

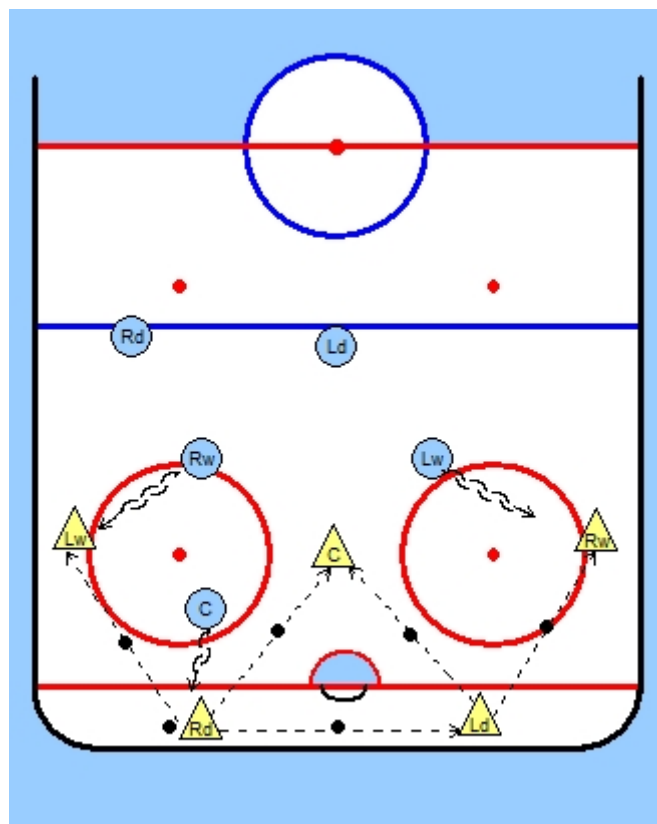


“If they only send one forechecker low and fast to our corner, it should be easier for us to beat it”

DEFENSIVE ZONE – BEATING THE AGGRESSIVE 1 – 2 - 2 FORECHECK - F1 AGGRESSIVE

Some teams will only commit 1 forechecking forward low into our zone hoping this will be enough to cause our D to make a pass that their other 2 forwards can intercept or at least close off.

Imagine they shoot the puck into our corner and they send 1 player low into our corner to check or pressure our defenceman with the puck and the other two position around the top of our circle close enough to the half boards to cover any D to winger pass on either side (see diagram below). Their two defencemen are holding our blue line prepared to come up and challenge our wingers who may be receiving a pass.





What is our defenceman who is going to the puck in our corner supposed to do?

First of all, our defenceman must get there quickly, at top speed. If he hesitates and allows the speed of their forward to take time and space away from him in the corner he will not be able to either win the puck first, make a move to beat their forechecker or pass the puck to one of our players. **The slower our defenceman goes, the easier a target he is to body check.**

Second, our centre, or our first forward back must go in front of our net an equal distance between their 2 higher forwards, creating a 3 on 2 in our favour around the top of our faceoff circles.

Third, our wingers must get to their post positions at the hash marks fast to be able to pick up any release pass from our defenceman.

Now what options do our defenceman have:

- Get the puck, and beat their forechecker with speed, faking one way and going the other, going one way and sharply reversing and going the other using the net as a blocker
- Take the hit from the forechecker and give the hit winning the one-on-one battle, then passing off opposite the flow to our open winger or centre, or D
- If the forechecker is right on our defenceman and he has no time or space, without taking possession of the puck, direct the puck behind our net to our other defenceman – this is the preferred play
- Pass the puck to our centre in front of our net

If they win the puck from our defenceman, our centre must anticipate this and be back to stop their forward going to the net and both of our wingers must assume their regular down low defensive positions.

Remember defencemen,

GET TO THE CORNER IN OUR END FAST, AND GAIN THE TIME AND SPACE TO MAKE A PLAY OR LEAD THE PLAY OUT OF OUR END

And centres,



GET BACK FAST TO COVER ONE OF THEIR FORWARDS DOWN LOW AND BE PHYSICAL

And wingers,

GET INTO YOUR HASH MARK POSITIONS FAST TO RECEIVE THE FAST HARD RELEASE PASS AND GET THE PUCK PAST THEIR DEFENCEMEN IF THEY PINCH

PRACTICE DRILLS:

- 1. 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. 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”.

2. Run 5 on 5 unit drill facing the puck off in the defensive zone with all players in their regular faceoff positions to practice breakouts and forechecking from more of a standstill start – much different from when the puck is shot in.

The “offensive” unit tries to score, and the defensive unit tries to breakout. 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.

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