



PARA ICE HOCKEY (SLEDGE HOCKEY) COACHING RESOURCE

A GUIDE TO INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

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REBRANDING: SLEDGE HOCKEY BECOMES PARA-ICE HOCKEY

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) recently rebranded the sport of sledge hockey. It is now known internationally as Para Ice Hockey with the goal of being more recognizable. Within Canada, most people know the sport as sledge hockey and thus in this resource guide, the names will be used interchangeably.

INDIVIDUAL SKILLS & COACHING RESOURCE GUIDE

The goal of this open access Para Ice Hockey guide is to empower Para Ice hockey coaches, facilitators, and athletes to grow and develop the sport. The resource provides an overview of the game, rules, equipment, individual skill development, and drills for teams/programs that can be used to deliver Para Ice Hockey in a fun and social environment.



The guide is simple to use and can enhance Physical Literacy within your Para Ice hockey program, club, or community. The drills (consisting of fun games and team-based drills) can all be adapted to suit the needs of your participants. This resource provides detailed information with diagrams to clearly explain the drills and will be supplemented with demonstration videos of each individual skill and team drill.

WHAT IS PARA-ICE HOCKEY?

Since its debut at the Lillehammer 1994 Winter Games, the Paralympic version of ice hockey has gained popularity and is now played by male and female athletes all over the world. It follows the rules of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) with modifications. Instead of skates, players use double-blade sledges that allow the puck to pass beneath. Players use two sticks, which have a spike-end for pushing and a blade-end for shooting.

The ice surface and markings, nets and pucks are all the same as ice hockey. Each team consists of six players on the ice, including a goalie. Para Ice hockey rule modifications include:

- An infraction called teeing, assessed when a player charges and makes contact with an opponent using any part of the front radius of their sled at a 90 degree to the opponent's sled.
- Players sit in specially designed sleds (sledges) instead of using skates.
- Players carry two sticks instead of one. Those sticks are approximately 1/3 the length of a regular hockey stick and have a different lie. In addition the sticks have metal picks on the butt end which are used to propel players on the ice.
- Player benches and penalty boxes are modified so that there is a low entrance to the bench as well as clear plexiglass so that players can see the play while they are not on the ice. If the arena has not been modified in this manner, players sit on the ice between the blue line and red line while not in play.

For more information, see:

<https://www.paralympic.org/ice-hockey>.

WHO CAN PLAY?

Para Ice hockey played in local and regional settings are open to athletes of all ability levels (including athletes with diverse physical disabilities, athletes with intellectual disabilities, and athletes without disabilities). Para Ice Hockey offers an inclusive platform to unite athletes of all ability levels to play a fun team sport.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL PARA ICE HOCKEY

Local and regional Para Ice hockey programs are open to people of all ability levels. This includes people with a wide range of physical disabilities, people with intellectual disabilities, and people without disabilities; allowing for an inclusive sporting environment. When first starting a program, the group can include athletes with diverse ages, physical ability levels, pre-existing sporting experiences, etc. and resources such as this help coaches/facilitators to program for diverse athlete groups.

At the grassroots and development levels, amputees, athletes with spinal cord injuries, athletes with spina bifida, cerebral palsy, and other congenital disabilities, athletes with intellectual or learning challenges, and athletes without disabilities commonly play together on the same team or as part of the same program. Generally, Para Ice hockey is considered a co-ed sport at the local and regional levels and clubs/programs are encouraged to find ways to provide an inclusive environment for female athletes. As the number of athletes increase in each region, there are opportunities to develop individual programs geared toward junior athletes or adult-beginner, -intermediate, or -competitive athletes, but finding a way for athletes of different ability levels to play together in certain situations is still important to develop the sport.

Successful programs ensure an environment where new athletes can have a good first contact experience while supporting ongoing athletes to focus on a balance of skill development and fun games/competition. Facilitating fun events for athletes, games amongst similar abilities, and involvement in tournaments can help enhance your program depending on available funds. Most leagues/tournaments in Canada host junior (<14 years of age), intermediate A (highly competitive), intermediate B (medium competitive), intermediate C (less competitive), and recreational (non-competitive) divisions where athletes of all ability levels are welcome.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARA ICE HOCKEY

At the competitive National and International levels, athletes must classify as having a 'noticeable walking impairment' to participate in IPC sanctioned events such as World Championships and the Paralympics. Once an athlete classifies as having the minimum disability requirement, that athlete can participate in IPC sanctioned events. Of all the athletes that classify, the best players play despite their level or type of disability. Lower limb amputees, athletes with low level spinal cord injuries, athletes with Spina Bifida, and athletes with mild walking impairments are the most common athlete based disabilities in IPC sanctioned Para Ice Hockey events. As of 2017, Paralympic Para Ice hockey is considered a co-ed sport and each team can roster female athletes, but rarely do women get selected to National Paralympic teams, particularly in the A division. Female specific national teams are being developed globally to prepare for the eventual inclusion of women's para ice hockey as a Paralympic sport.

PHYSICAL LITERACY

Canadian Sport for Life defines physical literacy as:

Having the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

- Motivation and confidence refers to an individual's enthusiasm, enjoyment of, and self-assurance in adopting physical activity as an integral part of life.
- Physical competence refers to the individual's ability to develop movement skills and patterns, and the capacity to experience a variety of movement intensities and durations. Enhanced physical competence enables an individual to participate in a wide range of physical activities and settings.
- Knowledge and understanding includes the ability to identify and express the essential qualities that influence movement, understand the health benefits of an active lifestyle, and appreciate appropriate safety features associated with physical activity in a variety of settings.

Individuals who are physically literate have developed all of these components by participating in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments.

PHYSICAL LITERACY & PARA ICE HOCKEY

Para Ice Hockey supports the development of physical literacy through a variety of physical skills. Para Ice Hockey develops the physical skills of coordination, balance, striking, power, speed, accuracy, and agility. Para Ice Hockey is an excellent activity to encourage individuals to practice and refine these skills in a fun, social environment.

It is important to consider how you can include people with physical disabilities in your session so that they have the same opportunities to develop their Physical Literacy skills.

Below are examples of things to consider when facilitating a Para Ice hockey session or practice.



Pre- and Post-Session Time: Allocate enough time before your session to set-up an environment that allows athletes to transfer into sledges in a safe environment (puck board and lots of space can be helpful) and enough time and space after your session to allow participants to transfer out of their sledges safely.

Equipment Set-up: Getting athletes setup with the appropriate equipment is one of the most important things to ensure success and a good first contact experience. Spend the time meeting an athlete early, getting to know them and their specific needs, and setting them up in equipment that will allow them to be successful. Recognize that ongoing modifications and changes will help your athletes to be more successful and set aside time to help them with this. See equipment section for more information.

Leader Communication: When athletes are in sledges, it can be hard to hear stand-up coaches and/or facilitators. Make sure all athletes can hear you by using a whistle, kneeling to the level of athletes, use coaching boards for visual learners, and/or jump in a sledge.

Skills: Make the tasks challenging but achievable for each athlete. This can be a challenge when you have so many diverse athletes as part of your program or club. Allowing for options and differentiated instruction can be very helpful to ensure all your athletes are challenged with a given task but not overwhelmed. This may require having several facilitators/coaches on the ice at one time.

Para Hockey is Different from Ice Hockey: Many facilitators/coaches come from Ice Hockey, and it's important to recognize that there are differences between the two sports. Take some time to play/coach in a sledge to better understand the limitations in a sledge (ex. inability to skate backwards, how hard it is to receive a puck from behind etc.), and your athletes will appreciate this. Use stand-up hockey drills but always be open to modifying them if they are not working for Para Ice hockey or for individual athletes.

Every Athlete is Unique: Understanding that each athlete is unique in their ability level, sport background, learning styles, attention span etc. is the key to success. It is a challenge to provide great programming to a diverse group but when successful can be very rewarding. Remember that athletes with physical disabilities deal with many ongoing challenges and may need to get off the ice to use bathrooms, adjust buckles, check on pressure sores etc. Being understanding about an athlete's individual needs is all part of accommodating athletes with physical disabilities into your programs. Helping athletes to recognize and embrace each other's differences is important to having a successful team where each person has a role (despite their ability level).

Participant Communication and Enjoyment: Encourage all participants to communicate with each other in a positive way and encourage a social environment so your athletes keep coming back.

Barriers to Participation: It's important to recognize the barriers that athletes with disabilities face. In Para Ice hockey, some of the major barriers are finances (ice time and equipment is expensive) as many athletes with disabilities have subsidized income that does not leave them with much money for recreational activities. Some organizations work hard to offer supplemented program fees for athletes who prove financial need. In addition, transportation to and from hockey (often with heavy equipment) can be a barrier. Some organizations overcome this by providing equipment for their athletes or a storage location at the ice rink.

RULES

A complete list of rules is available on the Paralympic website below. Remember that at the local and regional level, the goal is to get every interested person playing Para Ice hockey. This sometimes means making modifications to the Para Ice to allow a specific athlete to be successful. For instance, allowing an athlete to have a pusher out on the ice to keep them involved in the game, or to allow extra athletes on the ice to even out teams. At the grassroots and development level, use your discretion with the goal of leveling out the playing field to allow athletes on both teams to be successful.

www.paralympic.org/ice-hockey/rules-and-regulations/rules



DIFFERENTIATING PRACTICE

Differentiated Instruction and Universal Design are very similar concepts that share many of the same goals and ideas about learning that can be used in teaching and coaching. However, the two concepts are not synonymous as they differ in key aspects of their guiding principles.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated Instruction is all about creating and using specific drills or strategies that cater to all of the different skill or ability levels you are working with, and adapting your practice as you go in reaction to your observations of the athletes' ability levels. In theory, this is often considered best practice. But in reality, Differentiated Instruction can sometimes be difficult to implement with very diverse groups and low coach-to-athlete ratios (often the reality within most recreation sports leagues). This concept places a lot of emphasis on consistently assessing athletes, determining what they need, and then adjusting the instruction in order to meet those needs.

Universal Design

Universal Design is a concept best explained by using an analogy of stairs vs ramp. Stairs may work for most, but a ramp likely works for everyone and is more inclusive option because people of all abilities can use it together (an elevator would be the most inclusive version of this analogy). This philosophy of Universal Design can quite easily be transferred over to areas of teaching and coaching. For example, instead of separating athletes by ability through differentiation, Universal Design is all about creating tasks or drills that can be practiced universally. Its design allows all ability levels to experience success through unique entry points and creatively built in drill flexibility/modifications (ex. covert vs overt practice, speed, time, space, open vs closed environment, cooperative vs competitive, etc.). Using Universal Design concepts, coaches anticipate the problems that could arise in the lesson and incorporate modifications into the curriculum from the onset (ie. building a ramp in anticipation of people needing it).

It is important to adapt practices and games to allow everyone to be involved. Differentiating practices will enable new learning opportunities for participants, allow participants to feel challenged, encourage participants to achieve their progressive goals within Para Ice hockey, and have fun! Differentiating practice can be done by making minor adjustments to your original plan.

TIP: A simple approach to differentiating practices is to adapt any of the point in the simple acronym STEPS:

Space

Time

Equipment

People

Success

By changing any of these variables in your practice, you can make a practice, drill, or skill more or less difficult for a participant. Adopting these principles will progress a player's success and enjoyment in the sport.

As creators of this document, we cannot provide every potential way to adapt your program for success, but we have included some starting points in this resource. We hope we have empowered you to start trying your own adjustments, and that over time, you will figure out what works and what does not with your group of athletes.

PARA ICE HOCKEY SKILLS BREAKDOWN

The following pages consist of a breakdown of important Para Ice Hockey skills, and a brief explanation for each. These pages will be further updated soon with accompanying links to video explanations.

STARTING POSITION

- Hands at top of sticks
- Upper body leaning forward from hips and sitting on front of blades
- Sticks at a 45 degree angle to the ice when starting in stride, for maximum force generation



STARTS

ALTERNATE PICKING: Less efficient but helps players who are off balance in their sled and out of play rejoin the game quickly.

- Start in ready position
- Alternate driving picks into the ice
- Complete 2-4 alternating strides before starting to simultaneous pick



SIMULTANEOUS PICKING:

- Start in ready position
- Drive both sticks into the ice at the same time
- Complete 3-5 quick short strides before lengthening stride



FORWARD STRIDE

- After initial starting strides, gradually extend the length of your stride
- Arms should be extended so they are parallel with the ice
- Picks should strike the ice at the same time on a 45 degree angle to the ice
- Start to pull arms back to the side of the body while maintaining contact with the ice



GETTING UP

- Keep your stick in your hands
- Bring in the arm that is on the side you fell on so that it is bent and ready to straighten as you push up
- The stick in the other hand will have its pick thrust into the ice for stability while getting up
- In one large motion, straighten the arm closest to the ice while using the other stick to continue to help you all the way up onto your blades



STOPPING

BEGINNER:

- Player starts to turn the sled in the direction they will face when they stop
- Player uses stick on the side they wish to stop as a pivot point to turn body quickly by digging the pick into the ice
- In one motion, they will unweight their sled and raise up on the outside edge of the blade which is the closest to the side they are wishing to face to stop (i.e., stop facing left outside edge of left blade)
- Once up on the blade, the player will dig that edge into the ice while leaning away from the direction they were originally going



ADVANCED:

- Player starts to turn sled in the direction they will face when they stop
- In one motion, the player will unweight their sled and raise up on the outside edge of the blade which is closest to the side they are wishing to face to stop (i.e., stop facing left = outside edge of left blade)
- Once up on the blade, the player will dig that edge into the ice which leaning away from the direction they were originally going



TIGHT TURNS

BEGINNER:

- Player initiates turn by leaning body towards the direction of the turn
- Beginners often find that having the inside hand on the ice allows them to lean in and turn sharper
- The outside stick continues to pick to keep momentum



ADVANCED:

- Player initiates turn by leaning the body towards the direction of the turn
- Experienced players use the end of their stick to help them pivot and reduce drag
- The outside stick continues to pick to help keep momentum if needed



WIDE TURNS

- Player initiates turn by leaning body towards direction of turn
- Beginners often put their hand on the ice to help them lean inwards and keep balance while on the outside edge of the inside blade. They continue to push with the outside stick
- Experienced players should keep balance on the outside edge of the inside blade while picking with both sticks to keep speed



BACKHAND STATIONARY PASSING

- Both players hold their stick so their hand is one-half to two-thirds down the shaft from normal skating position
- The player making the pass starts puck at the heel of their stick blade. The player then pushes the puck as it rolls down off the toe of the stick blade. The player then finishes the motion by pointing at the target
- The player receiving the pass has their stick blade on the ice as a target ready to cushion the pass as it hits their stick



FOREHAND STATIONARY PASSING

- Both players hold their stick so their hand is one-half to two-thirds down the shaft from normal skating position
- The player making the pass starts the puck at the heel of their stick blade. The stick should start around the players' hip and they can then push the puck forward as it rolls down off the toe of the stick blade. The player then can finish the motion by pointing at the target (other player's stick blade)
- The player receiving the pass has their stick blade on the ice ready to cushion the pass as it travels to their stick blade



PASSING WHILE MOVING

- Skills are similar to the stationary pass
- Depending on the speed of play, players may have to practice sliding their passing hand from the skating position to passing position quite quickly
- If the receiver does not give a target with their stick blade, the passer can aim for the nose piece of the receiver's sled
- Encourage players to call for the pass



Stickhandling

- Player holds stick so their hand is one-half to two-thirds down the shaft from normal skating position
- Blade should be flat on ice with puck position in the centre of the blade
- Player then moves puck from front to back side of blade
- For young players, try to get them to imagine spreading peanut butter on toast as this helps them to have a fluid motion
- Encourage players to stickhandle near the nose piece of their sledge and with their head up

WRIST SHOT

- Player holds the stick two-thirds down the shaft from the normal skating position
- The stick should start in line with players' hip. The puck starts on the heel of the stick blade
- The player then puts pressure on the blade and pushes the puck towards the net. Applying pressure onto the blade results with the puck rolling towards the toe of the stick blade
- The player finishes the motion by pointing the toe of the stick at the target



SNAPSHOT

- The player holds the stick two-thirds down the shaft from the normal skating position
- The stick should start in line or slightly behind the hip of the player. The puck starts 2-3 inches in front of the stick
- The player puts pressure on the blade while locking wrist before making contact with the puck. Once contact is made, the player snaps wrist over to generate power very quickly
- The player finishes the motion by pointing the toe of the stick at the target



BACKHAND SHOT

- The player holds the stick two-thirds down the shaft from the normal skating position
- The player brings the puck back towards their body before pushing it towards the target to allow time to generate force
- The player finishes by positioning the stick high or low at the target depending on where they would like the puck to go



SLAPSHOT

- The player holds the stick two-thirds down the shaft from the normal skating position
- The puck should be in line with the players' hip. The player lifts their stick back with their wrist locked. The player then strikes the ice slightly behind the puck to generate force
- Contact with the puck is very short and leaves the player finishing the shot with their stick pointed at the target



ANGLING

- The player back checking on defence must gain inside position on the attacking player, protecting the middle of the ice
- The back checking player adjusts their speed to become slightly ahead of the opponent attacking with the puck
- The defender lines up their bucket with the front of the opponent's bucket to ensure proper alignment
- The defending player narrows the path of the attacking player to take away passing options and eventually cutting off the attacking players' path completely




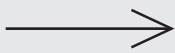



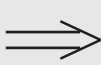



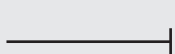

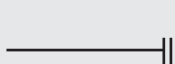


SKILL DEVELOPMENT

| | | ACCURACY | ANGLING | CHECKING | PASSING | POSITIONING | SHOOTING | SKATING | STICKHANDLING | TEAMWORK |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|-------------|----------|---------|---------------|----------|
| p. 19 | 2 Pass 2 Shot | | | | | | | | | |
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DRILL DIAGRAMS KEY

LEGEND

Each drill will have an accompanying diagram to help athletes/coaches better understand the game procedure. See below for a legend of symbols used in the drill diagrams throughout this resource.

| | | | |
|---|------------------|--|--------------------|
|  | Coach |  | Forward Skating |
|  | Players (Team 1) |  | Puck Carrying |
|  | Players (Team 2) |  | Shooting |
|  | Forwards |  | Pass |
|  | Defenders |  | Defensive Pressure |
|  | Goalie |  | Stop |
|  | Pylon |  | Pucks |

2 PASS 2 SHOT

AIM OF THE GAME

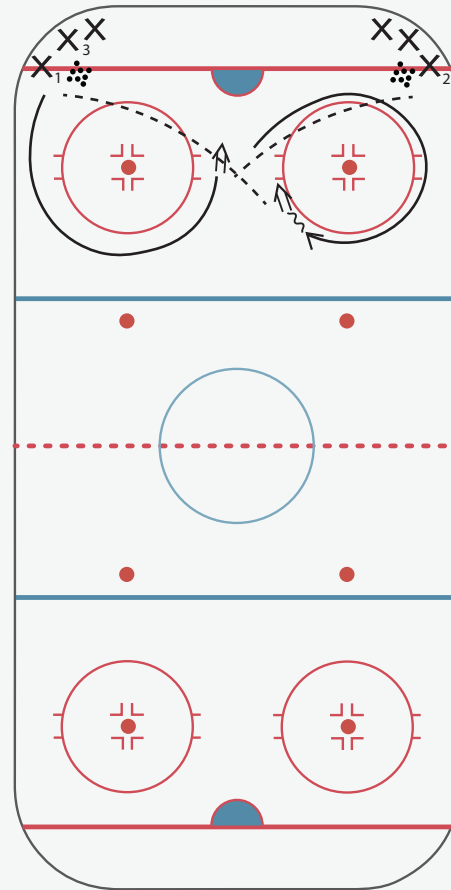
Passing/Shooting

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players split up into two lines in each corner.
2. X1 leaves without puck and goes around top of circle.
3. X1 receives pass from X2 and then shoots puck.
4. X1 continues around other circle and then receives puck from X3 for a shot on net.
5. X2 then leaves and does same pattern from their line.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Player receiving pass ensure they give a good target for passers and call for the puck.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Shoot with non-dominant hand.
- Quick release or one-timer shot.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Place stationary puck in slot for player to skate onto.

3 PLAYER SHOOTING

AIM OF THE GAME

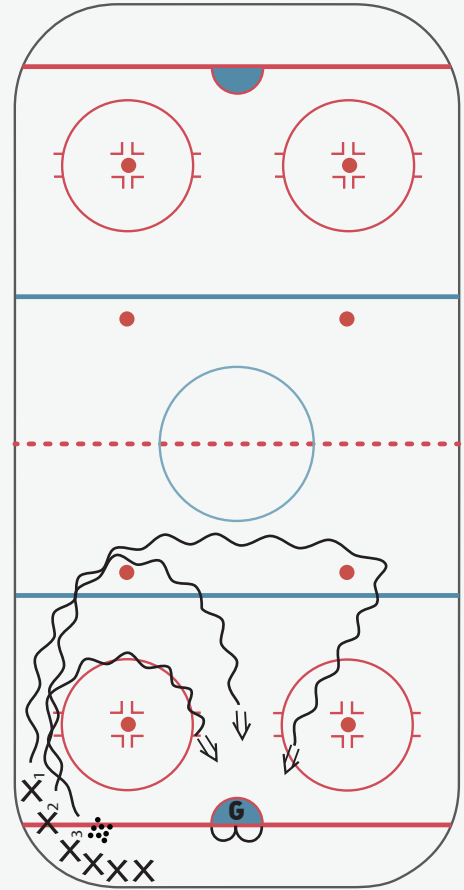
Stickhandling/Shooting

HOW TO PLAY

1. First 3 players in line leave at the same time with a puck.
2. X1 skates around the nearest circle and shoots.
3. X2 skates around the nearest neutral zone face off dot and shoots.
4. X3 skates around the other neutral zone face off dot and shoots.
5. Players line up in other corner afterwards to practice shooting from both sides of ice.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons (optional)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Timing needs to be correct so that goalie does not get more than 1 shot at a time.
- Work on quick transition from skating to shooting.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Shoot and stickhandle with non-dominant hand.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Player with lower skill choose to be X1 to focus more on shot versus stickhandling.
- Coach can place pylons to go around if neutral zone dots are too far or hard to see.

4 LANE STICKHANDLING

AIM OF THE GAME

Stickhandling

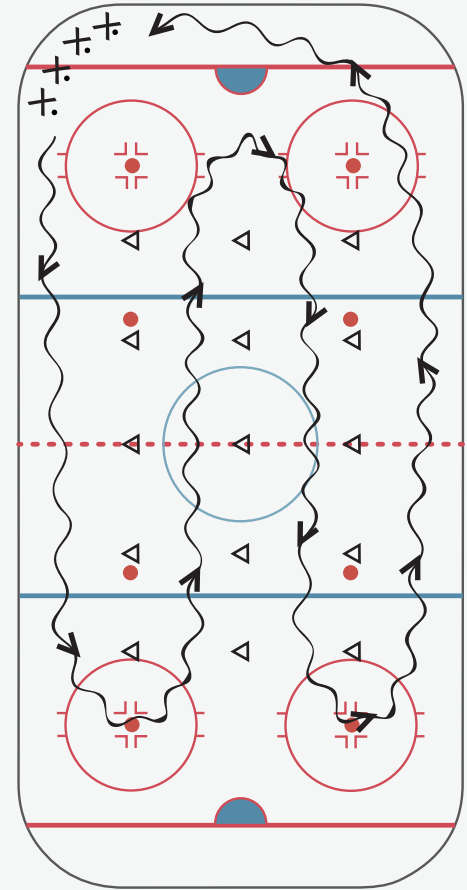
HOW TO PLAY

1. Divide the ice into 4 lanes by using pylons.
2. Each lane will be a different type of stickhandling skill

Eg. Right Hand Only
Left Hand Only
Underneath sled
Bank passes to self
Acceleration
Toe Drag
Slow Out; Quick In
2 Puck Variations

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Refer to stickhandling skill video.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Players who move quicker can pass other players.
- Use non-dominant hand if not already directed to do so.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Players with lower skills can go at a slower pace.
- Have additional pucks available if puck is lost.

4 PYLON CHASE

AIM OF THE GAME

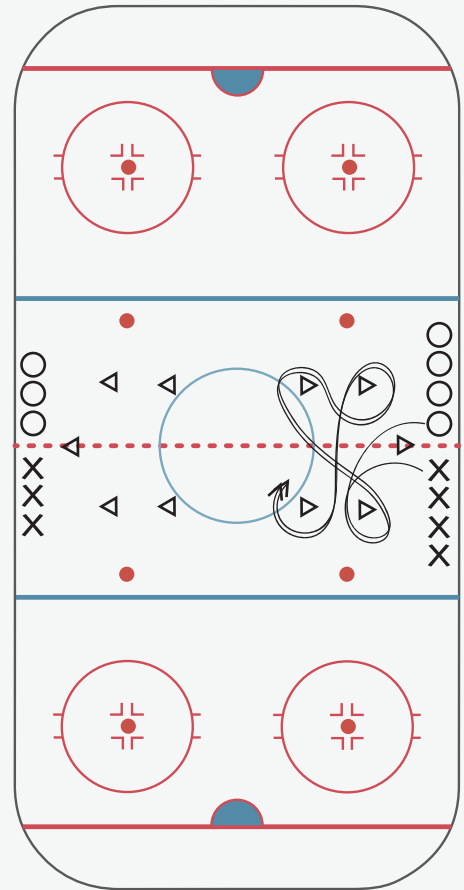
Skating/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players split up into two lines. One line will be the chased and the other line will be the chaser.
2. The chased will leave first. Once they get past the first pylon, the chaser will leave.
3. The chased will choose whatever pattern they wish as they weave in and out of the 4 pylons set up. The chaser must follow the exact same pattern.
4. The drill continues until the chaser catches the first person or 30 seconds goes by.
5. Get players to switch lines after turn.

EQUIPMENT

- 5 pylons per station
- Pucks (optional)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players start with their backs against the board to ensure fairness.
- Encourage players to practice both wide and tight turns.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- One or both players must use a puck during this drill.
- Move the pylons closer together.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Give more time to player being chased or give less time to player doing the chasing by moving the pylon or having coach control starts.
- Move the pylons further apart.

ASTEROIDS

AIM OF THE GAME

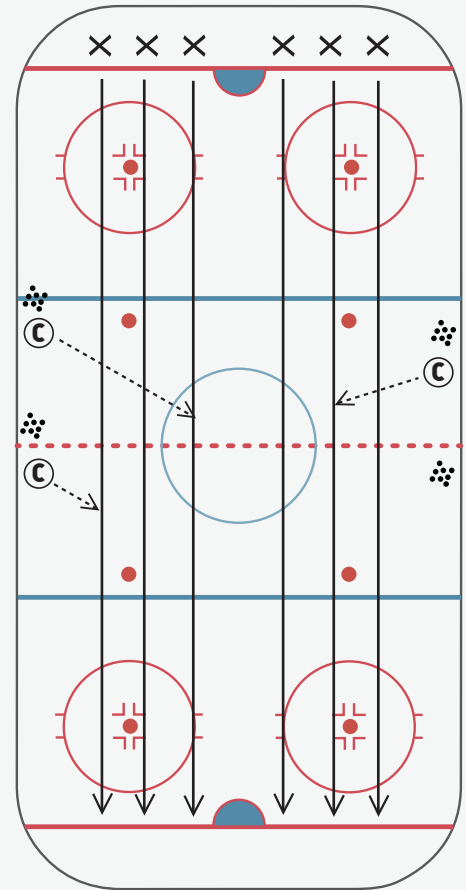
Skating/Passing

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players line up on goal line and coaches have pucks on neutral zone boards.
2. On the whistle, players try to skate to other goal line without getting hit in the blades or their nose piece with a puck that the coaches are passing at them.
3. If player gets hit with puck, they must then join the coaches for the next round.
4. Drill continues to go until there is only 1 person left.

EQUIPMENT

- 2-3 pucks per player



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players cannot block the pucks with their sticks.
- Pucks must stay on the ice to ensure safety.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Coaches/Players can pass from both sides so skating players have to be aware.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Coaches/Players can only pass from one side of the neutral zone.
- Players with less strength can move off the boards when passing the puck.

BASEBALL

AIM OF THE GAME

Skating/Passing/Shooting/Teamwork

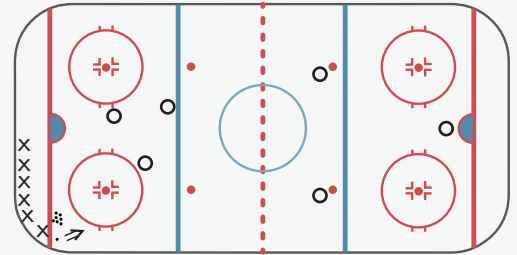
HOW TO PLAY

1. Break players in to 2 teams.
2. Batting team lines up in corner behind goal line. The first player shoots the puck to a space on the ice away from the outfield players. Once they shoot the puck they then skate as fast as they can around the middle circle and across the goal line on the other side of the net.
3. The outfield players spread out around the ice. They will get the puck that the batter shoots. They must make at least 3 passes before attempting to shoot.
4. If outfield scores before batter makes it past goal line the batter is out. If they don't score, the batter is safe.
5. Teams can choose to let every player bat or go with traditional baseball rules of 3 outs per inning.

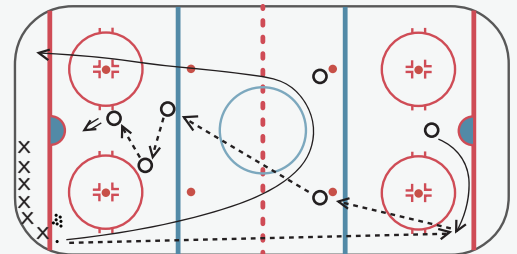
EQUIPMENT

- 1 puck
- Pylons (to ensure consistent base running)

PART 1



PART 2



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- If outfield misses a pass, they must start over their 3 pass count.
- If batter can shoot the puck into the far net this is a home run.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Increase the number of passes the outfield must make before shooting.
- Increase the distance that the batter must skate.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Decrease the number of passes the outfield must make before shooting.
- Decrease the distance the batter must skate.
- Require the outfield to all start behind blue line.

CAPTURE THE PUCK

AIM OF THE GAME

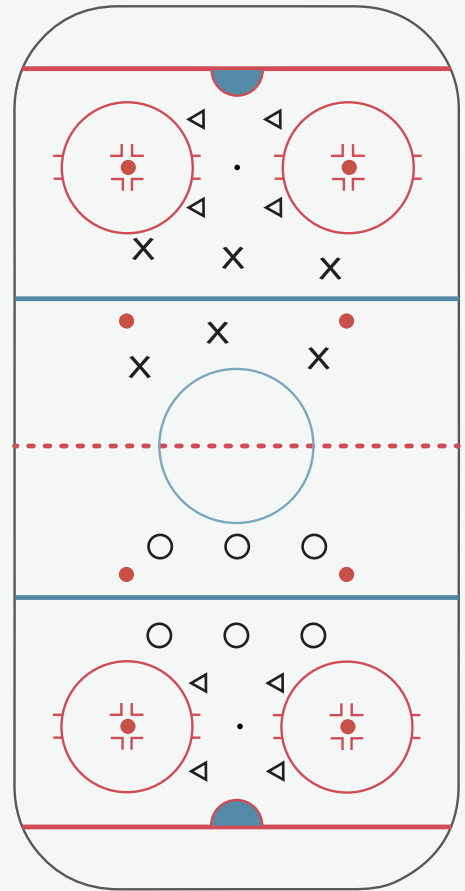
Skating/Stickhandling/Angling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players split up into two teams with each team taking a side of the ice. A puck is put in the middle of 4 pylons (safety zone) in front of each net.
3. The goal is for a team to make it to the other team's safety zone to get the puck and then bring it back to their own side.
4. However, as soon as the player crosses over the red line to the other team's side they can be tagged. If they are tagged on the other team's side they have to stay frozen in that spot with their arms outstretched. The only way they can get unfrozen is by one of their teammates coming over to give them a high five.
5. If the player makes it to the safe zone without getting tagged they can stay in their until they attempt to take the puck back to their own side. However, if they leave that safety zone and get tagged they must freeze where they are and the puck will be placed back in the safety zone. *The first team to get the other team's puck back to their side wins!

EQUIPMENT

- 2 pucks
- 8 pylons



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players MUST skate the puck (no passing the puck out).
- Players can either choose to go get the puck or save one of their teammates. They cannot do both in the same turn.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Move the safety zone behind the net.
- Players must stickhandle with weaker hand.
- Make the safety zone smaller or take it away completely.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Move the safety zone closer to the red line.
- Players can pass the puck over the red line.
- Make the safety zone larger.

AIM OF THE GAME

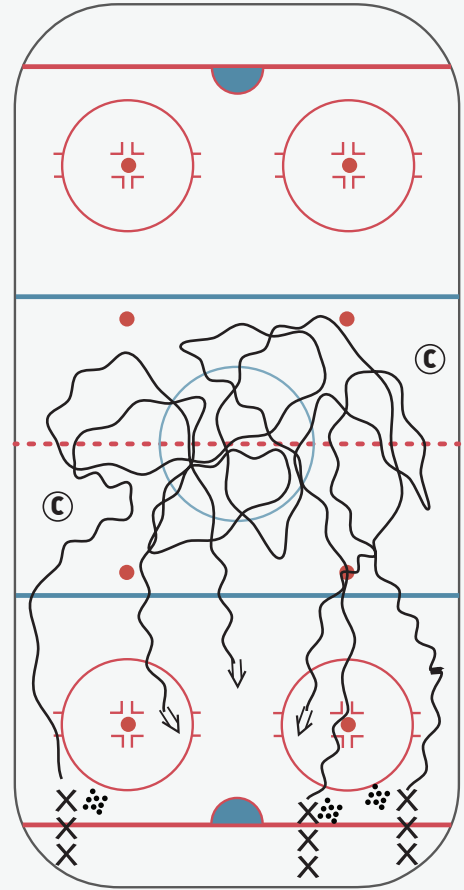
Stickhandling/Shooting

HOW TO PLAY

1. First player in each line leaves at the same time with a puck.
2. They stickhandle around the neutral zone while coach applies light pressure.
3. Coach then tells players one at a time to go to the Left, Right or Middle lane to shoot the puck in the end that they originally came from.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- If coach decides to do whistle control instead, ensure that players do not all shoot at same time.
- Players must go in different lanes so goaltender can practice different angles.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Shoot and stickhandle with non-dominant hand.
- Run out of both ends so that there are more players in to “create chaos”.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Run out of one end or decrease amount of lines for less chaos in neutral zone.
- Take away coach pressure.

CIRCLE DRILL

AIM OF THE GAME

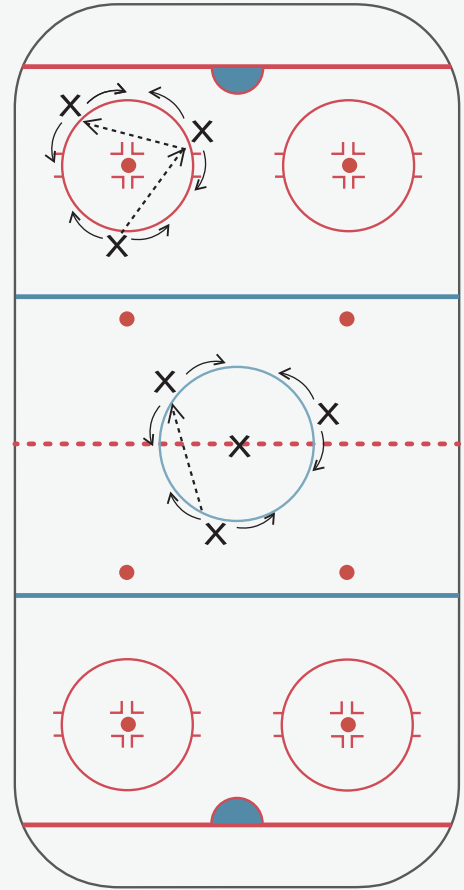
Passing/Positioning

HOW TO PLAY

1. 4-5 players spread around 1 circle passing a puck.
2. After 2-3 minutes 1 player goes in the middle of the circle without the puck.
3. The rest of the players then pass the puck around the circle trying not to get it intercepted by the middle player.
4. If middle player intercepts pass the last person to pass the puck now switches places with the middle player.

EQUIPMENT

- Puck



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players keep moving along edge of circle but do not overlap one another.
- Players wanting to receive the pass make sure to get into open lanes. Remember to try to give the passer two options to pass to.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Pass with non-dominant hand.
- Put two players in middle of circle or decrease number of players on outside of circle.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- No player in middle of circle.

CROSS ICE 1-ON-1

AIM OF THE GAME

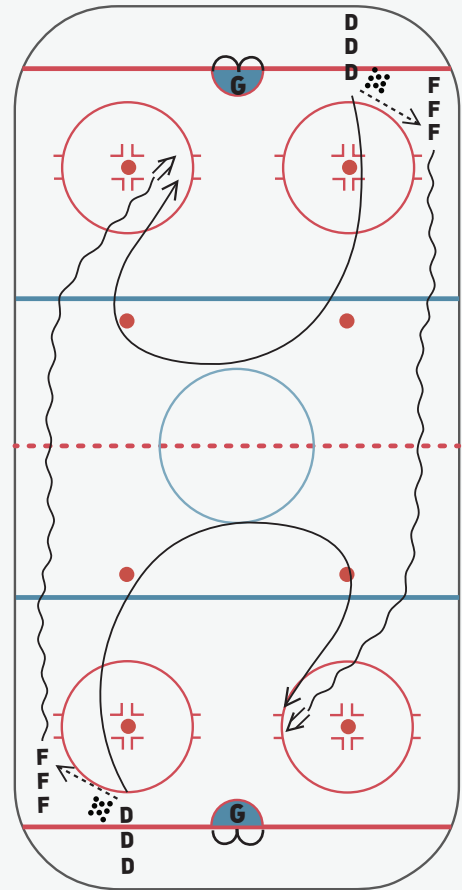
Stickhandling/Angling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Both ends go at the same time on the coach's whistle, following the same pattern.
2. The first defense in each line passes the puck to the first forward in line in their end.
3. Once pass is complete, forward skates down with the puck to the other end to go shoot on far net.
4. The defense then skates towards the middle of the ice to go 1 on 1 versus the forward coming from the other end of the rink.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons (optional)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players must go at same time for this drill to work (E.g., on coach's whistle).
- Defense must gap up or get close enough to the oncoming forward to keep them to the outside of the rink.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Try to go against player of equal skill level.
- Higher skilled players can delay leaving to give other player greater chance of success.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Forward can start with puck to take away having to receive pass.
- Players can move further up the ice to decrease distance needed to skate.
- Put pylon on ice the defense has to go around to help them with correct angling.

FOUR CORNER 1-ON-1

AIM OF THE GAME

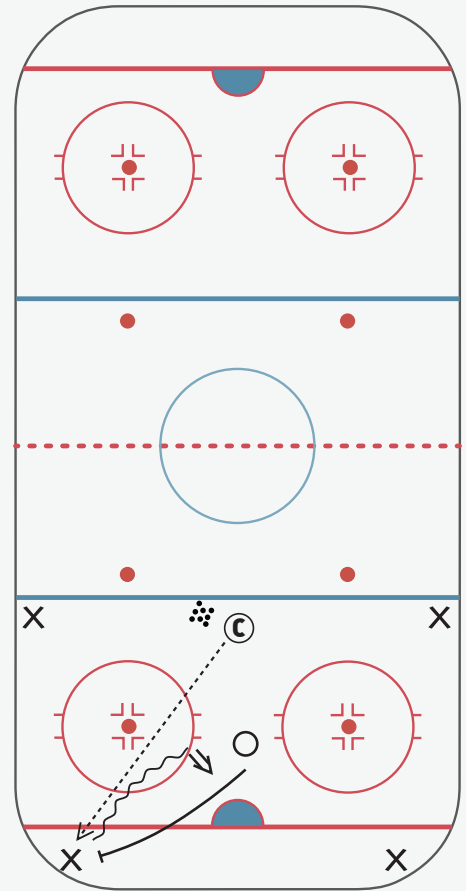
Angling/Checking/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Defensive player starts in front of the net.
2. Coach is in the middle of the blue line with the pucks with 4 players in each corner of the zone.
3. The coach will then pass a puck to the player to go against the defensive player 1 on 1.
4. Players go until offensive player scores, goalies saves puck, defensive player passes puck back to coach or coach blows whistle to end 1 on 1.
5. Defensive player then goes back to net front to go 3 more times and then switches out with another player.

EQUIPMENT

- 1 puck per offensive player



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Defensive player tries to keep offensive player towards the boards to cut down shooting angle.
- Encourage offensive players to keep control of puck to get close shot rather than shooting from far out or bad angle.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Give less rest time in between the four 1 on 1's to defensive player.
- Use non-dominant hand to stickhandle and/or shoot for offensive players.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Require highly skilled players to use non-dominant hand against lower skilled defensive players.
- Give more rest time in between the four 1 on 1's to defensive player or decrease to less consecutive 1 on 1's (e.g., Coach only choose 2 offensive players to go instead of all 4).

HIGH LOW

AIM OF THE GAME

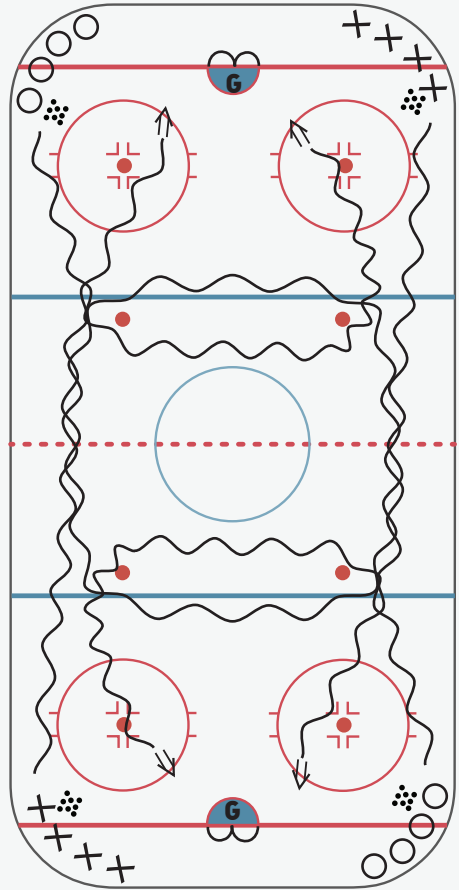
Stickhandling/Shooting

HOW TO PLAY

1. The first player in each line leaves on the whistle with a puck.
2. O goes around the closer neutral zone dots (low); X goes around the far neutral zone dots (high).
3. Both players head back to end the came from to shoot puck.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons (optional)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players must go at same time for this drill to work (E.g., on coach's whistle).
- If player who goes high is faster than player who goes low they must delay or ensure they are not shooting the puck at the same time as the other player.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Go both ends of the ice at one time so players keep their heads up.
- Use non-dominant hand for both stickhandling and shooting.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Players with lower skills choose closer dots, or coach sets up closer pylons for them to go around.

NEUTRAL ZONE REGROUP WITH 2-ON-1

AIM OF THE GAME

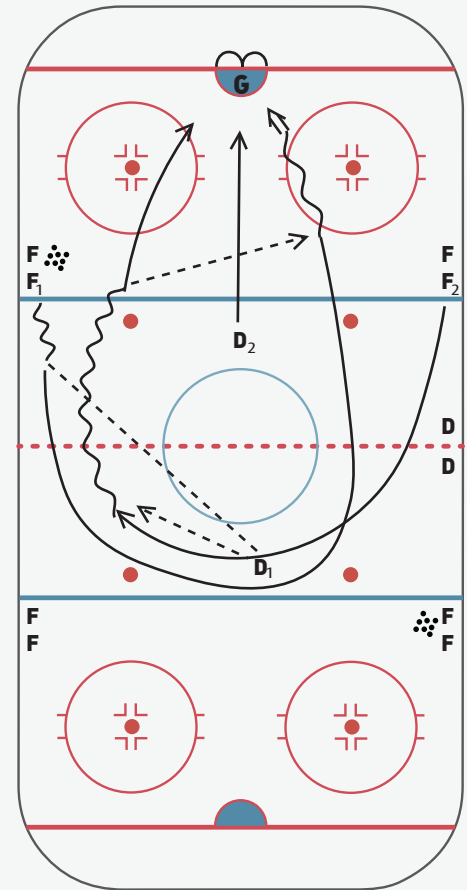
Positioning/Passing

HOW TO PLAY

1. Forwards go at the ends of both blue lines.
2. Two defence start in the middle of the neutral zone on either side of the red line. The rest wait to the side of the neutral zone.
3. On whistle, F1 and F2 leave. F1 leaves with a puck and passes to D1.
4. F1 will then swing behind D1 to other side of neutral zone while F2 swings in front of D1 to fill a lane.
5. D1 will pass to either F1 or F2 depending on angle given.
6. F1 and F2 come back down to the end they started from going 2 on 1 versus D2.
7. Another defence fills the spot of D2 and the same pattern happens from the other end.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Forwards must cross low enough in the neutral zone to give D1 a good passing angle.
- D2 can skate up with the forwards as they regroup so that the gap or space during the 2 on 1 is not too large.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Encourage F1 to pass while in motion.
- Encourage D1 and D2 to not sit still during drill to make it more game-like.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Take out the 2 on 1 to just work on neutral zone regroup.

PASSING & KEEP AWAY

AIM OF THE GAME

Passing/Angling/Checking/Stickhandling

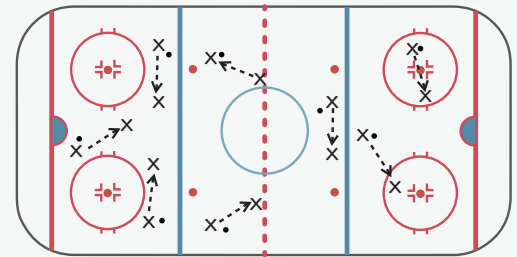
HOW TO PLAY

1. Break into partners of equal skill level.
2. Player starts 8-10 feet away from their partner passing the puck.
3. When coach blows whistle, whichever player has the puck on their stick keeps it away from their partner. Partner tries to take puck back and if successful, will then keep it away from their partner.
4. This will continue for 20-30 seconds until coach blows whistle again. Partners then go back to passing.

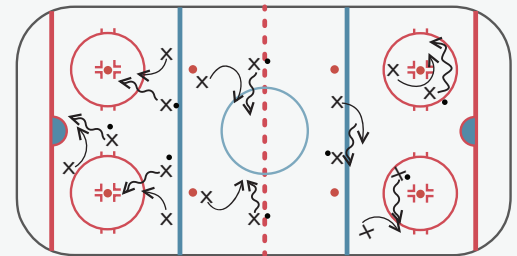
EQUIPMENT

- 1 puck per partnership

PART 1



PART 2



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Encourage players to stay in one area of the ice. For younger players you may need to ask them to stay in a circle or set up boundaries for them.
- Encourage different types of passing (both hands, back hand, saucer pass).

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Give less passing time (ie., Decrease rest).
- Pass while moving.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Come closer together to pass.
- If skills are not matched, require player with puck to use non-dominant hand and stay in small area.
- Instead of 1 on 1 have a third player join the group.

PUCK PIRATES

AIM OF THE GAME

Stickandling/Checking

HOW TO PLAY

1. Coach picks 1 to 3 players to be the Pirates.
2. Everyone else has a puck and stays inside one of the offensive zones.
3. On whistle, players start skating with pucks and the pirates try to take away their puck and pass it over the blue line into the abyss.
4. If player gets their puck taken away, they then become a pirate until there is only 1 person left with a puck.

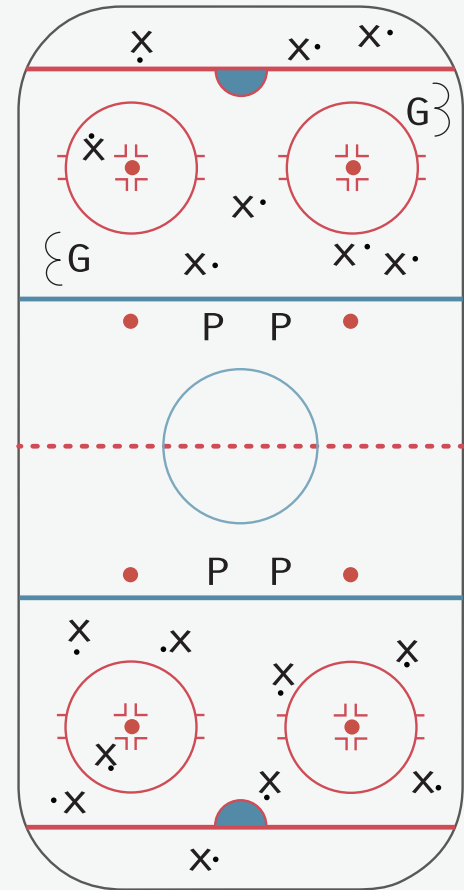
WITH GOALIES

1. Instead of pirates passing puck over blue line, they have 1 chance to score on either goalie.
2. If goalie saves the puck, the player gets their puck back. If pirate scores, the player becomes a pirate.

EQUIPMENT

- 1 puck per player

P = Pirates



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players have to keep moving with the puck even if not being chased.
- If you notice another person shooting on the goalie, delay so that there are not two shots at once.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Decrease the size of the playing zone.
- Use non-dominant hand to stickhandle and/or shoot.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Increase the size of the playing zone.
- Increase number of pirates to start.

REACTION TIME PUCK RACE

AIM OF THE GAME

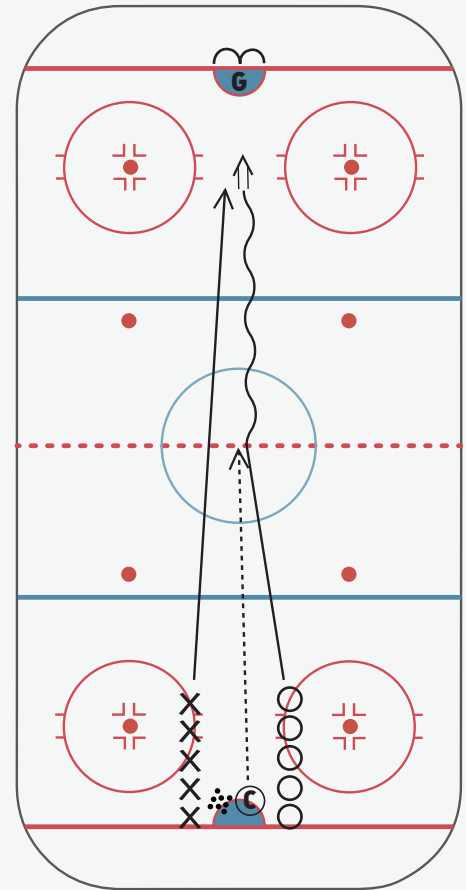
Skating/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. First player in each line gets in ready position with eyes facing forward
2. Coach will pass a puck towards centre ice
3. As soon as the players sees the puck come into their peripheral vision, they can start to stride
4. Players race for puck. The first player to reach the puck goes down to the far end to score
5. The other player continues to skate to try to get puck (backcheck). If player does get the puck, they go down to score

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons (if players have different starting points)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Quick, short strides to start
- Drill does not stop until the goalie saves puck or a goal is scored. No quitting!

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Match up against someone of a similar skill level
- Start at top of circle to give opponent more time to gain momentum
- Control the puck with your non-dominant hand

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Match up against someone of similar skill level
- Start further back to see puck first and react
- Second coach at the other end to pass puck to second player for shot

RING BATTLE

AIM OF THE GAME

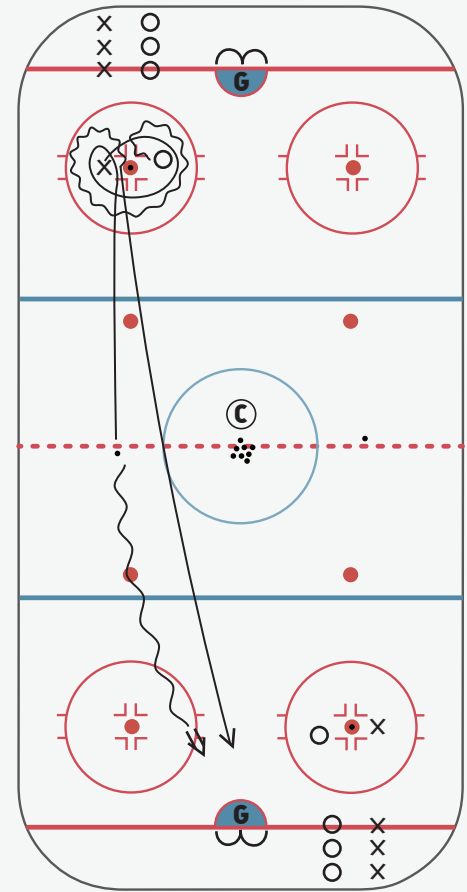
Checking/Angling/Skating/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Two players start across from each other on the hashmarks of the circle.
2. On the coach's first whistle the players battle for puck in the middle of the circle.
3. On the coach's second whistle the players leave that puck and race for the puck on the red line.
4. The player that gets to the puck first tries to go score on goalie. The player that does not reach the puck first continues to back check in order to try to get the puck back to score (on same net).

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- If puck goes too far out of circle, encourage players to allow player closest to puck to bring it back into the circle or coach will pass new puck into circle.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Match players of equal skill level.
- Players must use non-dominant hand.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Coach sets out two puck on red line so each player gets the opportunity to shoot.

SHORT SHOT LONG SHOT

AIM OF THE GAME

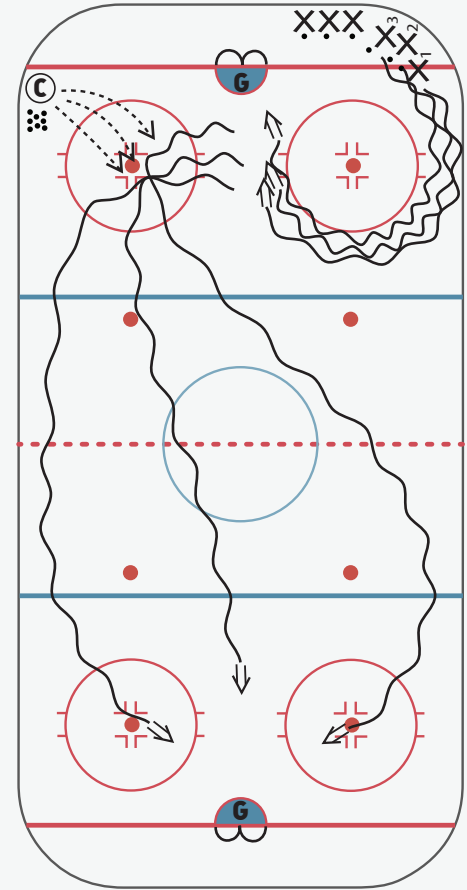
Shooting/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players go in groups of 3.
2. X1 goes first around circle with puck & takes shot on net; X2 and X3 initiate this same pattern once the person in front of them gets to the top of the circle.
3. They then go to other corner to receive a pass from the coach.
4. X1 skates down near boards and shoots; X2 skates down centre lane and shoot; X3 skates down far boards and shoots.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Timing - Player may have to delay if person in front of them is slower.
(Ensure goalies receive ONLY 1 shot at a time)
- Players MUST stay in their lane when shooting on long shot to allow goalie to practice different angles.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Shoot with non-dominant hand.
- Go to net after long shot for deflection/rebounds.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Beginner players choose X1 position to decrease amount of skating player must do with puck.
- Second coach at far end to pass puck to players who have difficulty carrying the puck.

SIMPLE 1-ON-1

AIM OF THE GAME

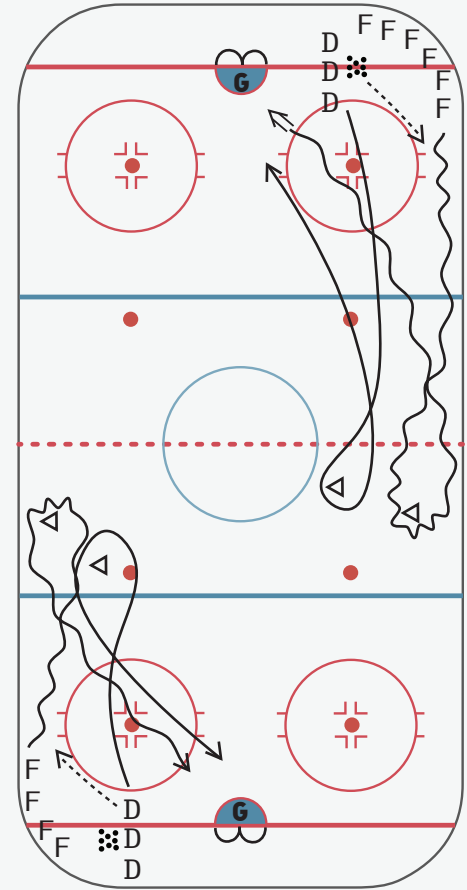
Angling/Checking/Stickhandling

HOW TO PLAY

1. Forwards start on hashmarks near board and Defence start on goal line near bottom of circle.
2. Defence start the drill by passing to the forward.
3. Forward skates with puck around pylon closest to boards (turn towards board).
4. Defence shadows forward and skates around second pylon (turn towards board).
5. Forward tries to skate to net to shoot.
6. Defence tries to angle forward towards board to take away shot.
7. Drill finishes when forward shoots puck for goal or save; OR defence takes puck away from forward and passes it back to defence line.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- 2 pylons



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Timing – Defence must make sure they keep pace with forward so they do not get in front or behind them.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Adjust distance between pylons so players have to work on timing (go faster or slower) to get correct angle.
- Set pylons further down rink so players have to work more on neutral zone angling.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Match with similar skill level if possible.
- Have defensive player wait until beginner player is already going with puck (vice versa when roles switched).
- Coach spots a puck just after offensive player turns around pylon so they don't have to worry as much about puck carrying.

SINK THE SHIP

AIM OF THE GAME

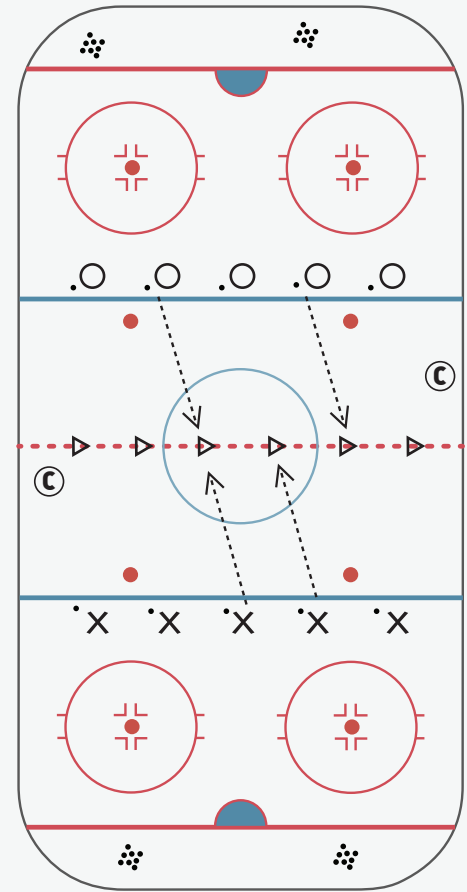
Passing/Accuracy/Skating

HOW TO PLAY

1. Players split into two teams and line up on their respective blue line with a puck each.
2. Additional pucks down below goal line at each end.
3. On coach's whistle, players try to pass the puck at the pylons and knock them towards the other team's side. Meanwhile, the other team is doing the same thing causing the pylons to be moved back and forth.
4. The coach times from 2 minutes and at the end of 2 minutes blows the whistle to stop any pucks. The team with the most pylons on their side of the red line loses.

EQUIPMENT

- 2 to 3 pucks per player
- 10-15 pylons/targets



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Players are not allowed to enter into the neutral zone area to get pucks.
- Only coaches can get pucks in this area.
- Pucks must stay on the ice to ensure safety.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- All pucks start below goal line to increase skating.
- Players must use non-dominant hand to pass puck.
- Use heavier pylons or tires for targets.

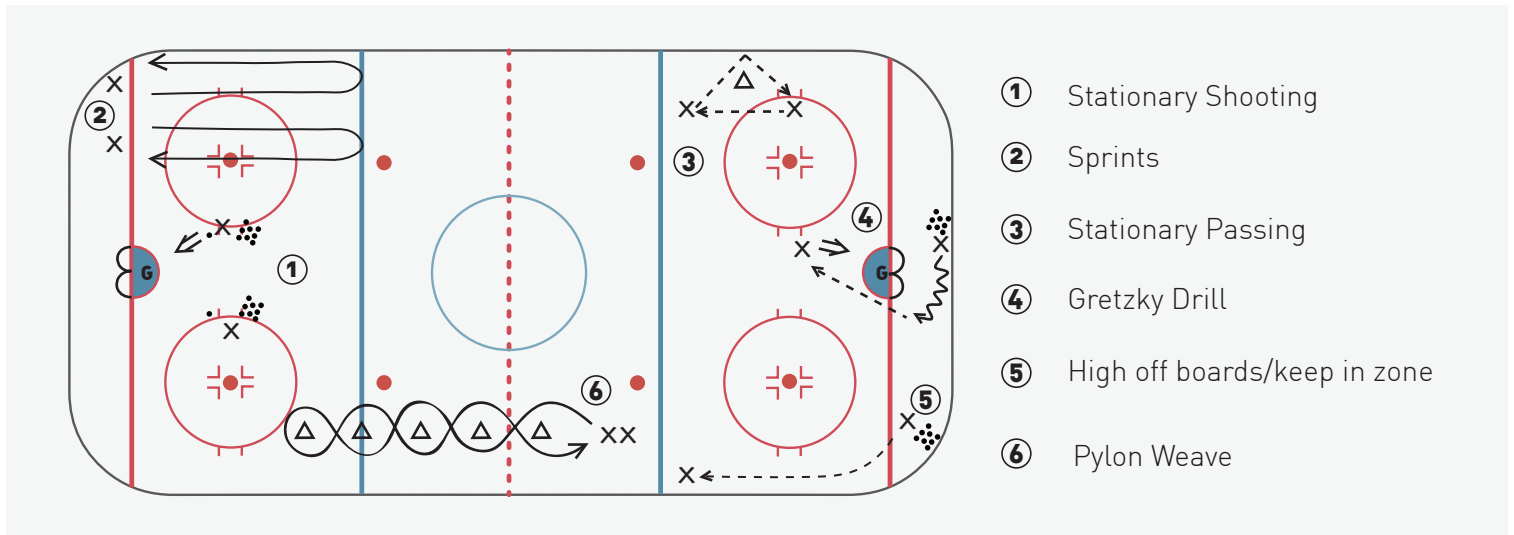
NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- All pucks are up around the blue line to start.
- Use lighter disk pylons or larger targets.

STATIONS 1

AIM OF THE GAME

Shooting/Skating/Passing



HOW TO PLAY

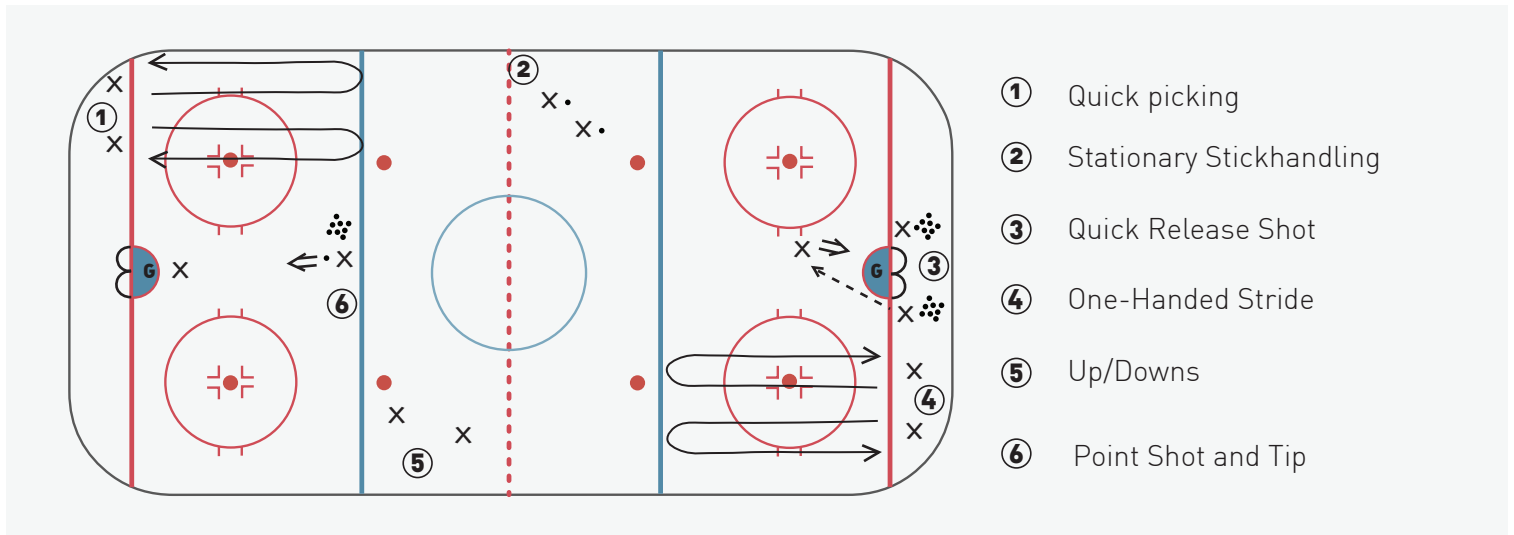
Split players up into groups of 2 to 4 players. Rotate groups through stations every 3 minutes.

1. Stationary Shooting – Players choose different angle around net to shoot at with 5-10 pucks each. Alternate which players shoot so goalie can practice moving in net.
 - a. Challenge: Players shoot with non-dominant hand; Players shoot from farther out
 - b. Support for Success: Players move closer to net.
2. Sprints – Players can alternate with partner so they get a rest break in between their sprint to the blue line. Players can then slowly skate back to goal line.
 - a. Challenge: Player increases number of picks they take before top of circle.
 - b. Support for Success: Players can decrease sprint distance; Players take longer break in between sprints.
3. Stationary Passing – Partners can start off by practicing different types of passes (e.g., forehand alternating hands; backhand; bank pass)
 - a. Challenge: Use both hands or focus solely on non-dominant hand; Try bank pass or saucer passing
 - b. Support for Success: Use dominant hand; Move closer to partner.
4. Gretzky Drill – One player starts behind net with a puck. They then choose which side to come out from behind the net to pass to their partner in front of the net, who will then shoot.
 - a. Challenge: Try to be unpredictable in which side you will pass from; Pass with non-dominant hand; Shooter has quick release shot or one-timer
 - b. Support for Success: Move pucks over to the side of the net so passer does not have to skate as far with the puck; Shooter takes time to shoot puck.
5. Picking puck up off boards – Players rim the puck back and forth to each other. They work on how to pick the puck up off the boards. Players can face away from partner to practice with other hand.
 - a. Challenge: Players can raise puck off the board.
 - b. Support for Success: Decrease strength of rim off board to help player learn to pick up puck off boards.
6. Pylon Weave – One at a time player weaves through pylons without a puck. If comfortable, players attempt station with puck.
 - a. Challenge: Encourage player to keep head up. Practice with using both hands.
 - b. Support for Success: Increase distance between pylons. Go without puck.

STATIONS 2

AIM OF THE GAME

Shooting/Skating/Passing



HOW TO PLAY

Split players up into groups of 2 to 4 players. Rotate groups through stations every 3 minutes.

1. Quick Picking – Players can alternate with partner so they get a rest break in between their quick picking to the blue line and then skate back.
 - a. Challenge: Players go to blue line.
 - b. Support for Success: Players go to top of circles.
2. Stationary Stickhandling – Players each have a puck and go through a variety of different types of stickhandling (right hand only, left hand only, spinning puck, under sled, toe drag, around toes, around back, figure 8's, etc.)
 - a. Challenge: Player works mainly on non-dominant hand.
 - b. Support for Success: Players start with simpler variations with dominant hand. Have additional pucks near if pucks easily lost.
3. Quick Release Shot – One player starts in front of net. Other players go to side of net with 5 pucks each. Goalie starts on the post and moves to front of net as puck is passed to shooter.
 - a. Challenge: Alternate passing sides so goalie has to move more to get set; shooter takes quick release or one-timer shot; player shoots from farther out.
 - b. Support for Success: Shooter takes time to shoot puck; All 5 passes come from one side and then switch to other side of net
4. One-Handed Stride – Players can alternate with partner so they get a rest break in between their one handed stride to the blue line and then skate back.
 - a. Challenge: Practice with non-dominant hand; use puck.
 - b. Support for Success: Use dominant hand; players go to top of circles.
5. Up/Downs – Players go with partners and take turns doing 30 second rounds of falling over to one side then getting back up before falling over to other side.
 - a. Challenge: Players can do this with puck. Players can lie down fully on stomach.
 - b. Support for Success: Tip over so just bottom of bucket is touching ice. Players can work on seeing how far they can reach their hand out to the side on the ice.
6. Point Shot and Tip – One player is at the blue line with 10 pucks. Other player(s) are in front of net ready to tip the point shot.
 - a. Challenge: Shoot with non-dominant hand.
 - b. Support for Success: Move closer to net to shoot. Have coach shoot and players work on tips.

TEAM CANADA 1-ON-1

AIM OF THE GAME

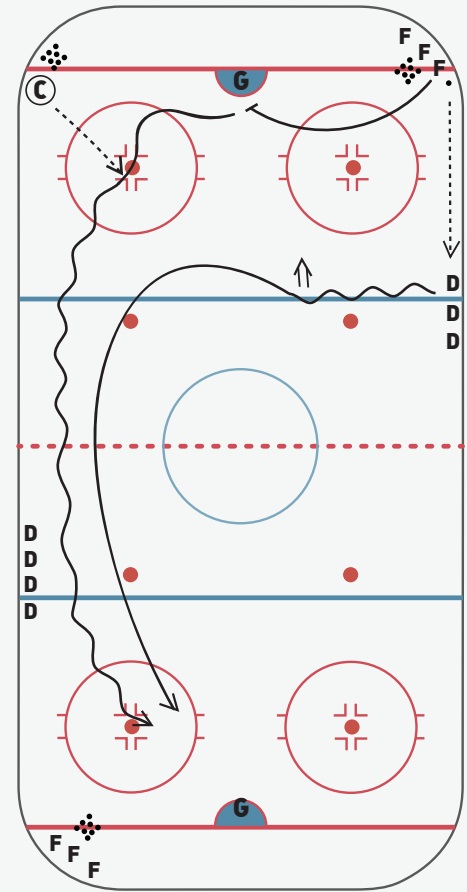
Shooting/Stickhandling/Angling/Checking/Passing

HOW TO PLAY

1. Forward starts with puck in corner and passes to defence on blue line.
2. As soon as the forward passes the puck they will go to the front of the net to create a screen and deflect the shot from the defence.
3. After the defence's shot, the forward will go to the corner to receive a different puck from the coach.
4. The forward then goes 1 on 1 versus the defence that just shot the puck.
5. Drill can be ran by both ends at the same time as long as players stay to their side of the ice in neutral zone.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Forward must get right in front of the goalie to cause a screen while defence is shooting.
- Defence allows forward to gain entry into the neutral zone before they initiate a check.
- Coach can choose for the defence to either shoot puck back down to coach, or take the puck and score themselves on the same net they were defending against.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Try to go against player of equal skill level.
- Defence shoot from blue line to work on long shot.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Try to go against player of equal skill level.
- Defence can move in towards the top of the face off circles to shoot.
- Leave pucks in corner for players to pick up rather than having pass from coach.

TEAM CANADA 3 SHOTS

AIM OF THE GAME

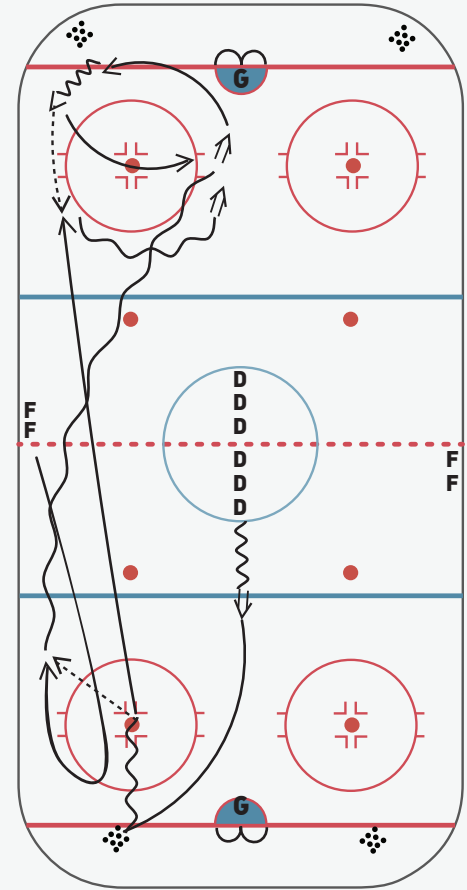
Shooting/Passing

HOW TO PLAY

1. Defence start the drill with a long shot.
2. Forward skates down to the hashmark to receive a pass from the defence that just shot on the net.
3. Forward then skates to the other end to shoot while Defence follows up to far blue line.
4. After forward shoots, they pick up puck in the corner and pass it to the defence who is now at the blue line.
5. Forward goes to front of net for deflection from the defence's long shot.
6. This drill can go out of both ends at same time.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Forward must appropriately time their skate down to the hashmark so that they give the defence a good passing angle.
- Defence must time themselves appropriately while waiting for pass from forward in far end so they are not too close to the net when receiving pass.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Shoot and pass with non-dominant hand.
- Defence shoot from blue line to work on long shot.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Defence can move in towards the top of the face off circles to shoot.
- Take out passes and leave pucks in pass reception spots instead.

THE S DRILL

AIM OF THE GAME

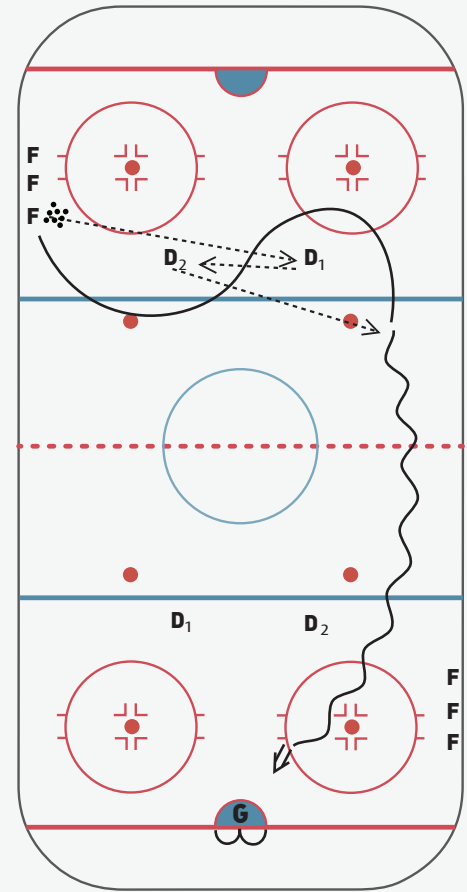
Shooting/Passing

HOW TO PLAY

1. Forward passes to D1 and then starts to skate an S pattern through the defensive pair.
2. D1 passes to D2.
3. D2 passes to forward who goes to far end to shoot.
4. Drill can be done out of both ends.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Timing of forward is important to allow for good passing angle.
- Defensive pair passing must be executed to keep flow of drill.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Defensive pair should try to keep their sleds moving while passing (game-like).
- Depending on speed of forward, defensive pairing can make multiple passes between each other before passing to forward.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Defensive pair can stay stationary.
- Forward can skate behind Defensive pairing instead of through them.

WATERFALL

AIM OF THE GAME

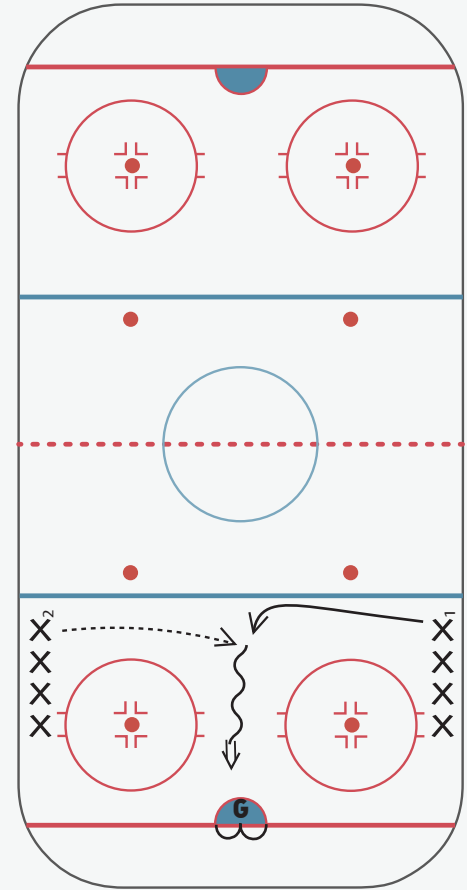
Passing/Shooting

HOW TO PLAY

1. X1 skates across blue line towards middle of ice and calls for pass.
2. X2 passes puck to X1.
3. X1 receives pass and goes in towards net to shoot.
4. Once X2 passes, they skate across blue line towards middle ice & receive pass from who is now first in the other line.
5. Pattern continues, and players switch lines after they shoot.

EQUIPMENT

- Pucks
- Pylons (optional)



KEY EXECUTION POINTS:

- Call for pass and give target to passer (put stick blade down on ice).
- Usually done for warm up drill, so shoot at goalie until they are warmed up.

READY FOR A CHALLENGE?

- Give and receive passes with non-dominant hand or backhand.
- Shoot with non-dominant hand.
- Stay in front of net after you shoot to deflect or tip shots from next player.

NEED SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS?

- Use pylons to start lines to decrease passing distance.

APPENDIX

EQUIPMENT

Player Equipment Requirements

- Sledge
- 2 Para Ice hockey sticks (L & R)
- Helmet with full cage or mask
- Neck guard
- Hockey gloves (tighter fit is better for hand dexterity)
- Shoulder pads
- Elbow pads
- Padded hockey gloves
- Shin guards
- Skate boots to protect feet (optional)

Goaltender Equipment Requirements

- Leg padding (dependent on the goaltender and their seated position)
- Goaltender chest protector
- Goalie Helmet with Visor
- Blocker
- Catcher with picks attached to move around the crease
- Goaltender Stick (with picks)

Practice Equipment

- Puck board (surface to put down off ice to help facilitate movement of athletes on and off the ice quickly)
- Pucks (rubber or plastic depending on program level)
- Coaching Board and Dry Erase markers
- Pylons
- Jerseys or Pinnies (to make groups//teams)
- Hockey Nets
- Toys (if programming for youth), etc.

SLEDGE SELECTION

General Adjustments for Program Sledges

- Pick out a sledge that appears to have an appropriate size bucket (ideally a tighter fit) and blades of an appropriate width (very wide for new/beginner athletes and narrower for advanced athletes).
- Adjust the length of the sledge such that the athlete has his/her feet/legs against the end bar of the nose piece with slight knee bend (dependent on the athlete's comfort).
- Once the athlete are in their sledge and out on the ice, you can do the last adjustment which will help them to be more successful (but is not mandatory depending on time). This involves moving the blades forward or back under the sledge (some sledges have quick release allowing you to adjust while an athlete is in their sledge while others require tools and might be better to adjust before the next session). Ideally, the nose piece of the sledge should hover off the ice and the blades should primarily be riding on the back of the blades but without making the sledge tip backwards. This often requires ongoing adjustment but once you find the right spot, it's worth labeling the sledge for that athlete as it will help them to be more successful moving forward.

Modification Options for Program Sledges

- Push Bars (to have a stand-up player push an athlete around if needed)
- High backs (Ideal for athletes with high spinal cord injuries or athletes who are very tight and lean over the back of low-back sledges).
- Anti-tipper bars (ideal for athletes who fall over a lot or struggle getting back up themselves).
- Lap Covers (help to protect the top of your lap and ensure that you are pulled into your sledge better).
- Protective nose pieces (For athletes who are concerned about their feet getting hurt , and who struggle to keep their feet upright in the sledge).
- Risers can be used for athletes who are taller and give them a competitive advantage. Generally, when in your sledge, your knuckles should just hit the ice when letting your arms hang. If this can be done easily, adjustable risers can be purchased and used.

Specialized Sledges for Long-Term or Advanced Athletes

- Once an athlete knows the ideal bucket width, sledge length, sledge height etc. they can think about purchasing their own sledge (either personally or funded through the organization) which will help the athlete to be a more successful Para Ice hockey player with customized equipment to maximize their performance. The Unique Inventions website (see resources) provides many different sledges for athletes depending on their disability or playing level.

STICK SELECTION

- When the athletes are sitting in their sledge with their hands at the top of the stick and out in front of them, the top of the stick should be in line with their shoulder. Stick blades should be a width that is comfortable for the athlete to grip and be provided with a left-hand stick and right-hand stick (opposite curves).

MAINTENANCE OF GENERIC PROGRAM EQUIPMENT

1. Sharpen blades (either generic or 7/16ths) — Sharpening will cause some issues with turning etc. so it's a good thing to do over the summer and warn athletes in the new season that it might be odd for a session or two. Pull off the blades (label them L and R and Front and Back with a sharpie) and have them all mass sharpened and replace them in the right direction. You will notice most of them have cut out holes on the blades that can help you to distinguish front and back, but sometimes labeling is better. If you want blades to last longer, getting skate guards is a good idea.

2. Sledge Blade Movement Upkeep — Assuming your sledges have a quick release option for moving the blades back and forth, loosening the bolts allows you to be able to adjust the blades back and forth with the small black handle under the sledge. If your sledges do not have a quick release, you will need to tighten all bolts that move blades forward and backward.

3. Tighten all other bolts on the sledge — This includes the bolts on the side of the bucket that the belts attach too (these should not be too tight such that the belt comes out of the right spot to tighten the sledge). Check that you have two pins to hold the telescoping nose piece in place - This will help to ensure that the tubes don't get bent etc. If any tubes are bent, you can try to either 1) bend them back into place 2) replace them with new tubes. Make sure the nose piece bolts are tight.

5. Stick Maintenance: Tape Sticks — Taping sticks will help prolong their life. Just the blade is ideal and not around the picks (or the Alan key gets filled in with tape residue and is hard to tighten).

6. General Equipment Upkeep:

- Air out equipment
- Organize equipment
- Tighten helmet screws and hardware
- Do inventory
- Think about ordering replacement nose pieces, pins, straps, piping, blades etc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Paralympic Committee – Para Ice Hockey

www.paralympic.org/ice-hockey

www.paralympic.org/ice-sledge-hockey/rules-and-regulations

SportAbility:

www.sportabilitybc.ca

www.facebook.com/sportabilitybc.com

www.twitter.com/sportabilitybc.com

www.instagram.com/sportabilitybc.com

Women’s Sledge Hockey of Canada:

www.canadianwomensledgehockey.com

www.facebook.com/CSHWT/

www.twitter.com/CSHWT

Sledge Hockey Equipment – Unique Inventions:

www.uniqueinventionsinc.com/

Canadian Cerebral Palsy Sports Association:

www.ccpsa.ca

Physical Health Education Canada:

www.phecanada.ca

Long Term Athlete Development Stages:

www.canadiansportforlife.ca/learn-about-canadian-sport-life/ltad-stages

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