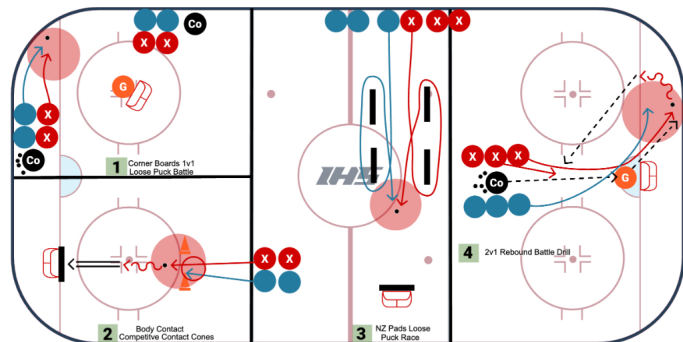


LOOSE PUCK BATTLE STATIONS

Tuesday, October 15th, 2024

Please Note: The Practice of the Week is usually designed to be utilized across multiple age levels. With that being said, we highly encourage you to adjust the drills based on your team's age and skill levels. IHS should always be used as a starting point and you can add/remove layers to fit your team.

Practice Theme: The drills and games in this practice are designed to help your players work on the skills and will to win loose puck battles in different situations.



We encourage you to match up players to similar abilities when possible to create scenarios.

We also encourage you to add/remove variables to **make some of the battles 60/40 pucks or 70/30 pucks by moving starting points**, etc. Get creative with it and see if players are able to problem solve and find ways to gain control of the puck

3 Key Focus Points

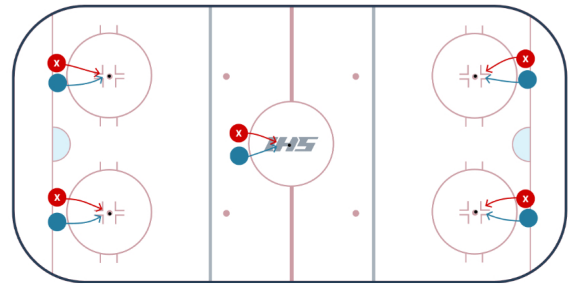
- 1Gain a Step: In close puck races players need to compete and problem solve to find a way to gain a step on their opponent to gain body positioning.
- 2Body Contact: Encourage your players to initiate body contact when racing for the puck to gain positioning to win the puck.
- 3Be Ready to Make a Play: Winning the puck race is meaningless if you aren't ready to make a play. Encourage players to be aware of their surroundings and be ready to make a play once they win their race.

Puck Race to 1 v 1

Details:

Drill Setup:

- Puck placed on the dot.
- 2 players start on the goal line.
- When coach says "go," the 2 players race for the puck. Whoever wins the puck is on offense the defender must either toss their stick aside or turn it over.
- Players continue to play keep away in the circle until coach says stop.



Drill Purpose:

- This is very similar to drill done day #1 except now we are adding the puck race and looking for players to gain position before possession to win the puck.
- By having the defender have to get rid of their stick or turn it over you are putting something on the line which will pick up the compete of the drill as well as rewards the puck race winner. In addition by having the defender have to get rid of their stick or turn it over you are forcing them to have to play the body as they do not have a stick to use.

Variations:

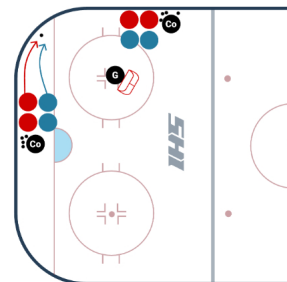
- Depending on your players level of proficiency allowing the defender to have a stick or no stick changes the drill.
- If wanting to really focus in on body contact I suggest having the defender without a stick or it be turned over.
- Once players show willingness and consistency in being physical and using their bodies then you can have both players use their stick the whole time. In that scenario I suggest turning it into a game. Puck race is worth 1 point. Each time the player steals the puck from the other player they get a point for stealing the puck. The offensive player gets no points (other than winning the puck race). The offensive players incentive is to not allow the other player to steal the puck and in turn get points.

Station Number: Full Ice (Everyone)

Corner Boards 1 V 1 Loose Puck Battle

Details:

Corner Boards 1 V 1 Loose Puck Battle allows players & coaches to work on a very common play during the game, a loose puck battle along the boards. This is a competitive drill that can also progress to 2 V 2.



Setup

- On the whistle, 2 players battle in the corner for a loose puck.
- Whoever gets the puck off of the boards first is on offense and tries to score a goal while the other player defends.
- Defenders can knock the puck out of play or they can steal the puck, tag up at the goal line and then become an offensive player.

Variations

- Can make the battle 1 V 1 and progress to 2 V 2. [View 2 V 2 Tag Up Example.](#)
- Can allow the defending team to tag up at the goal line to become offense.

Coaching Points

- Defending players need to keep their sticks on the ice and play the body.
- Offensive players should work to protect the puck with their body and utilize their edges to be strong on the puck and create space with tight turns.

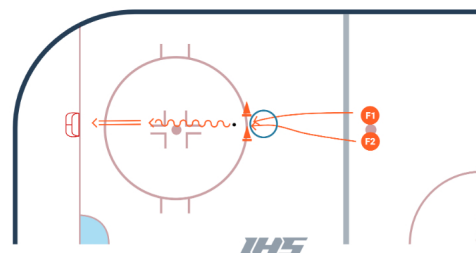
Station Number: Station #1

Body Contact Competitive Contact Cones

Details:

Both Players will start by having one foot in the faceoff dot, and begin leaning on each other for competitive contact. On the coaches whistle, players will race for the loose puck between the cones and use competitive contact to get their body in front of their opponent.

The players that have success in this drill will understand how to use their body to gain position on the opponent. Taking their hands away using the body is a great way to win the puck and earn the shot on net.



Station Number: Station #2

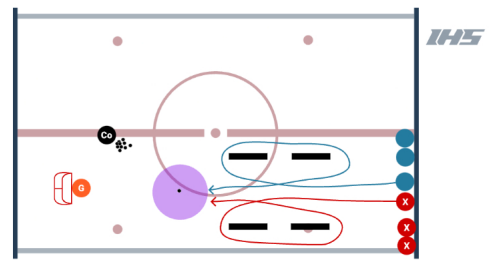
NZ Pad Skating Race with Shot

Details:

A fun race that works on edges, tight turns and body positioning. Rewards the winner with a shot.

Setup

- Set up 4 pads on one side of the neutral zone
- 2 lines of players, coach sets a puck in the middle to race to
- On the whistle one player from each line skates around the pads and back through the middle of the ice
- The players battle to get to the puck first and take it to the net
- The player who loses the race plays defense to put on back pressure.



Coaching Points

- Working on tight turns and accelerating out of turns
- Body positioning when racing for the puck
- Protecting the puck when taking it to the net

Variations

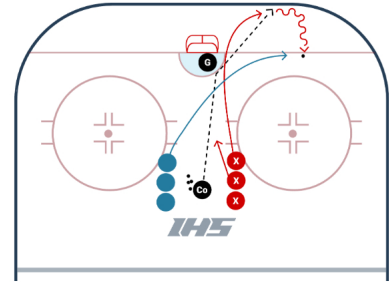
- 1Left Turn
- 2Right Turn
- 3Forward to Backwards
- 4Backwards to Forwards
- 5Side Jumps

Station Number: Station #3

2 vs 1 Rebound Battle Drill

Details:

Winning loose puck battles can be a major deciding factor in the outcome of a game. This battle drill challenges players to compete for a loose puck after a rebound. After the loose puck battle is won, the player with the puck must pass it back to the point, which will begin a 2 vs 1.



Setup:

- A coach or player dumps the puck on net and the goalie plays it to either corner.
- 2 players are spread out and charge into the corner to compete for the puck. Whoever comes out with the puck must pass it to the point player to begin a 2 vs 1.
- The drill is stopped after a goal, the goalie freezes it, or the puck is moved out of the zone.

Offensive Coaching Points:

- Players who arrive at the puck first should work on deceptive fakes with their body to escape from the corner. Fakes with your hips are extremely effective in this situation.
- Once you have the puck, protect it, get your head up and make a pass to the point.
- The point should be active calling for the puck and moving to space.

Defending Coaching Points:

- The defender should work on playing the body in the corner.
- When 2 vs. 1 begins, the defender should hold the middle and try to force a bad angle shot.
- Have good stick position. Do not swing your stick as it will open up passing lanes and make you off balance.

VARIATIONS

- You can add a second point player to make this battle a 2 vs 2. Watch a [video demo here](#).

Station Number: Station #4

Ramsay 3 V 3 Race

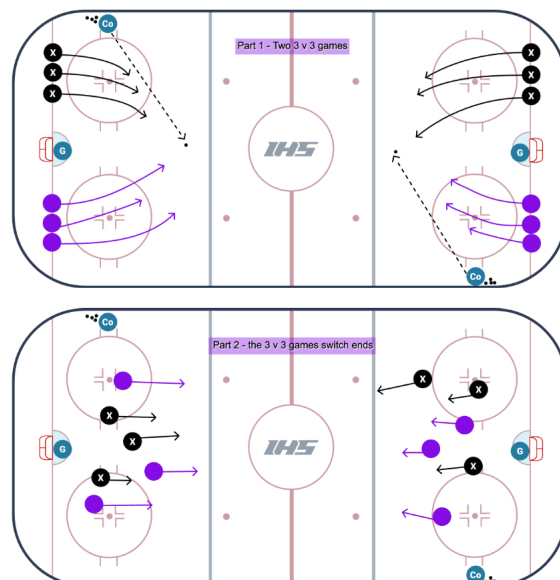
Details:

Jason Lammers describes the Ramsay 3 V 3 Race.

This competitive small area game incorporates racing to the puck to determine which team is on offense.

Setup

- Full ice setup with goalies in both nets.
- On each half of the ice, put 6 players on the goal line (so each side of the ice can play 3 V 3).
- On the whistle, the coach places a puck somewhere in the zone, and all 6 players race to the puck.
- Whoever gets the puck first, their team is on offense and the other team is on defense.
- Offense is trying to score. If the defense gets the puck, they work to keep puck possession before the next whistle.
- Play out 3 V 3 inside the blueline.
- On the second whistle, all 6 players on each half of the ice skate down to the other end of the ice to race for another puck. Coaches can have the players race for the previous puck that the other group was playing with, or the coach can collect the old puck and place it in a different part of the zone.
- Whoever gets that puck, their team is on offense and the other team is on defense.
- Keep score!



Coaching Points

- Race hard to get the puck!
- Offense - support your teammates and be an outlet when you do not have the puck
- Defense - keep sticks on the ice to block passing lanes
- Everyone - communicate with your teammates

Variations

- Can make this game 2 v 2, 3 v 3, or 4 v 4.
- Can create different variations within the game:
 - Can have the offensive team be all time offense and if the defense gets the puck, the defensive team tries to keep puck possession and they get a point if they make 4 consecutive passes.
 - Can have the offensive team start on offense if defense gets the puck they can tag up at the blue line and then that allows them to attack on offense.
- Can be half ice instead of full ice. Just divide the zone into two halves and put the nets by the half-wall by the face-off circles.

Station Number: Full Ice