



*“Many forwards seem to skate faster and try harder when we have the puck than when we don’t, when a goal against us means as much to us as a goal we score”.*

## **DEFENSIVE ZONE – FORWARDS BACK CHECKING**

When we lose the puck in their zone or in the neutral zone, the forwards must get back into their zone as quickly as they can and cover their open players.

The first forward back no matter what position he is must come back through the middle of the ice so he can cover either side and cover their trailing player in our zone wherever he may be, particularly if it’s a 3 on 2. The next forward back covers any other of their open players by getting beside them or in front of them, not behind them, while our 2 defencemen take care of the wide sides and anyone trying to skate between them to the net.

If a forward can catch their puck carrier he should do so and finish the check even if it is low in our end, not just stay in the vicinity of their players, letting our defencemen do the checking work.

Usually, once all the forwards are back there is time for the forwards to return to their usual responsibilities in our own end ... centre down low and in the corners covering their extra player, and wingers covering down inside our faceoff circles and their defencemen at the blue line, taking the passing lanes away from these defencemen favouring the inside towards the high slot a little. If there isn’t time to get low, stay with our defensive system with the last two players back in our zone covering the passing lanes to their defencemen, particularly their weak side defenceman who may be coming late.