

" ONE BIG GAME "

There is no doubt that European hockey has had a tremendous impact on shaping the modern game that is played in North America today.

Central to these changes are the basic tactics of European hockey that find their guiding principles in soccer. These tactics called for different physical training, skill development and game-like activities.

The tactical characteristics of European hockey that I think can most successfully be adapted to our college game would include:

- 1) Interchangability of players positioning based on principles of play.
- 2) Five man involvement over the whole ice.
- 3) Quick direct counter attacking. First look always to penetrate.
- 4) Puck control (characterized by good skating, passing and receiving skills).

The real question becomes how can we train our athletes to be successful in this type of game? Tactics, besides being dramatically different throughout the various cultures of the world, are continuously changing. The real keys to the success are the players high level of individual skill execution as well as combination play in small groups - 2V1, 2V2, etc. Speed, endurance and skating ability in

conjunction with total ice awareness have become distinctive elements of European hockey.

It's important to take these basic principles (the foundation of the overall system of play) and use them to create game situations to help players learn to make good decisions and solve problems.

Five offensive and their opposite defensive principles are listed as follows:

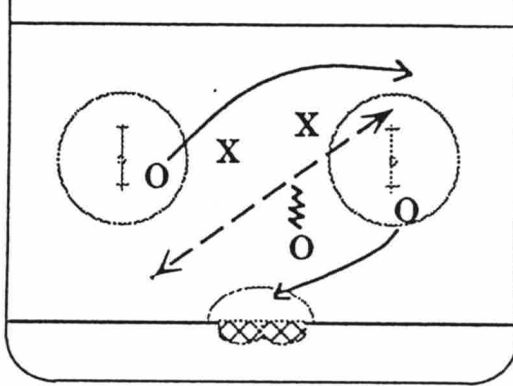
- 1) Offensive depth vs defensive depth.
- 2) Offensive mobility vs defensive balance.
- 3) Offensive penetration vs defensive delay.
- 4) Offensive width vs defensive concentration.
- 5) Offensive improvisation vs defensive restraint.

Using small area, small sided games or activities create an environment that will challenge your players. Players learn by moving. These games increase puck contact, increase concentration and fitness. Players gain a better understanding of time, space and support requirements. You are creating the competitive environment that brings out the best in your players. It is important at least early on to isolate the principle (offensive or defensive) you are teaching so as to get the desired results.

Using a minimum number of principles by which a game can be described, helps a coach analyze a game, a player understand the principles and their implications and serves as a basis for interaction between players and coach. Principles will remain constant even if the system changes.

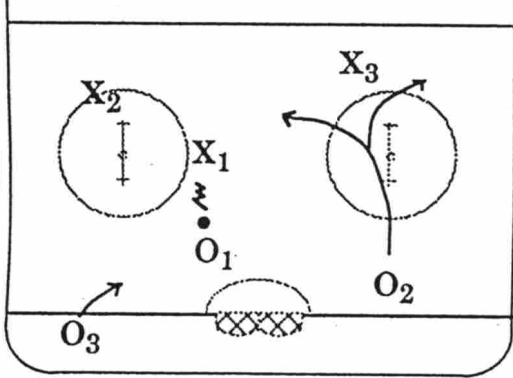
Depth in Attack

Figure 1



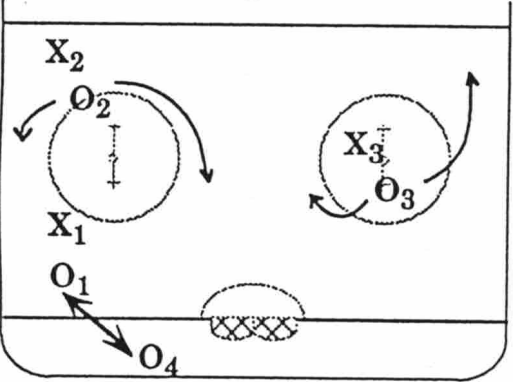
- 3V2:
 Keep Away
 -encourage smart movement of the puck, provide support from behind
 -defenders should play aggressive
 -offense gets a point if they split defense with a pass

Figure 2



- 3V3:
 -players without the puck must read the pressure on the carrier, but also try to stretch the defenders to create space

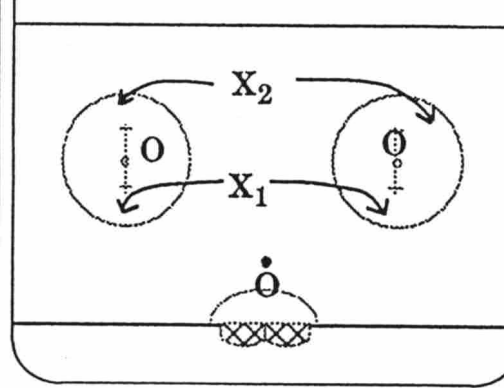
Figure 3



- 3V3 + 1:
 -offensive players must move to lose cover and support the player outside the area
 -all players must try not to bring other defenders to the puck
 -good communications

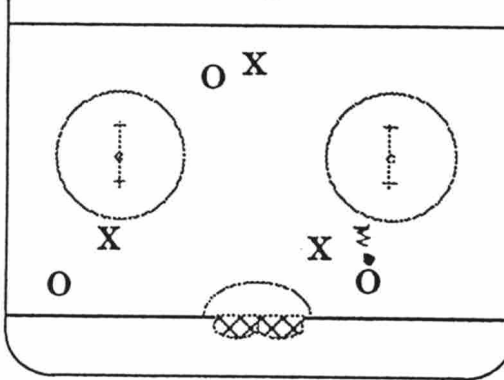
Depth in Defense

Figure 4



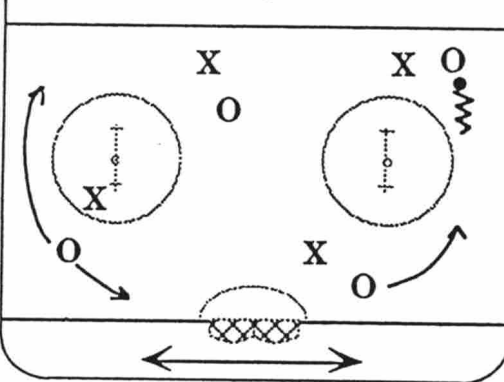
- 3V2, 4V2:
 -defenders must pressure the puck to prevent forward pass (decrease passing angles).
 -good stick position
 -2nd defender can't be flat so one pass will beat both
 -don't allow split
 -if defenders win the puck, encourage quick transition pass

Figure 5



- 3V3
 -encourage support from behind
 -get players to read and anticipate the pass (make it predictable)
 -use (1 to 1) work-rest ratio

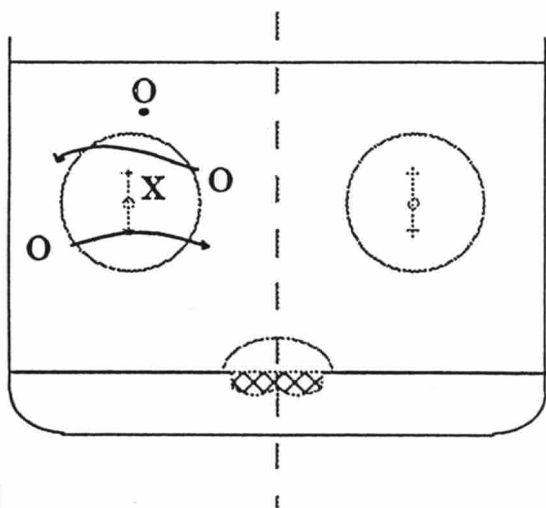
Figure 6



- 4V4, 5V5:
 -short-short-long across the ice keep away
 -condition of every third pass must be a long pass (you determine the length)

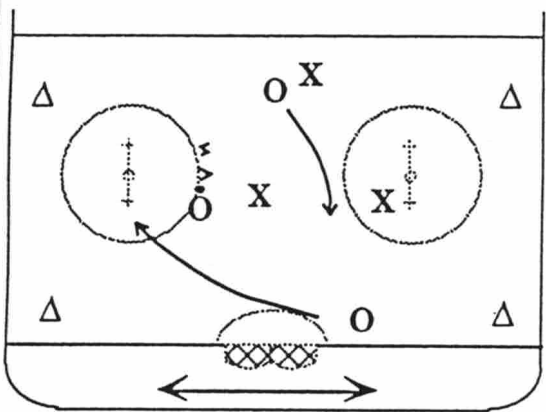
Offensive Mobility

Figure 1



- 3V1:
- encourage open and blind side movement to support
 - receiver should create (5V2) will create a more dynamic situation and encourage the same movement

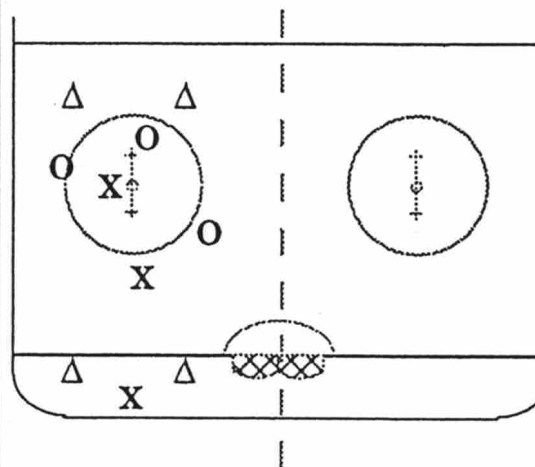
Figure 2



- 3V3:
- targets between the cones
 - go cross ice of 1/2 of zone
 - use cones to set up the "end zone"
 - goal is to carry or pass the puck to the end zone.
 - everybody plays offense & defense
 - possible condition: only forward passes

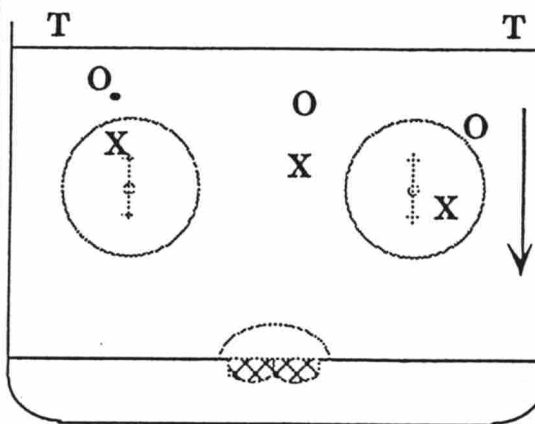
Defensive Balance

Figure 3



- 3V2:
- always a man down
 - offense always has 3 players to 2 for the defense
 - after puck is passed thru the cones, that team then attacks (3V2)
 - third player back goes between the cones

Figure 4

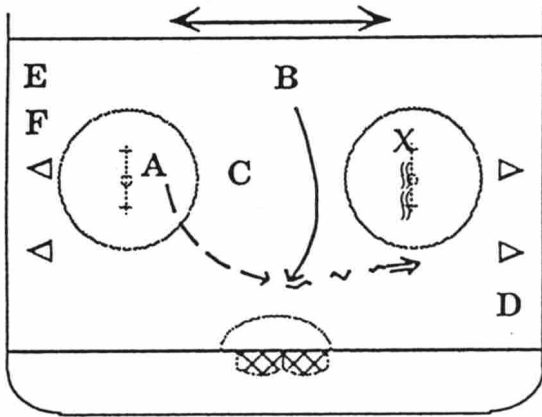


- 3V3:
- 1/2 ice game with emphasis on rebalancing after each pass
 - on turnover, (D) should clear, then play offence clear to targets

Offensive Penetration

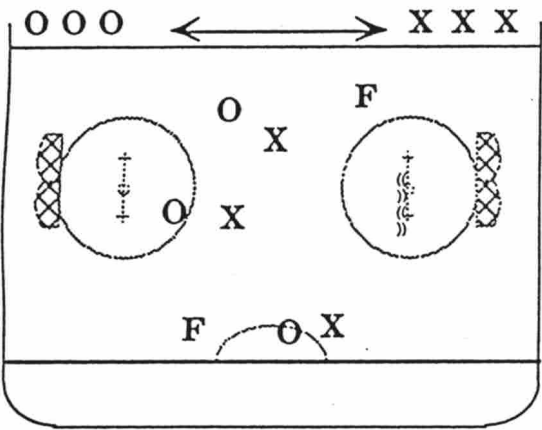
Defensive Delay

Figure 1



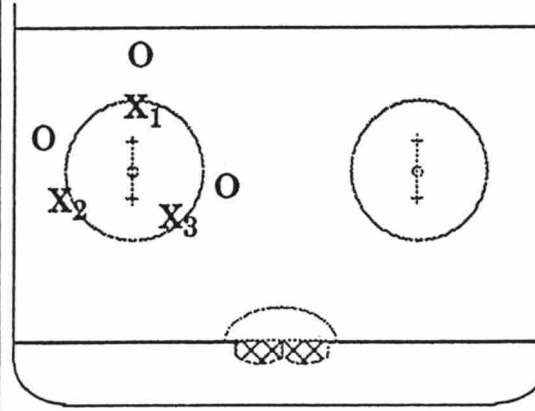
2V1 + Goalie:
 -A and B attack C with D as a goalie or waiting to attack with C
 -after the finished attack, C+D attack E with F as goalie or waiting
 -A and B are ready for attack from E and F

Figure 2



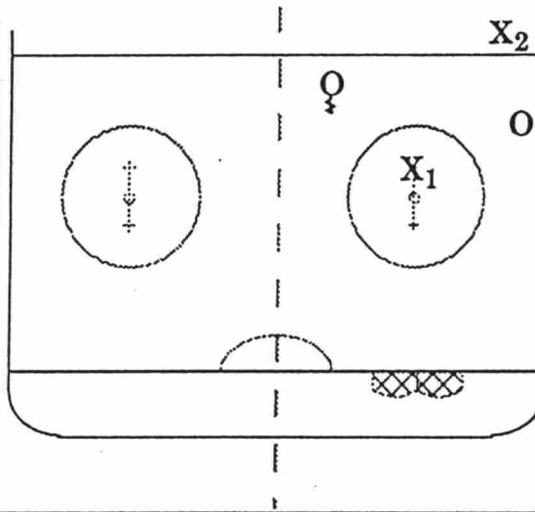
3V3:
 across ice scrimmage with two floaters always on the offence (5V3)
 -always look for pass to send a player in alone

Figure 3



3V3
 X1 pressures the puck from the front to prevent a quick pass
 -X2, X3 get into good defensive support position
 -KEEP AWAY

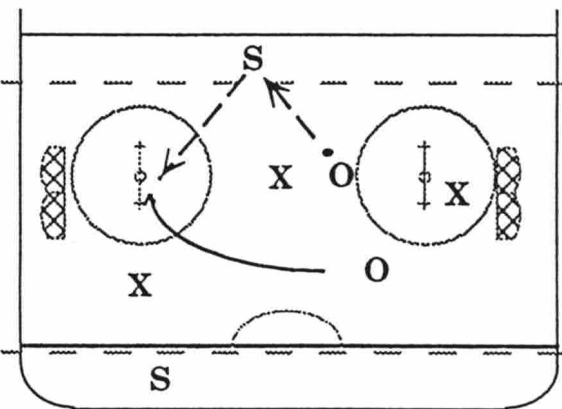
Figure 4



2V1 + 1:
 -X1 must learn to delay until X2 can get into good defensive position
 -this should be to goal
 DELAY=TIME =BALANCE

Offensive Width

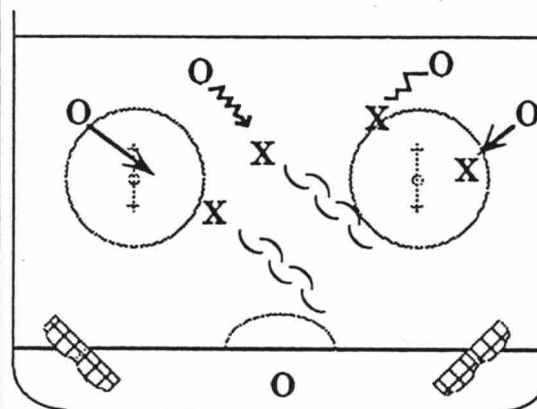
Figure 1



- 2V2 + 2:
- use support players outside the playing area
 - they are always on offense and can't be pressured
 - encourage a pass to these wide players

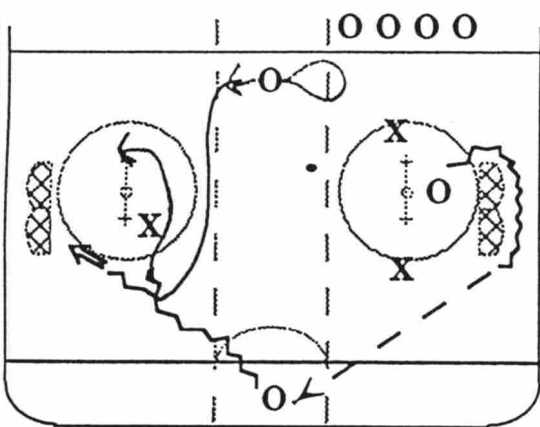
Defensive Concentration

Figure 3



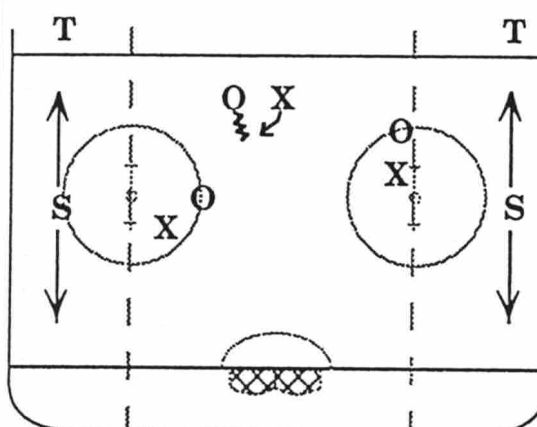
- 2V2:
- set up the goal in the corner and have the defenders use the boards to channel the play to the goal

Figure 2



- 2V1:
- cross ice with a middle zone for the next two forwards (keep feeding from the middle)
 - forwards should work on crossing Figure 8's
 - D should agility skate until puck is played forward
 - two forwards don't forecheck after initial rush

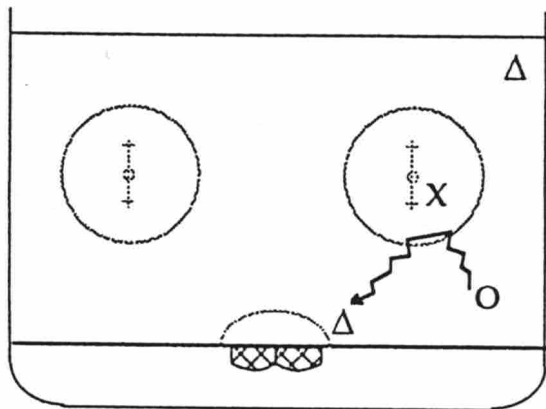
Figure 4



- 3V3 to goal:
- defenders can only defend inside the width of the dots
 - S are on the offense and must pass the puck within 3 seconds
 - defenders must keep good goalside position and communicate

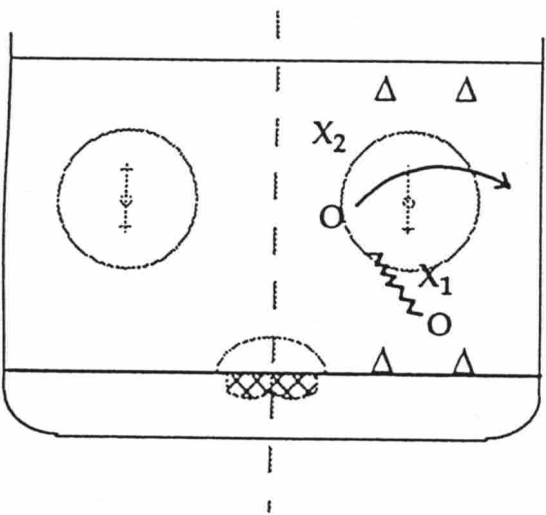
Offensive Improvisation

Figure 1



1V1:
 Offensive player can go to either cone.
 Defender should try to win the puck
 -use speed, change of pace, faking

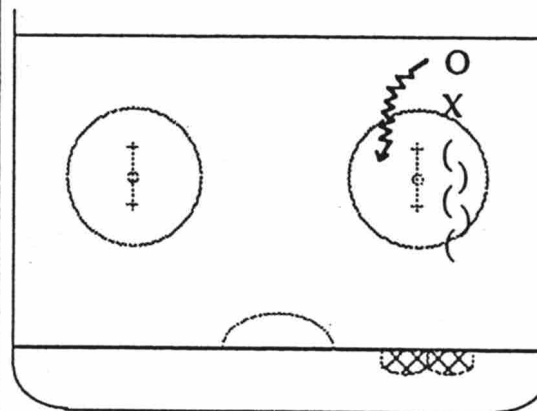
Figure 2



2V2:
 -try to penetrate with the dribble, player without the puck should move to destroy cover by X2

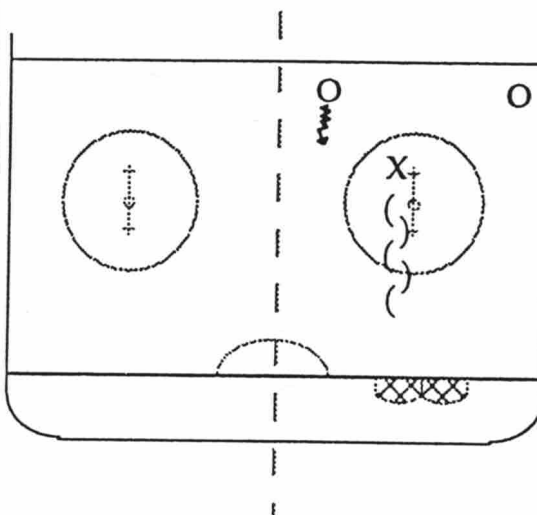
Defensive Restraint

Figure 3



Defender learns to play with patience
 -force the player to go where you want him to

Figure 4



2V1:
 -Good stick position
 -make the play predictable
 -communicate with the goaltender