

Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey

Sled
Hockey

Special
Hockey

Standing
Amputee
Hockey



Disabled Coaching Manual



A publication of USA Hockey

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Table of Contents

This is USA Hockey.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Coaches Code of Conduct.....	1
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hockey	3
Sign Language.....	5
Getting Started.....	13
Practice Plan for Hearing Impaired Players.....	14
Sled Hockey for Physical Disabilities.....	15
Keys to a Great Experience	17
The Sled Hockey Game Pusher.....	18
The Sled Hockey Game	19
Defensive Positioning.....	19
Forechecking.....	20
Official Rules of Sledge Hockey	20
Officials Positioning, Procedures and Judgment.....	21
Sled Player Equipment Guidelines	22
Special Hockey for Developmental Disabilities.....	27
Understanding Athletes with Developmental Disabilities	29
What to Expect From the Players	34
What to Expect From Yourself as the Coach	35
Standing Amputee Hockey	45
ISIH Classification System for Locomotor Disabled Athletes.....	47
Standing Amputee Hockey League Rules	48
Beginner Practice Plans for Disabled Hockey.....	51
Ice Utilization	52
Practice Plans	54
Advanced Practice Plans for Disabled Hockey	73
Practice Plans	75
USA Hockey Skills Competition Model.....	89
Creating a Strength and Conditioning Program.....	93
Philosophy	95
Goals of the Program	95
Program Outline.....	96
Nutrition.....	96
Stretching.....	98
Acknowledgments.....	104



This is USA Hockey

USA Hockey, Inc., is the National Governing Body for the sport of ice hockey in the United States. Its mission is to promote the growth of hockey in America and provide the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing and administering the sport.

USA Hockey's primary emphasis is on the support and development of grassroots hockey programs. In January 2009, the organization launched the American Development Model, which, for the first time ever, provides associations nationwide with a blueprint for optimal athlete development.

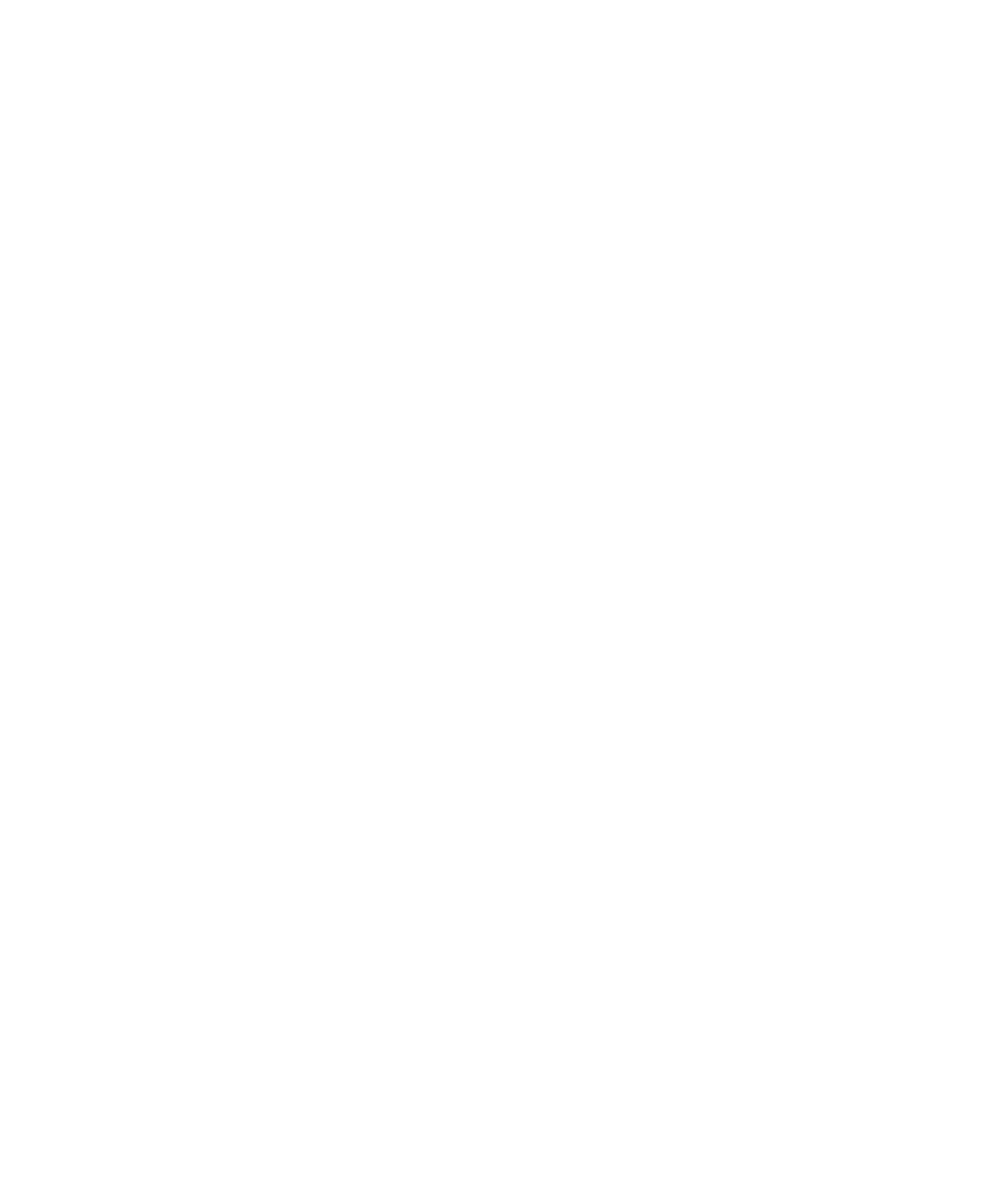
While youth hockey is a main focus, USA Hockey also has vibrant junior and adult hockey programs that provide opportunities for players of all ability levels. The organization also supports a growing disabled hockey program.

Beyond serving those who play the game at the amateur level, USA Hockey has certification programs for coaches and officials to ensure education standards are met that coincide with the level of play. Furthermore, a large focus is put on parent education with equipment needs, rules of the game and parental roles in youth sports among common topics.

Members of the organization are entitled to many benefits, including a subscription to *USA Hockey Magazine*, the most widely circulated hockey publication in the world; excess accident, general liability and catastrophic insurance coverage; access to USAHockey.com; and opportunities to participate in USA Hockey National Championships, as well as player development camps.

USA Hockey is the official representative to the United States Olympic Committee and the International Ice Hockey Federation. In this role, USA Hockey is responsible for organizing and training men's and women's teams for international tournaments, including the IIHF World Championships and the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. Closer to home, USA Hockey works with the National Hockey League and the National Collegiate Athletic Association on matters of mutual interest.

USA Hockey is divided into 12 geographical districts throughout the United States. Each district has a registrar to register teams; a referee-in-chief to register officials and organize clinics; a coach-in-chief to administer education program for coaches; a risk manager to oversee liability and safety programs; and a skill development program administrator to facilitate learn-to-play programs for youth players and their parents.



Introduction

USA Hockey's Disabled Section is committed to providing the necessary resources to all disabled players and their coaches so everyone can participate in an enthusiastic, fun atmosphere while teaching and learning the great game of hockey. In this book all coaching techniques will be covered in the four major disciplines of disabled hockey: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Sled Hockey for Physical Disabilities, Special Hockey for Developmental Disabilities, and Standing Amputee Hockey.

USA Hockey has recruited help from some of the best professional and volunteer coaches in their respective disciplines to help put together this comprehensive coaches manual that provides the foundation for coaching players with special needs. The key to coaching these athletes is to remember that they are individuals, and coaching them is just like coaching any other sports team. Every player is a little different and may require a different approach but, in the end, it is still hockey and it is meant to be fun.

Each individual section will cover the primary issues involved with each discipline. After all, it is the individual differences that make the disciplines unique, and by embracing those differences the athletes will have a great time on the ice in a fun, safe learning environment. USA Hockey's Disabled Coaching Manual will cover the basics to help players of all ages from youth to national teams. Skill development is crucial, but every coach prior to stepping out onto the ice must follow the same code of conduct.

It is a privilege to coach and an opportunity that should never be taken for granted. If you expect your

players to play with enthusiasm, then you as the coach had better show up every day with the same attitude. A smile makes all the difference in the world and can bring the most distant player into the fold. The team concept can only be fully understood once you have a real grip on your players as individuals and what it is that makes them play the game. In some situations the real victory is participation, and allowing them to get out and skate is all they really need. The role of the coach in disabled hockey may also be competitive depending on the team and the level, but our first priority is always to provide a safe environment for all involved.

Coaches Code of Conduct

- Winning is a consideration, but not the only one, nor the most important one. Care more about the child than winning the game. Remember, players are involved in hockey for fun and enjoyment.
- Be a positive role model to your players. Display emotional maturity and be alert to the physical safety of the players.
- Be generous with your praise when it is deserved; be consistent and honest; be fair and just; do not criticize players publicly; learn to be a more effective communicator and coach; don't yell at players. These are special players who feed off of positive reinforcement.
- Adjust to personal needs and challenges of each player; be a good listener and never verbally or physically abuse a player or official; give all players the opportunity to improve their skills, gain confidence and develop self esteem.

- Organize your practices based on the needs of all participants. That may mean individual sectioned-off portions of the ice so the challenges of all players are met and all the coaches are working together to achieve a fun learning environment.
- Familiarize yourself with the rules or, in some cases, the lack of rules based on the discipline and game freedom, i.e. no offside rule.
- Keep an open line of communication with your players and parents. Make sure you converse with each player verbally or non-verbally in a positive manner during every game or practice.
- Be concerned with the overall development of your players. Stress good health habits and clean living.
- Bring your best to every coaching situation. The players deserve that and more.
- Have a great time at the rink and your players will as well.

*Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey*

*Sled
Hockey*

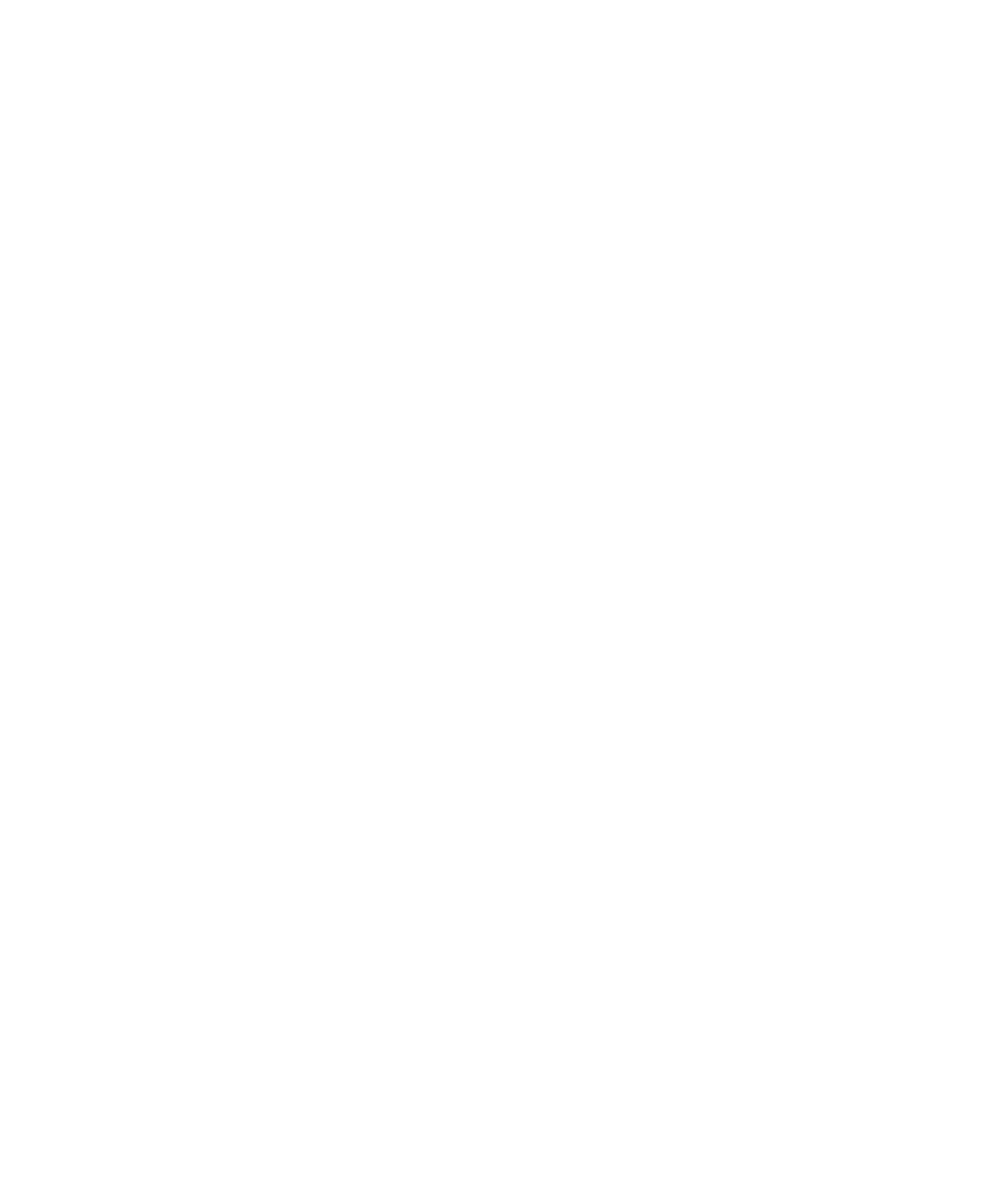
*Special
Hockey*

*Standing
Amputee
Hockey*



Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hockey





Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hockey

The most important aspect for a coach when working with a disabled player is to understand that these athletes have the same attitudes, goals, enthusiasm and feelings for the game as able-bodied players. They want to advance, improve, develop, have fun and play the game to the best of their abilities.

Many deaf/hard of hearing players participate on regular able-bodied teams. As a coach, communication is the most important aspect for the successful instruction of this special-needs player on your team. Understand as a coach that communication is the key to success at all levels. Every player understands a smile, a high five, a thumbs up or even a frown. When coaching a disabled athlete you must be cognizant of all of your verbal interactions and non-verbal body language. The ability to communicate your thoughts, game plans, standards of discipline and instruction to your players is the key to a successful season.

Understandably, most players on a team will learn and react in a more positive manner to visual cues as opposed to verbal ones. With very little organization and some general rules in a practice setting, a special-needs player can participate, improve, and be a solid contributing member of the team.

Hearing impaired athletes anticipate the play of the game the same way able-bodied players do. They anticipate receiving a body check when close to the boards, or know when an offside or an icing call is going to be made. In most cases they know when they have taken a penalty and why. They understand the game and have watched and enjoyed playing hockey like any other player.

Sign Language

The ability to use sign language is obviously the best form of communication to the hard-of-hearing player. As in most other sports, instruction through signs is a normal occurrence. The use of signs can also be useful to all the players on the team, not just the hearing impaired. The establishment of a few standard signs will help the communication with an entire team.

Most coaches will number their lines and defensive pairs 1-2-3. As a coach you may also number your special team units, power-play and penalty-killing units 1 and 2. You have established names for your systems of play, i.e. forecheck, defensive zone coverage, as well as offensive and defensive zone faceoffs. The following established signs will help the team communicate to form that all-important key ingredient to success on and off the ice: chemistry.

A



Again: The fingertips of the bent right hand tap on the upturned palm of the left hand.

B



Back Check: Move open right hand back over the shoulder. Then change to right “S” hand palm down, moves slightly in a sharp short motion in front of the chest.

Backhand: Move open right hand back over the shoulder, then wipe the back of the right open hand down over the palm of the left open hand, both palms facing in.

Bench: Left open “B” hand, palm forward; hook the right curved “U” fingers on the thumb. Slide right hand off the thumb to the side.

Block: Cross both “S” hands at the wrist in front of the upper chest, right palm facing left and left palm facing right, move both hands forward together with double contact.

Blue Line: Twist the right “B” hand in front of the chest, fingers forward and palm left, then place the tips of the “I” fingers together and draw them apart.

Breakout: Two flat “O” hands, thumbs together, move forward and out, ending in open hand “5” hands, palms down.

C



Center (place): Beginning with both open hands several inches apart, palms facing each other. Move the right hand forward in a circular motion dropping the fingers downward into the left palm.

Center (position): Right “C” hand, shaking slightly at shoulder level.



Change: With the knuckles of the right “A” hand on the knuckles of the left “A” hand, twist the wrists in opposite directions putting the hands in reverse positions.

Change Up: Sign for change (see change) at forehead level.

Coach: Right “C” hand taps on top of right shoulder.

Competition: Move both “A” hands, palms facing each other and thumbs pointing up, quickly back and forth twisting at the wrists in an alternating movement.

Corner: Both hands, palms flat and fingers straight are held in front of the body at right angles to each other with the fingertips touching. The left fingertips point to the right, and the right fingertips point to the front.

Crossbar: “C” hand moves right to left (drawing the crossbar of the net)

Crossovers: Move the right “B” hand, palm left, fingers forward, over the left hand, palm down, and ending with the right forearm resting on the back of the left hand (imitates leg movement of crossovers). Repeat.

D

Defense: Crossed “D” hands push forward, or “D” shaking slightly in front of body.

Dot: Index finger draws small circle in the air pointing downward.

Drill: Sign for “practice” with a right “D” hand replacing the “A” hand.

E**F**

Faceoff: Start with “O” hand, palm down. Open hand while moving downward. (As if dropping the puck).

Fight: Bring both “S” hands, palms facing each other, from near the shoulder towards each other and crossing at the wrists in front of the body, in a repeated motion.

First: Touch the extended right index finger, pointing left, palm facing the body, to the extended thumb of the left “A” hand, palm facing right.

Force: Slide the right “C” hand, palm outward, across and over the edge of the downturned left hand, ending the “C” facing palm down.

Forecheck: Right “F” hand pushes forward. Right hand changes to “S” hand, palm down, moves forward slightly in sharp, short motion in front of the chest.

Forehand: Right “F” hand pushes forward. Wipe the back of the right open hand down over the palm of the left open hand, both palms facing inward.

G

Game: Arc both “A” hands, palms facing body and thumbs extended, upward in a double motion touching each other in front of the chest.

Glass: Tap the index finger of the “X” hand against your front teeth.

Gloves: Both “5” hands, palms down and fingers pointing forward; pull the right hand over the left and then the left over the right bringing fingers upward from the fingertips toward the wrist imitating putting on gloves.

Go: With both extended index fingers pointing up in front of your waist, palms facing out and left hand closer to the body than the right, flick the wrists to point both fingers forward.

Goal: Arms overhead with elbows bent at shoulder level, flat palms, facing inward (similar to the touchdown sign in football)

Goal Line: goal (see goal) + line (see line)

Goal Net:

Goalie: Hold the right downturned “B” hand fingers pointing left, above the left downturned “B” hand, fingers pointing right against the chest with elbows pointing out. Both hands touch the chest at the same time.

Good: The fingertips of the open right hand touch the lips then move away and downward from the mouth.

H



Hard (difficult): Strike the knuckles of both bent “V” hands, palms toward body, as they pass each other in alternating up and down movements.

Hard (not soft): Strike the side of the middle finger of the right bent “V” hand, palm toward body, on the index finger side of the left “S” hand, palm down.

Hash Marks: Index finger draws short vertical lines in the air.

Helmet: Mime putting on helmet with two hands.

Hit: Strike the left extended index finger, palm out and pointing up, with the right “S” hand palm in.

Hockey: Bring the knuckle of the right “X” hand palm toward body, in an arc inward across the upturned left palm (imitates the stick hitting a puck).

Hurt: Point the extended index fingertips toward each other in front of the body several times without making contact with each other, palms facing chest.

Note: This may be signed in front of the place in pain.

I



Ice Skating: With an alternating movement, swing both upturned “X” hands back and forth in front of the waist.

Ice: Keeping both claw hands, palms down, in front of your body, draw fingers and thumbs inward toward palms, moving arms in towards the body.

Icing: Push the palm of the downward right hand forward across the top of the upturned left palm, fingertips pointing forward, sliding right hand forward.

Inside: With the right fingertips touching the thumb, palm toward body and fingers pointing down, insert

them down into the left “C” fingers, and palm right, with a double movement.

Inside/Outside Edges: Sign for outside and inside plus stationary left hand palm facing right, touch right index finger to bottom of left wrist. Move finger forward to tip of pinkie (motion can also be made in a back and forth movement).

J



K



Kill: Push the extended right index finger, palm down, forward and down under the left downturned open palm.

L



Left Defenseman:



Left Wing:



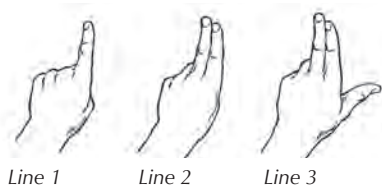
Line Change on the Fly:



Line Up: Hold the right “4” hand in front of the chest, palm facing left and the left “4” hand, palm facing right, little finger touching the right hand index finger.

Move the hands slightly apart, right toward the chest and left outward.

Line: Place the tips of the "I" fingers together and draw them apart.



Line 1 Line 2 Line 3

Lose: Touch the knuckles of both "C" hands, palms toward the chest. Bring the hands downward and apart dropping the fingertips down.

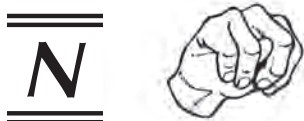


Medal: Two "C" hands, fingertips touching, thumbs downward. Tap against the chest. (Showing the shape of an Olympic medal)

Minute: The right "D" hand is held with the index finger edge against the palm of the left "5" hand, which faces right. The index finger moves forward in a short arc as if moving around the clock face.

Mistake: Touch the chin with the middle fingers of the right "Y" hand, palm facing the body, and wiggle slightly.

Mouthguard: "C" shape using only index finger and thumb. Move toward mouth, imitating inserting a mouthguard.

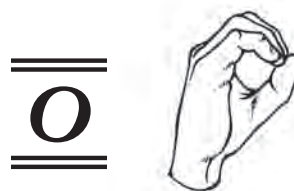


Net: Two claws hands, palms facing body, fingertips touching. Twist wrists to move hands apart ending palms facing each other.

Neutral: Shake the right "N" in front of you.

No: Bring the extended index and middle fingers down to tap on the extended thumb in quick repeated movements.

Number: Touch the fingertips of both flat "O" hands; twist both hands at the wrist in alternating directions.



Offside: The fingers of the downturned open right hand rest on the back of the fingers of the downturned open left hand. Bring right hand from off the back of the left hand, upward a few inches and the right open hand, palm facing side of body, moves downward along the side of the body.

Offense: Crossed "O" hands pushed forward, or "O" shaking slightly in front of body.

Outside: With the fingers pointing down, draw the right open hand up and out of the left "C" hand, palm right. Repeat.



Pass: With both "X" hands, palms facing in, place one behind the other. Move the hands in a circle around each other, exchanging places.



Pass

Pay Attention: Move both open hands, palms facing each other, outward to the sides of the head, keeping fingers pointing upward.

Penalty: Strike the extended right finger, pointing left downward on the elbow of the raised bent left arm.

Penalty Killing: Sign for penalty (see penalty) + sign for kill (see kill).

Period: The right “P” hand is placed palm to palm in the open left hand. The right hand moves in a clockwise circle and comes to rest again in the left palm.

Place: Touch the middle fingers of both “P” hands, palms facing inward, bring the hands outward in a circle toward the body, ending with the “P” hands touching again closer to the body.

Play: Two “Y” hands, palms facing the body, twist at the wrists a few times.

Player: Two “Y” hands, palms facing the body, twist at the wrists a few times, and then bring both flat hands, palms facing each other, downward in a straight line in front of the body.

Position: (See place)

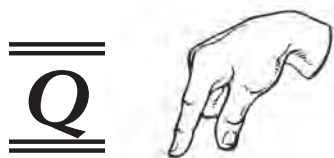
Post: “C” hand moves downward. (Drawing the post of the net)

Power Play: Use right open hand to indicate the size of the left arm muscle + sign for play. (See play)

Practice: Rub the knuckles of the palm down right “A” hand on the extended index finger of the palm of the left hand. Repeat.

Pressure: Push the right hand, open palm facing down, downward on the top of the left “S” hand, thumb side up, with two deliberate downward pushes.

Puck: Two “C” hands, palms facing inward, waist height. Move hands together until fingertips touch.



Rebound: (See again)

Red Line: Stroke downward on the lips with the extended index finger (red) + sign for line (see line).



Referee:

Remember: The extended thumb of the right “A” hand touches the side of the forehead and moves down to touch the thumb of the left “A” hand help at waist level.



Right Wing:



Right: With both extended index fingers pointing outward, strike the little finger edge of the right hand to the top of the index finger edge of the left hand.

Rink: “R” hand facing down, move in a oval shape (showing the shape of an ice rink).

S



Save: Both “S” hands, wrists crossed in front of the chest and palms facing in, twist outward at the wrists away from each other ending with palms forward at the sides of the body.

Score: Bounce the fingertips of the “F” hand, palm facing down, at the right shoulder level several times.

Second (sequential): Touch the extended right index finger, palm facing out, to the index finger of the left “L” hand, palm facing in.

Second (time): The right “D” hand is held with index finger edge against the palm of the left “5” hand, which faces right. The index finger moves forward in short tiny movements imitating the second hand on a clock.

Shoot: “L” hand shape, index finger pointing forward, move thumb up and down. (Shooting a gun).



Shoot

Sit: Lay the fingers of the right “H” hand across the fingers of the left “H” hand, both palms facing downward.



Skate:

Skill: The right hand holds the little finger edge of the open left hand, then pulls off and downward ending in a “A” hand.

Stay: Two “Y” hands are held palm out with thumbs touching, both hands move forward and slightly downward in a short movement.

Slapshot: Bring both “A” hands right over left with palms facing each other. Finishing down from above the right shoulder in an arc to the left. (Mimicking a slap shot)

Smart: The index finger on the right hand, palm facing left, touches the middle of the forehead and then moves straight out.

Snapshot: Brush the little finger side right of the open hand forward across the left palm, simultaneously twisting so the right hand ends palm down.

Stick: Two “F” hands, right hand on top of left hand, right hand moves forward and upward as if sliding up the shaft of a hockey stick.

Stop: Bring the little finger side of the right open hand, palm facing left, down into the upturned left palm.

Swizzles: Show in and out movement of the feet using both hands, palms facing each other.

T



Teach: Place both hands in a flattened “C” hand shape in front of the forehead, palms facing each other, bring them forward away from the head into flat “O” hand shapes.

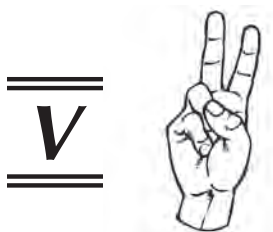
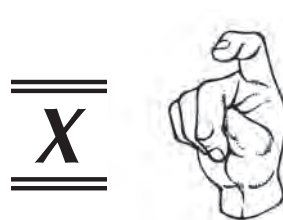
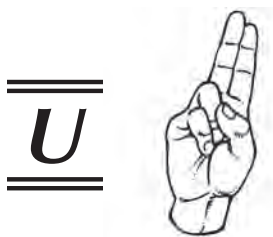
Team: Two “T” hands, index fingers touching and palms facing forward, bring the hands outward in a circle ending with the little fingers touching, palms facing in.

Third (sequential): Touch the extended right index finger, palm facing out, to the index finger of the left “3” hand, palm facing in.

Time: Tap the extended right index finger to the back of the left wrist, as if pointing to your watch.

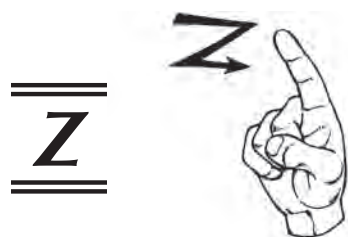
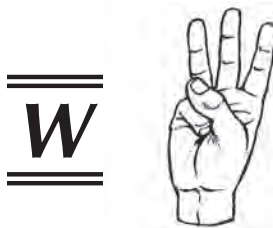
Tournament: (See competition)

Trophy: The fingertips of both “Y” hands tap together showing a trophy cup shape.



Varsity: Right “V” hand shakes, palm outward, in front of the body.

Yes: The right “S” hand shakes up and down at the wrist in front of the body, like the nodding of the head to indicate yes.



Wait: Wiggle the fingers of both upturned “5” hands, with the left hand higher than the right and both palms facing inward.

Watch Me: Move “V” hand, palm in, inward toward the face.

Watch: Right “V” hand, palm out, touches fingertips to the side of the eye moving outward toward the subject to be watched.

Water: Tap the index finger of the “W” hand to the chin.

Win: Swing with the right “5” hand from the right side of the body, palm facing left, down in an arc across the top of the left “S” hand. The right hand changes to an “S” hand shape as it passes left.

With: Bring both “A” hands together, palms facing each other.

Wrist Shot: “A” hand twists inward quickly at the wrist.

Zamboni: (Fingerspell) or, sign for ice (See ice) + machine: loosely mesh the fingers of both curved “5” hands, thumbs up and palms facing the body, bend the wrists up and down keeping fingers meshed imitating movements of the gears.

Zone: Touch the thumb tips of two “A” hands then draw them apart; circle toward self and touch the thumb tips again.

If at all possible, having a sign language interpreter available during practice and games can be a tremendous help to everyone when communicating. Interpreters are most helpful in a meeting before practice or a pregame setting when time is taken to visually cover a practice or game plan. With the use of an erase board to prepare, players have the opportunity to ask questions before stepping out onto the ice. If an interpreter is not available or feasible, the coach can use these signs to communicate to all the players.

It is inevitable that breakdowns will occur as a result of miscommunications. A coach should be very clear with the expectations of all the players. Don't allow a hearing impaired player off the hook simply because he or she is hearing impaired. They should be held accountable to pay attention and learn just like any other player. A good coach will set the bar high for the team to be good communicators and adapt to the style that works best for the team.

Getting Started

- 1) The biggest key is to have a little extra patience as a coach and to replace or add to verbal cues by using visual or non-verbal ones as well.
- 2) As with all coaching situations, preparation for practice and game situations is imperative. Plan your practice before and explain your plans before the players step onto the ice. All of your players will benefit from being informed of your goals for the practice. Use the erase board to diagram your drills for practice as this will enable the hearing impaired player to learn the same way as everyone else and fit in easier with his/her teammates.
- 3) Have the hearing impaired player always sit in front of the coaches at all times in the locker room and on the ice. This will allow them to get the maximum desired understanding of the drills and systems being taught. This is also much easier for the hearing impaired player who reads lips well.



- 4) In a practice situation instruct one or two players that have a good understanding of the drills to jump in front of the line when starting or changing your drills. This will allow not only the special player to emulate the drill correctly, it will help everyone do the drill properly.
- 5) When you stop practice with your whistle and want to change things up, have your players get in the habit of raising their arms above their head so everyone knows it's time to stop and look for change. Your players will also learn to do this in games, which in turn will help everyone out on the ice to understand and keep a hearing impaired player from continuing to play when everyone else has stopped.
- 6) One coaching hint that can be used for the entire team is to have your players use the glass around the rink as an aide in playing the game. In most rinks the glass can act as a mirror for your players to help them see what is happening behind them. The adoption of this skill by all your players will help them read and react to the play faster.
- 7) On the bench during games, good coaches reinforce good and bad situations. Use of the coaching board is most beneficial to all players, especially those who are hearing impaired. In this manner it is easier to communicate your expectations quickly with a higher level of understanding from the players.
- 8) Challenge yourself as a coach and your assistant coaches by researching other coaching methods to help your players, i.e. use a thick marker on the ice to help the players understand a skill or drill or how to point out where a player should be starting a drill. This works great and does not interrupt play like a cone might.
- 9) Most importantly, include all players in all team activities both on and off the ice. Let everyone on your bench get on the ice early in your games. In this manner, your players will feel part of the team and get into the game. If you want maximum effort you have to give maximum opportunity.

Communication, patience, and enthusiasm will go a long way to ensure everyone on the team has a great experience playing for you. This should always be your goal as the coach and it is the true measuring stick

of the job you are doing. Take the time to educate yourself first and learn what it takes to help a special child. In turn you will be helping all the other players do the same; this will create good players and even better people.

Practice Plan for Hearing Impaired Players

It is important to first plan and then explain to the hearing impaired player or players the plan and purpose of each drill in practice. Taking the time to explain your plan to the entire team will improve your time on the ice. It is crucial to have good players who understand the drills to be first in line to demonstrate so the hearing impaired player can adapt and move quickly to the next drill with no time wasted.

The practice plans for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, are combined with Sled Hockey, Standing Amputee Hockey, and Special Hockey for Developmental Disabilities are located in the practice plan section of this manual.



Deaf/Hard
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Sled
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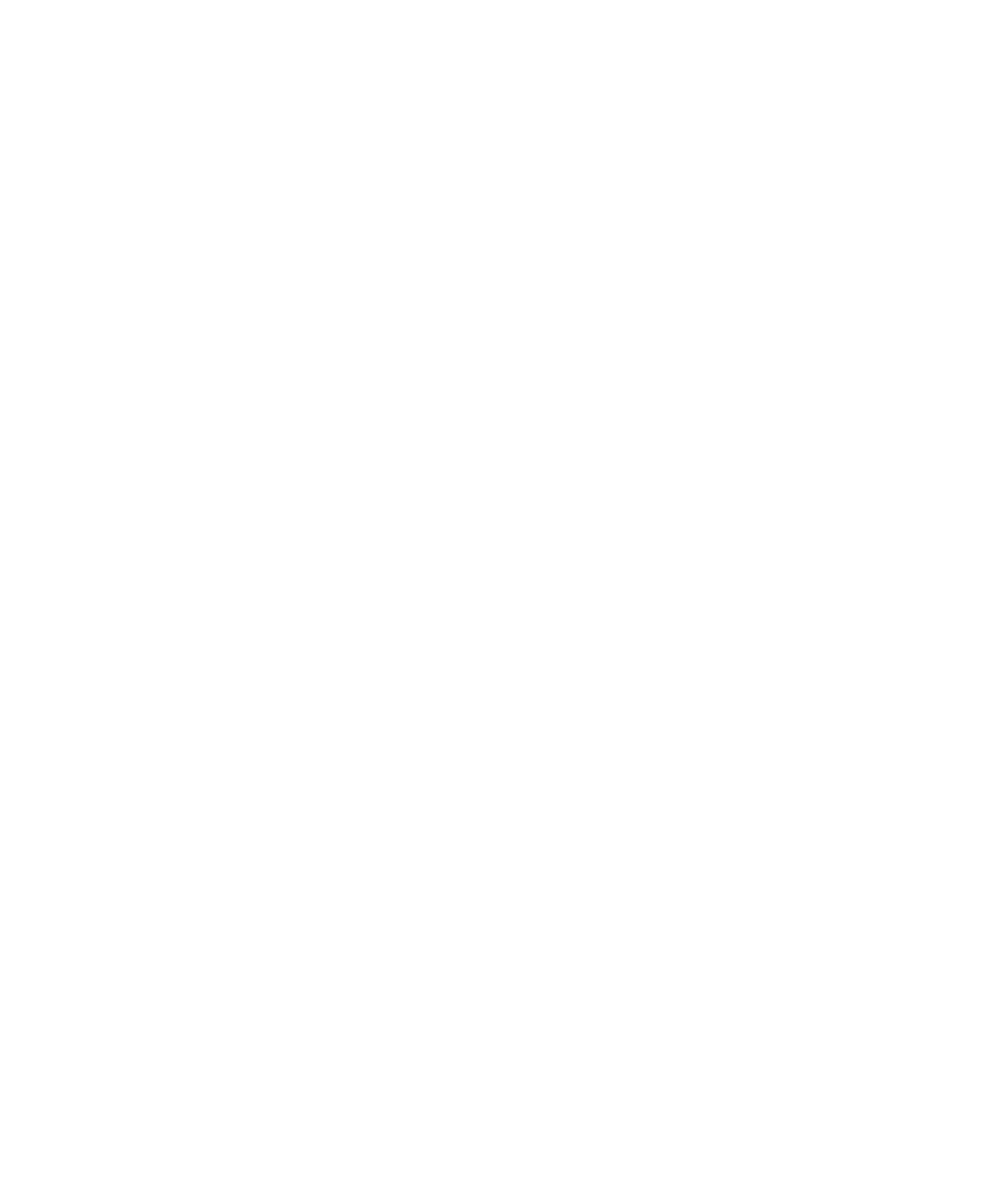
Special
Hockey

Standing
Amputee
Hockey



Sled Hockey for Physical Disabilities





Sled Hockey for Physical Disabilities

The major differences in sled hockey compared to other disciplines of ice hockey are the huge diversity of disabilities. Coaches have to deal with many of the challenges on an individual basis such as a player with Spina Bifida or what medications a player with Multiple Sclerosis is taking. It is crucial for the coach to be extremely familiar with every player's disability so you can be there for them physically as well as emotionally. Remember, it is not always what you physically see in a player; many times it is the emotional side of their disability that you have to educate yourself with first.

Sled players come with many different challenges. As the coach, your job is to make sure you have help in getting the players into their sleds and out onto the ice on time.

"I've used the same kind of drills since day one. I'm a developmental coach and, in my opinion, sled players have to learn the basics in skill development. Disabled hockey players, once they hit the ice, are no different than anyone else."

Bob O'Connor

Keys to a Great Experience

- Surround yourself with good volunteer help.
- Get familiar with every player's disability.
- Familiarize yourself with the sticks they use and how they stickhandle.
- Be concerned with proper sled fitting. Foam can be inserted to provide maximum fit. Make sure your players become one with the sled.
- One or two able-bodied players on each team can participate in league play, especially if you are short on numbers. (Rules differ by local league standards).
- Coaches use the same drills as able-bodied hockey with plenty of station work and the use of small area games combined with regular full-ice drills.
- When going to games, coaches should carry a card of the different nuances of the game to educate on-ice and other game officials.



The Sled Hockey Game Pusher

Some players' upper body disabilities do not allow them the same advantage when playing sled hockey. This is no cause for alarm; participation is what matters most. In these special cases, players are allowed to have a "pusher" assist them out on the ice. This particular individual's sled is designed to have an upside down U-shaped bar attached to the back of the sled so a volunteer pusher can help the player skate and stay with the play. No pusher can ever exceed the speed of the fastest player on the opposing team. The pusher in most cases is involved in non-league play only.

What is a Pusher?

A pusher is an individual who is on skates (and wearing other required protective equipment) during a sled hockey game and pushes a player who can not propel a sled themselves. A pusher uses handles which are attached to the back of the sled of the player being pushed.

What is a Pusher's Responsibility?

- 1) To propel the player who has limited mobility (or other disability which prevents him/herself

from participating in play i.e.: blindness, etc.) and cannot propel him or herself.

- 2) To keep the players safety in mind at all times, and out of harm's way.
- 3) To provide the player the opportunity to play the sport of sled hockey.

Pusher Requirements

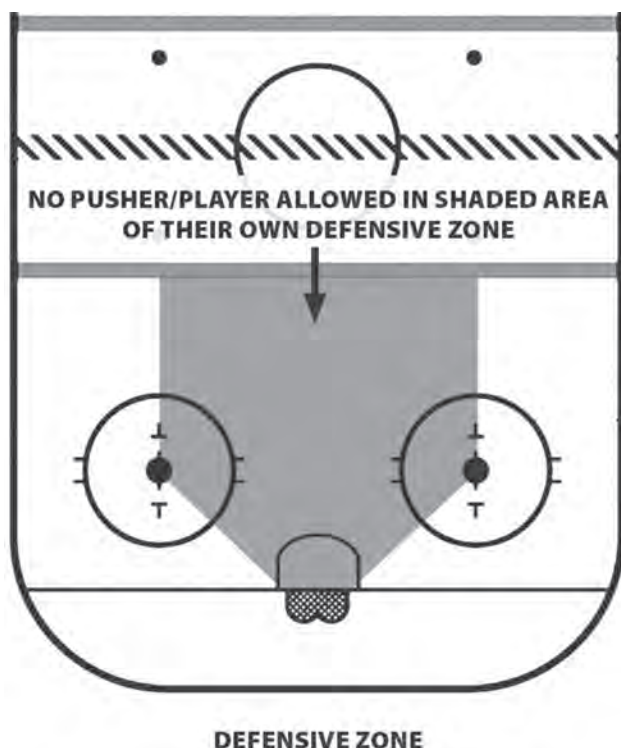
- 1) A pusher must be registered with USA Hockey as a player, coach or volunteer.
- 2) A pusher must wear hockey skates (no figure skates) and a HECC-approved helmet.
- 3) A pusher is strongly recommended to wear full hockey equipment.
- 4) A pusher must wear a jersey, warm-up or uniform of the player's team they are pushing.
- 5) A pusher must have adequate skating ability. The referee may remove a pusher if they are not able to skate well enough to keep the players safe.
- 6) No pushers and/or coaches are allowed to have an ice hockey stick during warm-ups or during game play at anytime.
- 7) Neither pushers nor coaches are allowed to sit in the bench area or on top of the boards.

In-Game Playing Rules for Sled Hockey Pushers

- 1) A pusher may not pull the pushed player backward unless the pushed player is in harms way.
- 2) A pusher may not push their player faster than the average speed of the player on the ice.
- 3) A pusher may not catch the opposing team's puck carrier from behind.
- 4) A pusher may not use their skates or any other body part to block, deflect or advance the puck.
- 5) A pusher may not use themselves to set up a screen.
- 6) A pusher may not trap the puck beneath the pushed player's sled and the ice in an attempt to advance the puck.
- 7) A pusher may not advance the puck with the front part of the sled.



- 8) A pusher may not dominate or intimidate opposing players.
- 9) A pusher must keep a minimum of one blade of the pushed players sled on the ice at all times.
- 10) A pusher may not lift the front or back of the sled off the ice.
- 11) A pusher may not jump for any reason. The pusher's skates must remain on the ice at all times.
- 12) A pusher may not use a hockey stick to push.
- 13) A pusher may not coach or communicate with any other players on the ice while pushing. They are simply there to push their player.
- 14) No pushers or pushed players are allowed to play within the area in their defensive zone with imaginary lines drawn from the defending goal posts to end faceoff spots and out to intersect with the blue line. (See diagram)



- 15) A pusher/pushed player may not check or be checked. Light body contact is allowed.
- 16) A maximum of two (2) pushed players for each team are allowed on the ice, in play, at any one time.

If there is an infraction of any of the above, a minor penalty shall be assessed to the pusher and player being pushed. Both must serve the penalty and sit in the penalty box/area.

A minor penalty shall be assessed for the first infraction of a pusher/pushed player entering the no pusher defensive zone. It will be an unsportsmanlike penalty.

If a pusher commits two (2) minor penalties in one game, the pusher will no longer be allowed to push in that game for any player. The pushed player will be allowed to continue to play with a different pusher.

Pushers, coaches and referees are permitted to help a player get up if they are unable to get up on their own (in a reasonable amount of time — players should not be left lying on the ice) during game play. However, the player or the pusher cannot intentionally or unintentionally affect the game. If an intentional obstruction of the game occurs, a minor penalty will apply. If an obstruction of the game occurs unintentionally, the referee must stop play and the ensuing faceoff shall take place at the nearest neutral zone faceoff spot.

Coaches shall not stand on the ice surface while the game is in progress. They shall remain on the players' bench. Only coaches and/or pushers wearing skates and a helmet are allowed on the ice to assist players during a game.

The Sled Hockey Game

Sled hockey is played with same rules as regular ice hockey. The only difference is the use of the tag-up offside rule. Players at older ages play full-contact with body checking. However, players are not allowed to t-bone their opponents, or make contact with the middle of another player's sled using the front of yours (making the letter "T"). Officials make the same calls as in regular ice hockey. Coaching sled hockey is very similar to regular ice hockey, but the two major challenges are defensive positioning and forechecking.

Defensive Positioning

Sled hockey players do not skate backwards, so it is imperative when coaching to teach players about proper gap control, in which the defensemen is moving up into the neutral zone and taking away time

and space from the oncoming forward. The defender then angles properly to keep the puck carrier toward the boards and not in the middle of the ice. It is crucial that defensive partners communicate constantly, especially if a switch needs to take place in the neutral zone and especially in front of the net.

Teaching players to angle properly is the key to defensive success. The three keys to angling are:

- 1) Proper gap control
- 2) Judging the opponent's speed
- 3) Moving the opponent to the outside and finishing the check (in a contact game)

Forechecking

Forechecking in sled hockey is another challenging system for coaches. When done poorly or ignored, this portion of the game can cost you dearly. It is very easy to send players in and get trapped deep in the offensive zone and, in turn, give up many odd-player advantages.

The key to a solid forecheck is to know when to be aggressive and when to back off and take away the neutral zone. Although it is a judgment call on the individual player or players, the key is to play the percentages properly and forecheck hard when you have a very high percentage of getting the puck or sealing off the puck carrier. It is equally as important at times to back off and angle properly through the neutral zone to take away an opponent's speed and maintain an equal number of defensive players to ward off any odd-player advantages. Just like regular hockey, sled hockey is a possession game and the team that controls the puck the most normally wins the game.

Official Rules of Sledge* (Sled) Hockey

**Sledge Hockey is the International Paralympic Committee's term for what we in the United States call Sled Hockey.*

Rule Differences

Teeing or T-Boning — Teeing is defined as “a player making contact with an opponent with any part of the front radius of his sled straight into his opponent.” This does not include all occurrences of contact being made, rather when contact is made at, or almost at right angles of the sleds with significant impact. This is a safety issue for the players, as serious injuries can occur. (Minor penalty)

Holding an Opponent — Holding is probably the most common penalty called in sled hockey. Holding an opponent for even a moment can cause this player to lose any momentum he may have. Holding infractions can occur on the arms, on the sled, anywhere on the body, on the head, and even on the opponent's stick. (Minor penalty)

Butt-Ending — Using the butt end during contact can be extremely dangerous because there are sharp “picks” located at the end of both sticks. These “picks” are used by the players to propel themselves along the ice but are sometimes used as a weapon. Officials should be very alert to a player's use of the stick. (Minor or major penalty)

Falling on the Puck by a Player — This play occurs often on faceoffs. A player will intentionally fall on the puck in order to protect the puck from the opposing center before passing the puck back to a teammate. This should be strictly enforced with the appropriate minor penalty.

Faceoffs — Faceoffs in the end zones will only take place at the end zone faceoff spots, regardless of where the puck was deflected out of play.

Offside — The determining factors for an offside are the position of the puck and the position of the player's blades. The player must have the blades under his sled making contact with the blue line at the moment the puck crosses the line.

Playing the Puck with the Butt-End of the Stick — Players are not allowed to make contact with the puck with the butt-end of the stick while the puck is not on the surface of the ice. This is a safety issue, as the picks at the end of the stick would be exposed to other players.

Penalty Shot — A penalty shot is determined by the position of the player's body and not by the position of the player's sled. Even if the player's sled has come somewhat alongside his opponent's sled while he/she is on a breakaway, if his/her body is still behind his/her opponent, then the penalty shot shall be awarded.

Change of Players Procedure during Stoppage of Play — Because players are on sleds, 10 seconds are given to both teams to make their player changes instead of the normal five seconds. The linesman conducting the faceoff will still allow the normal five seconds before dropping the puck.



Procedure for Conducting Faceoffs — The players shall be positioned squarely facing the sideboards of the rink, with their sleds outside of the faceoff spot, and with the blade of their sticks on the ice, positioned on the white part of the faceoff spot. The center may face the same way as his opponent or in the opposite direction.

Officials Positioning, Procedures and Judgment

Staying on Top of the Play — Officials should not hesitate to cross behind the goal to get closer to the play. When players are battling for a loose puck in close quarters, there are a number of things that can happen including holding. Because the players are low to the ice surface while sitting in their sleds, hands and sticks can be hidden behind their opponents, so the referee needs to be right on top of the play. This also applies to when the play progresses down the ice. For example, if you see a breakout pass from the end zone in your corner to a breaking player on the other side of the ice, feel free to cross over through the neutral zone to stay on top of the play.

Moving Out from the Boards — The official has to find open ice during a breakout and when play is moving through the neutral zone. Players on sleds take up more room than able-bodied players, so the referee should not be afraid to move away from the boards and move closer to the center in order to get out of the zone.

Line Change Procedure — When conducting a line change procedure in the end zones, the referee should move out from the end zone corners and make themselves seen by the benches to see if anyone is coming.

Faceoffs — Officials should conduct the faceoff by holding the puck out over the faceoff circle at the players' eye level. We do not want the players having to look up to anticipate when the official is going to drop the puck.

Judgement on Icings — Linesmen must use a different sense of judgement when washing out an icing because he/she feels that a defending player (other than the goalkeeper) is able to play the puck before it crosses the goal line. A player on a sled is not able to move as quickly as an able-bodied player, so use appropriate judgement.

Skating Backwards — It is imperative that you are aware of players behind you before you proceed to back up. If you run into a player on a sled while skating backwards you will end up on top of the player, hurting that player and/or yourself.

Picking up Player's Sticks — If a player drops a stick, do not retrieve it and hand it to the player. Coaches get very upset if you do this!

Never, Ever Jump — Officials should take the hit and do everything possible not to fall on top of the players.

Also, never jump up on the boards, as your skate blades would then be at the head level of the players.

Players Benches on the Ice — When a game is played at an arena that is not sled accessible, the players are to sit along the boards in front of their team's bench. Penalized players are to sit on the ice in the referee's crease. If a puck is directed toward the players or penalty bench, the players are supposed to direct the puck as if it "bounced" off the boards. If the puck enters the "bench" or if a player has directed the puck in an unfair manner, then play should be stopped right away. This is a safety issue, as we do not want players fighting for a loose puck among the players on the "bench."

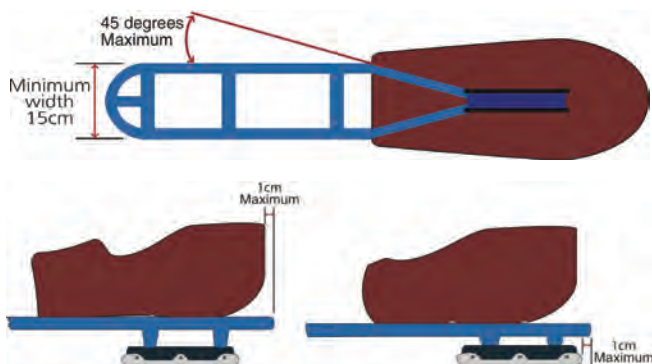
Sled Player Equipment Guidelines

Player equipment shall be defined as the sled, skag, bucket, skate holder, skate blade, sticks and picks.

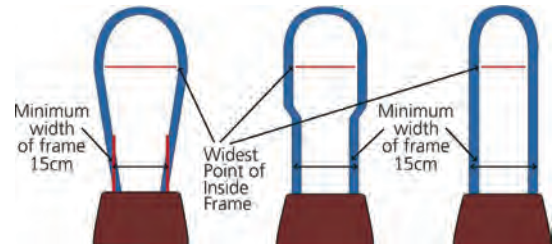
Sled Frames

- 1) Sled frames may be constructed of the following approved material: steel, aluminum, titanium and magnesium. The material must be cylindrical and not have a diameter smaller than 1.5 cm or greater than 3 cm.
- 2) The main side rails shall be a **minimum width** of 15 cm (measured from the outside of the frame) and a **maximum width** no greater than the seat of the sled. The side rails of the frame may taper underneath the seat to accommodate the blades; any taper must not exceed 45 degrees.

No more than 1 cm of the frame may protrude beyond the rear of the seat. The blade carrier may sit on the rear end of the frame, however the frame must protrude 1 cm beyond the end of the blade.



- 3) The front of the sled shall have a continuous curve with a maximum radius one half (1/2) of the inside width of the frame at its widest point forward of the seat. The following materials may be used in constructing this piece: steel, aluminum, titanium, magnesium and polyurethane.



- 4) The frame may be fitted with a maximum of four (4) cross members and one foot rail, mounted forward of the seat. The cross members may be square or cylindrical and may not have a diameter smaller than 1.5 cm or greater than 3 cm.



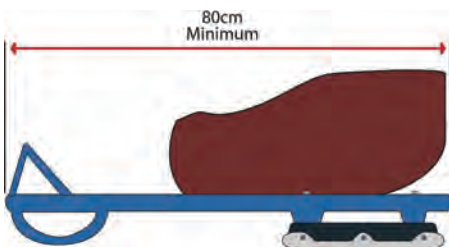
- 5) The height of the main frame measured from the ice to the bottom of the frame shall be 8.5 cm minimum to 9.5 cm maximum.



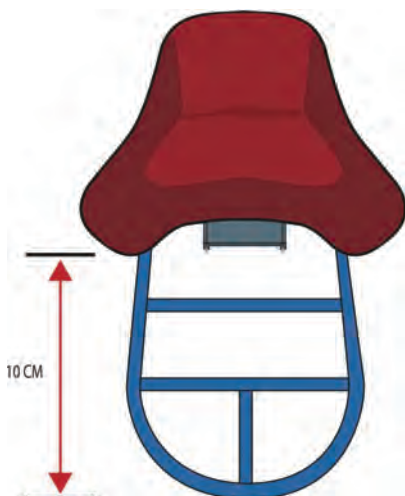
- 6) Players' seats/buckets may sit on the ice hockey blades/blade carrier, as long as it is not below 5 cm.



- 7) For a double amputee minimum length of the frame must:
- be 80 cm, and
 - accommodate the front skid.



- 8) The minimum length of the goalkeepers' sled frame must:
- extend 10 cm beyond the front end of the players' seat bucket.
 - accommodate the front skid.
 - shall have a foot guard/support not less than 5 cm high minimum and no more than 15 cm high maximum, if applicable.



Front Skag

The sled must have one skag. The front skag must be attached to the frame not more than 3 cm from the front of the main frame. The skag must be mounted in the center of the frame and extend backward. The skag measured from the frame downward toward the ice must be no less than 7 cm minimum and 9.5 cm maximum.

- The skag may be made of the same material as the main frame. If made of the same material, it must be cylindrical and have a 3 cm maximum.
- The skag may be designed of a nylon/plastic material. It may be solid in shape and have a 1.5 cm minimum and a 3 cm maximum.



Skags cannot be designed in the following styles:



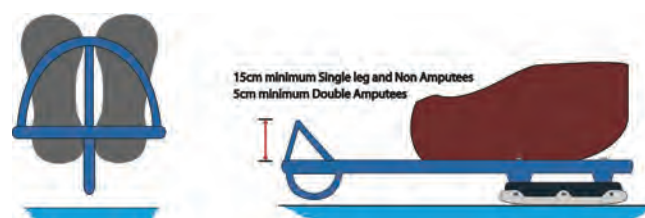
Foot Guard/Support

A foot guard/support is not required, however it is **strongly recommended**.

If in use, the foot guard/support must be made of the same material as the main frame and have a diameter of not less than 1.5 cm minimum and 3 cm maximum.

- The foot guard/support shall vary in height (depending on each player's foot size), but shall be a minimum of 15 cm high.
- The foot guard/support must not extend outside the main frame, and must not extend above the player's feet/foot.

Note: Double amputee's foot guard/support shall be a minimum of 5 cm high.



Foot Protection

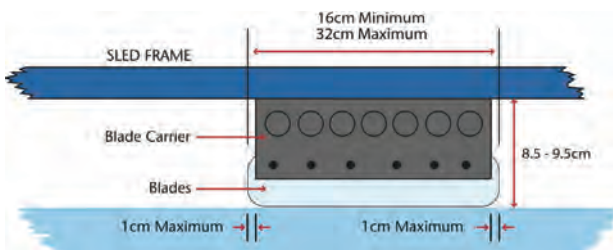
Ice hockey skate boots as protection are not required, however, they are **strongly recommended**. A guard built into the main frame may also act as suitable protection.



Skate Blades/Blade Carrier

Each sled shall be mounted with one (1) blade minimum and two (2) blades maximum, mounted parallel and square under the seat of the sled. There is no minimum width that the blades be set apart, however, the maximum width is the width of the seat. The blades must be a minimum 16 cm and no longer than 32 cm. The blades must not protrude more than 1 cm beyond the front or back of the blade carrier.

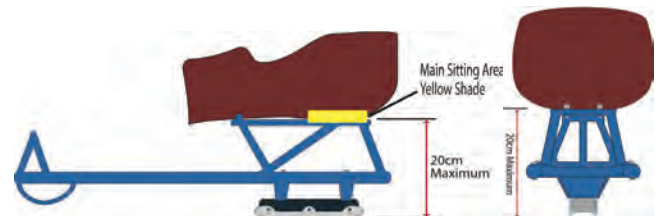
Note: Plastic blades are acceptable for goalkeepers only.



Sled Bucket (Seat)

- 1) The bucket may be made from any suitable material and must not have sharp edges (edges rounded off). No more than 1 cm of the frame may protrude beyond the rear of the bucket.
Note: If the goalie sits cross-legged, the bucket may be extended sideways to protect the knees, but may not protrude more than 1 cm beyond the player's knees.
- 2) The maximum height a seat may sit above the ice is 20 cm, measured from a flat surface to the lowest point of the underside of the main seating area of the seat.
- 3) Removable seat cushions or built-in padding, or a combination thereof, must not exceed 5 cm in height, nor overlap the seat.

- 4) No external projection or protuberance beyond the seat or back support toward the rear of the sled will be allowed in excess of 1 cm.
- 5) Straps and/or adhesive tape may be used to secure players feet, ankles, knees and hips to the sled.



Hockey Stick

Sticks may be made of wood or other material, such as carbon, aluminum, fiberglass or plastic. They shall not have any projections and all edges must be beveled. Adhesive non-fluorescent tape of any color may be wrapped around the stick at any place. The shaft must be straight.

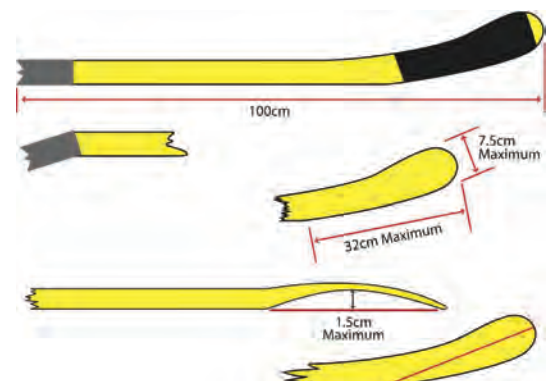
Shaft Dimensions:

Maximum length	100 cm from toe to the pick end of the shaft
Minimum width	2 cm
Minimum thickness	2.8 cm

Blade Dimensions:

Maximum length	32 cm from heel to toe
Maximum width	7.5 cm

The players stick blade may be curved and the curvature shall be restricted in such a way that the distance of a perpendicular line, measured from a straight line drawn from the heel to the center end of the blade, shall not exceed 1.5 cm.

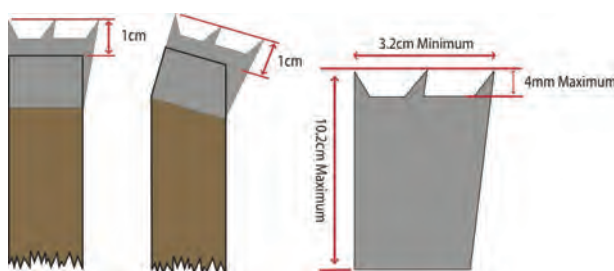


Picks

The depth of the teeth on the “pick-ends” shall NOT extend more than 4 mm. A set of “pick-ends” must be fixed to the lower or butt-end on each side of the stick, and have at least a total of 6 teeth of equal length per stick (a minimum of 3 each side). The “pick-ends” may be made of any strong material, including steel, and the entire length of the “body” of the pick may not be longer than 10.2 cm (4 inches). The “pick-ends” shall not extend more than 1 cm beyond the butt-end of the stick. The “pick-end” may be beveled but not extend beyond 1 cm at any angle.

Pick Dimension:

Minimum width 3.2 cm



Goaltender Stick

Sticks shall be made of wood or other material, such as aluminum, fiberglass or plastic. It must not have any projections and all edges must be beveled. Adhesive non-fluorescent tape of any color may be wrapped around the stick at any place.

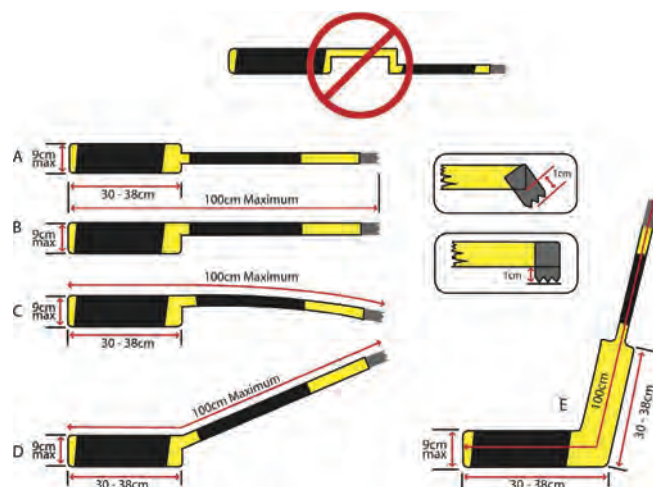
Shaft Dimensions:

Maximum length	100 cm measured along the center line
Minimum width	2 cm
Minimum thickness	2.8 cm

Blade Dimensions:

Minimum length	30 cm
Maximum length	38 cm from heel to toe
Maximum width	9 cm

The goalie's stick blade may be curved and the curvature shall be restricted in such a way that the distance of a perpendicular line, measured from a straight line drawn from any point at the heel to the end of the blade, shall not exceed 1.5 cm. The goalie's stick may have an additional pick at the base of the blade not exceeding 1 cm, set at 90 degrees at the butt-end of the stick to facilitate movement back and forth in the goal (i.e. push or pull).





Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey

Sled
Hockey

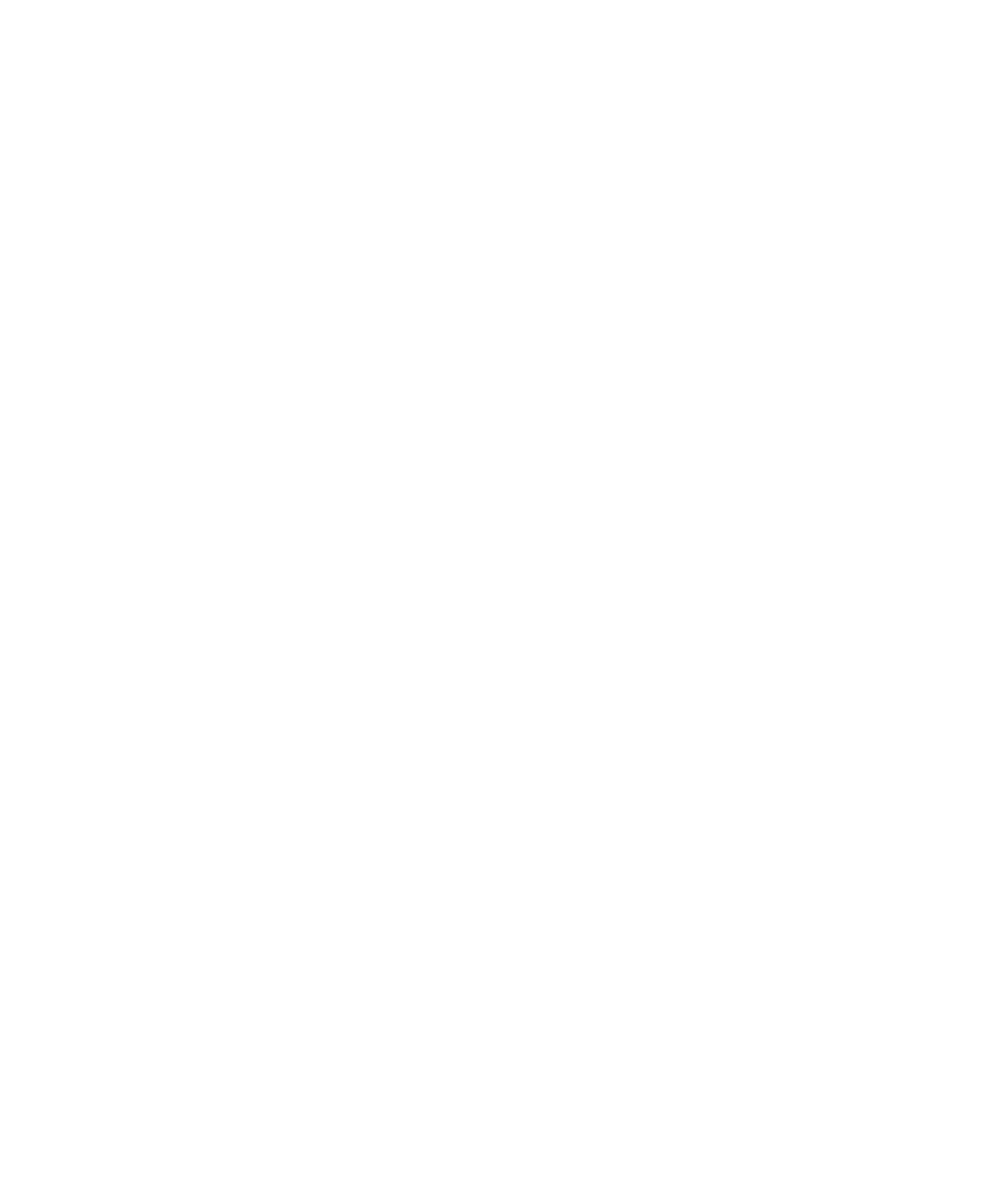
Special
Hockey

Standing
Amputee
Hockey



Special Hockey for Developmental Disabilities





Special Hockey for Developmental Disabilities

USA Hockey is committed to coaching excellence. The most important thing to know as a coach in special hockey is that your athletes are individuals, and coaching them is just like coaching any other youth or community sports team. The skills that make successful coaches are the same regardless of the level of play being coached. But we recognize that there are some situations that make special hockey coaching unique and thus more enjoyable.

This section is designed to provide tools for recognizing coaching situations and opportunities that may be unique to the special hockey coaching environment. At the end of this section, we have provided some tables that other coaches have found helpful in planning or adjusting practice strategies to help athletes and coaches alike become more successful.

Special hockey provides opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to participate in the sport of ice hockey in a specially-adapted learning environment. In this section, we refer to this discipline as such and all other programs outside of the four disabled disciplines as neuro-typical hockey. Today, there are more than 60 teams in over 30 cities across the United States. Visit usahockey.com or americanspecialhockeyassociation.org for a complete list of special hockey organizations.

Understanding Athletes with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities affect more than 4.5 million Americans (1.65% of the population). They

are defined as “severe, life-long ailments attributable to mental and/or physical impairments, manifested before age 22.”

Individuals with developmental disabilities experience substantial limitations in three or more of the following major core life competencies: capacity for independent living; economic self-sufficiency; learning; mobility; receptive & expressive language; self-care/direction.

Many of the players are adults who lack these core competencies, thus providing them with the opportunity to remain with the same special hockey program for many years, compared to neuro-typical (i.e. house league, travel and/or high school) programs that kids “age out” of.

Common Developmental Disabilities*

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Down Syndrome
- Neurological Disorders (i.e. Tourette’s Syndrome)
- Mental Retardation
- Cerebral Palsy
- ADD/ADHD

**Many special hockey players have more than one of the above. As one example, a combination of Autism and ADD/ADHD is not uncommon.*

The most common developmental disability is autism. Unfortunately, it is also the fastest growing disability in the United States.

Facts about Autism

- 1 in 150 U.S. children are Autistic*
- Affects boys 3-4 times more often*
- More than 80% are under the age of 21^
- The number of those aged 6-21 receiving services for autism increased from 22,664 to 193,637 (from 1994 to 2005)*
- One child is diagnosed with autism every 20 seconds

*Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Study; Feb. 2007; ^Autism Speaks;
~Autism Society of America

Clinical Definition

Autism is a complex developmental disorder that appears in the first three years of life, although it is sometimes diagnosed much later. It affects the brain's normal development of social and communication skills. Common features of autism include impaired social interactions, impaired verbal and non-verbal

communication, problems processing information from the senses, and restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior. The symptoms may vary from moderate to severe. Two related, milder conditions are Asperger syndrome and "pervasive development disorder not otherwise specified" (PDD-NOS).

What are the mental, psychological and social considerations I should be aware of?

Each athlete will have completed all USA Hockey forms, including the medical release form. The form will note if there are any restrictions on activity, medications that may affect performance or other unique situations. Other than that, they are just like everyone else.

The best advice we can give you as a coach is to look beyond the disability to see the person, and then trust your instincts on psychological and social situations. If you sense that someone is left out or feels lonely, you are probably right. Ask that person how he/she thinks things are going and if he/she is having fun. Even



without any experience working with a player with developmental disabilities, your instincts, common sense and hockey knowledge all play a critical role in shaping your coaching style and help you implement your best judgment.

As noted above, if there are significant psychological or social disabilities that have been diagnosed, you will see them noted on the medical release forms. Be sure you see those forms before the athletes arrive for the first practice.

IMPORTANT: The largest challenge for a special hockey coach is the enormous range of variables to deal with as opposed to neuro-typical hockey. The three major differences are: age (5-adult); degree of disabilities players have on any given team, and the wide range of hockey skill level/physical limitations players have.

It is acceptable to create a form for parents to fill out regarding a player's disability. For the parents who are comfortable sharing (most are), this information can be extremely helpful to a coach:

- 1) Medication & implications (i.e. time of day they are administered and side effects)
- 2) Impact the disability/disabilities has on comprehension, coordination, sociability, etc.
- 3) Physical conditions (i.e. seizures, palsy, anything that would limit a player from physical activity, etc.)
- 4) Teaching tips (are there key words or phrases a player might be more responsive to?)

How can I train and coach athletes more positively and more successfully to improve their performance and behavior?

Look below for the comments on expectations, dignity and respect. In special hockey, we are always looking for ways to support volunteers and coaches with new training and resources. Keep an eye on usahockey.com under the disabled section for updated tips and to ask questions of our sport specific advisors.

Check out the Principles of Coaching section of this guide for tips on effective coaching.

There is also an organization specifically dedicated to developing positive coaching skills. Check it out at positivecoachingalliance.org.



What to Expect?

Special Hockey players are not immune to rules and expectations. Game rules and sportsmanship can be learned if coaches provide consistent messages. A coach's principles about behavior and respect should not in any way be compromised. Rather, it is important to understand the athletes' disabilities so these concepts can be properly explained to them and carefully articulated to parents.

When players follow the rules, they should be recognized every time to reinforce good behavior. Coaches also must understand when those rules and expectations must be modified.

A good rule of thumb is to "expect what you expect from players **without** disabilities." If players break the rules, they must understand there are consequences. Some coaches issue a penalty, but don't necessarily put their team down a man. The penalty box can be a place where players can take a "time out" and talk to the coaches about what went wrong and why a

certain behavior or incident was inappropriate and unacceptable. Unlike neuro-typical teams that may issue a punishment for a player not listening/following direction or for making the same mistakes several times, special hockey coaches should be empowered to implement disciplinary action to keep the practice or game environment safe or in good spirits.

Some teams have what is called a “Safe Coach” who handles these duties. Players are instructed to go to the Safe Coach, who is on the ice (helmet, no stick or gloves), for a short period of time. If a player is sent to the Safe Coach or penalty box multiple times, coaches should use their discretion as to whether or not the player finishes the practice or game.

Violence is not tolerated under any circumstances and is dealt with by issuing one warning before dismissal from that practice or game.

Game Rules and Guidelines

When it comes to the rules of the game coaches must, at times, improvise. Typically, there are no offsides or icing in special hockey. It is not that players aren’t capable of learning these rules, but with such a wide range of physical abilities, developmental disabilities, size and age, enforcing these traditional rules would cause a special hockey game to last for hours.

Faceoffs slow the game down significantly. It can take two special hockey teams 60 seconds or more to properly line up for a faceoff. Coaches and parents alike would much prefer to see kids playing than standing around waiting for both teams to be perfectly lined up for the puck to drop. While “official rules” differ from game to game and team to team, below are some universally adapted guidelines for games:

- No offsides or icing
- Penalties enforced (penalty shot at both coaches’ discretion)
- 1-2 “floaters” allowed on ice/team (floater is defined as a player who does not pursue the puck or interfere with play)
- 2-minute shifts (buzzer signifies line change)
- Opposing coaches work together to ensure skill level is properly matched and that players from both teams are being equally included and having fun

- Game score is kept but, at the discretion of the opposing coaches, can be modified based on the nature of the games and the demeanor of its participants

Communicating Ideas for Learning

Is there a specific training plan I should follow for the season or can I be creative?

The USA Hockey Coaching Education Program offers both education programming and great materials for coaching hockey. These materials can be downloaded from usahockey.com and instruction is offered over the course of the season by the local affiliates.

For any coach, having such a wide range of skill, age, size and intellectual comprehension ability is an ominous scenario. However, it also presents a wonderful opportunity for a coach to put his or her mark on the team by thinking “out of the box” and customizing the environment in which the team plays as well as culture of the team.

At any level – from Mite to Midget – great coaches are the ones that are the best at **adaptation and innovation**. For example, special hockey coaches make use of a variety of teaching aides that help players (most of whom are visual learners) develop skills, embrace a concept and have fun.

For example, playing with soccer/kick balls allows players to develop skating skills and helps foster the ability to make use of a player’s skate in receiving passes and re-directing the puck. Practicing stickhandling with tennis balls helps players develop soft hands. For players who are non-verbal, success might look like keeping that player on the ice for the entire practice. So, it is not unusual for a coach to do milk crate races or play a game of red light/green light or tag to keep his or her players engaged and motivated.

When teaching game concepts, some coaches use latex spray paint or magic markers to help players understand relative positioning as well as key offensive and defensive areas of the ice.

For instance, to illustrate where the ‘Priority A scoring area’ is, a coach might draw/paint a circle in the offensive slot or the area immediately in front of the opposing net, between the faceoff circles. A coach will do this to illustrate the location of the “sweet spot” or, in other words, the place on the ice where a

player should be (or proceed to) when his or her team is in possession of the puck in the offensive zone.

Once players grasp that concept, it is effective for a coach to use a simple command during a game to direct a player there, by saying “sweet.” In practices or games, using clear and simple language is most effective.

How does an individual with an intellectual disability learn sport skills and rules, and what can a coach do to facilitate learning (training sequence, levels of instruction)?

People with developmental disabilities learn just like everyone else. They use different strategies and strengths to help them understand. Some learn best through seeing things, others through hearing things. Some need to feel what it is like to do something before they can learn it. The only difference with special hockey athletes is that they will most likely be slower to learn than their peers.

Repetition is a proven strategy for learning that is effective with everyone. It can also be effective with special hockey athletes. Another strategy is to “tell them, show them, help them and remind them.” Bottom line: no one strategy works for everyone. Be creative and have fun. That is the best environment for learning to happen.

Tips*

- Use clear, simple language & speak slowly (ask a parent if there are key phrases).
- Coaches demonstrate whenever possible.
- Repetition is key (routine is soothing).
- Visual aids can make huge impact (spray paint/markers/props).
- Be aware of each child’s learning preference (be sensitive to tone of voice, surrounding noise, physical proximity).

*Source: New Jersey Center for Outreach and Services for the Autism Community (NJCOSAC)

Avoid Sarcasm and Figurative Speech

Literal interpretation of:

- “Lend me a hand.”
- “Let’s hit the ice.”
- “What’s up?”
- “Stick down.”
- “Eyes Up.”
- “That blue line’s high today”

Non-Verbal or Severe Cases

Working with severe non-verbal players is extremely challenging. It takes an incredible amount of patience. Some tips on how to best gain and keep a non-verbal player’s attention include:

- Make eye contact
- Use player’s name
- Light touch on shoulder



What to Expect From the Players

Learning Considerations

It is important to help athletes (this would be any athlete, not just the special hockey athlete) see how much fun they will have once they master what you are teaching. Factors that may affect motivation include the athletes' reasons for coming to practice. Is it because they asked to be there? Did someone else sign them up? Do they feel comfortable that they know this sport? Or is it a new experience for them? While it may be helpful to know the answers to all those questions, your task as a coach remains the same: No matter what the motivation was for coming to the first practice, make the reason for coming to the second practice the fun and sense of success they felt at the first one.

Medical Considerations

Some of the primary medical considerations are defined in the table at the end of this section titled Intellectual Disability and Other Related Developmental Disabilities. The most important things to remember regarding these issues are safety, dignity and expectations.

- Safety is dealt with by talking to parents, guardians and athletes themselves about what you should be aware of. You are not expected to be a physician; just use common sense. Be sure to read the required USA Hockey Medical Release Form so you will know if there are restrictions on activity.
- Dignity is an easy thing to deny or to give. The best gauge of ability comes from talking to your athletes about what they like, how they feel during a workout or what they want to accomplish in this sport. When you talk to athletes, labels like Down syndrome, FAS, or "seizure prone" become less necessary.
- Expectations come from many sources. You will set expectations for your athletes. They will set them for themselves. Their families may have expectations about what they can or cannot do. As a coach, you need to set expectations that will challenge and push your athletes, then design workouts to help them meet those expectations. Be aware of restrictions that are noted on the Medical Release Form, but don't let them define the athlete.



Social Considerations

Social issues and their challenges are part of any athlete's reality, including a special hockey athlete. Where there are challenges in social skills, fitness, economic status or nutrition habits at home, you simply adjust the tools you use to help athletes meet expectations.

What to Expect From Yourself as the Coach

The role of the special hockey coach is much the same as any other volunteer coach in the community. There is an expectation that the coach will know something about the sport and how to teach it. This expectation varies with the skill level of the athletes and the environments in which the coaching takes place. If you have attended a USA Hockey Coaches Certification Level 1, you have the basics. If you haven't been to a clinic, you need to attend one as soon as possible.

There are a few aspects of coaching that are unique to the program. As a special hockey coach, there is an expectation that you will:

Help Players Select the Appropriate Hockey Program

Many of our players come to their first practice with very little knowledge of the sport of ice hockey. Because of this, you will need to help them become familiar with their options. A new player may only want to learn to skate or may have a goal of playing on a team in a league.

Another challenge is to help athletes select events within a sport. What level of hockey will provide a challenge as well as success? Which type of hockey will they enjoy the most and thus learn more quickly? The challenge here is a balance between pushing athletes to grow while not setting them up for frustration.

Offer a Wide Range of Activities and Events for All Ability Levels

When most people think of coaching special athletes, they assume that all athletes will have the same, lower ability level. This is not always the case. The average special hockey team will include athletes who have very limited exposure to a sport and athletes who have been playing for years, perhaps even in integrated sports programs in the community. Setting up practices will be much easier once you know the

ability of each athlete. Then you can build workouts to meet everyone's needs.

Often times, special hockey organizations will find themselves with more than 20 players. This provides the opportunity to split into two or more groups to provide more customized instruction, if the coach deems that approach more suitable for player learning. Dividing developmentally disabled players into groups can be even more challenging than creating 'A' and 'B' travel teams. However, many coaches opt to divide players by skill level, size or degree of disability to best achieve an optimal learning environment. In the spirit of "Hockey is for Everyone," special hockey teams don't make cuts.

Examples of Dealing with Different Ability Levels

- Train local youth hockey players to assist as volunteers to help teach skills and demonstrate drills. This also allows the player-to-coach ratio to be kept low, providing more robust instruction to each player.
- Divide ice into several skill stations and then rotate. Some teams choose to split players up by physical and/or intellectual ability. Others may choose to have groups evenly divided. Either way, it is important to establish and set individual goals for each player. For example, a skating drill can continue while a player needing extra instruction will receive it immediately and be re-integrated into the drill.
- Whenever possible, develop and conduct drills that emulate game situations. Make use of small area games and build in competition where appropriate.
- Incorporate free time where appropriate. This allows for casual learning where a coach can interact with the player without the pressure of giving and receiving instruction while conducting a drill, thus holding up the whole group. However, it is also critical for players to try things on their own to learn more about themselves as players.
- Build in fun. This keeps players engaged throughout the entire practice.

Lowering Player-to-Coach Ratio

Many special hockey teams enlist the services of local youth hockey players to volunteer their time to help adult coaches teach developmentally disabled athletes the game. Some teams call the neuro-typical youth players “mentors” while others call them “junior coaches.” Whatever their name, they can be a huge asset to any special hockey program. Youth players can demonstrate drills, shag pucks, move nets and provide basic one-on-one instruction under the supervision of the head coach. Lowering the player-to-coach ratio improves the quality of instruction disabled athletes receive, but it is also a two-way street.

For the neuro-typical player, volunteering with a special hockey team allows him or her to fulfill community service hours for his or her school, church, synagogue or youth organization. Furthermore, it is rewarding, challenging and looks good on a college application. Most importantly, volunteering as a mentor or junior coach helps to build character by helping others.



Provide Safe Training and Competition Opportunities

This is no different from any other coaching situation, but it is important to always remember. This population is more than twice as likely than their peers to experience abuse (physical, sexual or emotional). Keeping a protective eye out for signs of abuse or potential for becoming a victim is a sign of a good coach.

Safety Considerations

Unlike neuro-typical hockey, there are hidden dangers of the locker room, practice/game environment, from open rink doors and sticks in locker rooms to medication lying around or equipment being worn improperly.

- Start with listening to parents.
- Time of day can be a factor (medication).
- Physical environment can present unexpected hazards.
- Make note of players prone to seizures and plan accordingly with other coaches and parents.

Conduct High Quality Training and Competition

Another misconception is that because this is special hockey, the expectation of quality is less. This is not true. We intend for special hockey players to experience the highest quality training and competition possible. To achieve this, we continually revamp training workshops and materials to support our volunteers and coaches. USA Hockey strives to be a resource to every community, both in the programs we offer to people with intellectual disabilities and in the sport training resources available to our volunteers and coaches. The unfortunate reality is that many coaches are volunteer parents with little or no hockey experience. Getting high quality coaches involved in special hockey is critical to its growth. Some USA Hockey District Coaching Education Programs offer a Disabled Seminar (check with your district Coach-in-Chief).

Involve Families and/or Other Support Groups

Anything worth doing is worth getting help in doing. Families come to USA Hockey with a wide range of expectations and interests. Some look to special hockey as a respite opportunity. Others would like to only be involved by coming to the rink and cheering.



Still others seek more active roles as assistants or coaches themselves. All of these are acceptable and a part of the “team experience.” However, finding a qualified head coach is imperative. Much like any other team, the coach has to be the recognized leader and must set the tone for each practice and game.

Starting a Special Hockey Program

For more information about starting a program, you can find a USA Hockey Level 5 Master’s thesis authored by former head coach of the Colorado Golden Eagles Special Hockey team, Tracey Tucker at the following address: americanspecialhockey.org/user/File/Starting_A_Program.pdf. For information on finding a special hockey program near you go to americanspecialhockey.org/asha_7200.html.

Goal Setting and Understanding Success

One question to ask yourself as a coach at any level is “Have I changed the player’s behavior in a positive way?” Like anything else, it is important to define success before the season starts. Look at it from three different perspectives:

Non-Verbal: Might be to develop the ability to pursue the puck and grasp the concept of the game.

High Functioning: Might be to master puck-handling and grasp team concepts (passing/making plays)

Life: This might be to become mainstreamed in school or try out for a neuro-typical team. This

might be to gain social maturity, employment, a driver’s license, admission into college, etc.

Assist Players’ Integration into the Community

While some players will already be active in many aspects of their communities, others may turn to special hockey to provide a safe place to learn sports and social skills that will assist them in more inclusive settings. You won’t have to work hard at this part of your coaching experience. It frequently just happens, or happens with family support. As a cautionary note: not every athlete sees community integration as a desirable goal. Some players will view special hockey as their “safe place” where they don’t have the same concerns about “being different” as they have in some integrated settings. Other athletes enjoy the freedom of going back and forth between special hockey and community or school sports programs because they have different friends or goals in each group. Still others see special hockey as a place to learn skills so they can make the leap to integrated sports programs. Regardless of the goals, you will want to honor the athletes’ goals first! Ways to support athletes in attaining their goals related to integration include:

- Help them register for community hockey programming during your season
- Talk with them about what their goals are and how you might help
- Set up some integrated hockey (with the local hockey community) experiences to determine if that might be a logical next step

ORAL EXPRESSION

They May	Accommodations
Speak only in single word statements or phrases.	If you understand what they mean – great! If you do not understand, ask them to say it differently.
Exhibit word retrieval problems and substitute words for words they are having trouble retrieving.	Help them calm down and relax so they can find the words they want. Come up with “signs” for common requests or concerns.
Exhibit bizarre patterns of language usage.	It may be bizarre to you but makes perfect sense to the athlete. Explain that you are having trouble understanding what they mean. Get a conversation going - the give and take should make their intent more clear
Imitate or repeat words incorrectly.	The accommodation is only necessary if you do not understand. If that is the case, ask them to pick a different word to tell you what they mean.
Use gestures as a substitute for a word.	Learn what the signs or gestures mean.
Have difficulty relating ideas in sequence.	Break down sequences into steps and learn them individually; then put them together after the steps have been mastered.
Have difficulty making self understood to peers.	If one peer does not understand, ask others if they understand and would be willing to help “translate.”
Contribute to discussion with off-task comments.	Again, it may seem “off task” to you but very on task to the athlete. Ask them how their comment fits the discussion. They will explain it, give insight into their thinking or realize that they were off the topic.
Confuse words.	Help them use the correct term. Be patient; give them an opportunity to formalize ideas.

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

They May	Accommodations
Ask that questions be repeated.	Repeat them. If it starts to take too much time, pair the player with another player who can provide modeling.
Often say “what,” or “huh,” etc.	Check for hearing issues. Switch from verbal instruction to visual demonstration of the task.
Confuse the meaning of similar sounding words.	Explain the difference between the words and try visual techniques instead of auditory.
Fail to follow verbal directions.	Have them repeat directions back to you to verify understanding. If failure to follow directions creates distractions for other players, have the player sit out or work with an assistant coach until you can determine the reason for not following original directions.
Do the opposite of the given instructions.	Have them repeat directions back to you to verify understanding. If failure to follow directions creates distractions for other players, have the player sit out or work with an assistant coach until you can determine the reason for not following original directions. Make sure you are stating the direction as a “positive” statement, such as, “Carry the puck all the way to the net and shoot at the goal,” as opposed to, “Never carry the puck all the way to the net and then NOT shoot at the goal!”
Have difficulty locating the direction of sounds.	Switch to visual cues. Set up a physical reaction to the sound no matter where it comes from. For example, “When you hear my whistle, stop and look at the blue line.”
Answer questions inappropriately.	Establish that they understood the question by restating the question with their answer and then asking if that was what they meant to say.
Confuse time concepts (before/after).	Switch to physical (kinesthetic) mode so that the end of one action leads to the next and will “feel” right. Like what is supposed to happen next.
Confuse direction words (front/back).	Instead of saying, “Go to the top of the circle,” say, “Come and stand right here,” so they have a visual and physical way to remember.
Ask irrelevant questions.	Make sure you understood the question or what they were really asking. You may not understand at first, so ask them to help you understand the question.
Show increased difficulty in any of the above areas when noise increases.	Make a rule that it must be quiet when you are talking, and explain that it is because some players won’t be able to understand if it is noisy. “Let’s all help each other have the best chance to learn this skill!”

ATTENTION SKILLS

They May	Accommodations
Fail to finish.	Provide reward via praise or the right to move on once a task is completed.
Seem easily distracted.	Keep them busy using a variety of short tasks. Be quick with praise and give it often.
Appear not to listen.	Touch them on the shoulder and ask if they understand what to do.
Have difficulty concentrating on tasks requiring sustained attention.	Break skills down into smaller tasks. Keep instruction time limited so they move more quickly from one activity to the next. Teach as you do it with them.
Appear to act before thinking (impulse control issue).	Pair them with another player or volunteer who can act as a screener for the impulse. Deep breaths help them slow down to focus and help you calm down as well!
Shift excessively from one activity to another.	Set up rewards for mastering a skill before moving on. Ask them to teach the skill to another player who is having trouble. This keeps them focused on someone else's action and not on their desire to move on.
Have difficulty awaiting turns in games.	Outline the schedule so they understand expectations.
Excessively run about to climb on things.	Help organize activities/limit materials if feasible.
Have difficulty staying seated.	There should not be a lot of sitting during a sports practice. Have activities set up so that the minute they arrive they have something to start on. "The first thing you should do when you get to practice is get a puck and shoot five times from each of these blue Xs."

SOCIAL PERCEPTION

They May	Accommodations
Make inappropriate comments.	Depends on the nature of the comments. If it is disruptive or makes other players uncomfortable, have them sit out or move to work with an assistant until you can explain that this is hurting their teammates.
Make inappropriate use of personal space.	Do a warm up drill that establishes an arm's length; talk about giving everyone space. Have partners shake hands and remind everyone that hand-shake distance is usually best for talking. Any closer and people get nervous and can't focus on what you are saying.
Have difficulty anticipating behavior in others.	Repetition via drills will help in learning patterns of actions.
Have difficulty in changing behavior.	Reward and praise positive behavior and changes. Notice and comment on improvements no matter how slight.
Appear to be inflexible.	Make every action a choice. Say, "Do you want to join the group over here or do you want to join the group over there?" Try to avoid "or else" comments.
Difficulty responding to non-verbal cues, hand gestures, facial expressions.	Experiment with different cues and have them decide which ones work best for them.

CHARACTERISTICS AND TEACHING METHODS

At times, you may see or hear the following terms to describe something about an athlete. These terms describe traits, or conditions, but they do not describe the person. There are very few traits or characteristics that are true for all people with any label.

Disability	Characteristics	Best 3 Strategies to Affect Learning
Intellectual Disability* (General)	Information processing and learning occurs at a slower rate; attention span is short. This was noticed for the first time before age 18.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train for short periods of time. 2. Provide repetition (key to athlete gaining new skill development). 3. When training, think of athletes as literal thinkers.
Autism	Communication difficulties. "In their own world," but frequently aware and bright.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Craves established routines. 2. Signal transition, change, loud noises, etc. 3. Provide highly structured and least distracting environment.
Cerebral Palsy	Poor muscle control. Does not necessarily indicate intellectual disability. Difficulty with speech articulation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work on strengthening muscles. 2. Teach skills in isolation to help build muscles. 3. Develop gross motor skills.
Down Syndrome	Anywhere from moderate to significant intellectual disability. Genetic cause. Make sure you know about atlanto-axial instability before you do a drill that puts pressure on the neck or head. About 10 percent of people with Down Syndrome have weakened vertebrae. The information will be on the medical release.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set clear expectations and limits. 2. Use eye contact when talking; work one-on-one to demonstrate new skill (gain full attention). 3. Use repetition and review.
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	Tends to have attention and memory deficits. Finds it difficult to stay on task. Has difficulty in remembering what was previously learned.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create routine. 2. Set rules and limits. 3. Reinforce acceptable behaviors.
Fragile X	Elongated face. Prone to seizures. Coordination difficulties.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide structured and predictable activities. 2. Provide minimal auditory and visual stimulations. 3. Establish routine and structure.
Prader Willi	Sleep disturbance. Compulsive eating. Skin picking.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signal and practice transition. 2. Set firm rules and expectations. 3. Establish routine and structure.

**We do not characterize as such. Mental retardation is still an acceptable term, but we include this within the scope of all developmental disabilities*

ATHLETE BEHAVIOR CHARACTERISTICS AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE LEARNING

The goal of this chart is to provide coaches with information about special hockey players with different functional and learning characteristics (not labels) so that coaches can teach and coach more effectively. When an athlete exhibits what is generally perceived as inappropriate behaviors, those behaviors may simply be a reflection or part of the person. Inappropriate behaviors that will not be tolerated include defiance, acting out or silliness.

When possible, talk with parents, providers, teachers, former coaches, etc., about an athlete's characteristics and the successful strategies used to affect learning. Use the characteristics as a checklist. Ensure that one or more of the strategies opposite the respective characteristics are employed in each practice.

Athlete Characteristics	Strategies to Improve Learning
Learning occurs at a slower rate	Provide structure. Provide repetition and review. Break down skills into smaller parts.
Short attention span	Train for short periods of time. Provide repetition and review (key to gaining new skill). Work one-on-one (gain full attention).
Resistance to change	Provide clear and continuous transitions. Establish routines (enforce concept of flexibility). Build on successes.
Stubborn/Behavior problems	Set clear rules, expectations and limits. Enforce rules but provide conditions for coming back. Reinforce acceptable behaviors.
Verbal communication difficulties	Allow for additional time to express thoughts. Use picture boards/other assisting devices. Ask him or her to demonstrate or show what he/she means.
Prone to seizures	Know signs and symptoms. Control atmosphere (heat, sun, sugar, etc.). Inform and assure teammates when they occur.
Poor muscle tone	Provide specific exercise and strengthening programs. Stretch safely; do not allow athletes to stretch beyond normal joint range of motion.
Lower pain threshold; sensitive to touch	Establish eye contact when talking. Use softer/adaptive equipment. Forewarn if any touch is necessary.
Failure to form social bonds	Work in small groups. Have athletes work in pairs (same pairs for several weeks). Provide highly structured and least distracting environment.

Athlete Characteristics	Strategies to Improve Learning
Over-stimulated easily	Remove or lessen stimuli (dim lights; soften sound; remove unnecessary objects). Train in separate room or smaller group; gradually add people.
Difficulty with balance or stability	Provide additional assistance. If stretching, sit down, lean against wall or hold on to partner. Allow for extra time to complete a task.
Compulsive eating	Remove food from practice/competition sites. Provide structure and routine for eating.
Coordination problems	Break down drills to easier movements. Allow additional time with one-on-one support. Progress according to athlete's ability.
Mood swings (frequency and intensity)	Provide structured and predictable activities. Set clear expectations, limits and conditions. Separate from group when necessary, but allow back to resume practice.
Physical limitations or impairments	Provide adaptive equipment or modifications. Provide exercises that strengthen and stretch muscles. Develop gross motor and stability skills.
Blind	Use many verbal cues. Provide action-specific feedback. Hand-over-hand demonstration may be needed.
Deaf	Establish eye contact when talking. Use signs or pictures or American Sign Language. Demonstrate what is desired.

Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey

Sled
Hockey

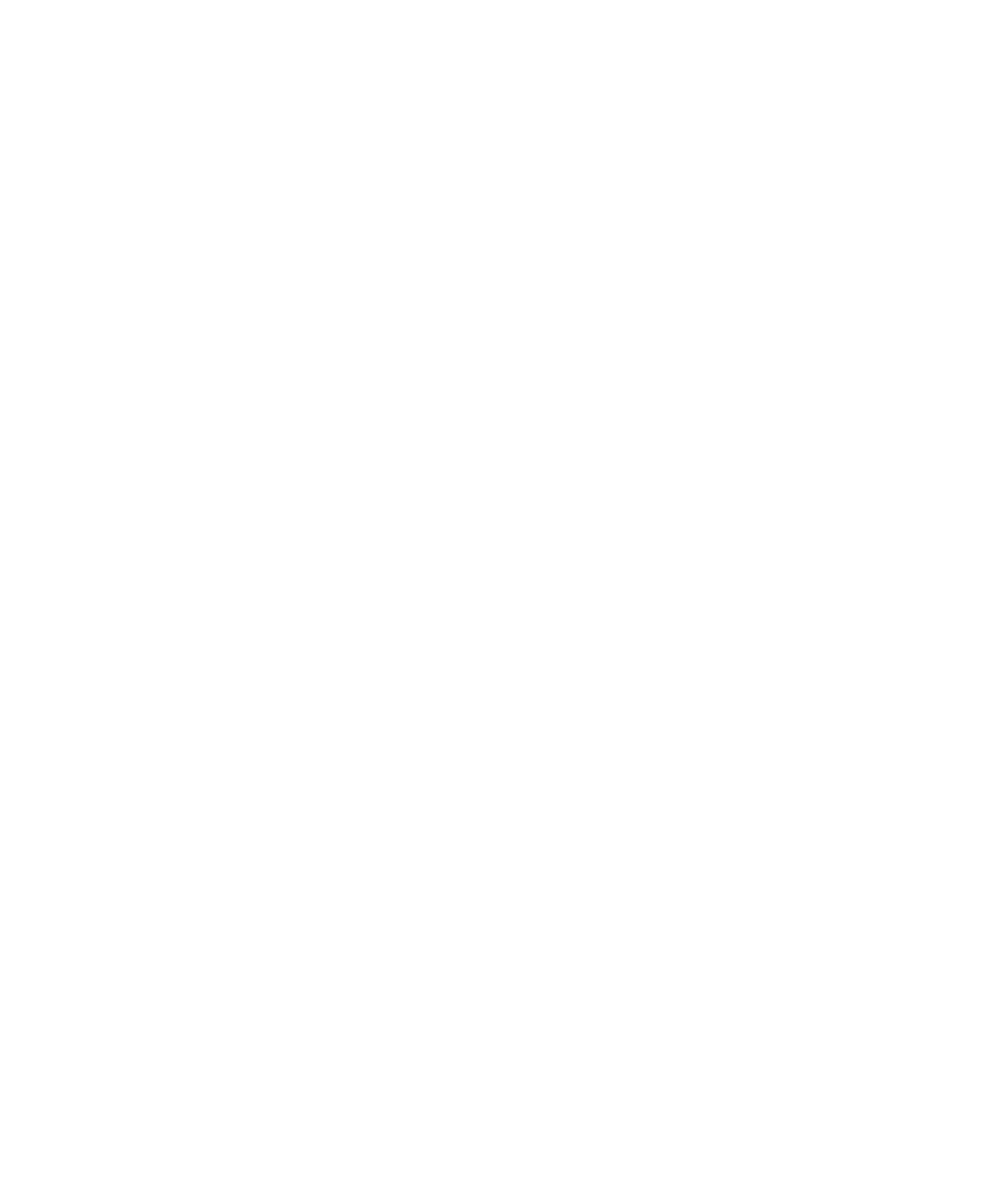
Special
Hockey

Standing
Amputee
Hockey



Standing Amputee Hockey





Standing Amputee Hockey

Standing amputee hockey at the youth levels uses the same rules as regular ice hockey. Many amputee players play on able-bodied teams with their disability going unnoticed. Amputee players body check and get body checked. They are no different than any other player and should receive the same treatment as any able-bodied player. As a coach, the key to developing an amputee player is to get to know the athlete's prosthesis so you can zero in on how to help the player, whether it is a leg or hand that will allow you to help with any particular skill, including skating or puck-handling.

At the international level, standing amputee hockey incorporates a unique point system not used in regular youth play. This classification system is designed to even the playing field. Missing limbs/appendages/digits are assigned a particular point value. Teams are only allowed a certain number of points on the ice at one time. The coach's challenge is to identify the appropriate point value for each line when changing lines; obviously putting the right line combinations together is a top priority. Players put their classification point value on the back of their helmets. This not only helps the coach make line changes, it also allows the referee the opportunity to call the game evenly. At these two levels, the game is played without body checking and is governed by the International Ice Hockey Federation women's hockey classification rule book.

ISIHF Classification System for Locomotor Disabled Athletes

(Approved by ISIHF Council on December 17, 2004)

Description	Class	Points
AKA, SD or combo* or equivalent	C	1
BKA or equivalent	B	2
BEA, AEA** or equivalent	A	3

Total Points

For 5 players on the ice: no more than 12 points

With a single penalty being served (4 players on ice): no more than 9 points

With a double penalty being served (3 players on ice): no more than 6 points

Abbreviations

AKA — Above or through knee joint amputation

BKA — Below knee, but through or above ankle joint amputation

SD — Shoulder disarticulation – amputation of the upper limb through the shoulder joint

AEA — Above or through elbow joint amputation

BEA — Below elbow, but through or above wrist joint amputation

*Combo - Any two amputations meeting the minimal handicap criterion or equivalent

**AEA – If a player can wield a stick using both arms with or without an assistive device attached to his/her residuum

Minimal Handicap for Amputee Category:

Amputation through or above the ankle or wrist joint.

All non-amputee and equivalent amputees competing must be classified by a certified IPC classifier or classifier of their respective National Paralympic Committee prior to their arrival at an ISHIF Championship. The player must provide corresponding documentation, signed by the classifier, to the Championship Organizing Committee. In addition, the Organizing Committee should have a certified classifier as a member.

Marking of a Point Assignment: Each player is to wear a point assignment number/colored sticker attached to each side of his/her helmet.

Not eligible for participation in ISHIF events are players with intellectual disability or who are visually impaired.

Standing ice hockey will be played according to IIHF women's ice hockey body checking rules (iihf.com).



Standing Amputee Hockey League Rules

Basic Hockey Rules

The following rules will be used as a complement to the IIHF no-check rules.

Eligibility

Eligible for competition are male and female athletes with locomotor and dexterity impairment in the upper and lower parts of the body.

Minimum Impairment Requirement

Main principle: The athletes must have an impairment of a permanent nature in the upper and/or lower parts of the body of such degree that is:

- 1) Clearly recognizable
- 2) Makes typical skating and puck handling less practical

Minimum Impairment

Amputation

Lower body part Through or above the ankle

Upper body part Through or above the wrist (and/or unable to grasp and control stick)

Paresis

Loss of 20 muscle points in limbs (not counting grade 1 and 2: maximum motor score 80).

Joint Mobility

Ankylosis (fusion) of ankle, knee or shoulder joint

Flexion of extension contracture of hip or knee at least 30 degrees

Cerebral Palsy

Spasticity/discoordination corresponding to class 7/8

Limb Shortening

Lower – at least seven centimeters

Upper – at least 20 centimeters

Note: Players without minimum required disability, but who cannot play typical ice hockey in a competitive fashion because of chronic post-traumatic painful disorders, instability of ankle, knee or hip joints or similar condition, are not eligible.

Players with intellectual disabilities and visual impairment are not eligible.



Standard Neurological Classification of Paresis

	R	L	Key Muscles
C5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elbow Flexors
C6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrist Extensors
C7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elbow Extensors
C8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finger Flexors (distal phalanx of middle finger)
T1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finger Abductors (little finger)
L2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hip Flexors
L3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knee Extensors
L4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ankle Dorsiflexors
L5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long Toe Extensors
S1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ankle Plantarflexors

Cerebral Palsy, Brain Injury or Stroke Survivors

Class 7

Moderate to minimal hemiplegic. Good functional ability in non-affected side. Skates with asymmetry.

Class 8

Minimally affected. May have minimal coordination problems. Skates well. Has good balance.



Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey

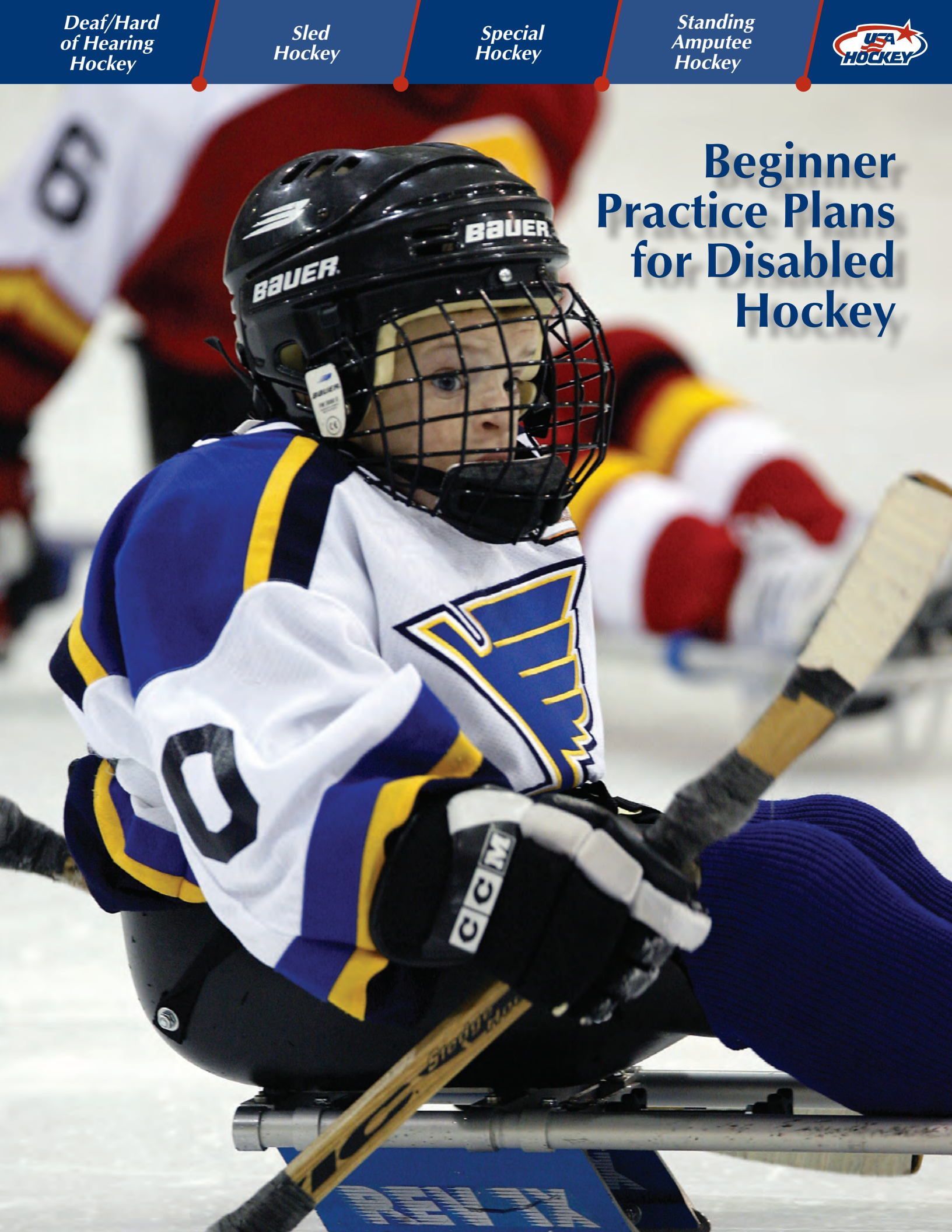
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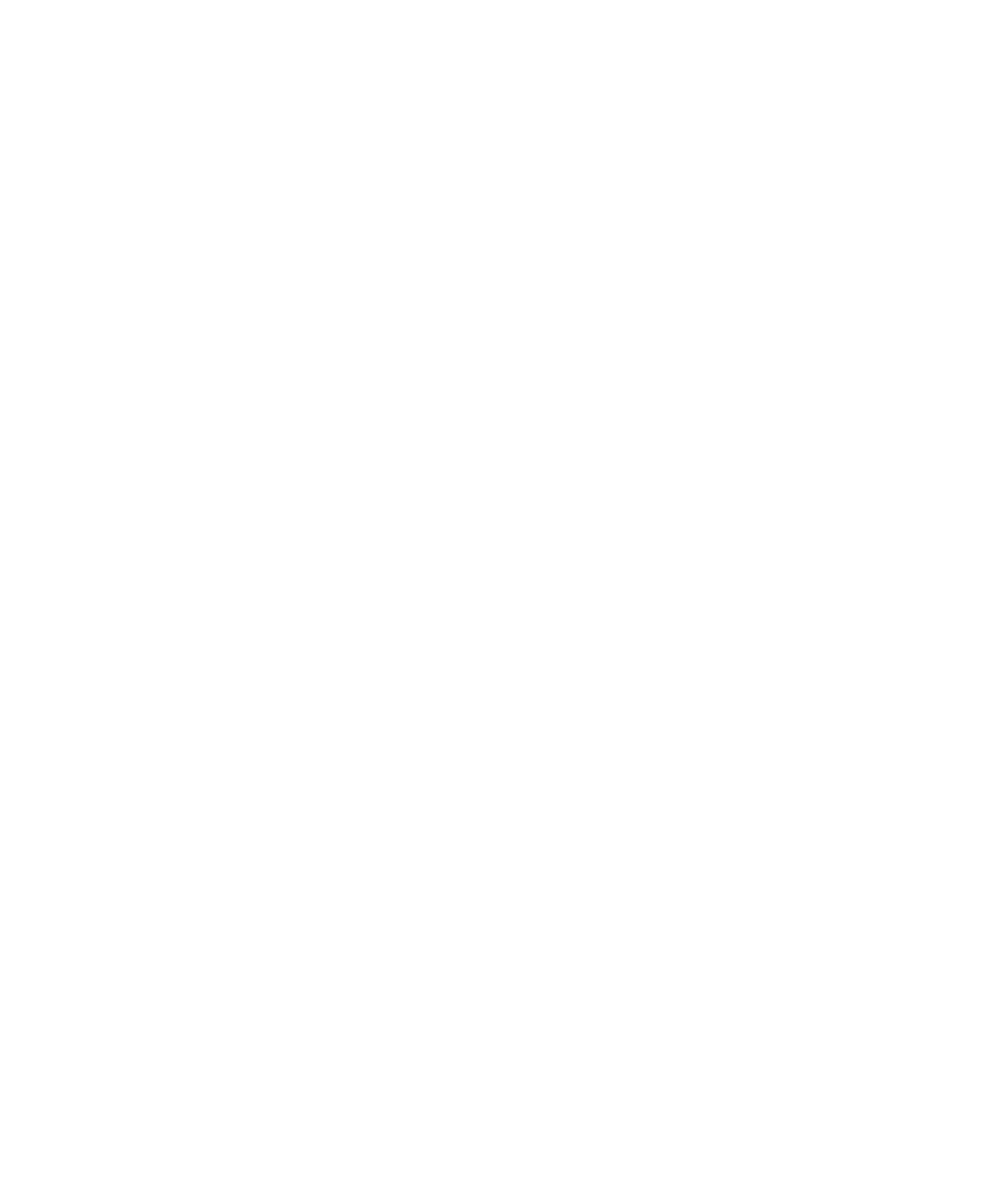
Special
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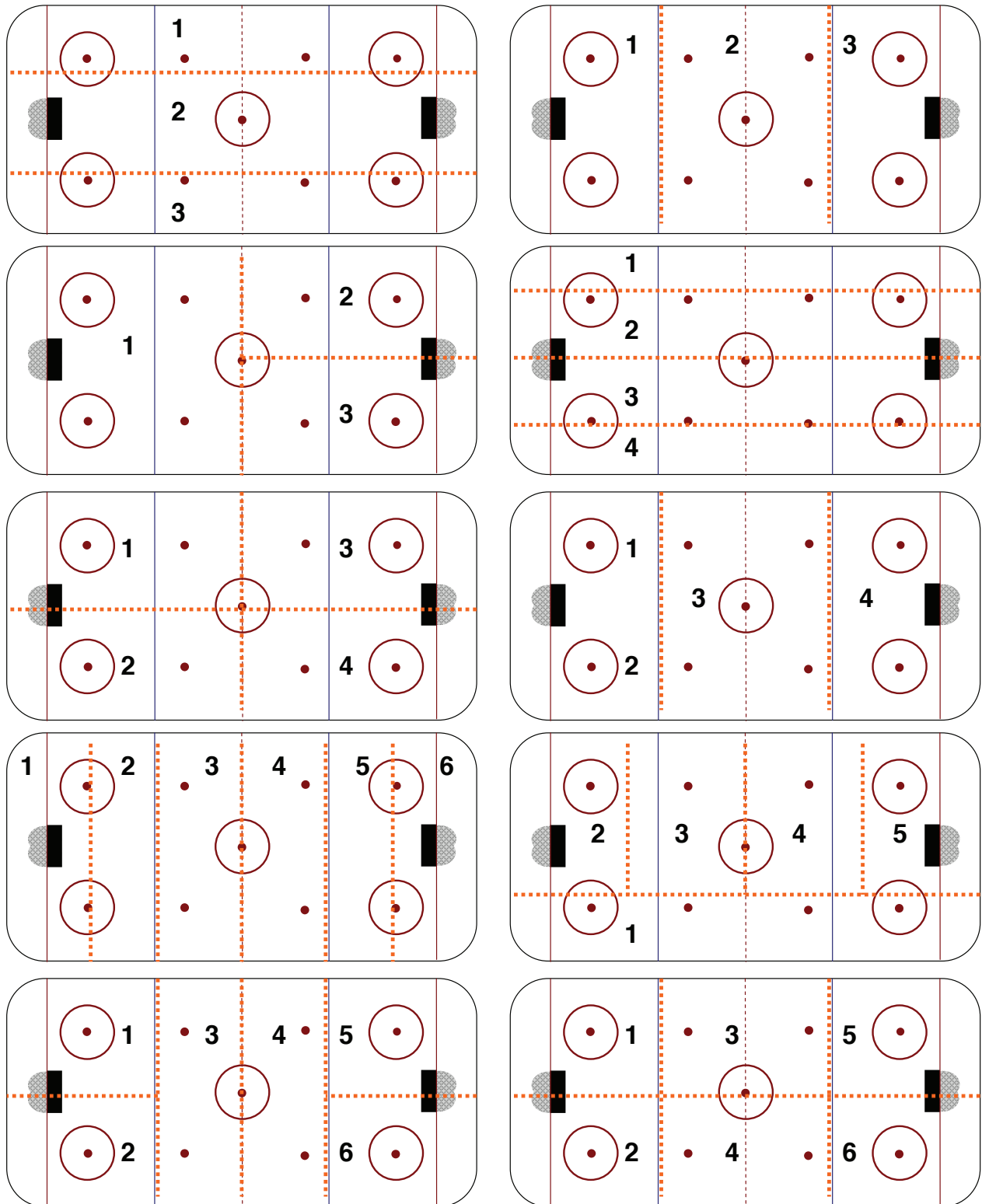
Beginner Practice Plans for Disabled Hockey





Ice Utilization

The ice surface can be broken up into different size zones to accommodate any number of players and a wide range of topics to be covered in practice. Below is a diagram of many ways to utilize the ice for your practices.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Softballs

Warm-Up: Puck Handling (5 minutes)

Players skate around the rink handling a puck. On whistle, they jump into the nearest circle and stickhandle, exit on next whistle and continue around the rink. Coaches use this time to set-up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle to change stations, players do five jumping jacks before moving on to the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station as the players arrive.

Station 1: Skating (ABCs)

Run on skates, drop to knees, drop to single knee, drop to knees and spin 360 degrees, arm circles forward, arm circles backward, arm circles one forward and one backward, two-foot power jumps, log roll to right, log roll to left.

Station 2: Freeze Tag

Coach tags or selected players do the tagging. The tagged player is frozen and stands in the hockey ready position until he/she is set free. The tagged player is set free when someone skates a circle around him/her.

Station 3: Passing

Players practice passing technique on both the forehand and backhand. Players should be positioned so that they make the passes across their body. Use softballs to force proper technique. Sweep the ball when passing and keep the hands out away from the body.

Station 4: Chaos Stickhandling

Players stickhandle while skating around obstacles. All players are involved. The coach can switch to players going in pairs in a follow-the-leader set-up. Check to see that each player is holding his/her stick properly. Hands about shoulder width apart and top hand at the end of the stick partially held in the palm.

Station 5: 1 v 1 Hockey

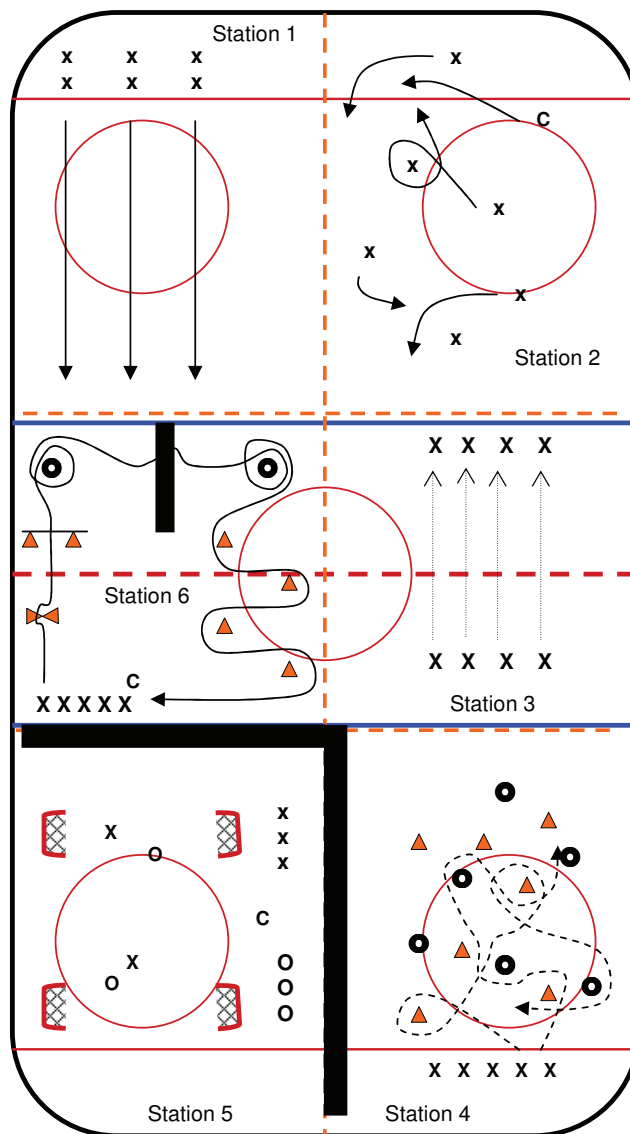
Keep two 1 v 1 hockey games going with a change of players every 30 seconds.

Station 6: Obstacle Course (ABCs)

Have players begin obstacle course by starting on their knees, stomach, back, etc. Jump over obstacle, immediately followed by sliding under an obstacle. Include 360 degree turns and a slalom course.

Game: Pom Pom Pull Away (9 minutes)

Players must skate to opposite end of ice without being tagged by selected taggers. Once tagged, players stand along boards. Last survivor wins.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Tennis Balls, Dodge Balls

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Agility Skating (5 minutes)

Players skate around rink and perform tasks at certain places on the ice (i.e. stops at blue lines, jumps at red line, knee drops at tops of circle).

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Skating – Loose Puck Races/Mirror

Players start on their knees, stomachs, or backs. When coach throws a puck out, they get up as quickly as they can to race for the loose puck and the chance to score. Works on recovery, acceleration, puck battles, scoring. Mirror drill – X performs agility moves and O has to copy his movements. Works on agility, balance, coordination.

Station 2: Passing/Shooting

First person in line passes to the person across from him. Each X continues to pass to the next one until it reaches the last X who receives the pass and shoots. After each X makes a pass, X skates to the spot where the pass went. After shooting, get back in line. Works on passing, receiving, skating, stops/starts, shooting.

Station 3: Skating, Puck Handling and Shooting

Players start behind tire. They carry a puck in and around the cones and finish with a wrist shot on net. Works on edge control, stickhandling, shooting and scoring. Be sure to switch sides so players go each direction.

Station 4: Dodgeball

Players play dodgeball in an area cordoned off with borders. Draw a line down the middle so they know where they can't cross. Rules of dodgeball apply. Works on athleticism, balance, agility, coordination, and edge control.

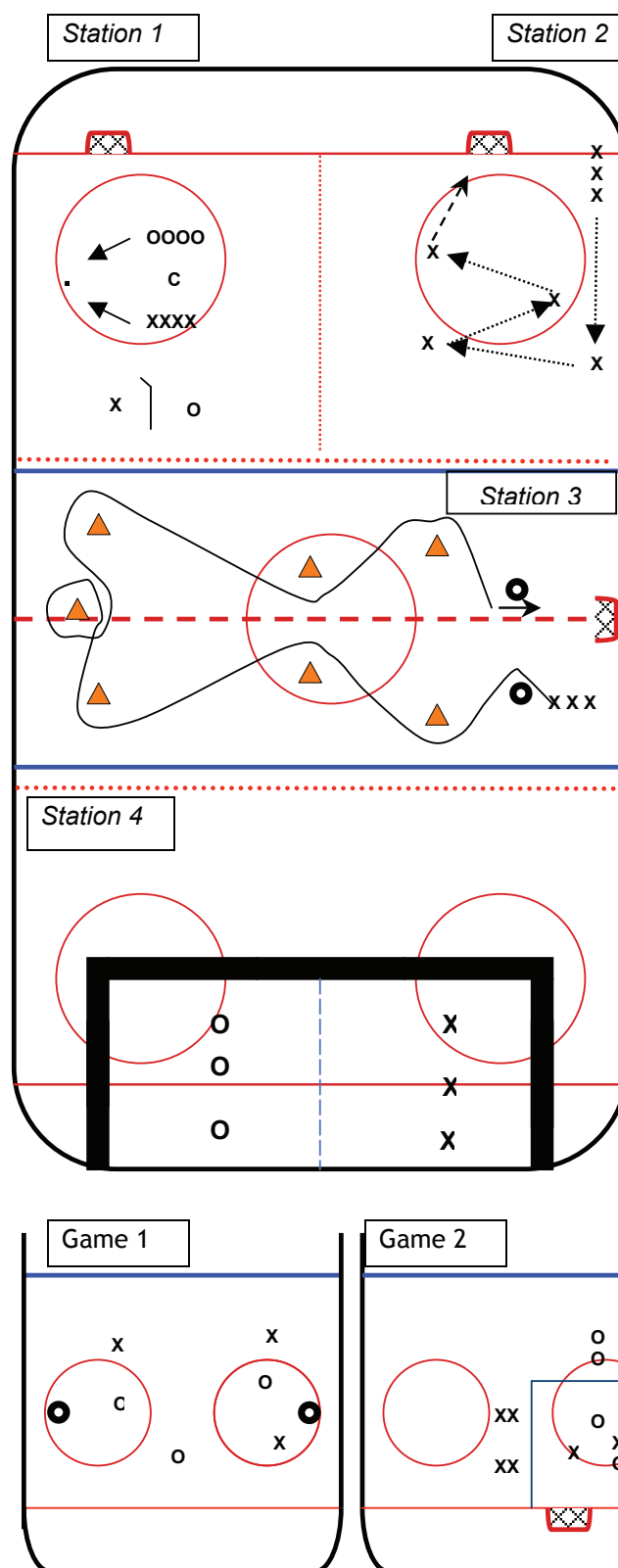
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: 3 v 3 with Ringette

3 v 3 game where players shoot at a designated tire using ringette rings. Works on hands (strong bottom hand), hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, team play.

Game 2: 3 v 3 Tight Area with Support

2 v 2 game where players have to pass to one of their lines (teammates) before they can go on offense. Once a pass is completed, the teammate in line can shoot or pass. It is like the person in line is a point man, they shoot at the net they are facing. Draw a line on the ice to outline the playing area and where lines should be. Works on passing, receiving, shooting, scoring, skating, puck battles, puck support, and team play.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Passing with Coaches (5 minutes)

Coaches line up and down the boards on both sides of the ice. Players skate around and make passes with coaches.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Skating – Loose Puck Races

Players skate slalom course then race for loose puck for a chance to score. Works on edge control, starts, puck battles, and scoring.

Station 2: Passing/Shooting

First person in line passes to the person across from him/her. Each X continues to pass to the next one until it reaches the last X who receives the pass and shoots. After each X makes a pass, X skates to the spot where the pass went. After shooting, get back in line. Works on passing, receiving, skating, stops/starts, shooting.

Station 3: Skating/Loose Puck Races

Players start at cone and sprint to another cone where they stop and come back to a loose puck for a chance to score. Works on starts, stops, puck battles, puck handling, shooting and scoring.

Station 4: 1 v 1 Tight Area Games

Players play 1 v 1 in a very tight area. After playing in game within borders, have them move to the corner to play a second 1 v 1 with different parameters. At the game within the borders, players score by skating the puck to the tire, not shooting it. Works on battling, skating, balance, puck handling, competing.

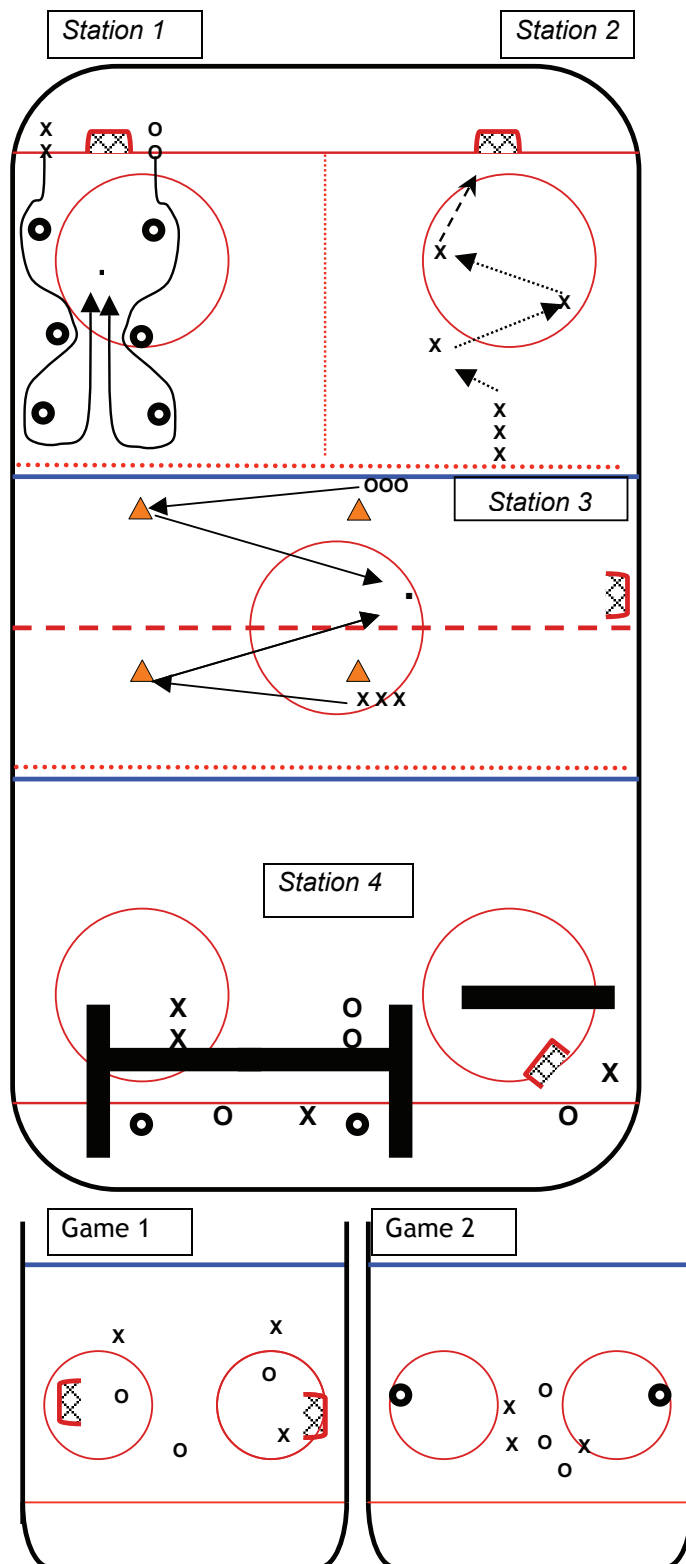
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: 3 v 3 Forehand Only

3 v 3 game where players can only touch the puck with the forehand of their blades. Works on hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, team play.

Game 2: 3 v 3 Ringette

3 v 3 game where players shoot at a designated tire using ringette rings. Works on hands (strong bottom hand), hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, team play.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Ringette Passing (5 minutes)

Players pair up and pass back and forth with ringette rings and sticks upside down. Works on passing technique and concentration.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: 3/4 Ice Game

Team X plays against Team O. When time to rotate stations, team X becomes team O. Team O moves to Station 3.

Station 2: 3/4 Ice Game

Team X plays against Team O. When time to rotate stations, team X becomes team O. Team O moves to Station 3.

Station 3: Loose Puck Races

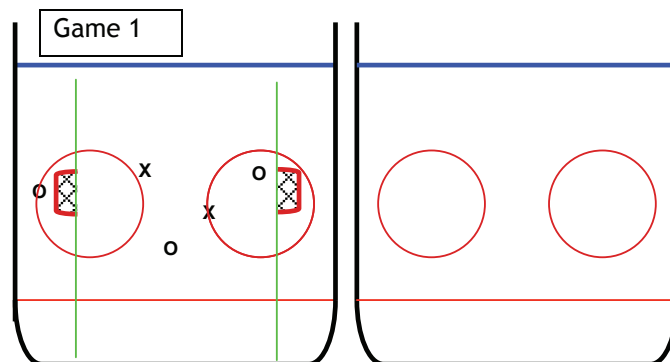
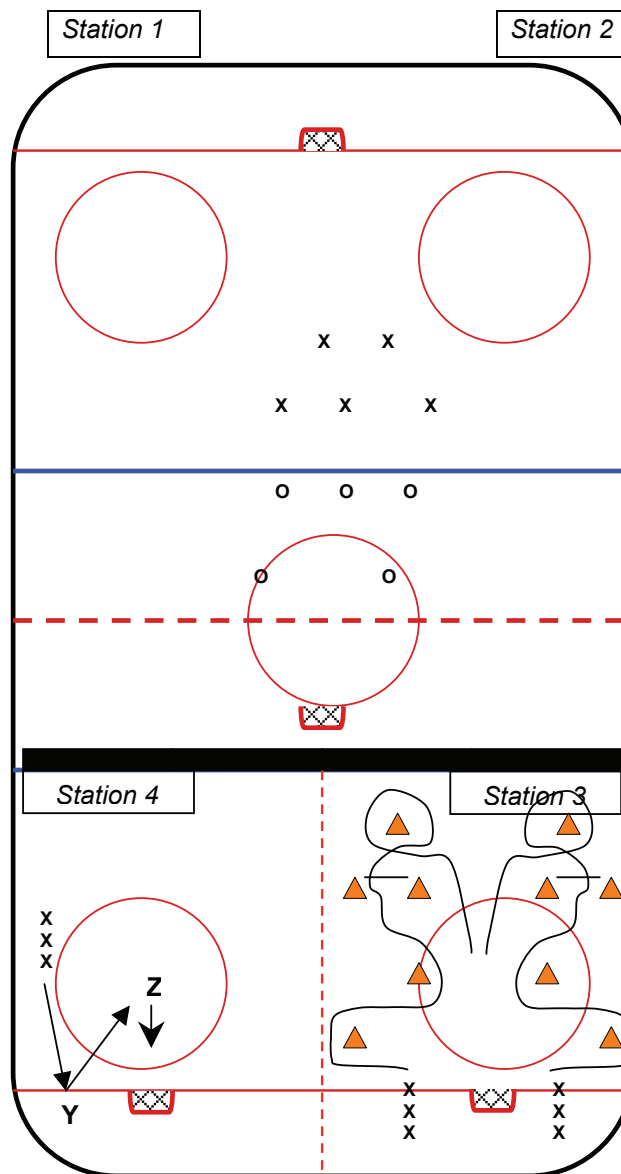
Players skate through obstacle course then race to loose puck for a chance to score. Works on edge control, starts, balance, agility, loose puck battles, shooting, and scoring.

Station 4: Passing/Shooting

Pass and follow – player in line passes to Y just below the goal line. Y passes to Z for a shot on goal. Z plays a rebound if goalie leaves one. Players then move to the spot where they passed to. So X becomes Y, Y becomes Z. Emphasize moving after making a pass and scoring goals, not just shooting on net. Works on passing, receiving, starts, stops, alertness, shooting, scoring. Do out of both sides. As an alternative, you can also have Y receive the pass and skate behind the net before passing to Z. Y can then look for a rebound as well before becoming Z.

Games: 3 v 3 Cross-Ice (Gretzky) (8 minutes)

3 v 3 game where players shoot at a designated net but can only shoot once they have passed to Gretzky behind their own net. Gretzky can move laterally but must stay below the goal line. One player each shift is designated as Gretzky. Emphasize competing and getting open. Works on team play, puck skills, skating, hockey sense, and competing. Play at each end.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Players wearing dark jerseys skate clockwise around rink, light jerseys skate counter clockwise. Sprint from top of circle to top of circle, without pucks, then with pucks. Change direction on whistle.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Station 1: Skating/Puck Handling

- A. Tight turns/cut backs
- B. Stops and starts (Z-drill)
- C. Tight circles around cones
- D. Zig-zag through cones

Have players perform drills with/without pucks. Works on skating, edges, stops, starts, body control and puck handling.

Station 2: Passing

Pass and follow. Each player passes (headmans) the puck to the player in front of him/her and then skates to where they passed until the last player receives the pass and goes in on a breakaway. Player X passes to A to B to C to D who tries to score. Works on passing, receiving, team play, and scoring.

Station 3: Loose Puck Races

Players skate through obstacle course then race to loose puck for a chance to score. Works on edge control, starts, balance, agility, loose puck battles, shooting, and scoring.

Station 4: Body Contact

- A. Stationary shoulder bumps. Players partner up and lock arms with each other. After they lock arms they bump each other shoulder to shoulder. After a few minutes have them skate in a straight line while bumping.
- B. Angling. Player X skates with a puck down the wall, past the tire and attacks the net. Player O cuts in front of the tire and tries to angle X so he/she can't get to the net. If player O succeeds, let the 1 v 1 battle play out.
- C. 1 v 1 Keep away (puck protection).

Works on balance, agility, edge work, and body control.

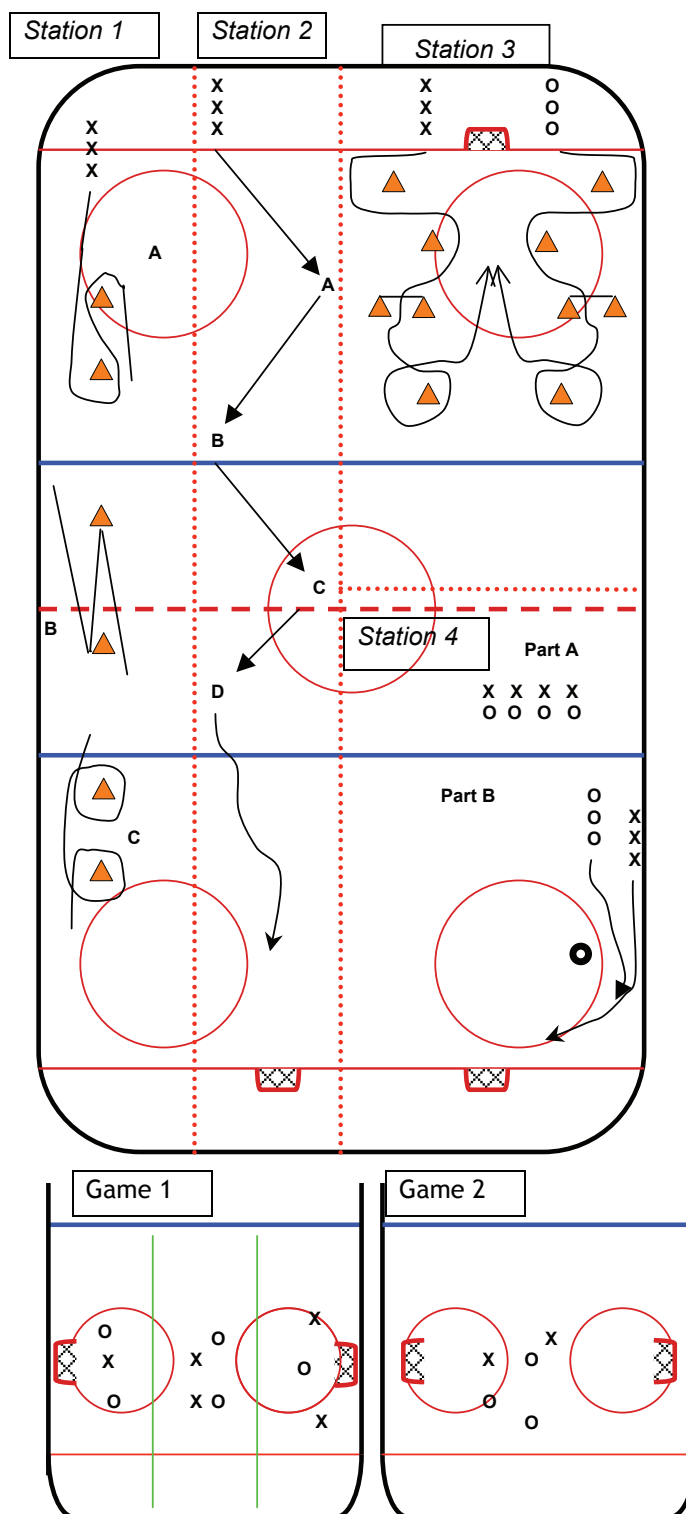
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: 5 v 5 Zone to Zone

5 v 5 game where players are confined to a designated zone. They must pass from zone to zone to advance the puck. In the attacking zone, a team will always have a 2 v 1 advantage. Works on team play, passing, receiving, competing, and goal scoring.

Game 2: 3 v 3 Ringette

3 v 3 game where players shoot at a designated tire using ringette rings. Works on hands (strong bottom hand), hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, team play.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun**EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP:** Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Soccer Balls**Free Puck Time (5 minutes)**

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Puck Handling (5 minutes)

Players skate around the rink handling a puck. On whistle, they jump into the nearest circle and stickhandle, exit on next whistle.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)**Station 1: Baseball**

X passes to an O. All of the Os must make passes so that each one of them touches the puck. Once they have all touched the puck, they must attempt to score and get the runner out. While the Os are trying to score, X skates up and around the tires back to the goal line. If X hits the goal line before a goal is scored, he/she is safe. If Os score first, X is out. Works on passing, receiving, skating, puck handling, shooting, team play, and scoring.

Station 2: Puck Carrying Races

Players skate through obstacle course while carrying a puck and then race to see who can get a shot on net first. Works on edge control, starts, balance, agility, competing, shooting, and scoring.

Station 3: Agility Skating/Loose Pucks

Line up a succession of tires or cones and have the players perform different agility skating tasks through them for a race to a loose puck at the end. Be creative and mix in one-foot, two-foot turns, stops and starts, carrying pucks, etc. Works on skating, edge work, acceleration, puck handling, puck battles and agility.

Station 4: 2 v 2 Keep Away with Support

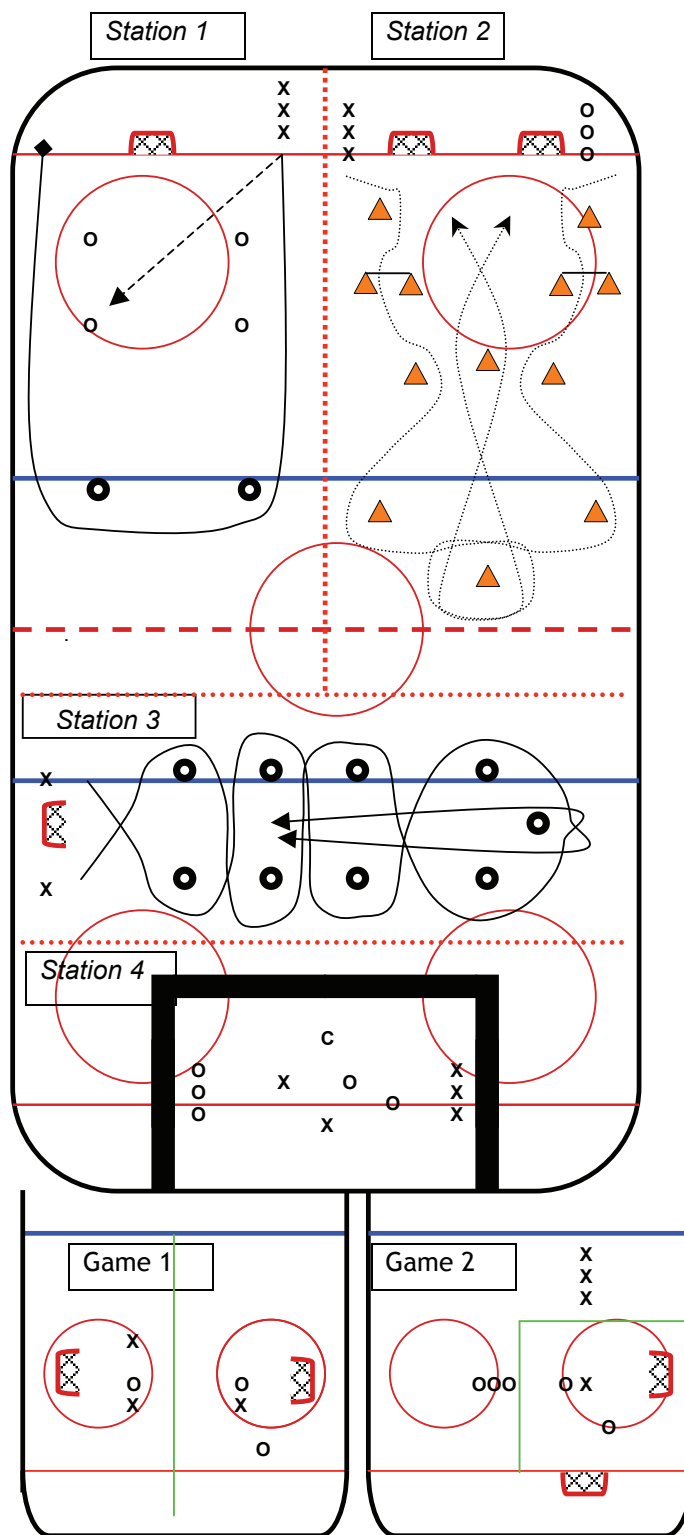
2 v 2 keep away in a very tight area where the players have to pass to the coach on change of possession. Players can continue to use the coach once they have possession (3 v 2). Emphasize moving to get open and making and receiving passes. Works on passing, receiving, competing, protection, battles, team play and skating.

Games (8 minutes each)**Game 1: 3 v 3 Always on Power Play**

3 v 3 game played where two players are always on the offensive side of the mid line and one player stays on the defensive side of the midline. This always results in the offensive team having a 2 v 1. Works on skating, competing, team play support, passing and hockey sense.

Game 2: 2 v 2 with Point

2 v 2 game in a tight area where the players must pass back to their point man before they can go on offense. Points can pass or shoot when they receive puck. Works on hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, loose pucks, competing, and team play.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Soccer Balls

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Shooting (5 minutes)

Players grab a puck and shoot wrist shots against the boards. Work on hard, low wrist shot with good weight transfer.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Pass and Follow

Player X carries puck behind the net and passes to Y. Y passes to Z, Z passes to B. When B receives pass, skates up and around, then in between tires and attacks the net. Before shooting, perform a deke at the tires then perform hard, low wrist shot on net. After each player passes, they move to the next spot (X to Y, Y to Z, Z to B...) Works on passing, receiving, skating, puck handling, shooting, team play, and scoring.

Station 2: 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 in a Tight Area

Depending on number of players in lines, players play a tight area 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 in the corner. They can (but don't have to) pass to the coach for support. Whomever has the puck is on offense. Works on puck protection, stick skills, tight area play, scoring, competing, and team play.

Station 3: Catch and Shoot

Players line up facing the net. Coach is off to the side of the net. Coach passes to player who catches and shoots on net. Try to limit stickhandling. Emphasize quick catch and shoot release. Have them switch lines so they get passes from both sides of their bodies. After the shot, have players switch lines by skating a slalom course working on their edges. Do one-foot turns, two-foot turns, etc. Works on passing, receiving, shooting, scoring, skating, edge work, team play, release, and footwork.

Station 4: Puck Protection

Players skate around zone (littered with cones) and handle pucks. Have one fewer pucks than there are players. Reps should be 20-30 seconds with equal rest. On whistle, players skate around with pucks and try to protect them from one player without a puck who is trying to steal someone's puck. On the second whistle, the lone player without puck must do jumping jacks. Works on skating, puck handling, puck protection, competing, and agility.

Games (8 minutes each)

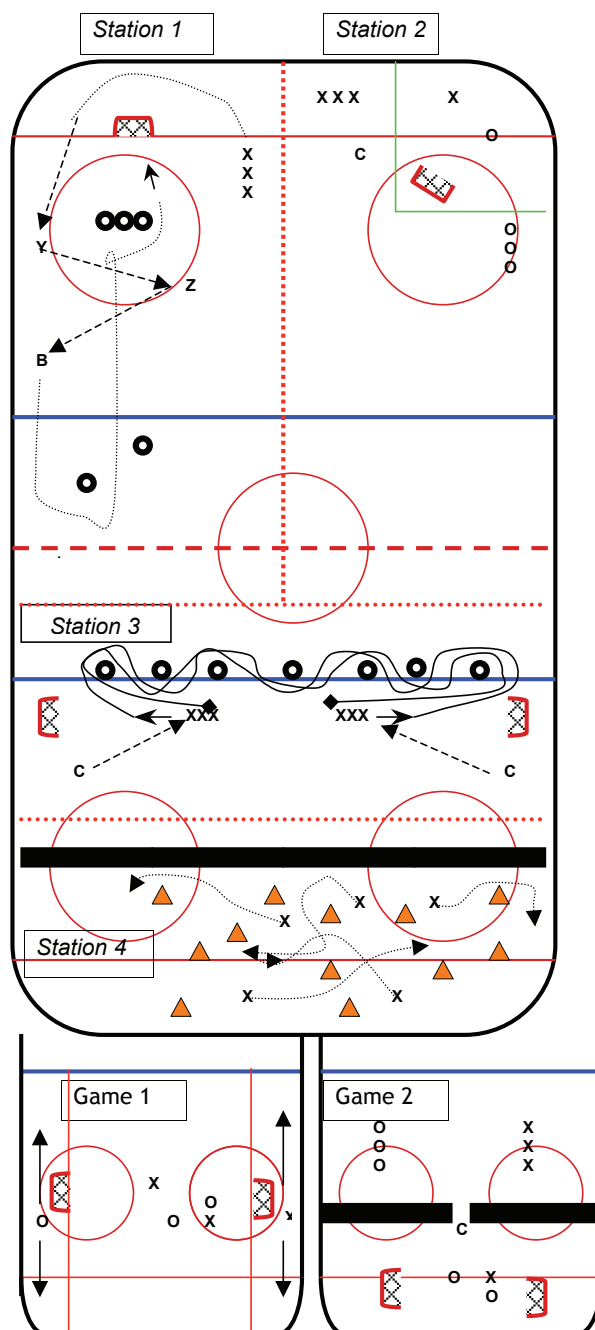
Game 1: 3 v 3 Ringette Gretzky

3 v 3 game where players shoot at a designated net but can only shoot once they have passed to Gretzky behind their own net. Gretzky can move laterally but must stay below the goal line. One player each shift is designated as Gretzky. Emphasize competing and getting open. Works on team

play, puck skills, strong bottom hand, passing, receiving, skating, hockey sense, and competing.

Game 2: 2 v 2 Tight Area with Support

2 v 2 game in a tight area where the players can pass to the coach any time they want. Teams shoot at a designated net. Emphasize that using the coach creates an odd man situation. Works on hockey sense, puck handling, puck support, skating, loose pucks, competing, and team play.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up (5 minutes)

Players skate around the rink with a puck. On the whistle, players enter the nearest circle and stickhandle within the circle. Players exit the circle on next whistle.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Skating

- Starts
- Forward stride — full stride and recovery
- Agility, balance, and coordination

Station 2: Stickhandling/Shooting

Players stickhandle through obstacle course and finish with a shot on net.

Station 3: Game

Tight Area 1 v 1, clear to the coach to get on offense.

Station 4: Passing

Two lines opposite each other work together. Make proper pass and skate to opposite line. Be good receivers.

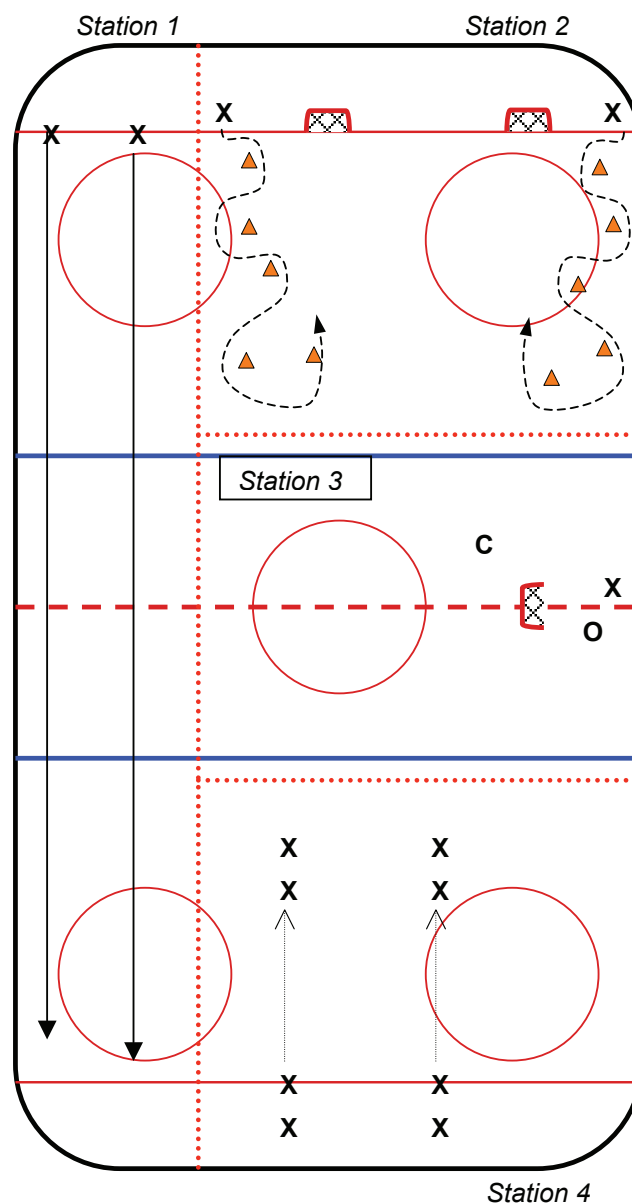
Games (10 minutes each)

Game 1: Cross-Ice 3 v 3

Players can use coaches as support to outnumber other team.

Game 2: Half-Ice Game

Two separate half ice games, from red line to goal line.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Six Nets

Warm-Up: Puck Handling (5 minutes)

Players skate around the rink handling a puck. On the whistle, they jump into the nearest circle and stickhandle, exit on next whistle and continue around the rink.

Coaches use this time to set-up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle, players do five two-foot jumps before changing stations. Coaches distribute water at each station as the players arrive.

Station 1: Forward Crossovers Left

Players skate the circle working on crossover skating technique. Each player skates two laps around the circle with the next player in line starting as player one passes in front on his first lap. Coaches should work individually with players that need technical instruction.

Station 2: Net Tag

Player X attempts to evade player O using the nets as a screen. This activity can be done with multiple players at the same time.

Station 3: Pass and Follow

Players pass the puck to the next player and then take that player's spot. Sweep puck and show a good target for reception. Finish with a wrist shot on goal.

Station 4: 3 v 3 Tight Space

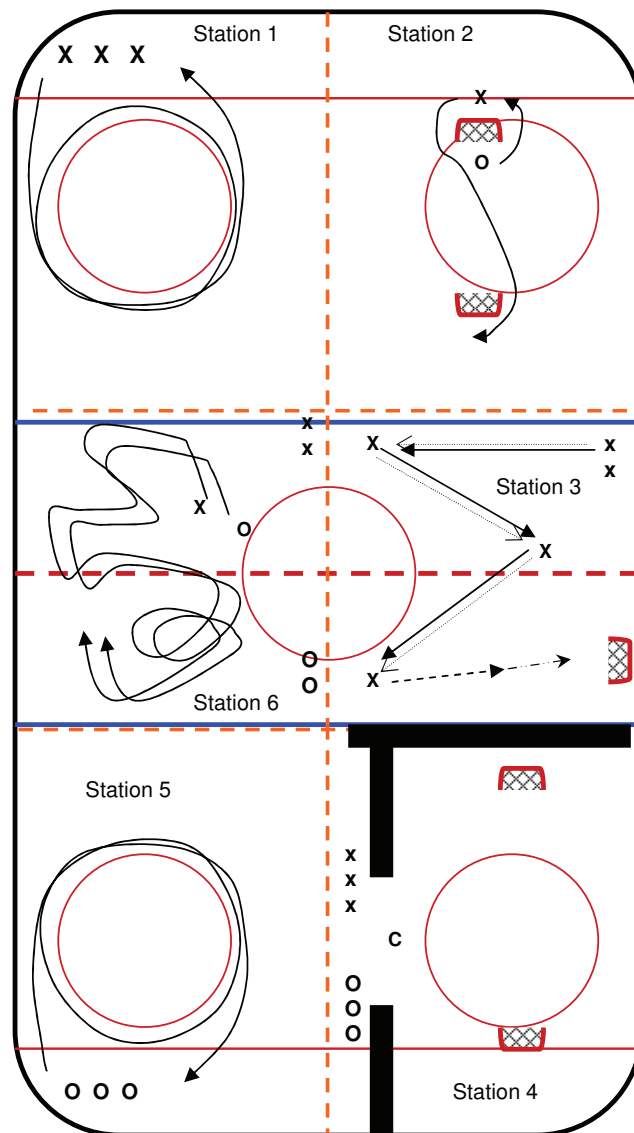
Play 3 v 3 and change on the whistle every 30 seconds.

Station 5: Forward Crossovers Right

Players skate the circle working on crossover skating technique.

Station 6: Russian Shadows (Follow-the-Leader)

Two players go together and play follow-the-leader. Encourage them to be creative with their movements. Can carry pucks as well and can have multiple groups going at once. Works on skating, edges, agility, coordination and balance.



Game: Soccer (9 minutes)

Cross-ice soccer in all three zones for remainder of time.

GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Six Nets, Cones, Tires

Warm-Up: ABCs (5 minutes)

Coaches should immediately set up the dividers across each blue line. Players will skate a figure eight around the ice surface, down the middle and back along the side boards. Players must jump over the dividers, perform a Superman dive at the red line down the middle and drop to their knees at the red line coming back along the boards. Mix up the agility moves.

Designate two additional coaches to set up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle to change stations the players do one 360 jump to the right and one to the left before moving on to the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station as players arrive.

Station 1: Puck Control

Players skate with puck through slalom and finish off with a shot on goal. Check to see that the players are holding their sticks properly.

Station 2: Shooting Technique

Players work on wrist shot technique shooting against the boards. Players should stand sideways to boards so that proper weight transfer is used. Start with puck behind back foot and sweep puck towards the target.

Station 3: Soccer (ABCs)

Play soccer 5 v 5 or 4 v 4 cross-ice in 40 second shifts in whatever number that allows players to participate every other shift.

Station 4: Obstacle Course

Run obstacle course to focus on stops, starts and tight turn skating skills. Once players begin, be active and assist individual players with skating technique.

Station 5: 2 v 2 Score on Any Net

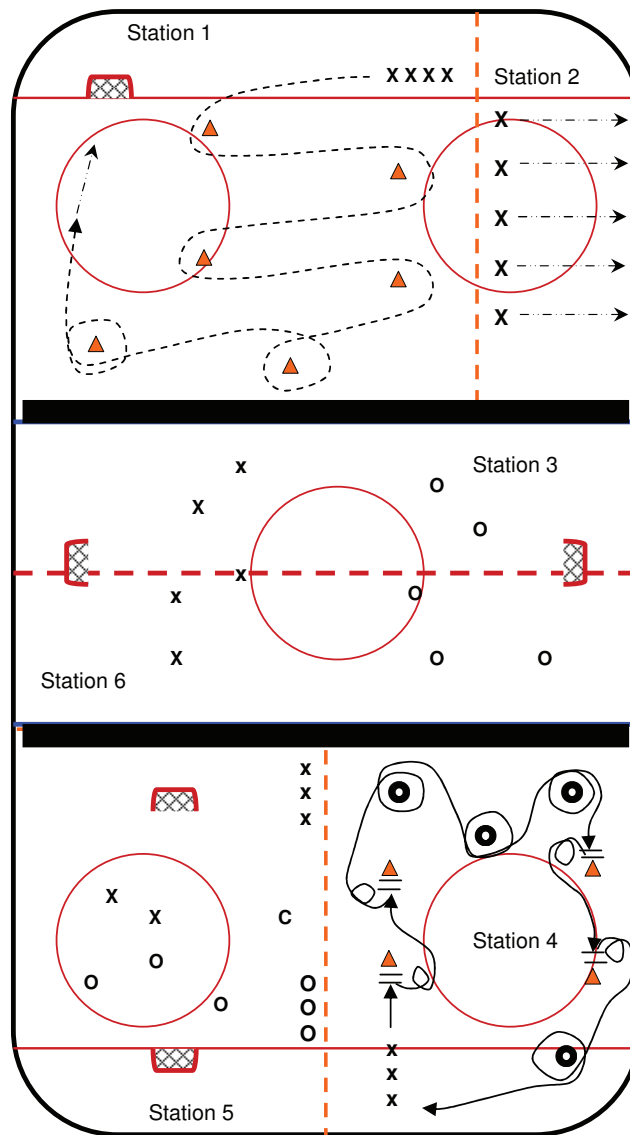
Play 2 v 2 in 30-40 second shifts. Players can score on any net. The coach continues to spot puck into play after goals are scored until the shift time is complete.

Station 6: Soccer (ABCs)

Play soccer 5 v 5 or 4 v 4 cross-ice in 40 second shifts in whatever number that allows players to participate every other shift.

Game: 4 v 4 Cross-Ice (9 minutes)

Play 4 v 4 cross-ice hockey in all three zones for the remainder of time.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Ice Marker

Warm-Up: Free Play (5 minutes)

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment (i.e. ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.)

Coaches set up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle to change stations the players do one 360 jump to the right and one to the left before moving on the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station as players arrive.

Station 1: 1 v 1 Pit Game x 2

Players compete 1 v 1 in a tight space scoring on the opposite goal. Coach continually spots puck into play when a goal is scored. Variation: score on either net.

Station 2: Edges Around Sticks

Players drop stick lengthwise in front of them. Inside edge around stick, outside edge around stick, two laps inside edge around stick, two laps outside edge, inside edge figure eight, outside edge figure eight, two-foot side jumps over stick, one-foot side hop over stick. Perform all exercises on both right and left feet.

Station 3: 1 v 1 Keep Away and Passing

Players play 1 v 1 keep away in zone. On whistle to rest, players stationary pass to each other. Pass cross body and sweep puck. Forehand, backhand, bullet pass (hard as possible).

Station 4: Give Away Game

Players split into two teams with one team on each side of the line. Players must stay on their own side. The players attempt to shoot as many pucks as possible into the other team's zone. On the whistle to end the game, the team with the fewest pucks in its zone wins. Dividers can also be used as the line in the middle so the players must lift the puck.

Station 5: Crossovers Right and Left

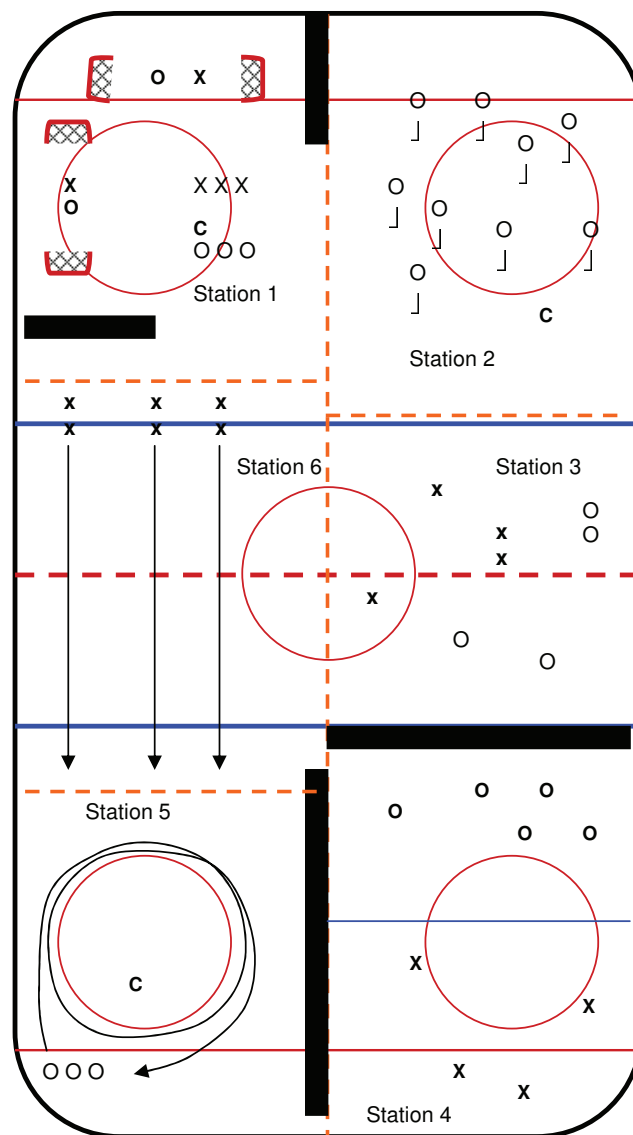
Crossover skating technique to both the left and right sides.

Station 6: Skating and ABCs

Step over stick, stick through legs, drop to knees, drop to knees 360, log roll to left/right, run on skates, swizzle out jump feet together, single leg stride left/right.

Game: Full-Ice Glove Tag (9 minutes)

Players must skate the length of the ice without getting hit by a glove thrown by the coaches. If the player can catch a glove before it hits the ground, they have a free pass to the opposite end. Tagged players wait along the boards.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Six Nets, Cones, Tires, Tennis Balls, Ringette Rings

Warm-Up: ABCs (5 minutes)

Coaches should immediately set up the dividers across each blue line. Players will skate a figure eight around the ice surface down the middle and back along the side boards. Players must jump over the dividers and perform a Superman dive at the red line down the middle and drop to their knees at the red line coming back along the boards. Mix up the agility moves.

Designate two additional coaches to set up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle to change stations, players do three hops on the left foot and three hops on the right foot before moving on to the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station as players arrive.

Station 1: 3 v 3 Ringette

Play 3 v 3 tight space ringette using 30-second shifts.

Station 2: Freeze Tag

Once tagged the player drops to his knees with stick out on ice. The player is unfrozen when a teammate skates a circle around him/her and jumps over his/her stick.

Station 3: Obstacle Course (ABCs)

Have players start on knees, stomach, back, etc. Jump dividers, dive under sticks and 360 around far tire.

Station 4: Skating Tight Turns

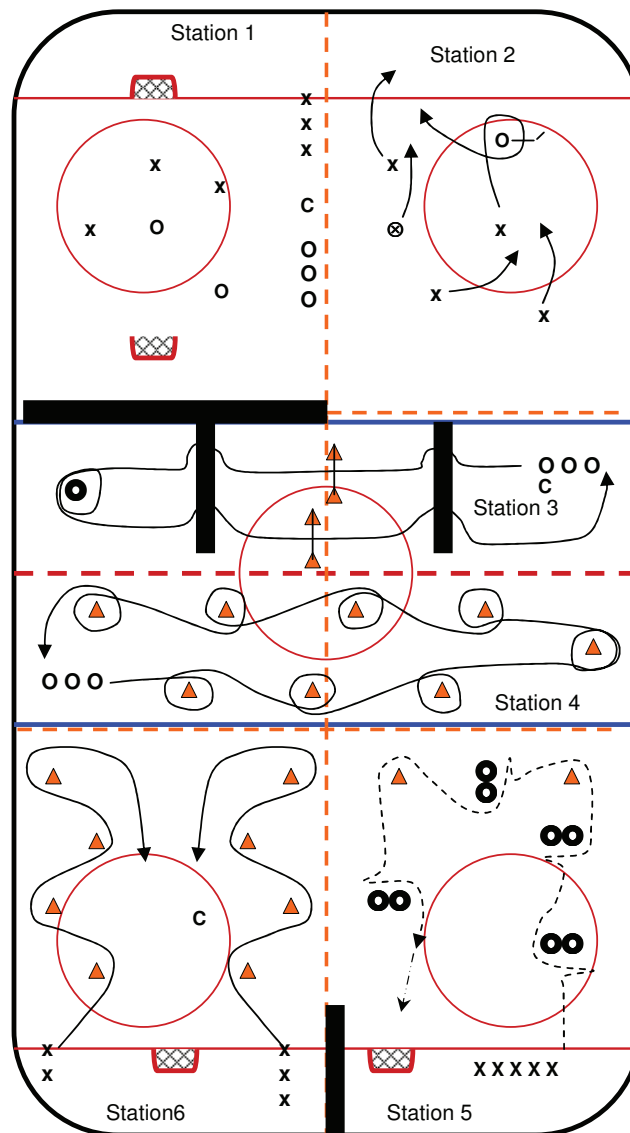
Skate the tight turn slalom course. Halfway through add pucks. Once started, work individually with players that need technical skills help.

Station 5: Puck Control Fakes

Have players attempt a wide fake at each set of double tires. Emphasize exaggerated moves and putting the puck as wide as possible. Finish off with a shot on goal.

Station 6: Loose Puck Races (ABCs)

Players race for a loose puck and finish with a shot on goal. Vary course and add extra agility (i.e. start from knees or stomach, complete 360 around cone, jumps, etc.).



Game: Cross-Ice with Tennis Balls (9 minutes)

Play cross-ice hockey in all three zones using tennis balls. Change shifts every 30 to 40 seconds.

GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Five Nets, Cones, Tires

Warm-Up: Free Play (5 minutes)

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment (i.e. ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.).

Coaches set up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle to change stations, players do three hops on the left foot and three hops on the right foot before moving on to the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station as the players arrive.

Station 1: Forward Crossovers Left/Right

Work on skating technique. Each player skates two laps around the circle with the next player in line starting as player one passes in front on first lap. Coaches should work individually with players on technique as needed.

Station 2: Net Tag

Players evade the tagger by using the nets and tires to screen out opponent.

Station 3: Passing with Movement

Pass forehand and backhand. Catch pass and spin 360. Skate forward and pass, stop and skate backward to starting spot.

Station 4: 2 v 2 Any Net

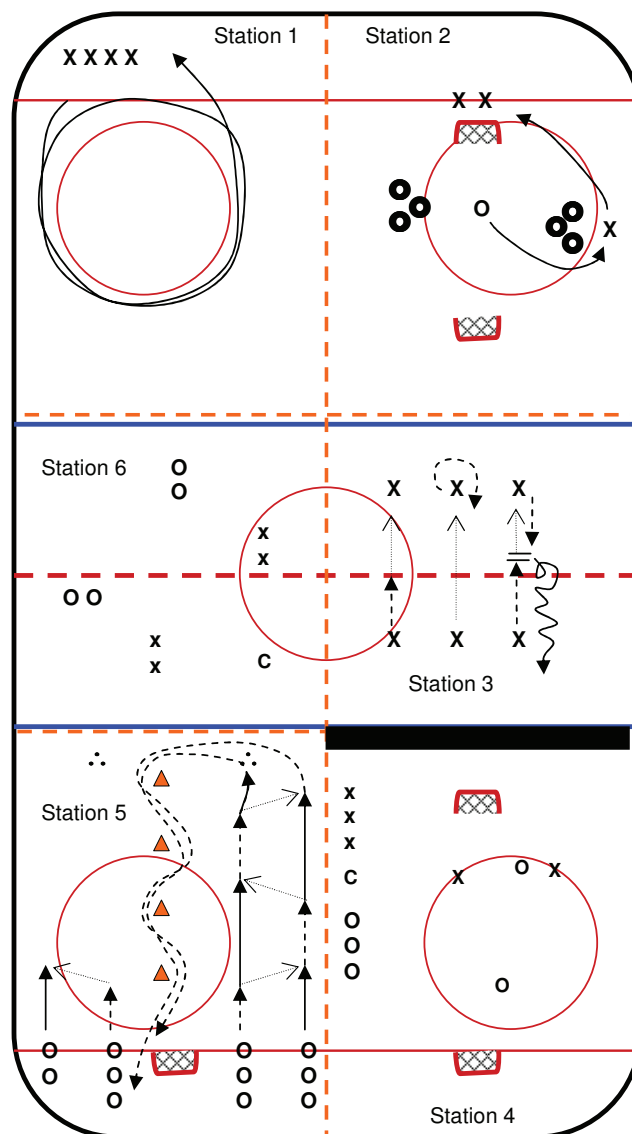
Play 2 v 2 with the players able to score on either net. Coach continues to spot pucks in to the game when players score until the end of a 30-second shift.

Station 5: 2 v 0 Passing

2 v 0 passing with weave back through cones. Players should change lines so they are passing on both forehand and backhand. Use proper technique and sweep the puck. Have stick on the ice to show a target on pass reception.

Station 6: Steal Pucks

Each player has a puck. On the whistle, players attempt to steal other players' pucks while still possessing their own.



Game: Submarine Tag (9 minutes)

On the whistle, players must skate the length of the ice without being tagged. If tagged, the player stands still with legs spread apart wide. To become free again a teammate must slide between the frozen player's legs.

GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Six Nets, Cones, Tires

Warm-Up: Passing with Coaches (5 minutes)

Players skate around the rink with puck and make passes to any coach. Coaches are stationed at various positions along the boards.

Designate two additional coaches to set up stations.

Stations: Six Stations x Six Minutes (36 minutes)

On the whistle, players do five two-foot jumps before changing stations. Coaches distribute water at each station as players arrive.

Station 1: Skating Edge Control (ABCs)

Swizzles, inside edges, outside edges, two-foot slalom, inside edges pump, single leg alternate edges, power jumps, swizzles out jump feet together.

Station 2: Puck Control

Slalom through cones and finish with wrist shot. Next, skate full circles around each cone and finish with a wrist shot. Coach can add chaser to slalom. Check to see that each player is holding his/her stick properly.

Station 3: Tag with Both Feet on Ice

Players must push with inside edges and keep both feet on ice as they maneuver to escape the coach. If tagged, the tagged player drops to knees until a teammate skates a circle around him/her to set him/her free.

Station 4: Passing Shuttle

Player with puck skates three strides, passes to opposite line and then skates to the back of that line. Next, the player with the puck skates three strides and passes to the opposite line. Work both forehand passing and backhand passing. Remember to sweep the puck.

Station 5: 3 v 3 Tight Space

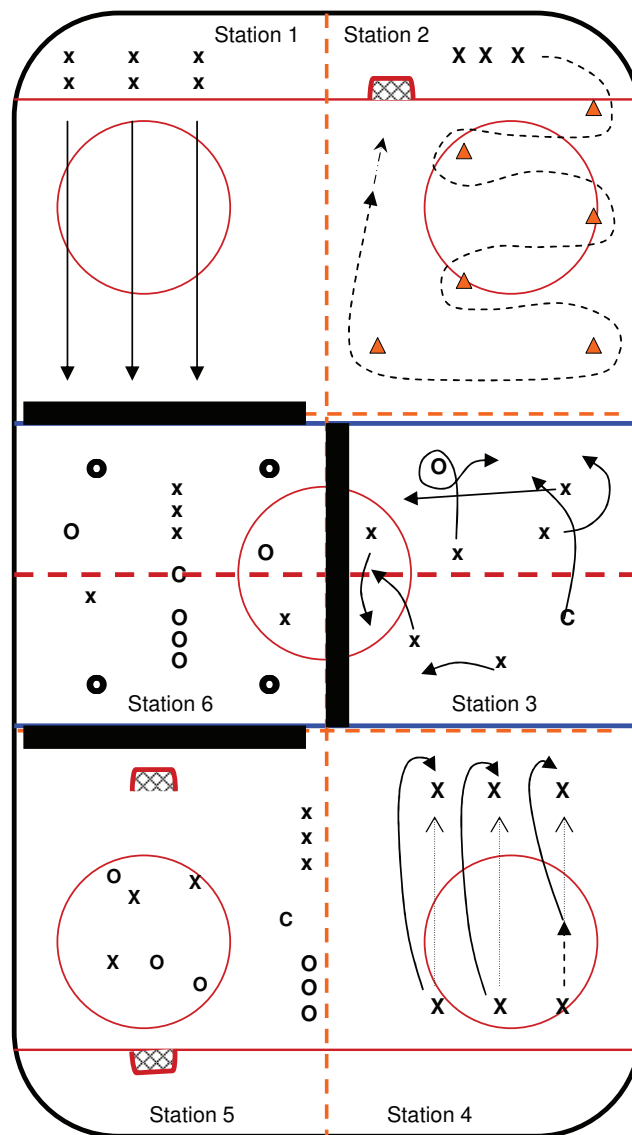
Play 3 v 3, change on whistle every 30 seconds.

Station 6: 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 Hit the Tire

Pass the puck off the tire to score. The coach can have two 1 v 1 or 2 v 2 games going on at the same time.

Game: 4 v 4 Cross-Ice (9 minutes)

Play 4 v 4 cross-ice hockey in all three zones for the remainder of time.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Soccer Balls

Warm-Up: In-Circle Stickhandling (5 minutes)

Players skate around with puck. On the whistle, they jump into the closest circle and stickhandle within it.

Stations: Three Stations x 10 Minutes (30 minutes)

Station 1: Pass to Score

Players play 3 v 3 cross-ice. The condition to score points is that you complete a pass through the cones to a teammate. Can pass any direction and as many times as possible.

Station 2: Team Handball

Players play with no sticks, cross-ice with a soccer ball. Goal is to not let the ball hit the ice and to throw it into the opponents net. Players are not to take more than three strides with the ball.

Station 3: 3 v 3 Cross-Ice with Support

A 3 v 3 cross-ice game where there are four coaches around the outside for support. Players must pass to a coach before attempting a shot on net. Encourage puck support and outnumbering opponent.

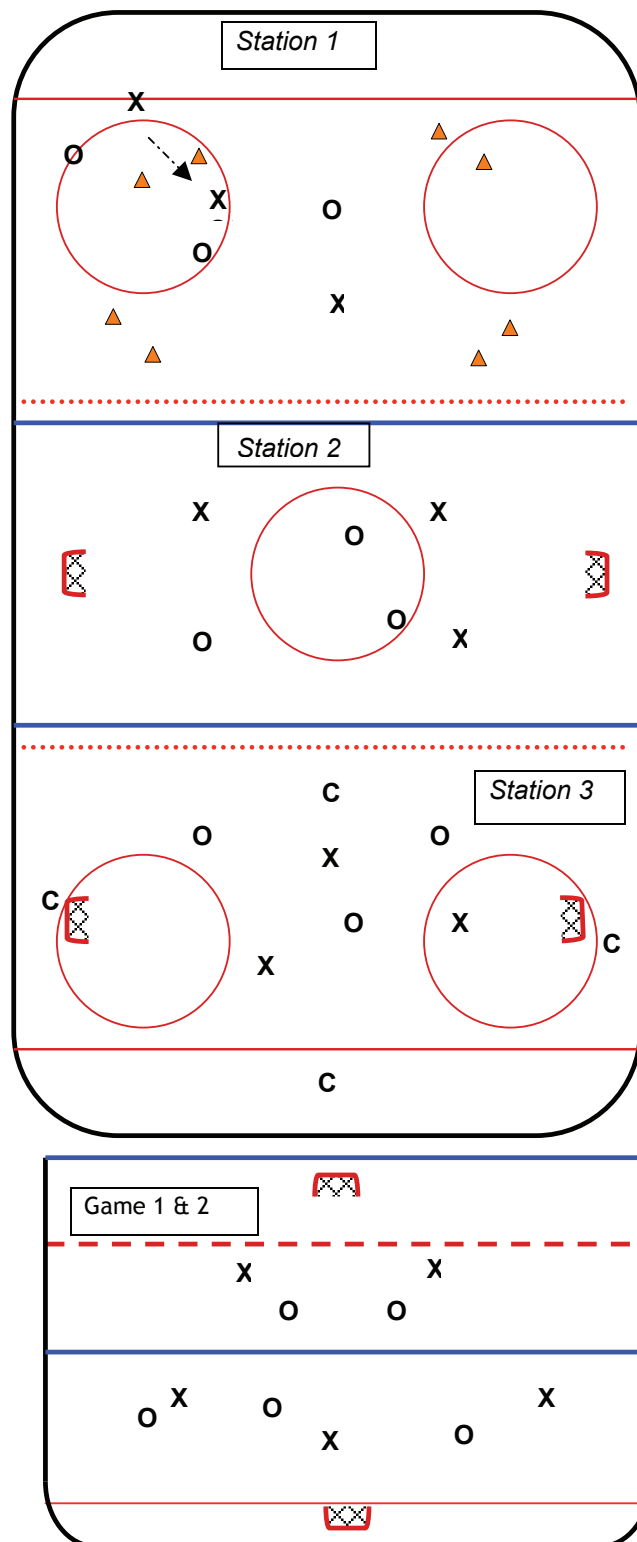
Games (10 minutes each)

Game 1: $\frac{3}{4}$ Ice 5 v 5

Set borders out on one blue line. A full 5 v 5 game is played in the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ ice. Encourage players not on the ice to use the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ to work on stickhandling while they wait their turn.

Game 2: $\frac{3}{4}$ Ice Score-O

Everyone on the ice with multiple pucks. Try to keep 3-5 pucks going at once.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Warm-Up: Free Play (5 minutes)

Let the players have the first five minutes of time as free play. Dump as many items as possible onto the ice and let kids experiment (i.e. ringette rings, blue pucks, black pucks, softballs, tennis balls, etc.).

Coaches set up stations.

Stations: Four Stations x 10 Minutes (40 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Underhandle/Shooting

Player receives pass from coach, then skates through cones with puck on stick, keeping the puck on the forehand at all times. After the last cone, take a wrist shot on net.

Station 2: Skating

- Two-foot glides
- One-foot glides
- Crossovers

Station 3: Stickhandling

Players stickhandle in a tight area with obstacles laying around them. 20 seconds on, 20 seconds off. Encourage them to move feet while handling puck. Everyone goes at once.

Keep away – same drill with fewer pucks than players

Station 4: Passing

Players play 3 v 3 cross-ice. The condition to score points is that you complete a pass through the cones to a teammate. Can pass any direction and as many times as possible.

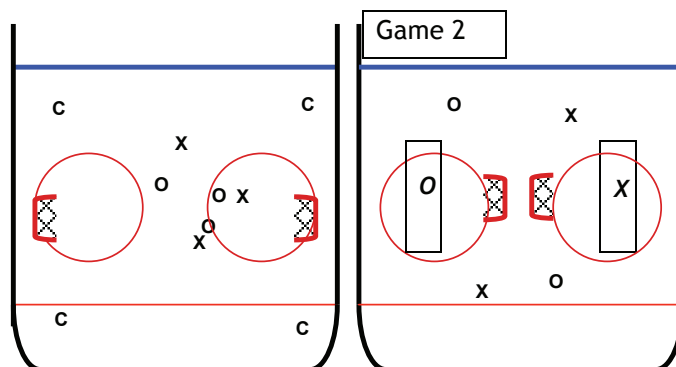
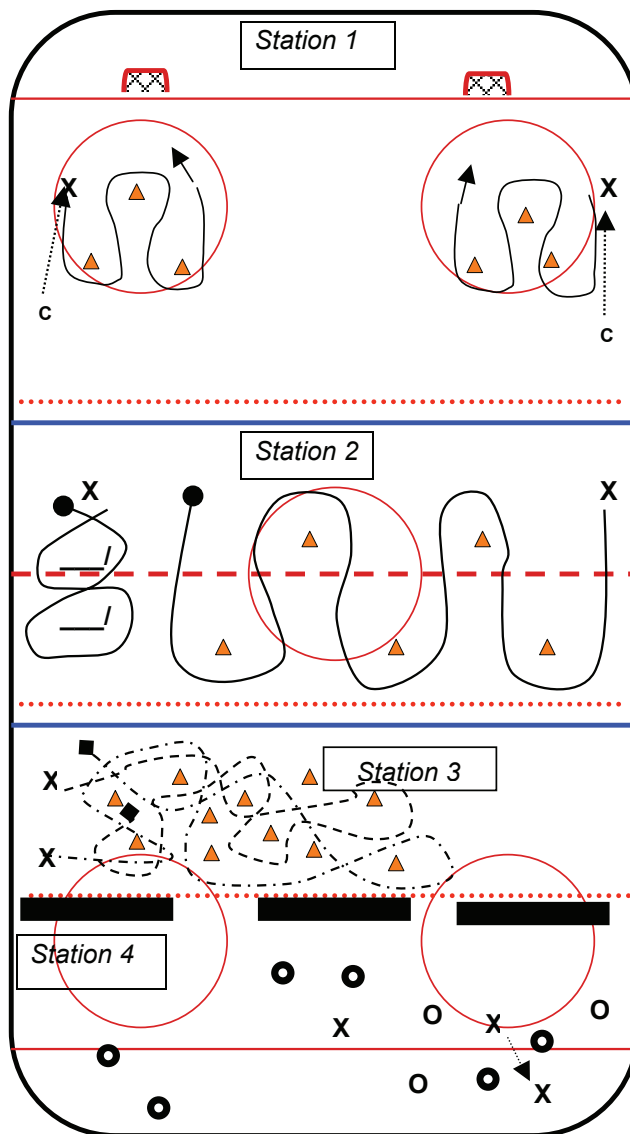
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: Cross-Ice with Support

A 3 v 3 cross-ice game where there are four coaches around the outside for support. Players must pass to a coach before attempting a shot on net. Encourage puck support and outnumbering opponent.

Game 2: Man in the Box

Nets are piggy backed. 3 v 3, one player is a designated shooter who stays in his/her box. Other two players must pass to shooter for shot. After initial shot, other players can score on rebound.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires, Tennis Balls

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Three Zone Game (8 minutes)

Rotate zones every two minutes.

Stations: Eight Stations x Four Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Skating

All done squeezing ball behind glide-leg knee

- A. Right foot forward – stride length of ice
- B. Left foot forward – stride length of ice
- C. Right foot backward – ‘C’ cuts length of ice
- D. Left foot backward – ‘C’ cuts length of ice
- E. 1 v 1 sprints to puck with shot at end

Station 2: Puckhandling/Protection

Two 1 v 1 cross-ice battles – hit the tire (or trash can) on each end to score (competing, stickhandling, puck protection, defense, stick on puck). Start first 1 v 1 then next group starts after 30 seconds. Then next group starts after each goal.

Station 3: Passing/Receiving

- A. Each player with one partner (groups of two) - moving randomly around the zone passing (stay within 10-15 feet of each other).
- B. Odd number keep away (7 v 3, 6 v 2, etc.) using whole zone

Station 4: Cross-Ice with Support

Play 2 v 2 cross-ice with goalies, but must pass to one of coaches before players can attempt to score.

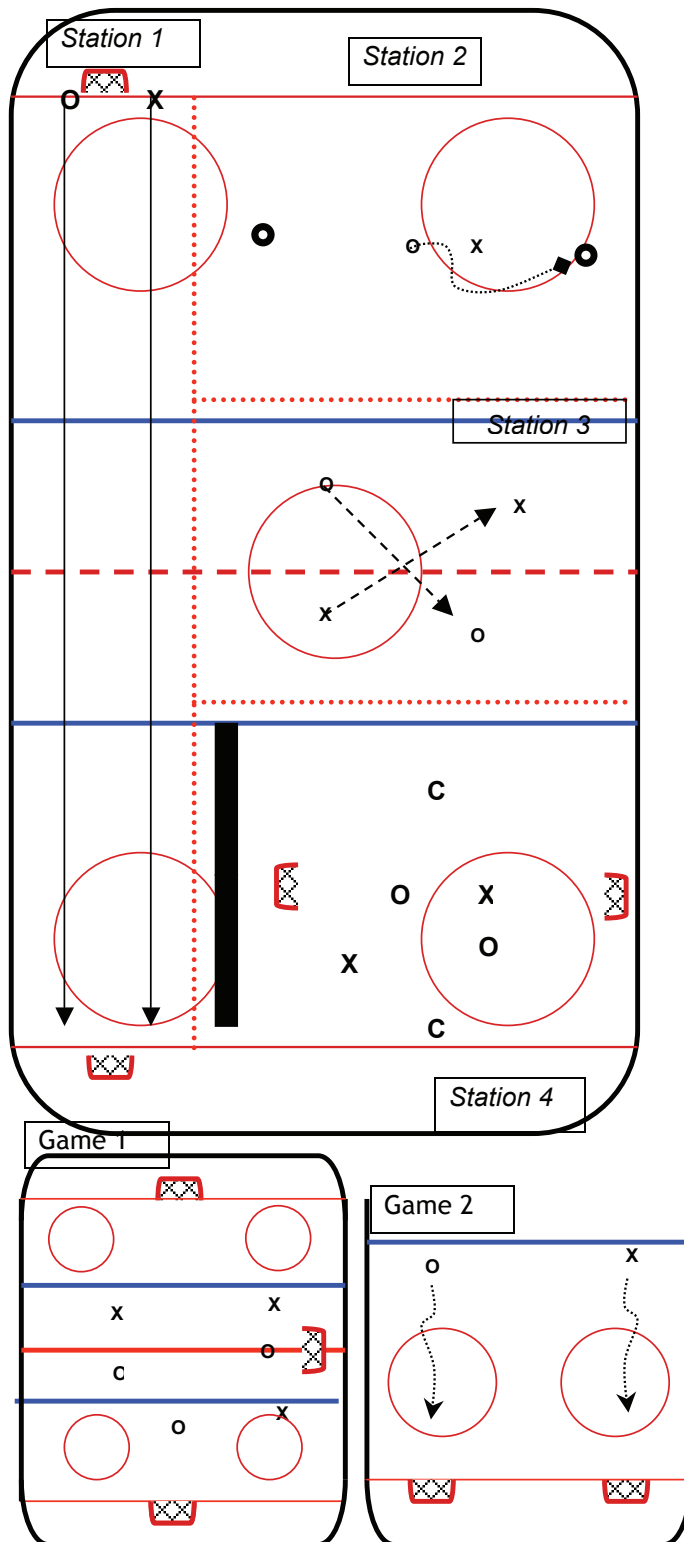
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: Russian Scrimmage

Players line up by color on boards in front of scorekeepers bench. Coach dumps a puck to start players. Multiple 1 v 1, 2 v 2 games, etc.; four or five battles going at same time. Full-ice and can score on any of three nets.

Game 2: Showdown

Players try to score on breakaways – three lines, three nets/goalies.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Four Nets, Cones, Tires

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Warm-Up: Shooting against the Boards (5 minutes)

Players get a puck and spread out around the rink and shoot at the boards. Encourage proper wrist shot technique.

Stations: Four Stations x Eight Minutes (32 minutes)

Work on proper stride and mechanics.

Station 1: Agility Skate/Receive and Shoot

Player skates through obstacles (working on edges) and then has to jump over a border. After jumping border, player stops in the scoring area, receives a pass from coach and takes a wrist shot on net.

Station 2: Passing

Two lines opposite each other. X passes to O and sprints to back of line. O then passes to next X, sprints to X line. Forehand passes first then progress to backhand passes. Add in receiving on the backhand as well.

Station 3: Chaos Puck Handling

Players stickhandle in and around objects littered in the small area. All players are going at the same time. Emphasize keeping their eyes up. Halfway through, take away a few pucks so players have to either protect their puck or try to steal one from another (20 seconds on, 20 seconds off).

Station 4: 2 v 2 Tight Area Game

Players play 2 v 2 in a very tight area. Emphasize moving the feet in small spaces and competing for loose pucks.

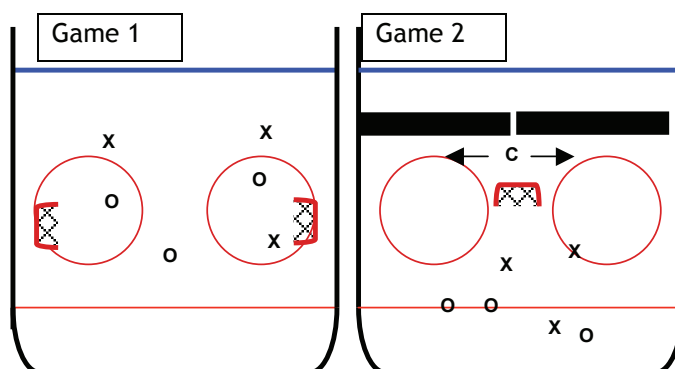
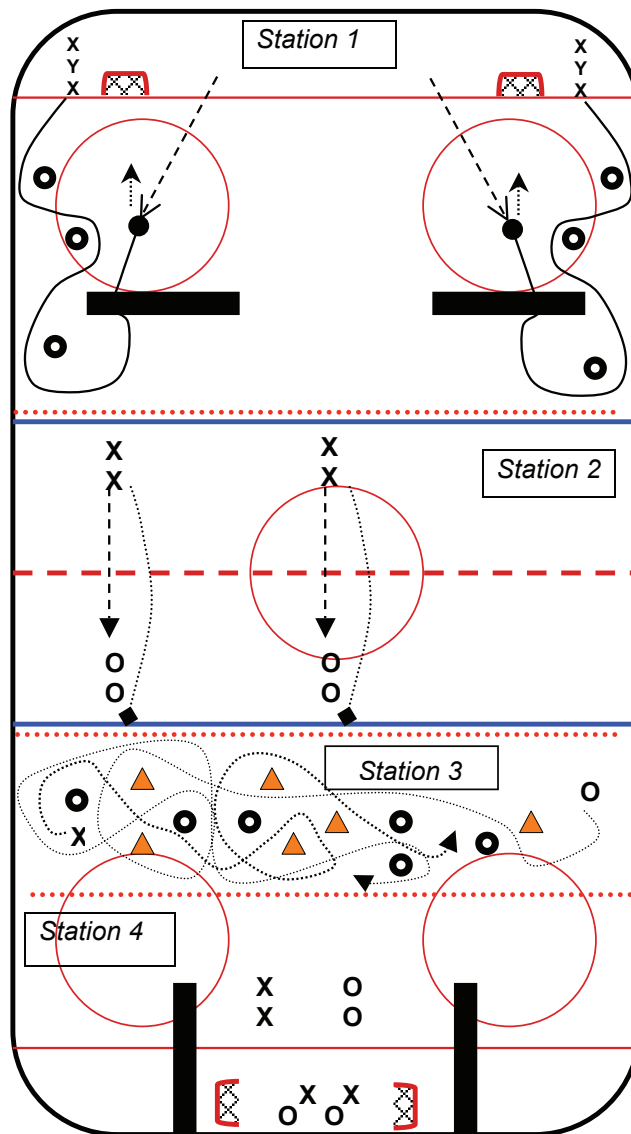
Games (8 minutes each)

Game 1: 3 v 3 Forehand Only

3 v 3 game where players can only touch the puck with the forehand of their blades. Get them to be thinking ahead of time and how they will be able to surround the puck to keep it on their forehand.

Game 2: 3 v 3 Gretzky

3 v 3 from top of circles down with net turned around. To get on offense, team has to pass to Gretzky (coach) behind the net before attacking. Emphasize moving to get open. Gretzky can move laterally but must remain behind the net.



GOALS: Skill Development/Fun

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED/SET-UP: Borders, Three Nets, Cones, Tires, Tennis Balls, Soccer Balls

Free Puck Time (5 minutes)

Players are free to do what they want.

Stations: Three Stations x 14 Minutes (42 minutes)

Station 1: Skating

- **Chariot Races** – this drill works on forward striding of the ‘puller’ and good glide position of the ‘rider.’ Divide players into two teams. Players pair-up with a teammate. First player holds both sticks by the butt-end. Second player holds both sticks by the blade end and maintains good glide – ready position with knees bent and head up. First player pulls partner in a line up and around a cone and back to the goal line. All players on both teams must go as a ‘puller.’
- **Duck, Duck, Goose** – Players are in groups of about six. Each sits on the edge of the circle except one player who is ‘it.’ ‘It’ skates around the circle touching each player on the head and saying ‘DUCK’ on each touch. He eventually touches one person to whom he says ‘GOOSE.’ This player rises and must chase ‘It’ once around the circle and touch him/her before ‘It’ can return to the touched player’s spot. If the ‘It’ child is touched he continues to be ‘It.’ If not, the new player is ‘It.’ Make sure different players are touched and make them skate in both directions.
- **Bumper Butts** – players skate backwards inside a circle and try to knock out the other players by forcing them out of the circle. The last player standing is the winner.

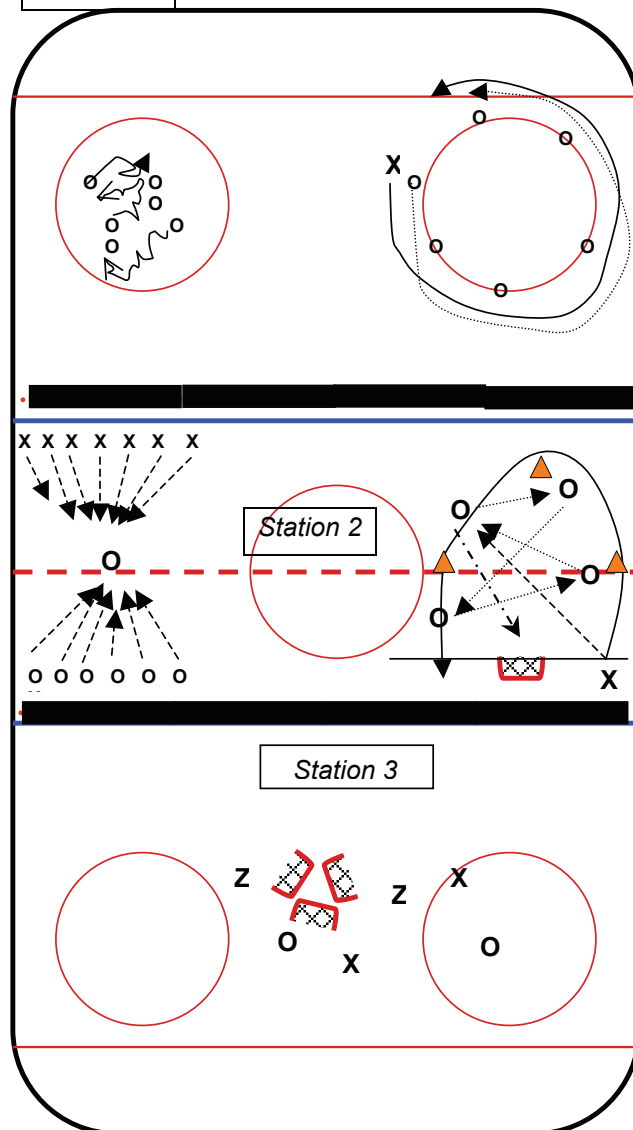
Station 2: Passing and Puck Skills

- **Kill the Ball** (need lots of pucks) – two teams are formed and each is lined up across the zone from each other. Place a ball at center ice between the two teams. Players try to shoot pucks at the ball trying to knock it towards the other team with their pucks. No one is allowed to leave their spots to move closer toward the ball. The team that knocks the ball the furthest toward the other team is the winner. Let the game run for about two minutes then start again.
- **Baseball** – Defensive team is positioned anywhere in ‘the field.’ The ‘batter’ shoots the puck anywhere inside the zone, while the defensive players retrieve the puck and pass to each other until each has touched it once. They then can try to score on goal before the batter crosses the goal line. After shooting the puck, the ‘batter’ must sprint and make a full 360 degree circle around cones placed as ‘first,’ ‘second’ and ‘third’ base. The batter is out if the defensive team scores before he crosses the goal line. The batting team bats through its line-up and then the defensive team gets a turn to bat.

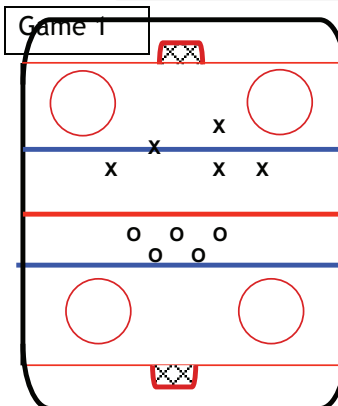
Station 3: Competitive Game

- **Three Net Piggy Back** (three nets, three goalies; 2 v 2 v 2) – each team is assigned to score on a certain net and defend the other two.

Station 1



Station 2



Game 1

Games Full-Ice Scrimmage (10 minutes)

*Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey*

*Sled
Hockey*

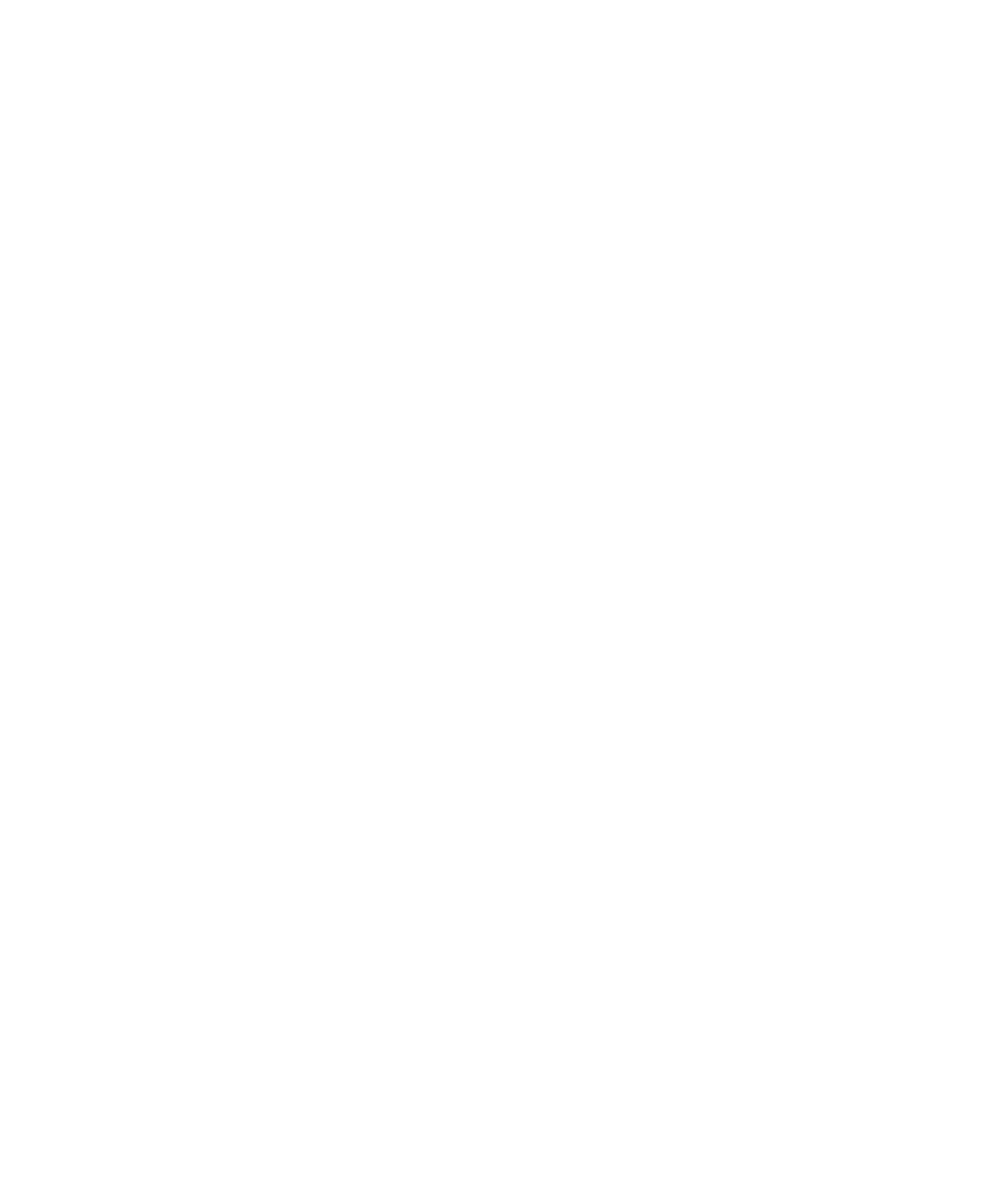
*Special
Hockey*

*Standing
Amputee
Hockey*



Advanced Practice Plans for Disabled Hockey

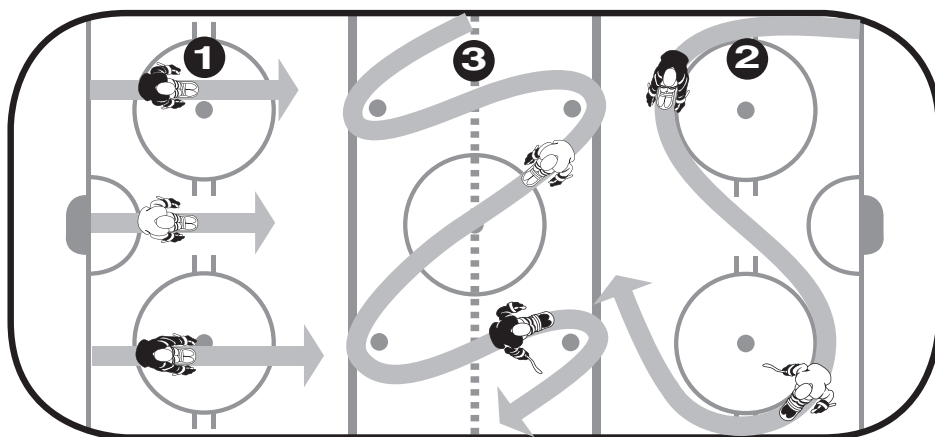




PRACTICE PLAN #1

Warm-Up/Stretch (10 mins.)

The players get out on the ice and the captain or coach takes the players through a high-paced skating warm up for 10 minutes. This can be skating or even a five-on-five small game going on at either end of the rink. When the 10 minutes is up, the players gather in the middle and stretch accordingly based on their disability.



Skating (20 mins.)

#1 Full-Ice Striding Format

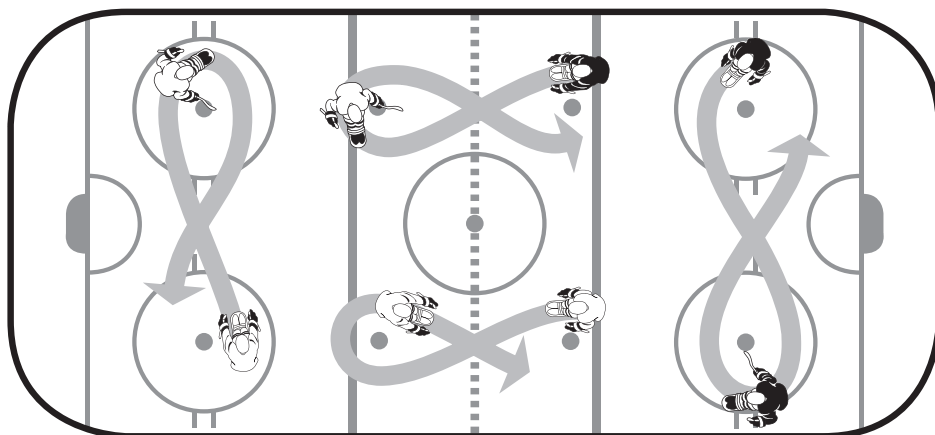
The players start at one goal line and skate to the far end. Coaches use many different drills to improve their skating along the way (stops and starts as an example). Be creative.

#2 Circles

The players start in one corner and skate quickly around half the circles working on their turns and acceleration. This drill should be done with and without the puck. For those not in a sled, alternate backward skating as well.

#3 Tight Turns

Using full ice or half ice, have the players start on the goal line and accelerate to the blue line and have them tight turn to the boards in the same direction and come back. Alternate sides so they are learning to turn both ways. Use half-ice drills to make the skating area more confined to emulate game-like conditions.



Skating

Interval Partner Figure Eights

down to the far end and get the goalies warmed up. Players partner up and skate short confined figure eights for 15 seconds rotating with their partner every whistle. The interval drill is a daily theme to help break up practice and work on a new skill every session.

Stickhandling

Three Station Rotation (25 mins.)

Divide the players into three zones and rotate them through each drill every eight minutes.

Figure Eight Number Call Drill

The players all receive a number but the goalie does not know which number matches the player. While the players are skating around both circles doing figure eights with pucks the coach calls out a number and that player goes in and shoots. After shooting, the player picks up a loose puck and gets right back into line skating. After four minutes change sides. Encourage sled players to shoot

Water Break (3 mins.)

Interval Partner

Figure Eights (5 mins.)

Before starting the drill, have an assistant coach take the goalies

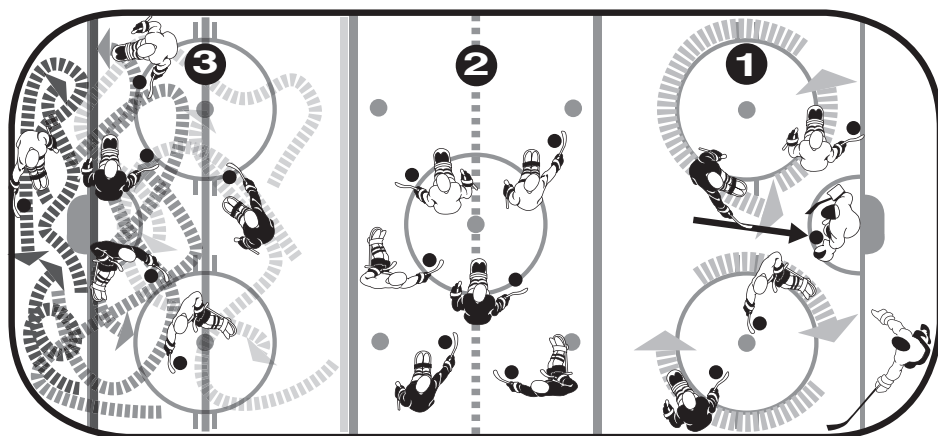
using both hands, not just their strong sides.

Tight Turns Stationary Puck Handling *(Slight Movement for Sled Players)*

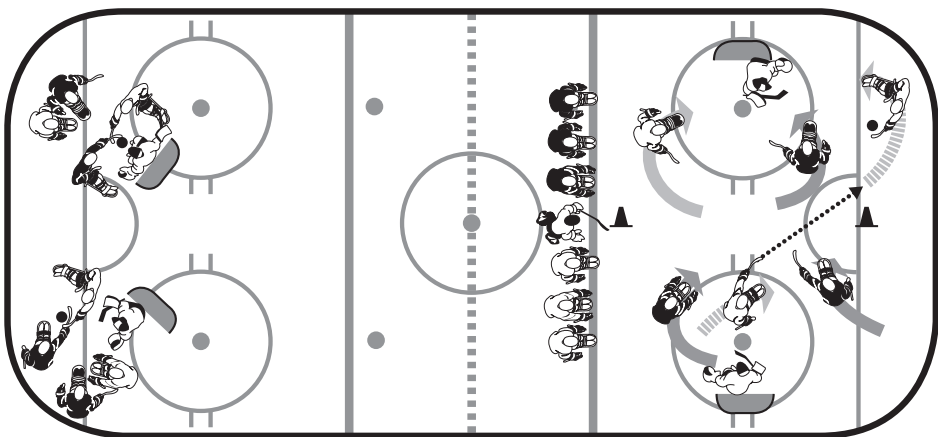
The players face the coach with little movement and handle the puck first on the right side and then the left side of their bodies, finishing with side-to-side puck movement across the body. Encourage the players to cup the blade of their stick over the puck on the forehand and backhand side while keeping their heads up. Coaches: be creative and add more progression to make the drills more difficult, using your skates make them kick the puck up onto the blade or moving the puck under the sled back and forth. Make the drills specific based on the age of the player and the discipline.

Chaos Shrinking Puck Handling Drill

Players skate in any direction they want with pucks using the blue line at one end and the boards as a boundary. Encourage the players to skate in traffic with their heads up at all times. On the first whistle or command make them speed up and on the second have them slow down, but keep their feet or sled moving so that they do not stop. After a while shrink the space by telling the players they can only skate from the faceoff dots to the boards. This will force them to handle the puck in confined areas just like in a game. If time permits have them shrink down to the goal line and the boards. Tight quarters force the players to have quick hands and keep their heads up. Be space specific: sled players may need more room, and hearing impaired players will need



Stickhandling – Three Station Rotation



Controlled Area Small Games

a different command vs. using a whistle.

Interval Partner Figure Eights Again (5 mins.)

Before starting the drill, have an assistant coach take the goalies down to the far end and get some work. Players partner up and skate short confined figure eights for 15 seconds rotating with their partners every whistle.

Water Break (3 mins.)

Controlled Small Area Games (10 mins.)

Break the ice up into small areas and play small games, attaching

different rules every time you change the game. Small area games are ideal to teach game-like situations in a competitive environment. Small spaces mean more puck touches and greater intensity.

Game 1 – Three-on-Three

Start by making sure you have different colored jerseys for the players to put on so the players can tell who is on their team. Using only six players at a time, set the goal nets up past the faceoff dots at one end facing each other. Teams play three-on-three with the other players waiting across

the blue line for a line change that should occur every 40 to 60 seconds based on the age of the players. Be creative; play four-on-four as well or two-on-two. Whatever works to make your practice a success.

Game 2 – Red Baron

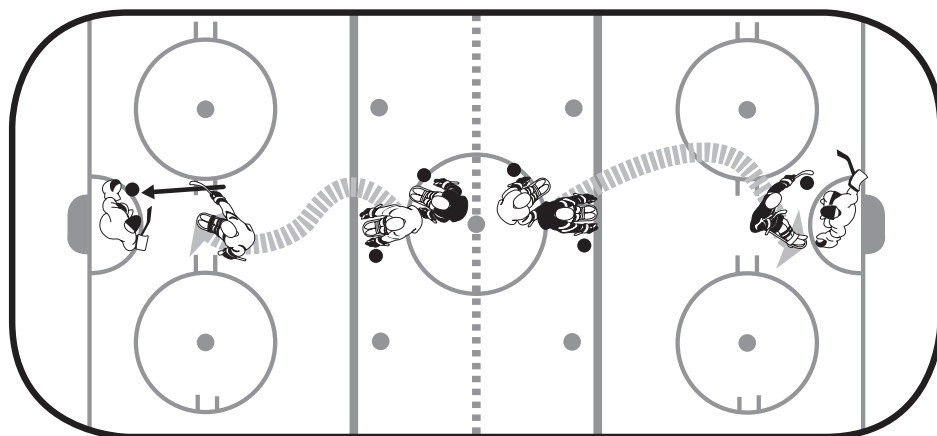
The game starts out two-on-two with a fifth player added. The fifth player is known as the “red baron” and is always on offense and plays for both teams depending on who has possession of the puck. Change every 40 seconds with a new red baron every time.

Breakaways (10 mins.)

Finish the practice on a fun note with the players all getting a chance to go in on a breakaway. With time permitting, make it a fun competition.

Team Cheer

On the count of three, finish with a team cheer. Make sure your kids leave the ice feeling good about themselves with a loud positive team cheer.



Breakaways

PRACTICE PLAN #2

Skating Warm-Up (15 mins.)

Warm-Up Skate

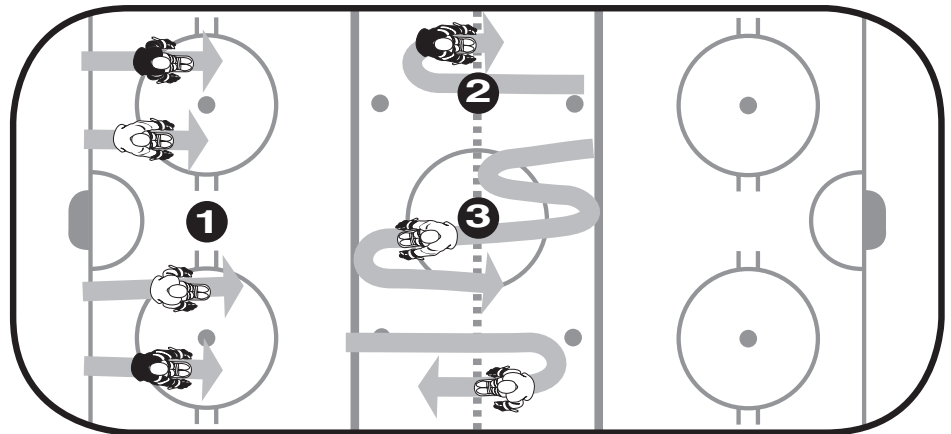
Coaches pull the nets out slightly at each end. The players skate clockwise around the ice picking up speed on the whistle and slowing down on the next whistle. This is a great opportunity to incorporate different skating drills to warm your players up. Progress to tight turns on the whistle while changing direction. Also, have your players work on three hard strides to the left with a tight turn and then three hard strides back to the right with a tight turn all going in the same direction.

Long Strides

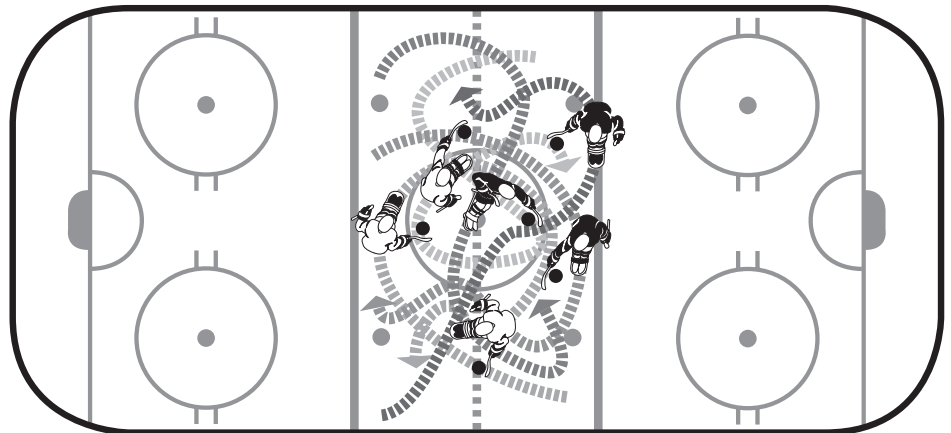
Lining up on the goal line, the players over-exaggerate their stride going from one side to the other for the younger players or using cross-ice or full length drills for the older, more experienced player. When they get to the far blue line players relax and go easy and back into line.

Tight Turns

Divide the players into groups based on the number of skaters you have. Start the drill on the blue line faceoff dot. The skaters skate hard to the opposite blue line, tight turn towards the boards and race back. The idea is to work on tight turns, so keep the area confined to simulate a turnover and change of possession that happens so often in games. Change sides and work on the opposite turn towards the boards after a while so the players learn to turn both ways on their skates and in their sleds.



Skating Warm-Up



Interval Neutral Zone Chaos Puck Handling Drill

Neutral Zone Snake Turn

The players start in the middle of the ice on one blue line. They skate forward to the near red line, tight turn back to the blue line and then tight turn again, skating to the far blue line and then a tight turn again back to the blue line they started on, finishing on the other side. Once the players' turns are improving and getting tighter, try the drill again using pucks. Once again, do the drill starting on both

sides so players learn to turn well both ways.

Neutral Zone or Board Team Stretch (5 mins.)

Allow the captain to lead a team stretch in the center ice circle or down at one end. This is the time to stretch: when the players are warm, not at the start of practice before they are properly warmed up. That's when injuries occur. For sled hockey, the players should

find a spot on the boards and do full arm stretches using the boards to provide stability and tension.

Interval Neutral Zone Chaos Puck Handling Drill (5 mins.)

Before starting the drill, have the assistant coaches take the goalies to the far ends and get them warmed up. The players start at the top of the faceoff circles at one end. On the whistle, players skate to the neutral zone carrying a puck. Once they get between the blue lines they can skate in any direction staying between the two blue lines. The idea is getting them to skate in any direction with their heads up through traffic. On the next whistle, that group skates to the top of the faceoff circles at the far end and the next group goes. The reason they stop there is so that the goalies can be warmed up properly and not interrupted.

Water Break (3 mins.)

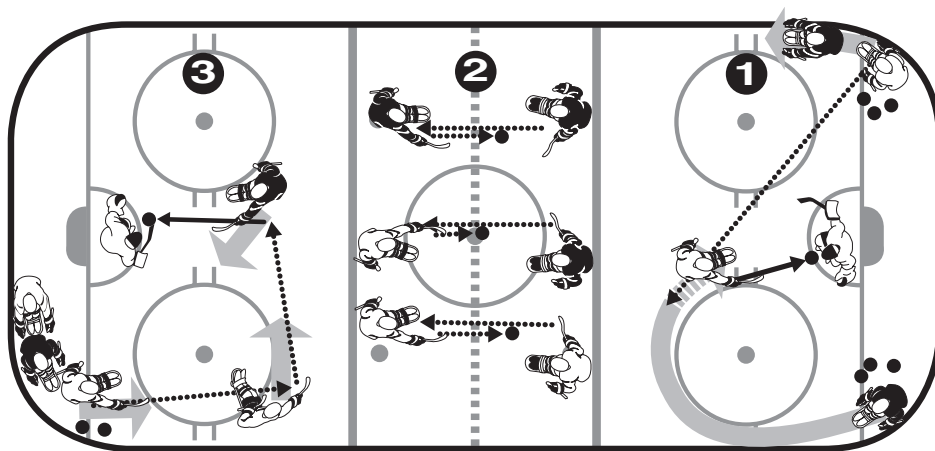
Passing Stations (25 mins.)

Station 1

Divide the players up and place them in both corners at one end. One player skates out from the corner up towards the blue line cutting back to the middle and receiving a pass from the other side and going in for a shot on goal. The players pass from alternating sides.

Station 2

Start out passing stationary with a partner using forehand and backhand passing. Sled players should be working on both hands equally, not just their strong side. Once the players have done this, begin a movement drill between the blue lines in traffic so, with all players moving, the puck carrier



Passing Stations

must find his/her partner with a pass going in any direction.

Station 3

Place the players in one corner with one player near the blue line near the boards and another spread out to the middle of the ice. The player in the corner passes the puck to the first player on the blue line. That player then moves the puck to the middle and that player receives the pass and goes in and shoots. The players rotate, with the first player going to the blue line, the second player going to the middle and the shooter going to the back of the line. Repeat the drill until everyone has been able to shoot, then change sides and start the drill again. Once the players get better at the drill, make it harder with more players and tip drills.

Water Break (3 mins.)

Scrimmage (10 mins.)

PRACTICE PLAN #3 — Defensemen Practice

Warm-Up Skate (10 mins.)

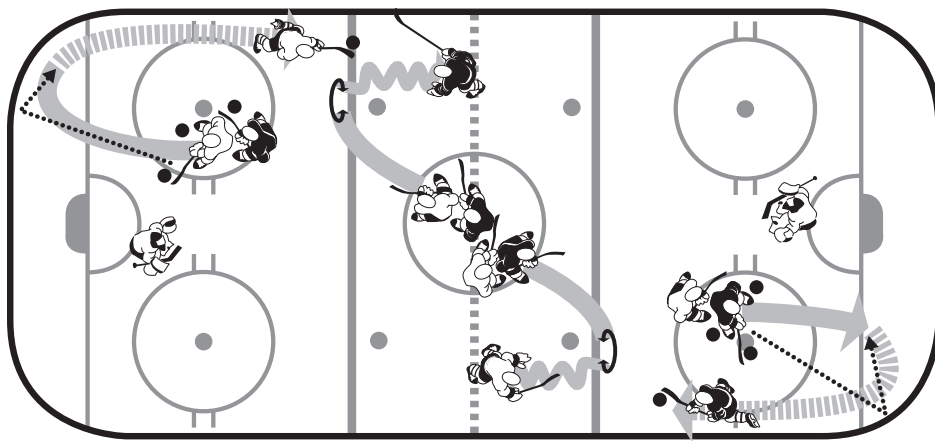
Coaches pull the nets out slightly at each end. The players skate clockwise around the ice picking up speed on the whistle and slowing down on the next whistle. This is a great opportunity to incorporate different skating drills to warm your players up. Progress to tight turns on the whistle while changing direction. Also, have your players work on three hard strides to the left with a tight turn and then three hard strides back to the right with a tight turn all going in the same direction.

Angling One-on-One Gap Control Full-Ice Both Sides (10 mins.)

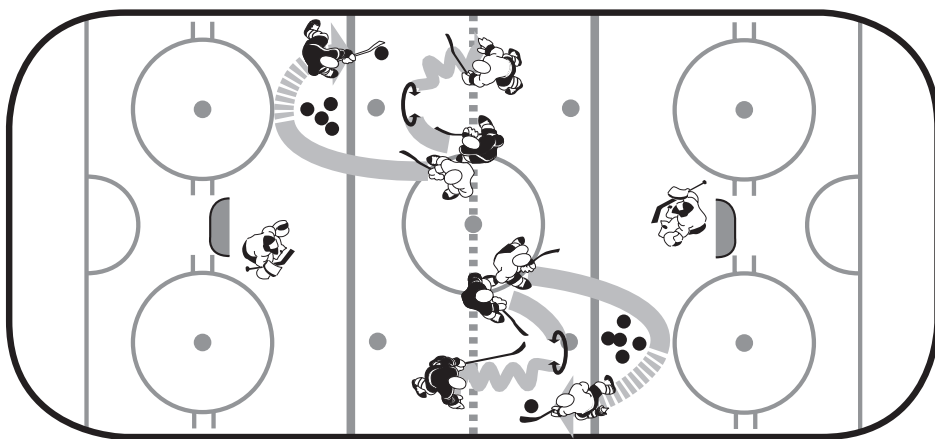
The defensemen are divided into two groups out at the center faceoff circle with half defending one side with the other half defending the other side. The forwards are lined up on opposite corner faceoff circles. On the whistle one forward from each faceoff circle goes to the corner, picks up a loose puck and skates up the boards. The defenseman in the middle skates to the near blue line on his/her side facing the forward, and then backs up, taking away space from the forward. The defenseman and forward now compete one-on-one to the far end. On the whistle, the next two forwards and defensemen go. After a while, change sides and repeat the drill.

Confined Area One-on-One Drill (10 mins.)

Coaches move the nets up to the middle of the ice above the top of the faceoff circles. The defenseman and forward start on the same side, with the drill being



Angling One-on-One Gap Control



Confined Area One-on-One

played out on both sides. The coaches set up pucks at the top of the faceoff circles on opposite sides of the rink. The defenseman starts out closest to the boards with the forward closest to the center circle. On the whistle, the forward swings deep and picks up a puck while the defenseman skates to the near blue line and plays the forward one-on-one.

Half-Ice Two-on-One Then Two-on-Two (10 mins.)

Use half ice on this drill and do it out of both ends. Realistically, in any hockey game, two-on-

ones occur after a turnover in the neutral zone. They don't start in one end and continue all the way down the ice. The defense starts on one side halfway up the boards. The forwards line up on both sides. The player without the puck skates to the puck carrier in the neutral zone, receives a pass and they go straight to the net two-on-one against the defenseman. The defensemen change sides after five minutes and the puck passer is now on the other side. Progress the drill to two-on-two with the forwards starting deeper in the zone,

regrouping in the neutral zone and coming back now two-on-two against two defensemen.

Water Break (3 mins.)

Defensive Zone

Breakout Options (15 mins.)

The following three options are typical game-like situations for defensemen when breaking out, and should be practiced often.

Option 1: Defensemen Carry

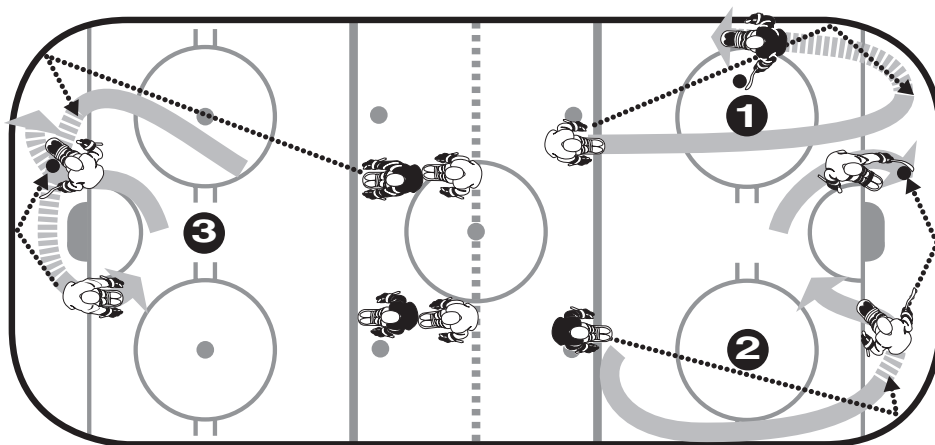
Using both ends if necessary, place two sets of defensemen at the blue line near the neutral zone faceoff dots. The coach then dumps the puck in. The defenseman, realizing he/she has time, picks up the puck out of the corner with head up and skates it out of the zone looking to head man the puck.

Option 2: D-to-D

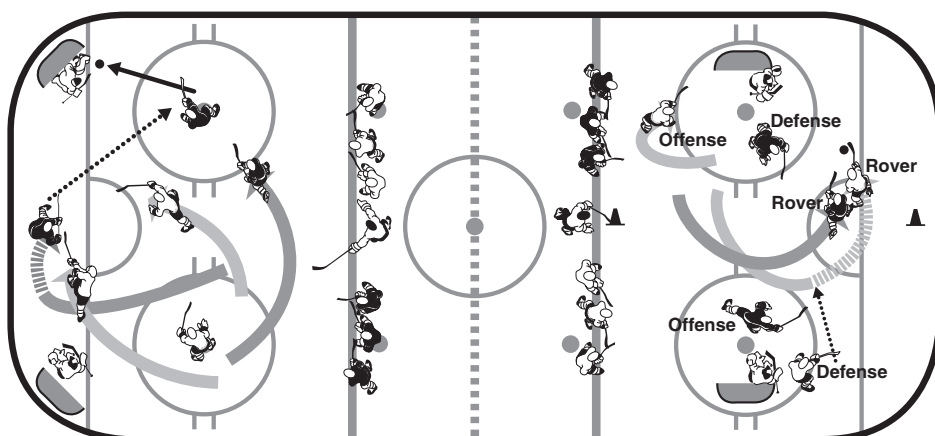
The coach dumps the puck to one corner. The defenseman who picks up the puck then makes either a direct pass behind the net to his/her partner or, using the end boards (depending on time), banks the puck off the boards to his/her partner and that defenseman now carries the puck with head up looking to either carry the puck or head man it to a teammate. Place a coach or player in the middle or on the boards to represent a passing option.

Option 3: Reverse

The coach dumps the puck in. The first defenseman picks up the puck, skates behind the net and reverses the puck to the original corner. The other defenseman comes from in front of the net, picks up the puck and skates it out or makes an outlet



Defensive Zone Breakout Options



Three-on-Three Small Games

pass. Place a coach or player in the middle or on the boards to represent a passing option. The reverse is a great option when one forechecker is close and applying pressure to the original puck carrier.

Three-on-Three Small Games

Finish practice with three-on-three small games, or progress to a three-on-three rover game where only the rovers from both teams can enter both zones.

PRACTICE PLAN #4 — Forwards Practice

Warm-Up Skate with Pucks (10 mins.)

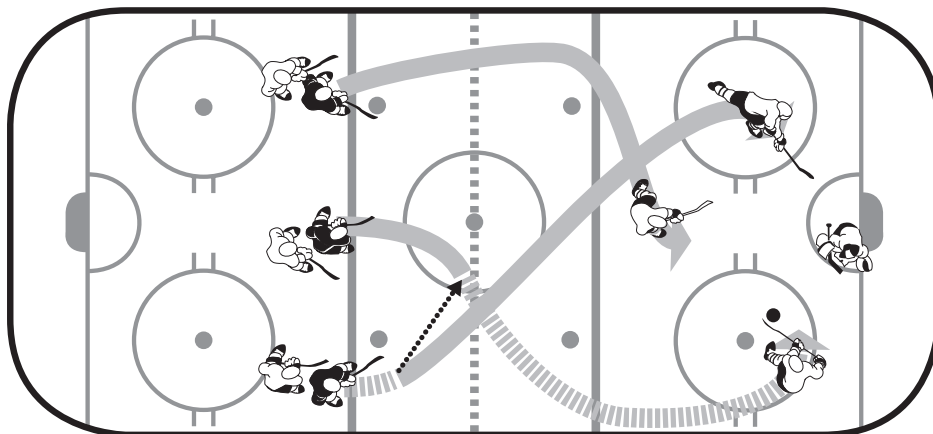
The players start in one corner. Three players go at a time carrying a puck, cutting all five circles in half and finishing at the far end. The non-sled players can progress this drill into alternating circles from forward to backward skating with pucks. Next, line the players up in three lines at one end and have them skate with pucks full length doing tight turns on the far blue line and then tight turns on the near blue line and then skating down to the far end to finish the drill.

Offensive Zone Entry Drill Three-on-Zero (10 mins.)

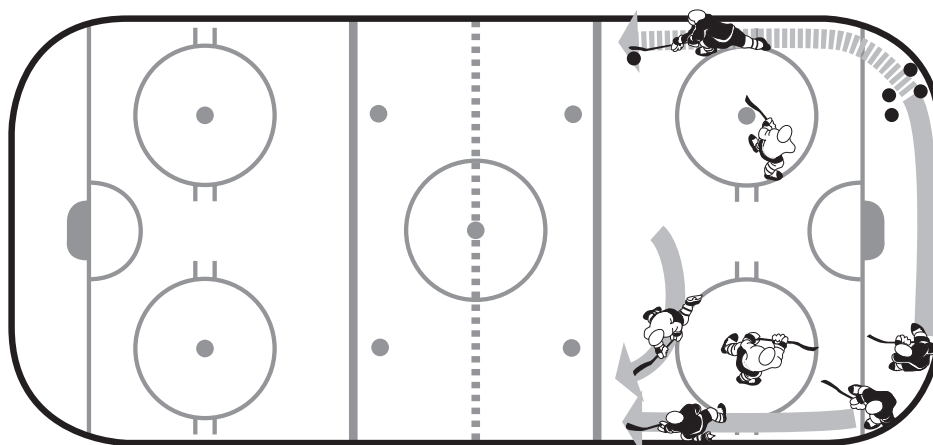
The players start at the far blue line and make two quick passes coming down three-on-zero. When they get to the blue line the puck is dumped in and the players quickly form a triangle forecheck. The closest player to the puck goes to the puck and stops; the second player supports along the boards and third player is high in the slot. All three players stop and the coach reverses the puck. The players then skate to the other side and form the triangle forecheck. This a great drill to teach your players positional play while forechecking in the offensive zone. Once they become proficient at this drill, have them play it out live with five players on each team - one team breaking out and the other forechecking.

Two-on-Zero with Two Back Checkers (10 mins.)

Two players, one on each side of the boards at the hash marks,



Offensive Zone Entry Drill Three-on-Zero



Two-on-Zero with Two Back Checkers

break out two-on-zero. From the triangle forecheck, two players back all the way down the ice. The high player in the slot picks up the player without the puck on the back check. Repeat the drill from the other end rotating end to end with all the players changing positions so they understand all the responsibilities involved.

Water Break (3 mins.)

Center Ice Passing Drills (15 mins.)

One-on-Zero Passing from Both Sides with Line Rotation

The players line up in four groups at both sides of both blue lines. On the whistle, one player from opposite blue line skates over to the other side, receives a pass from the first player in the opposite line. Using both sides at the same time, the two players who received the pass go in and shoot at opposite ends. On the

whistle, you alternate sides and two more players go.

Progression Two-on-Zero

Now, two players from each side go, creating a neutral zone two-on-zero with four players going and two shooting at opposite ends.

Progression One-on-One

Now, the first of two players skates over and becomes the defenseman and the second player the puck carrier. With this in mind, the passer only passes to the second player going. As in the previous drill, four players go at a time and shoot at opposite ends.

Progression Two-on-One

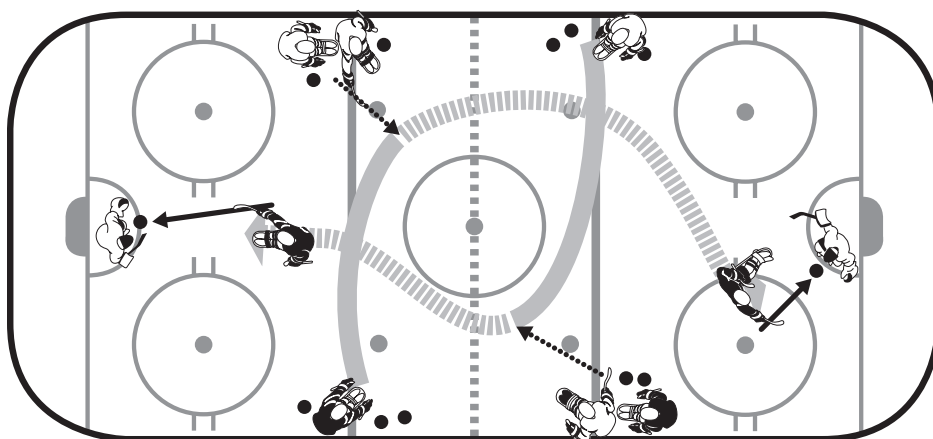
Now, the first of three players skates over and becomes the defenseman while the next two players are on offense. With this in mind, the passer only passes to the second or third player going. Six players go at a time and shoot at opposite ends.

Water Break (3 mins.)

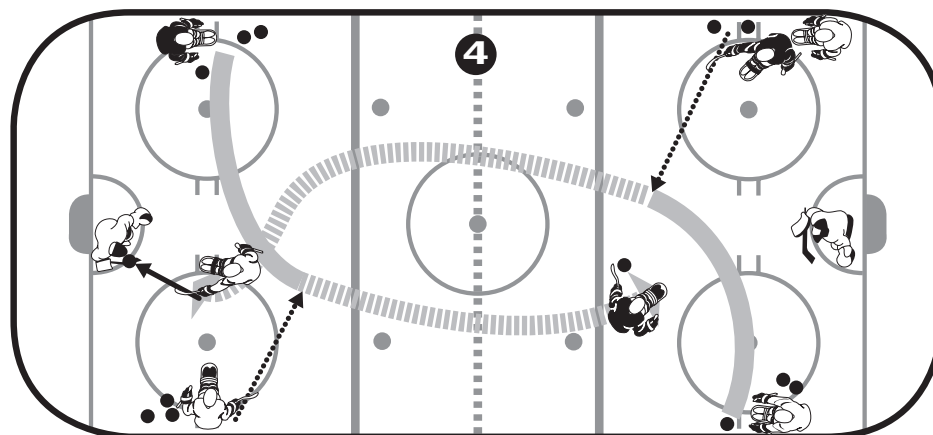
Small-Area Game

Three-on-Three (9 mins.)

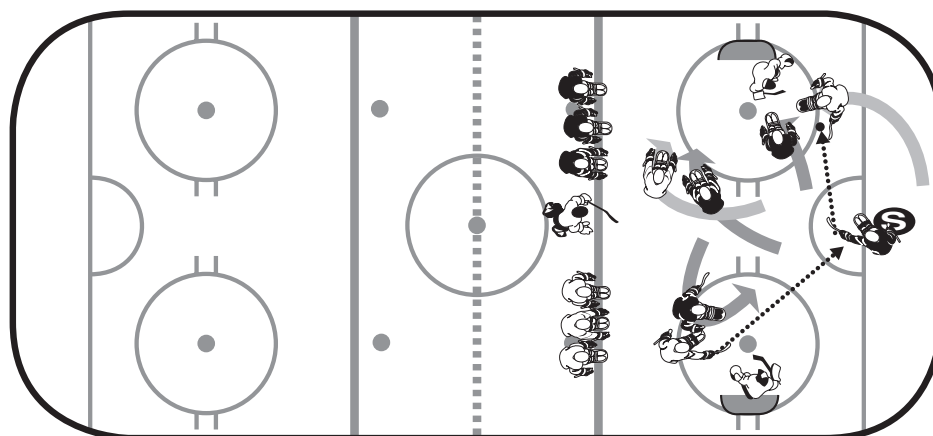
Even the teams out and try to use two different colored jerseys. Play cross-ice three-on-three with short shifts creating fun and competition. Change it up every 40 seconds to create intensity.



Center Ice Passing – One-on-Zero Passing from Both Sides



Center Ice Passing Drills – Progression Drills

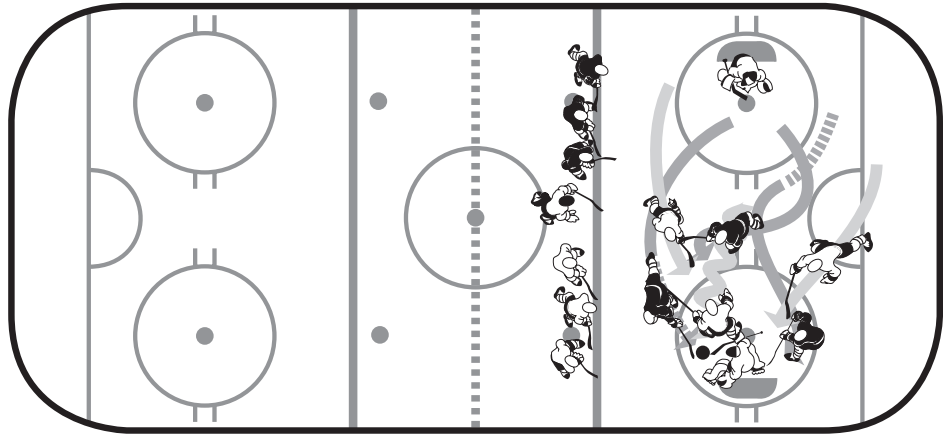


Small-Area Game Three-on-Three

PRACTICE PLAN #5 – Small Area Games

Coaches Call (10 mins.)

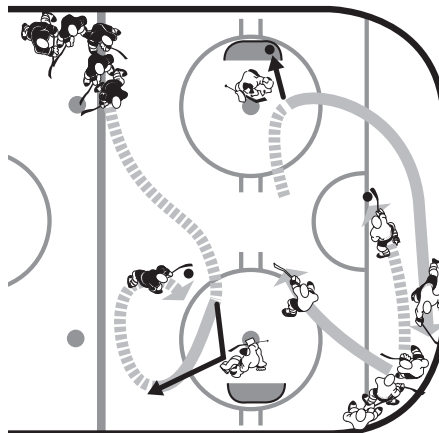
Use four nets - two at each end cross ice - or one net at each end depending on how many goalies and players you have. Divide the players into two or four evenly-matched teams. Use two different colored jerseys to identify the teams. The players line up inside the blue line on opposite sides. The game begins when the coach calls out two-on-two or three-on-three. The coach can also call out two blues and one red to force a two-on-one. Whatever the coach calls out, the players in line react to it. Change players every 40 seconds to create intensity.



Coaches Call

Progression Breakaway Relay (15 mins.)

Use four nets - two at each end cross ice - or one net at each end depending on how many goalies and players you have. Divide the players into two or four evenly-matched teams. The first player in each line goes on the whistle. He/she can not go back into line until he/she has scored. After the player gets back into line, two players go. When they score, three players go. After the three players have scored and are back in line, start again with one player. Play to five, with the losing team doing three laps around the nets. Have a best of three competition to increase the fun and intensity.

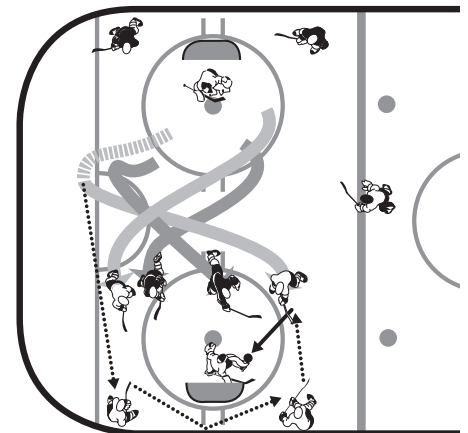


Progression Breakaway Relay

the players into two or four evenly-matched teams. Place two players from each team behind the opposing net. These players are active and can pass to each other and to their teammates. The offensive team can not score until a pass has been made to one of the players off to either side of the net.

Side Pass Olympian Two-on-Two (10 mins.)

Playing cross-ice divide the players into two lines outside the blue



Four Corner Two-on-Two

line. Place one player from each team in the neutral zone. He/she is known as the "Olympian." Playing two-on-two, the team with the puck must pass to their Olympian and get the puck back before it can score. The players can pass to the Olympian anytime during the game. Change it up every 40 seconds.

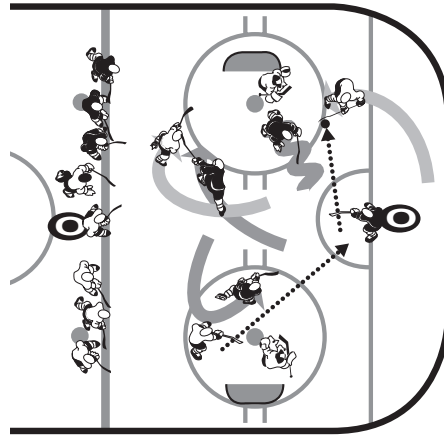
Four Corner Two-on-Two (10 mins.)

Use four nets - two at each end cross ice - or one net at each end depending on how many goalies and players you have. Divide

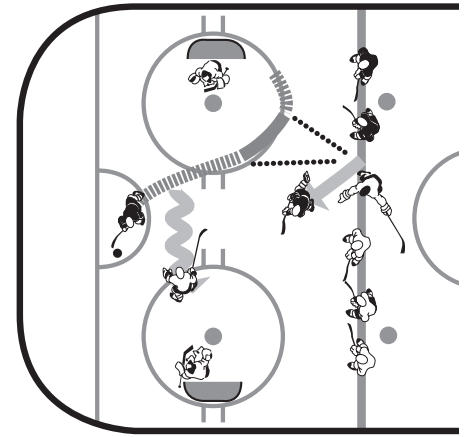
One-on-One Passing Activation Game (10 mins.)

Playing cross-ice, divide the players into two teams. Use two different

colored jerseys to identify the teams. The game starts out one-on-one but every time the puck carrier passes to his/her teammates who are lined up along the blue line the player who gets the pass jumps into the play making it a two-on-one and so on. The real smart teams try to get as many players out on the ice to dominate play.



*Side Pass Olympic
Two-on-Two*

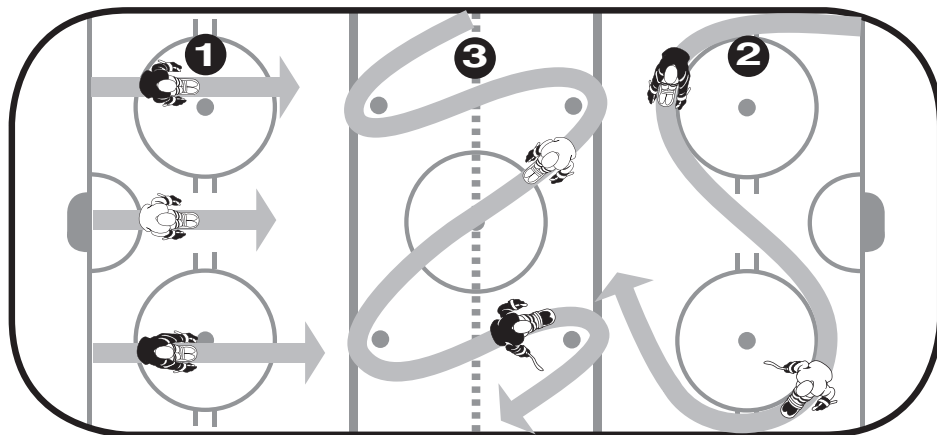


*One-on-One Passing
Activation Game*

PRACTICE PLAN #6

Warm-Up Skate with Pucks (10 mins.)

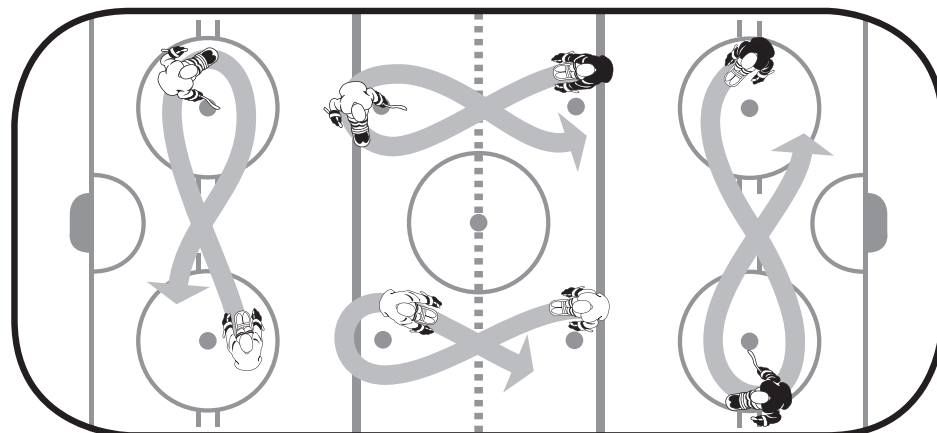
The players start in one corner. Three players go at a time, carrying a puck, cutting all five circles in half and finishing at the far end. The non-sled players can progress this drill into alternating circles from forward to backward skating with pucks. Next, line the players up in three lines at one end and have them skate with pucks full length doing tight turns on the far blue line, tight turns on the near blue line and then skating down to the far end to finish the drill. The goalies remain at one end getting warmed up.



Warm-Up Skate with Pucks

Interval Loop and Drop Partner Pass (5 mins.)

Divide the players up in pairs all over the ice. Goalies stay at one end for warm-up shots. The two players stand stationary 15 feet apart. On the whistle, the puck carrier tight turns around his/her partner and back to the original spot and then passes it to his/her partner. The second player carrying the puck repeats the drill. Each time a player pivots around his/her partner, he/she should do something different i.e. turn the other way or pivot backwards.



Interval Loop and Drop Partner Pass

Water Break (2 mins.)

Passing (10 mins.)

- 1) Stationary with a partner: forehand, backhand and flip passes. Stay 20 feet apart.
- 2) Using both ends, line players up at each neutral faceoff dot just outside the blue line. Players receive a pass and go in and shoot. Use different

variations (two passes, skating to both sides before shooting, etc.).

- 3) Long pass to far side, loop off the boards, get it back, go in and shoot.
- 4) Full-ice both sides. Rotate pass and shoot.

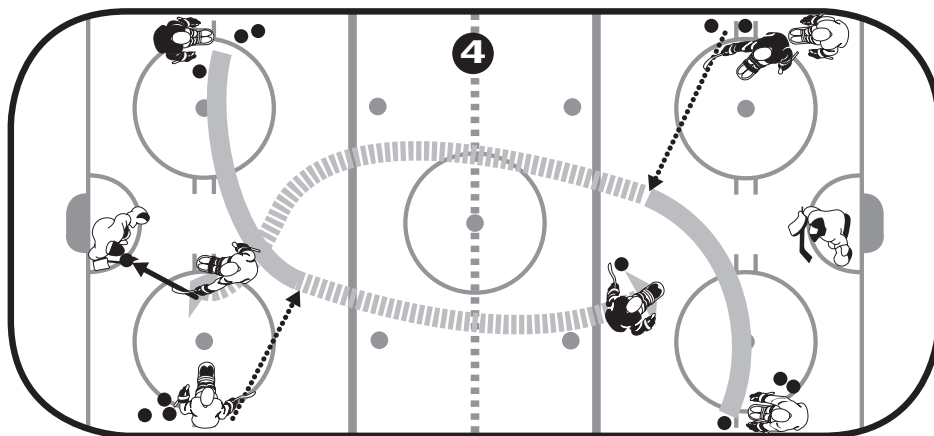
Repeat Interval Loop and Drop Partner Pass (5 mins.)

Divide the players up in pairs all over the ice. Goalies stay at one

end for warm-up shots. The two players stand stationary 15 feet apart. On the whistle, the puck carrier tight turns around his/her partner and back to the original spot and then passes it to his/her partner. The second player carrying the puck repeats the drill. Each time a player pivots around his/her partner, he/she should do something different i.e. turn the other way or pivot backwards.

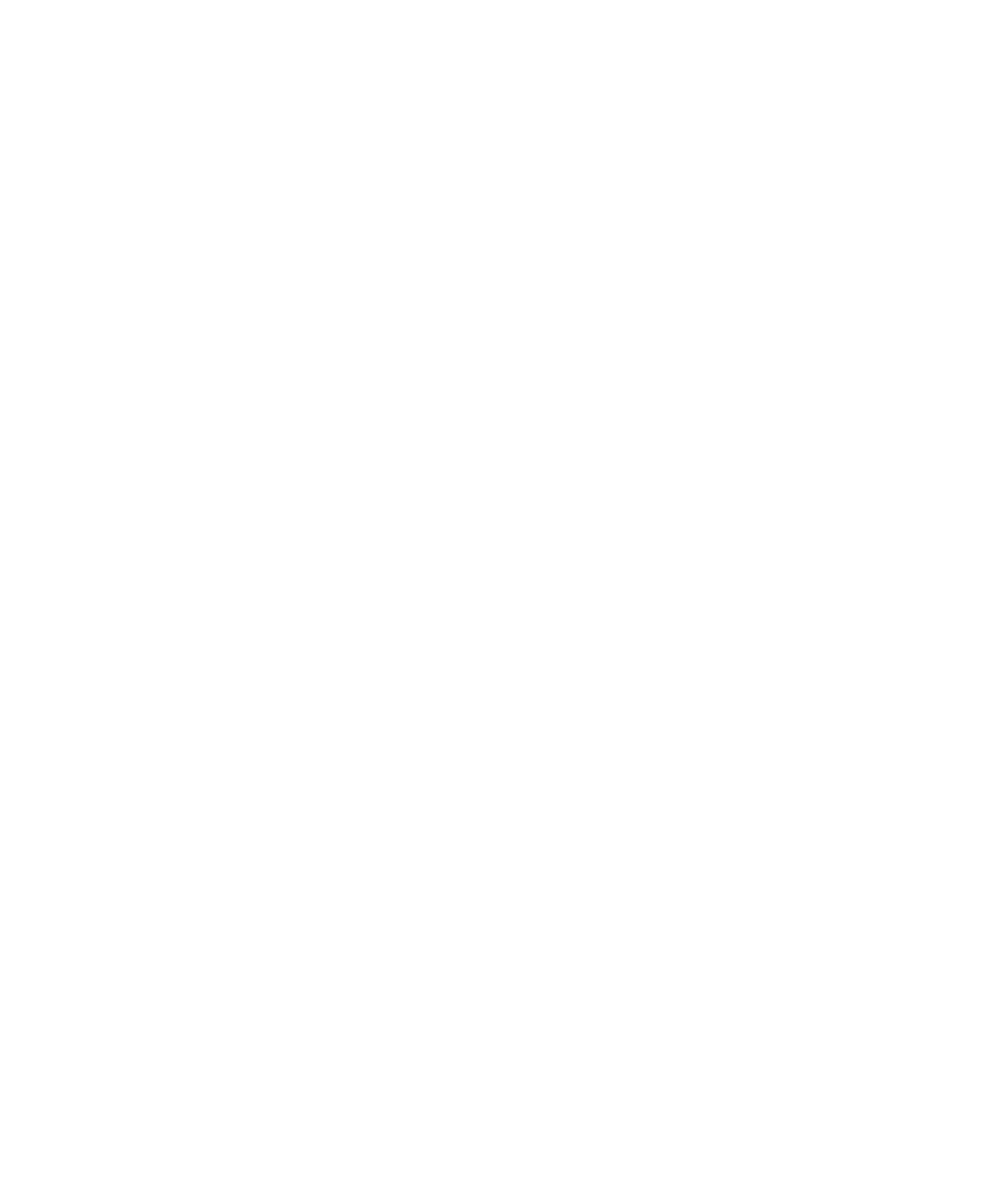
Water Break (3 mins.)**Reversal Two-on-Zero,
Two-on-One, Two-on-Two
(20 mins.)**

Divide the players up into all four corners. On the whistle, the first two players from one end go down two-on-zero. After shooting, they break out again coming back to their original end. The two players who passed the puck follow and back check to the far end but regroup inside the far blue line and receive a pass from the next players in line and go down two-on-zero. The drill then progresses to a two-on-one. Place the defensemen on one faceoff circle at opposite corners. They break out at the same time as the two players from each end, creating two full-ice two-on-ones. Progress with two defensemen, creating two full-ice two-on-twos.



Reversal Two-on-Zero, Two-on-One, Two-on-Two

**Finish with Breakaways
at Both Ends**



*Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey*

*Sled
Hockey*

*Special
Hockey*

*Standing
Amputee
Hockey*



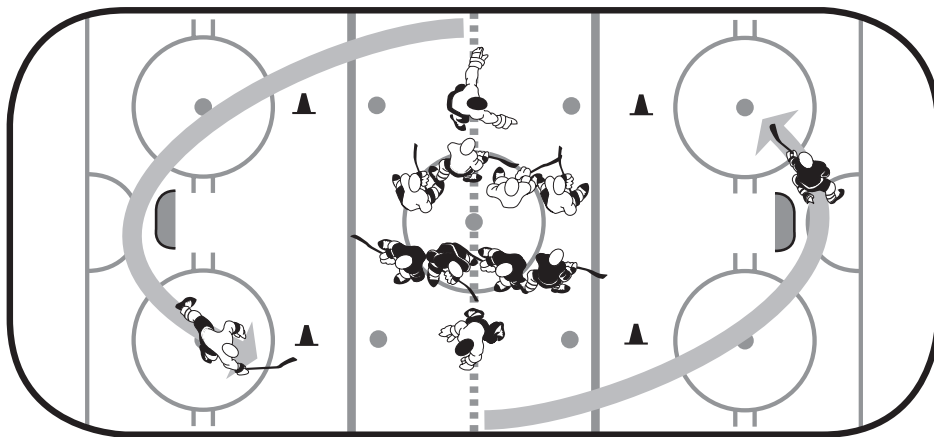
**USA Hockey
Skills Competition Model**



USA HOCKEY SKILLS COMPETITION MODEL

Skill #1 — Fastest Skater

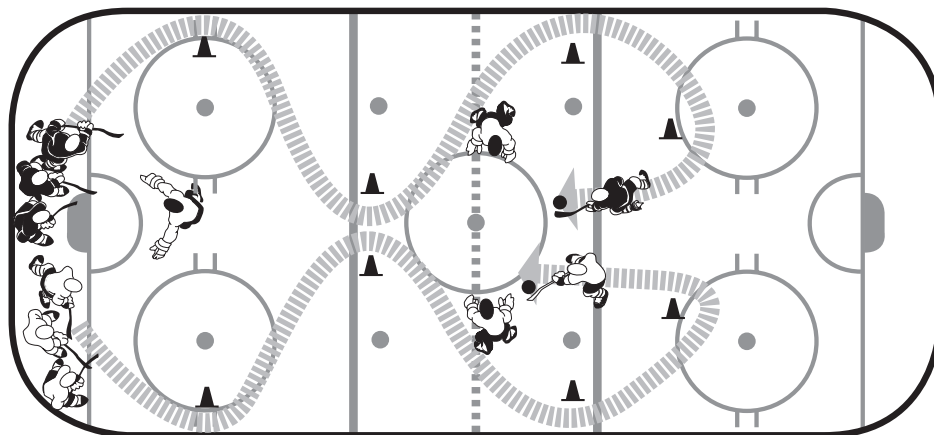
Two players start at opposite sides of the red line. On the whistle, both players do one complete lap timed by the coaches using stop watches. The player with the best time wins.



Skill #1 — Fastest Skater

Skill #2 — Tight Turns with a Puck

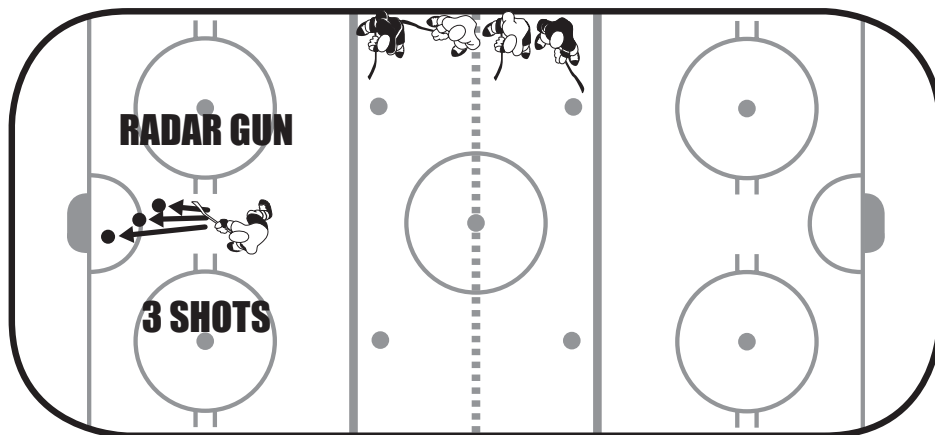
Two players go on the whistle carrying pucks through a slalom course and back up the middle, finishing at the red line. Using stop watches, coaches time the players and the winner is the skater with the fastest time.



Skill #2 — Tight Turns with a Puck

Skill #3 — Hardest Shot

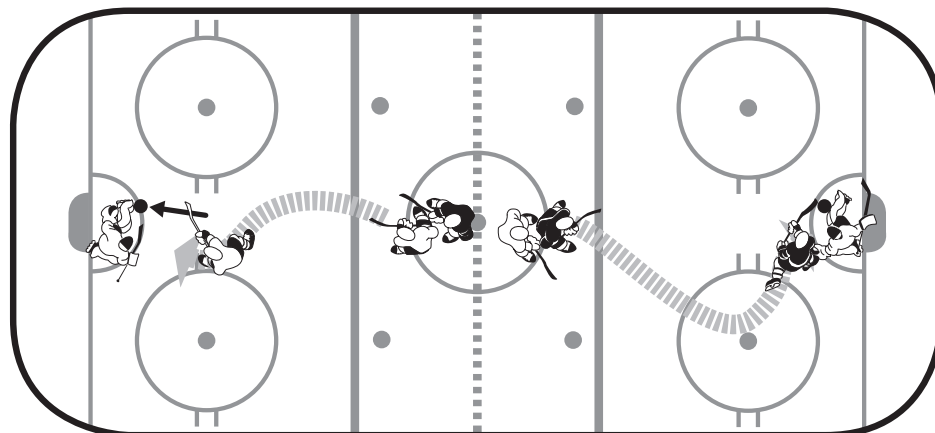
One coach is placed behind the net with a radar gun. The player lines up between the hash marks of both faceoff circles at one end of the rink. Each player gets three shots. The player with the hardest shot wins.



Skill #3 — Hardest Shot

Skill #4 — Breakaways

Using both ends of the ice, place a goalie at each end. The players start at each blue line. One at a time, they go in on the goalie and try to score. Each player gets a minimum of two shots, one on each goalie. The goalie with the most saves wins and the player with the most goals wins. Tiebreakers are solved by sudden death.



Skill #4 — Breakaways

Deaf/Hard
of Hearing
Hockey

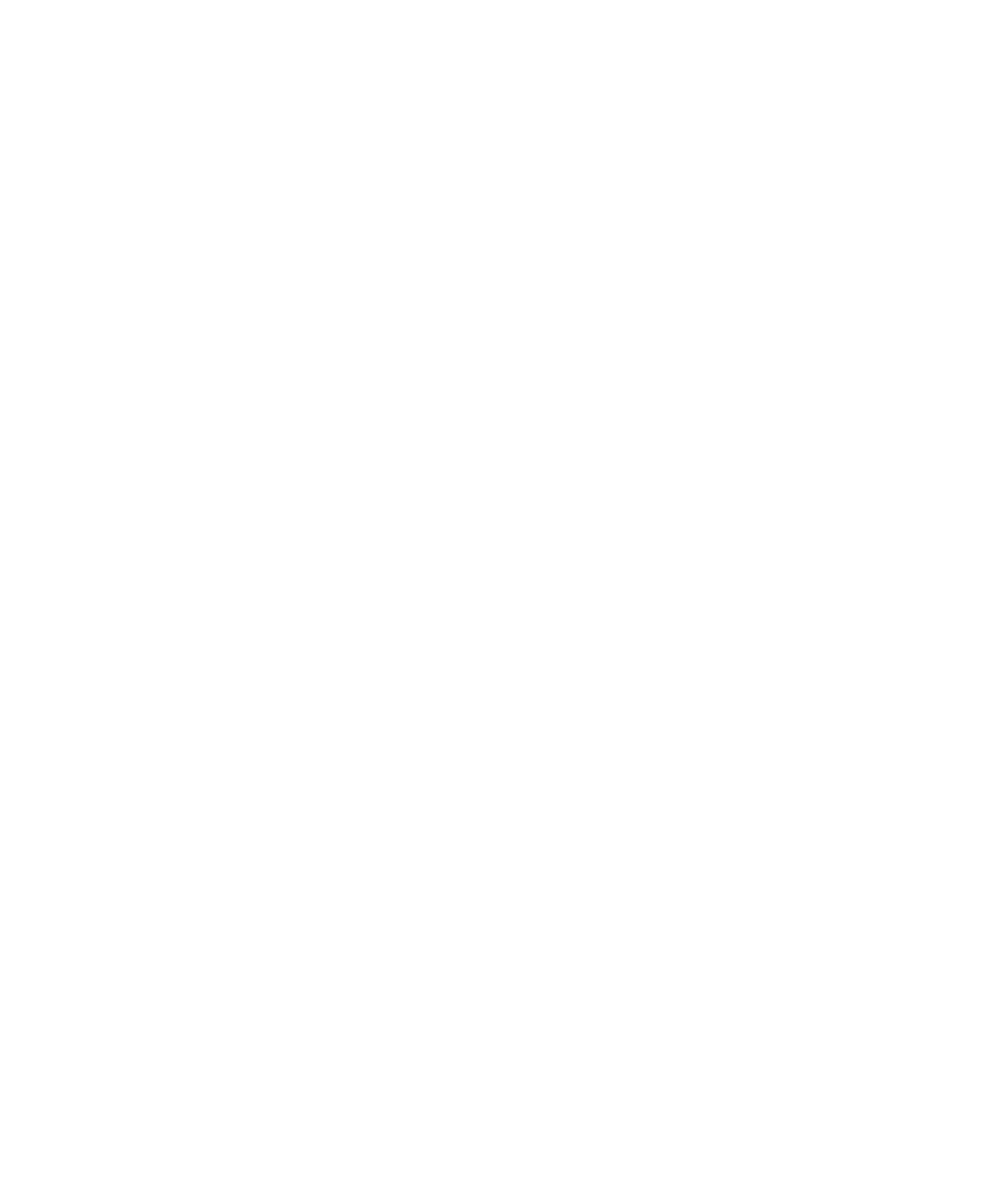
Sled
Hockey

Special
Hockey

Standing
Amputee
Hockey



Creating a
Strength and
Conditioning
Program



Creating a Strength and Conditioning Program

Philosophy

To achieve maximum individual performance and athleticism through sport specific training to yield a stronger, more athletic team at the end of the game and at the end of the season while remaining injury free.

Goals of the Program

Injury Prevention

Hockey is a very physically demanding sport, as it occurs at high speeds with intermittent contact all while continuously performing an unnatural movement: skating. Injuries are common and some will never be prevented with this type of physical strain on the body. The injuries that can be prevented are injuries to shoulders, abdominal area and lower and upper back. Below are ways the USA Hockey strength and conditioning program will help to prevent injuries:

- Go through a dynamic or aerobic warm-up before and an aerobic cool-down after activities.
- Put in place a stretching routine before and after all activity.
- Emphasize core stability by incorporating strength and power exercises for hip flexor, abdominal, lower and upper back and chest.
- Implement injury prevention exercises by stabilizing muscles around the shoulder and neck.
- Insure muscle balance by incorporating exercises that work each side of the body independently.

Individualized

Not everyone is the same, and there is not a single strength and conditioning protocol that is effective for everyone. People have individual strengths and weaknesses, and those need to be determined to be able to develop strength and conditioning programs for each individual. The USA Hockey strength and conditioning program will determine individual strengths and weaknesses by:

- Communicating with coaches about strengths and weakness of individual players.
- Communicating with players about their strengths and weaknesses.
- Developing a testing approach to evaluate overall athleticism on and off the ice.
- Testing individuals periodically to see improvements.
- Helping each player set short-term and long-term goals.

Enhance Athletic Ability

Hockey has a long list of physical demands that are placed on the body during competition. These demands include: muscle mass, strength, power, aerobic fitness and anaerobic fitness. Also included is flexibility, coordination, speed, quickness, agility, proprioception, balance, reaction ability and hand-eye coordination. All of these attributes are trainable, and the USA Hockey strength and conditioning program will improve these attributes as follows:

Strength and Power Exercises: Will be hockey specific and mimic movement patterns, muscles used, range of motion, joint angles, and contraction type which will transfer to on-ice improvements.

Aerobic System: Will be trained in the offseason with variable amounts in the preseason and in-season. Will consist of 30-90 minute bouts and will feature many cross training activities to keep it interesting. Anaerobic system will be the main focus during the pre-season and in-season and will range from biking and slide board training to speed, quickness, and agility training. Will also include on-ice drills to develop this energy system.

Flexibility: Training will take place pre- and post-activity.

Coordination: Will constantly be tested throughout the strength and conditioning program with dynamic warm-ups and hockey specific strength and fitness drills. Speed, quickness, and agility training will be introduced in the offseason and will frequently be trained during the preseason and in-season, and will imitate hockey movement patterns and work-to-rest ratios.

Proprioception and Balance: Will be trained throughout the year and will play a big part in injury prevention. This will include many unstable surface exercises. Reaction abilities will also be trained throughout the year, and will be incorporated into anaerobic drills so that individuals will have to react to external stimuli. Proprioception, balance, and reaction drills will also be incorporated into the pregame warm-up so it will carry over to game situations.

Program Outline

The program's design has three phases spread over two years and three months with micro phases put in place as needed. A rough outline follows:

Week(s)	Phase
1	Testing
2-13	Competition
14-15	Active Rest
16-28	Hypertrophy
29	Active Rest
30-39	Hypertrophy
40-53	Strength
54-66	Competition
67-68	Active Rest
69-74	Strength
75-83	Strength/Power
84-111	Power
112-114	Taper
115	Goal

Nutrition

Finding Daily Caloric Need

$$\text{Daily Caloric Need} = \text{BEE} + \text{GA} + \text{EX}$$

$$\text{BEE} = 66 + (13.7 \times \text{Wt}) + (5 \times \text{Ht}) - (6.9 \times \text{A})$$

BEE = Basal Energy Expenditure

Wt = Weight in kilograms

Ht = Height in centimeters

A = Age in years

$$\text{GA} = \text{BEE} \times \text{Energy Cost}$$

GA = General activity

BEE = Basal Energy Expenditure

Energy Cost

0.1 = Not active at all, do not move much during the day

0.2 = Active walking or rolling a lot during the day (nurse, teacher)

0.3 = Very Active, moving all day long (construction worker)

$$EX = (\text{kcal/lb/min})(Wt)(\text{Min. of activity})$$

Kcal/lb/min

Wt = Weight in pounds

Minutes of Activity = Minutes you exercise

I am 31, weigh 170 lbs. and am 5'9" tall, so:

170 lbs. = 77.1 kg (170/2.205)

5'9" = 69 in. = 175 cm (69 x 2.54)

$$BEE = 66 + (13.7 \times 77.1) + (5 \times 175) - (6.9 \times 31)$$

$$BEE = 1,783$$

$$GA = 1,783 \times 0.2$$

$$GA = 356$$

Daily caloric need without exercise =

$$1,783 + 356 = 2,139 \text{ calories}$$

This means that I need to eat 2,139 calories per day to stay 170 lbs. without exercise.

$$EX = (0.09)(170)(30)$$

$$EX = 459 \text{ calories burned with exercise}$$

Daily caloric need with exercise =

$$1,783 + 356 + 459 = 2,598 \text{ calories}$$

This means I need to eat 2,598 calories per day to stay 170 lbs., with rowing, as an example, for 30 minutes.

How To Gain or Lose Weight

You must burn or eat 3,500 calories to lose or gain 1 pound. If you want to lose five pounds you must either cut back on your caloric intake or burn (through exercise) 17,500 calories (5 x 3,500) per week.

CALORIES	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
Consumed	2139	1939	2239	1639	2139	2039	1839
Burned	500	300	600	—	500	400	200
Deficit	500	500	500	500	500	500	500

So if you cut 500 calories per day either by exercise or not eating as many calories, this is achievable. In one week you can lose one pound. To lose five pounds it will take you 5 weeks. You should not lose more than 2-3 pounds per week.

To gain weight you would have to eat 500 calories more. On days that you do not exercise you would need to consume 2,639. To gain weight you also need to lift so that you are building muscle, as muscle weighs more than fat.

Recommended activities for losing weight include:

- Skating
- Rolling in your wheelchair
- Going for walks
- Arm ergometer
- Swimming
- Rowing machine

Training Cycles

The first three sections are fairly self-explanatory and the players should understand injury prevention and how to enhance their athletic ability.

In order to understand how to train properly for competition, whether it is for a tournament or the Paralympic games, you must train in cycles based on the time of season. Teams should taper off a little just prior to competition, meaning the work load will be less in the weight room, as an example, prior to scheduled games. The following three phases of training will help you maximize your time and preparation.

Hypertrophy

During this phase prior to the start of the season you want to increase muscle fibers. If you have larger muscle mass, then you will have a greater capacity to gain more strength. You achieve this by doing sets of 10 three times in the weight room using 50-60% of your maximum lifting weight based on the given exercise.

Strength

The strength phase will occur at the start of the season. The number of reps will decrease and the amount of the weight you use should be heavier.

Power

The power phase will be the last phase prior to major competition. During the power phase we will be working on the amount of power that you can individually generate. Again, you must drop the number of reps and increase the weight. Increasing your ability for power output will allow you to skate faster as well as getting to top speed quicker.

Stretching

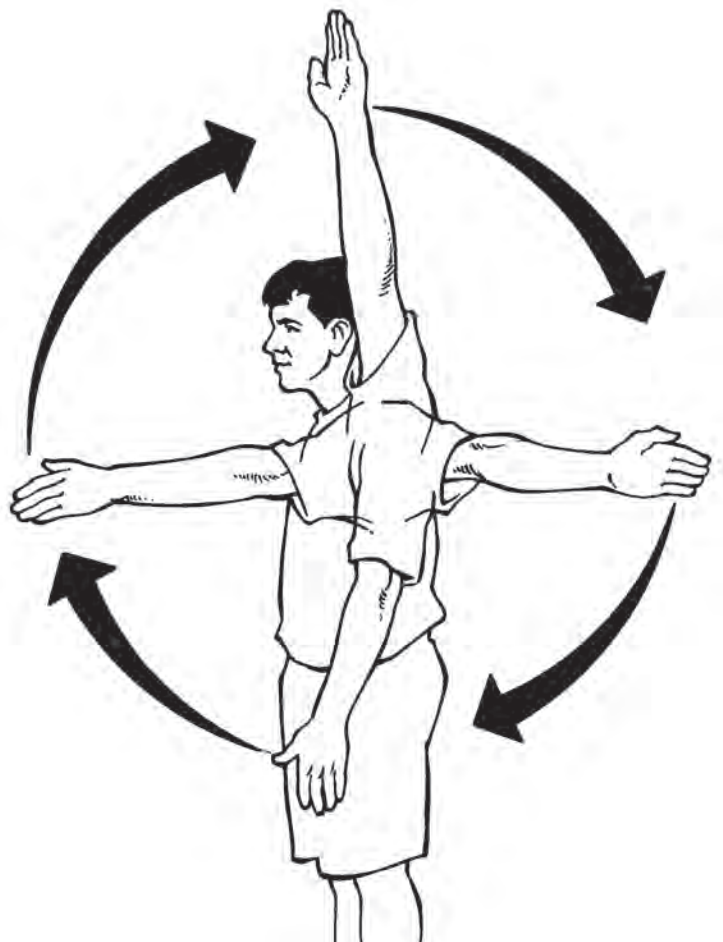
Most aerobic and strength training programs inherently cause your muscles to contract and flex. That's why regular stretching is a powerful part of any exercise program. Consider this:

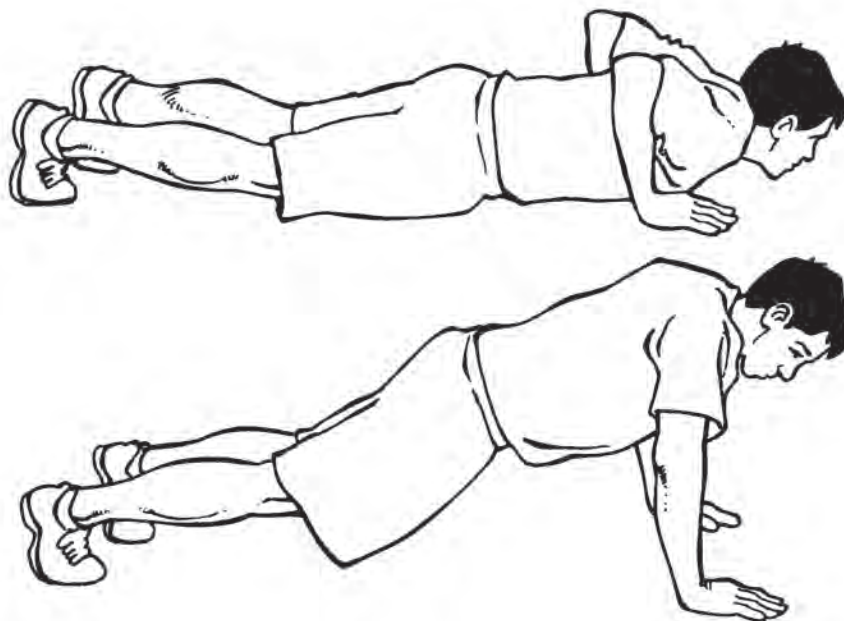
- Stretching increases flexibility. Flexible muscles can improve your daily performance. Tasks such as lifting packages, bending to tie your shoes or hurrying to catch a bus become easier and less tiring.
- Stretching improves range of motion of your joints. Good range of motion keeps you in better balance, which will help keep you mobile and less prone to falls — and the related injuries — especially as you age.

- Stretching improves circulation. Stretching increases blood flow to your muscles. Improved circulation can speed recovery after muscle injuries.
- Stretching can relieve stress. Stretching relaxes the tense muscles that often accompany stress.

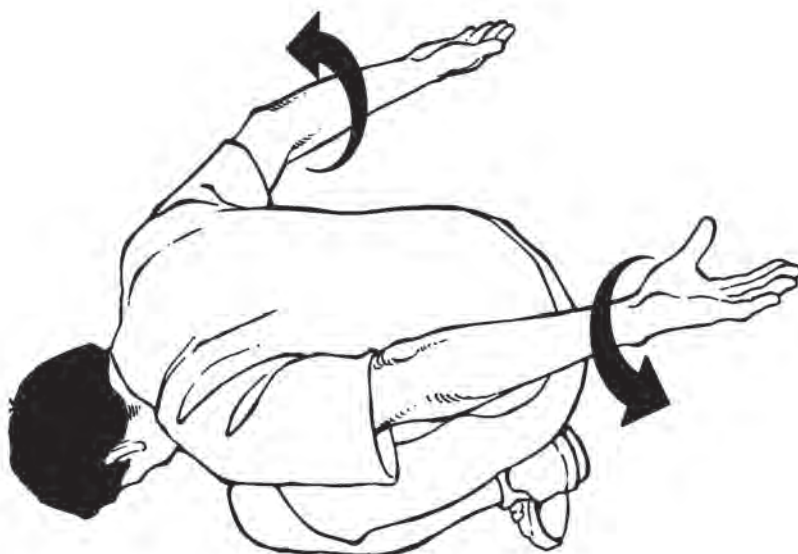
Some studies indicate that stretching helps prevent athletic injuries as well.

Take the time to teach players how to stretch properly for maximum benefit of each exercise. The following pages show the various stretches used by the U.S. National Sled and Hearing Impaired Teams in their training routines. The diagrams are self-explanatory.

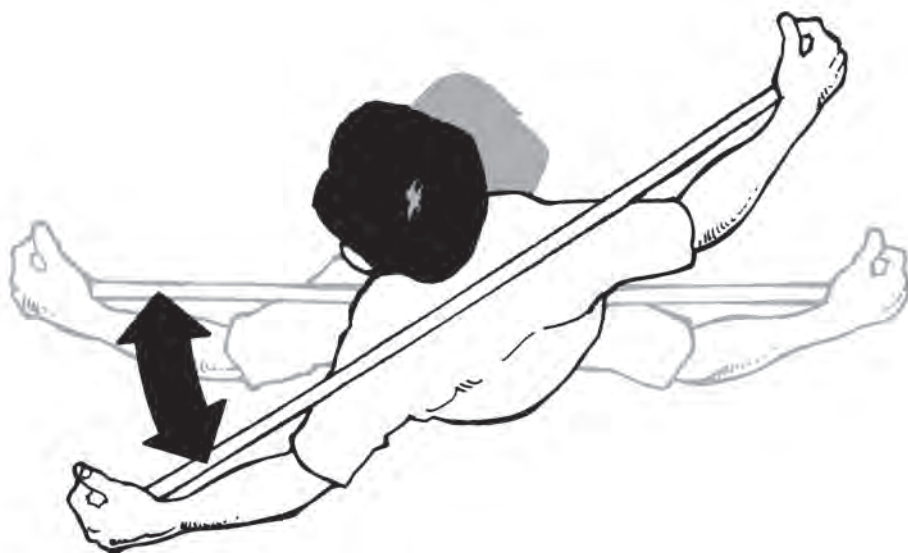












Acknowledgments

USA Hockey and the USA Hockey Disabled Section would like to extend their appreciation to the following individuals for all their great input and help in making this manual. The effort of these fantastic coaches and volunteers has been tremendous. This book will help coaches all across the country create a fun, safe, and positive experience for all those kids and adults who participate in disabled ice hockey. USA Hockey would also like to thank the hundreds of unsung heroes across the United States who are in the trenches every day and whose names do not appear below. The effort they put forth helping their local programs provide opportunities for players in all four disciplines is incredible.

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J.J. O'Connor
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