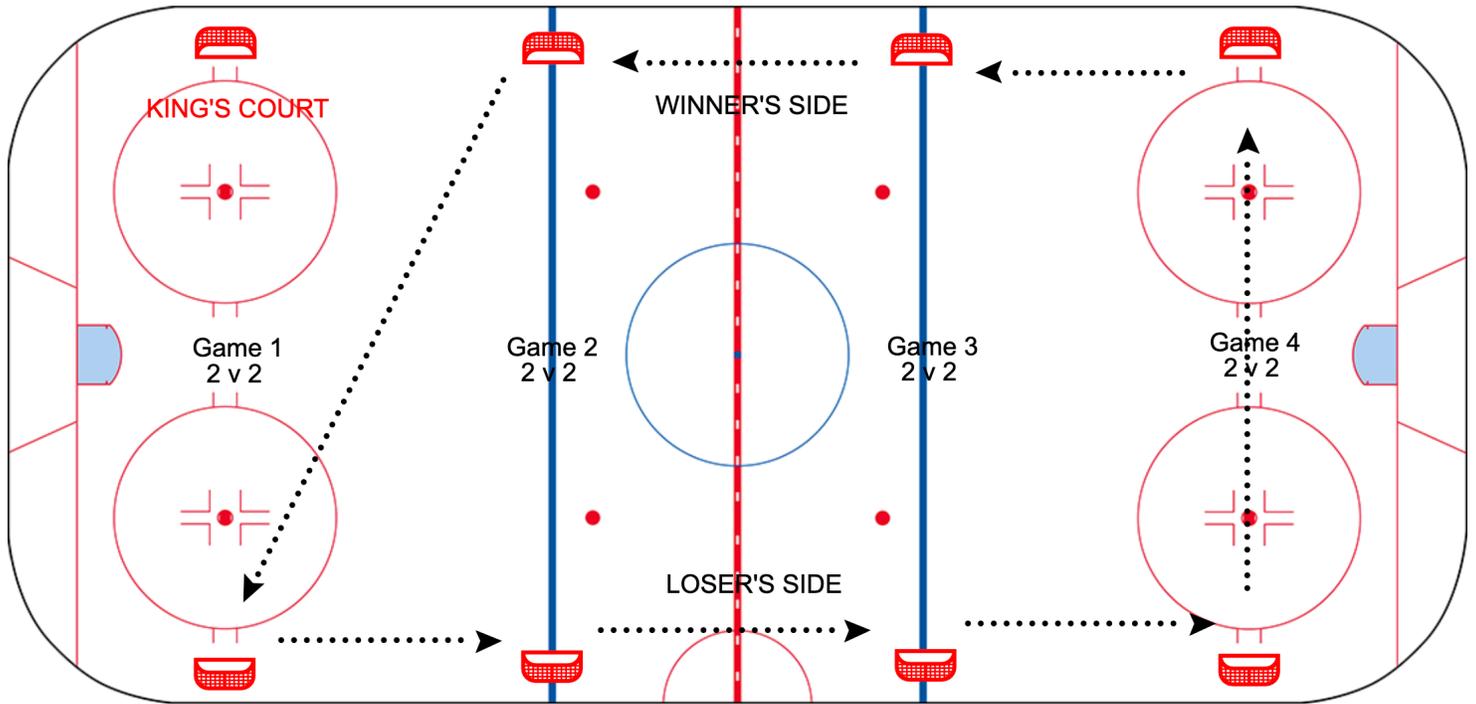




King's Court (Tourney)



Description

This is called King's Court. I like to play this tournament to create/add a little fun/intensity to practice. The object is to be defending King's Court at the end of the practice. First, decide how many games and teams you'd like for the tourney. For the sake of clarity, I've designed this tourney with 4 games and 8 teams. Each team has 2 players, for a total of 16. If 1 goalie is available, I usually assign him/her to King's Court. If 2 goalies are available, I usually put them opposite one another in Game 1. Of course teams can have more than 2 players. With enough advance planning and, if possible, I like to bring in older players to play with each team to keep the intensity level up, forcing a higher level of play. I also like to add rules to the game, i.e. the puck must pass behind the defensive net before a scoring opportunity and set the length of time for each game, i.e. 2 min. The length of the game is usually dependent on the time left in practice. The coach whistles play to begin. After two minutes (or more, depending on time specified) the coach's whistle ends play. The coach then asks the winners of each game to move to the Winner's Side and losers of each game to move to the Loser's Side. Then on the coach's command all teams shift as depicted with the arrows above. The winner in Game 1 stays in place, defending King's Court. The only difficulty arises in explaining to the players, that in order to move to the Winner's Side, you have to win. You cannot move to the Winner's Side on a tie. In the case of a tie, teams simply stay in the court where they began play, before rotating on the coach's command. Players quickly learn that in order to move up, ultimately to challenge for King's Court, they have to win. As with all games/tourneys, coaching creativity can add much to any basic design. For instance, if you want it to be harder for a team to GET TO King's Court, you can put the goalie at King's Court. If you'd like it to be harder of teams to STAY at King's Court, you can place the goalie opposite. Obviously playing with an open net forces better defensive side positioning, which players will learn naturally, maybe with a word or two from the coach on technique. I usually play with regular nets with goalies and small nets for all teams without goalies. If I'm using small nets, I usually place homemade boards across the bottom to decrease the size of the net openings. The object again, is to be the team defending King's Court when the final whistle of practice sounds. As practice nears the end, watch the intensity level pick up, particularly if there are awards/penalties.