

## T - Principles for Efficient Use of the Ice

I go from rink to rink to run practices, play myself and coach my hockey class and see many practices before and after mine. I also sometimes go and watch elite teams practice.

The game has changed since the last NHL strike-lockout-whatever (a regular occurrence now). Here are some of the main changes.

- no more can opener, you have to be able to skate backward, transition skate.
- teams now back pressure the puck carrier, many all the way to the net. Creates a defensive 2-1 and now that F must be able to play the low 3-3 in the zone.
- attack with 4 players - one D joins the attack and 2 F go to the net creating a low and higher triangle. This demands hard back checking and picking up the 3rd 4th and 5th attackers.
- outnumbering in the corners - when the attackers back is to the play 4 defenders will be there and the weak side F having net coverage. Demands terrific puck protection skills and defensive awareness.
- more teams pinch on the strong side and everyone pinches on the wide rim. A forward fills behind the D and will have to play the defensive 1-1.
- hooking is now called so you have to defend from the defensive side and not reel the attacker in at the end of your stick.

Given these changes I don't understand why the D would wear Black practice jerseys and take all of the defensive 1-1's and only do the passing on breakouts and not be joining in all rushes.

Transition games have been around for a long time and Erkki Westerlund wrote a booklet for HC with a video but I seldom see a transition game in practice. Still the OLD FASHION 1 on 1 with the F's attacking and the D's defending.

I watched an elite team practice yesterday in this 90's style method but I know the system they use wants the D to join the attack and they pinch on the strong side.

So I am saying that the practice methods should be changing along with the way the game is changing. Hockey is going more and more to 'Total Hockey' which is based on 1-2-3-4-5 Read-Recognize-Respond.

In **Total Hockey** all of the players have to develop ALL of the SKILLS. Everyone needs to be able to skate well both forward **and** backward. Everyone must be able to attack and defend in all situations from a **1-1 to a 5-5**.

Now being designated as a Wing, Centre, Defenseman is simply stating the 'Home Position' where you start on the faceoff. A player is designated there because most of the time he/she will need those skills but at any time in any shift the defenseman #4 may end up being attacker #2 and should recognize that and have the skills and knowledge to play that situation effectively.

*How should we change the way we practice.*

1. *Wear only two colours during practice with half the F and half the D and one goalie each colour.*
2. *Design the drills so that everyone attacks and defends for part of each practice.*
3. *Use drills to isolate technique and then turn them into transition games where after a 1-1 or 3-2*

*the defender must fight for rebounds and make a breakout pass.*  
4. *Play many games that isolate specific skills and that everyone does.*

#### Two Suggestions for Better Use of Ice Time

A - coaches don't move pucks - players simply put the pucks where they are needed next when one activity finishes.

B - only go to the board for new activities. Even many new activities can start with a simple explanation. (this whiteboard stuff started in the 80's, before that the coach simply told the players where to start, what to do and had a few of the smarter ones demonstrate) Once you have done something name it and give a 30 second reminder and get keep the practice moving - simply add tasks on the go i.e. extra passes, extra players, dump-ins.

**Moving 7-12 minutes per hour is just not acceptable.**

#### **Where these coaching ideas come from.**

*I have been lucky enough to coach with many elite coaches, meaning Olympics, NHL, University, Pro and Minor Hockey and attended seminars or had lengthy discussions about the game. This is where I get these ideas. I also attend an international seminar almost every year to stay up with the game.*

*I taught PE for 34 years at almost every level. Elementary, Junior High, High School, College. About 25 000 classes where I experimented with these ideas.*

*I have coached at almost every level over the last 45 years. All ages of minor hockey, camps in seven countries on three continents, elite girls and boys hockey, university men, college men and women, (13 men and 9 women's teams at all 3 Calgary institutions with teams), international and women's pro,*

*So I have had a unique opportunity to coach with and watch and listen to many of the best coaches on the planet. The point of this website and the Facebook coaching site is to share these ideas.*

*Juhani Wahlsten - Finland legend. Worked with Juuso starting 1985. Coach Peters at Bemidji who defined 'Who we are.' and that consistent message resonated in everything we did.*

*Vladimir Jursinov - Russian Olympic coach. Did seminars with Jursi and Juuso and coached with Jursi in Salzburg.*

*Reijo Ruotsalainen - Coached with Rexi in Salzburg.*

*Gene Reilly - Salzburg - Gene now coaches in Russia.*

*Willy Desjardins - NHL, Olympics -six seasons as assistant coach for Willy at U of Calgary.*

*Mike Johnston - NHL Olympics - coached against Mike 3 years and with him at U of C.*

*Terry Johnston - NHL D - coached with TJ at u of C and minor teams. Best D coach I have worked with.*

*Pierre Page - NHL - Salzburg HC*

*Mike Kennedy - NHL F - co-coached at SAIT with Mike. Author of 'Make Hockey Great Again' Now coaches in Japan.*

*Mike Tschumi - European Pro - 3 of his players were in the U20 World tournament this year. We coach together now.*

*Brent Devost - HC of men's team at SAIT. Runs really good practices and team building. I was assistant.*

*Jim Molloy - great with skills and team building.*

*Slava Lener - assistant coaches together one season at U of C. Head of Czech hockey and Olympic coach.*

*Tim Bothwell - NHL D - Olympic W - HC at U of C two years while I assisted.*

*Wally Kozak - Olympic W coach - Men's National Team - Wally and I coach together a lot.*

*Dr. Gaston Schaeffer - international skating coach.*

*Court Dunn - coaches school hockey and an expert at using 'games to teach the game.'*

*Deniz Ince - coach of Turkey who is a student of the game.*

*Lots of discussion with great coaches like Erkka Westerlund, Petr Svoboda, Curtis Brackenbury, Mike Hartman.*

*Lots of others not mentioned here.*