's job is to tie up or lock up their centre without getting a faceoff interference penalty and prevent their centre from winning the draw back to either of their defencemen. So our centre in stead of trying to win the draw simply lifts the stick of the other centre off the ice when the puck is dropped and moves into their centre at the faceoff dot, so the puck just sits in or around the faceoff dot and doesn't go anywhere. Or our centre figures out which way their centre is going to draw the puck back by the way their centre's body, skates and stick are positioned and at the drop of the puck slaps their centre's stick the opposite way from the way their centre wanted his stick to go. Again, our centre moves into their centre at the faceoff dot and leaves the puck sitting in or around the faceoff dot.

Our left defenceman knowing our centre is going to do the above, goes hard to the faceoff dot immediately as the puck is being dropped so he can shoot the puck out of our zone hard off the boards to the weak side away from any of their players, or hard up the middle between their two defencemen or hard off the boards on the strong side, depending on which lane is available to get the puck out of our zone.



Our right winger goes hard to cover their left defenceman in case our centre loses the draw, and our centre goes hard to cover their right defenceman if the draw is won back that way.

The problem with this line up is if our centre gets blocked out in trying to cover their right defenceman, and doesn't get to him in time to stop or block his shot on goal. This overload line up to the right of the faceoff dot also leaves their right winger completely uncovered as well as most of the side by the boards to the left of our centre.



OPTION 3

A third option lining up in our own zone when they have a 5 on 4 power play against us is to line up as in the next diagram below: our right defenceman (yellow) takes the draw in stead of our centre, our left winger is in his usual position, our centre lines up as the right winger, and our left defenceman is back towards the corner to the left of our net and behind our centre.

Our right defenceman's job in taking the draw is simply to tie up or lock up their centre without getting a faceoff interference penalty and prevent their centre from winning the draw back to either of their defencemen. So our right defenceman in stead of trying to win the draw simply lifts the stick of the other centre off the ice when the puck is dropped and moves into their centre



at the faceoff dot, so the puck just sits in or around the faceoff dot and doesn't go anywhere. Or our right defenceman figures out which way their centre is going to draw the puck back by the way their centre's body, skates and stick are positioned and at the drop of the puck slaps their centre's stick the opposite way from the way their centre wanted his stick to go. Our right defenceman moves into their centre at the faceoff dot and leaves the puck sitting in or around the faceoff dot.

Our left defenceman knowing our right defenceman is going to do the above, goes hard to the faceoff dot immediately as the puck is being dropped so he can shoot the puck out of our zone hard off the boards to the weak side away from any of their players, or hard up the middle between their two defencemen or hard off the boards on the strong side, depending on which lane is available to get the puck out of our zone.

Our centre goes hard to cover their left defenceman in case we lose the draw, and our left winger goes hard to cover their right defenceman if the draw is won back that way. This will leave our centre and left winger at the top of the penalty kill box as they should be if the other team gets puck possession on the faceoff.

Even if the tie up strategy simply delays the time it takes their centre to draw the puck back to one of their defencemen, it gives our forwards more time to get out and cover their defencemen than if we were to lose the draw outright.

This is the preferred line up as long as our defencemen have practiced the tie up faceoff move so they can execute it properly. Tying up is a lot easier than winning the faceoff outright as even good centres may win only about 60% of faceoffs. The successful tie up % is a lot higher than 60% normally. Tying up also takes a lot of arm, wrist and hand strength and many times our defencemen are stronger physically than our forwards. Try OPTION 3 in practice and see how it works. It should work very well with practice.

