



Capitalizing / Defending Neutral Zone Turnovers

Age Level: Midget

Finnish 5 Puck Progression



Time: 15 minutes

The major concept of the Finnish 5 Puck is to practice dynamic decision making which will help players learn to play with their head up instead of staring at the puck while they work to memorize a drill. The initial activities are set up to warm up your hands and edges. From there, the activities become more complex as more decisions need to be made within the group. Each Activity encourages players to keep their head up, move to open space, and pass the puck by interacting with their teammates through verbal & non-verbal communication.

If you commit to working on activities like this instead of memorization drills for a portion of each practice, you will marvel at how your team begins to work together. It will look extremely messy at first, but players will get better with each repetition. Moving to open space, and moving the puck will eventually become second nature to the team.

SETUP & ACTIVITY VARIABLES

Players: great for 3, 4 or 5 players at a time.

Time: You can rotate through groups of players in 45 - 60 second shifts. 5 players can be participating in the activity, while another 5 rest.

Blow the whistle and the next 5 jump in.

Space: can be set up to be within a zone, or half of a zone (station) or a smaller area. The smaller the space, the more challenging it will be for the players as they are forced to make quicker decisions.

Added Challenge: add obstacles within the space to challenge the players further. Tires, cones, sticks, etc placed in the space make it harder to pass and skate around. As time goes on the added obstacles will help improve their reaction & decision making.

- ACTIVITY # 1: FORWARD SKATING
- ACTIVITY # 2: BACKWARD SKATING
- ACTIVITY # 3: FOREHAND ONLY PUCK CONTROL
- ACTIVITY # 4: PASS 1 PUCK
- ACTIVITY # 5: PASS 2 PUCKS
- ACTIVITY # 6: PASS 3 PUCKS
- ACTIVITY # 7: PASS 4 PUCKS
- ACTIVITY # 8: PASS 5 PUCKS
- ACTIVITY # 9: 4 VS 1
- ACTIVITY # 10: 3 VS 2

COACHING POINTS:

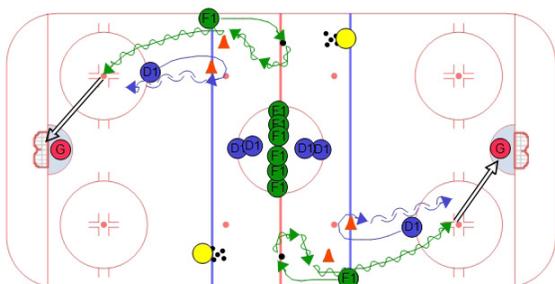
- Encourage players to always move to open space on the ice. Do not allow them to stand still and pass the puck back and forth.
- Encourage verbal communication (calling teammate by name, saying you are open, etc).
- Encourage non-verbal communication (good eye contact, showing a passing target, tapping a stick, etc).
- Allow players to make mistakes. It will take time to get comfortable with these activities. But as time goes on you will see them picking their head up to make a decision, which is the goal of this progression.



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Quick Turn Up 1 on 1



Time: 10 Minutes

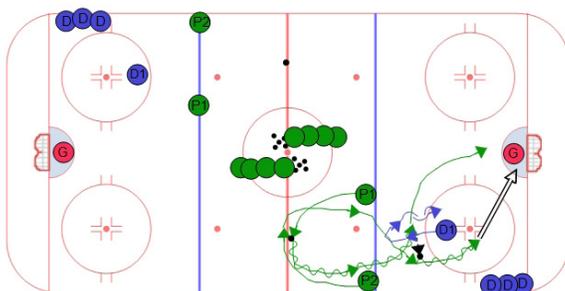
This one on one drill has the defense start on the top of the circle and the forward start along the wall on the blue line. The inactive forwards and defense should all line up in the center circle. Place cones as shown to mark where players need to skate around. A puck is placed on the red line by the coach. On the whistle the forward will skate up the red line, retrieve the puck, and make a tight turn to attack the defense. They need to skate wide around the cone (as shown) and then attack the defense as they enter the zone wide. The defense will skate up and transition towards the inside of the ice and then take on the forward in a one on one.

My Notes

The key for the defense is to use the dots as a guide and make sure the forward stays to the outside using a good gap and good stick position. They should try to force the forward into a bad angle shot and if they try to go to the inside they should be ready with good body position or stick.

Forwards should take what the defense gives them. If they give them too much space then take the inside. If the defense does not give them the middle then they should protect the puck and drive wide.

Quick Turn Up 2 on 1



Time: 10 Minutes

The way this 2 on 1 drill is set up it forces the players into a situation that players often find in games. The first situation is a quick transition and then quickly develops into a 2 on 1 using half the width of the ice, a situation that is common on the rush in 3 on 2 situations. Regardless of how you are teaching your players to react to 2 on 1, both offensively and defensively, this drill presents a great situation.

My Notes

To set up the drill place two lines of forwards at center ice as shown in the diagram. Two forwards from each line come out to the blue line, one along the wall and the other inline with the edge of the circles. One puck is placed inline with the dots at center ice. The defense is lined up under the hash marks along the wall and the defensive player that starts is at the top of the circles.

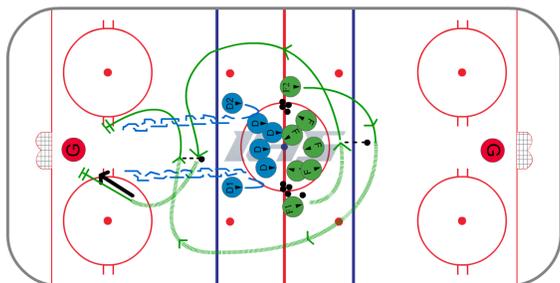
On the whistle, the forwards sprint up to the blue line, retrieve the puck, then attack the defender 2 on 1. The forward that starts on the inside will retrieve the puck. There are three options for the forwards to emphasize. First, have the puck carrier drive wide. If they do this then the inside forward drives hard to the net or stays high. Second, the puck carrier can cut to the middle towards the defender and either keep the puck or drop it as the inside forward cuts behind. All three options are shown in the animation. The players should play the puck until they score, the goalie freezes the puck, or the puck goes above the top of the circles.



Capitalizing / Defending Neutral Zone Turnovers

Age Level: Midget

Quick Turn Up 2 on 2



my notes

Time: 10 Minutes

This 2 vs 2 drill is excellent for working on high-speed turnovers or transitions in the neutral zone. When a turnover occurs in the neutral zone it is important for the forwards to get up ice quick, find passing lanes and work to generate a scoring opportunity. On the defensive side of things, it is important to work with your partner to keep the forwards to the outside of the ice with good gap control.

The video clip is from Buffalo Sabres Development Camp. The drill is set up to be half-ice situation but it is running out of both sides of the ice for full ice drill. Coaches can easily set up this drill to be full ice (like shown in the video), half ice (with only one side running), full-ice half-width (so the other width can be used for stations) or a 1/4 ice station. The variety of ways this drill can be set up makes this an excellent option for many ages and skill levels.

SETUP:

- Have 2 forwards and 2 defensemen ready to go 2 vs 2.
- Can be full ice, half ice, or set up as a 1/4 station.
- When the whistle blows, the two forwards cross to generate speed coming through the neutral zone. You can have the players skate around the players waiting for their turn (like it is shown in the video). This makes it hard for the defense to know which forward is coming out with the puck.
- The forwards go into the zone and the 2 vs 2 begins.
- The forwards work to score a goal. The play goes until a goal is scored, the play is whistled down, or the defense takes the puck out of the zone.
- When the whistle is blown all players need to sprint out of the zone.

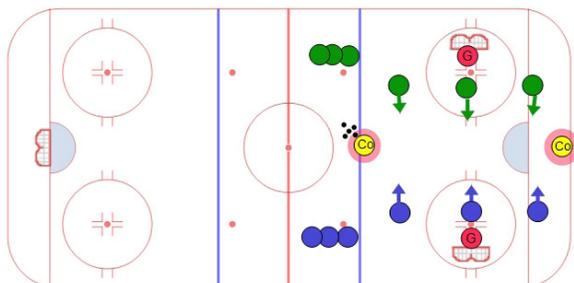
FORWARD COACHING POINTS:

- Forwards should work to generate speed crossing over at the start of the drill.
- Forwards should be mindful of the defense and consider crossing with their teammate to drop the puck or changing up their skating speed to create space and throw off the defenceman's gap.
- The forward without the puck should be looking to go to open space to be an outlet or driving to the net to bring the defense with them.
- Communicate with your teammate!

DEFENSIVE COACHING POINTS:

- Stick on the ice!
- Use good defensive stick position to steer forwards to the outside and take away dangerous passes.
- Work on keeping a close gap to the forwards. You do not want to be so far back that they can easily shoot.
- Work to angle forwards to the outside of the ice.
- Communicate with your partner!

The Greatest Drill in the World



Players love this drill so much it was referred to as "The Greatest Drill in the World" within our team, hence the name. This drill is a variation of the typical 3 on 3 cross ice game. In this variation coaches, or designated players, are placed on each side as shown in the diagram. These coaches (or players) are used as outlets for each team. Therefore, when a team has control of the puck they will have a 5 on 3 advantage because they can use either of these outlets. When they receive a pass, the designated coaches (or players) must pass back to a player on the same team from which they received the pass. Encourage quick puck movement, moving without the puck, lots of talking, puck protection, and taking advantage of 2 on 1 situations.