

# **PYH Coaches Handbook**

## **The Basics of Situational Play**

“Skill and Confidence are an unconquered army”  
-George Herbert, Jacula Prudentum

# Basics – One on One

## Defending

In defending the one on one, the most basic rule for the defenseman is to play the body! The defenseman should match the speed of the attacker aligning his outside shoulder with the attacker's inside shoulder (relative to the boards) so that he has more room towards the boards than towards the middle.

Defense should carry their stick in one hand with their hand at their waste. This gives you room to make a poke check and does not give away how far your reach is.

The defender should attempt to make a play on the attacker near the blue line and definitely before the tops of the circles. If this happens later, and you are beat, then there is less time for the goalie to react.

As the attacker approaches, watch his chest. Draw him in and keep your body between him and the net. Keep your shoulders square to his body. If the opportunity is there make a shoulder check on him to take him off the puck. If you do use a poke check, make sure that you still maintain contact with his body to keep him from making a play with the loose puck. Your defensive partner should be following up to retrieve the puck.

If the attacker is successful in making his move around you, pivot with him (facing him) and skate straight to the net. You will be taking the shorter path and may be able to cut him off before he can get off the shot.

## Basics – One on One

### Attacking

In playing the one-on-one as the offense, speed is essential. Generally, you have an advantage in skating speed going forward over the defenseman who is skating backward. This is why it is essential to learn how to skate with the puck at full speed!

You have several options as the attacker. You can:

1. Skate quickly around the defenseman on either side

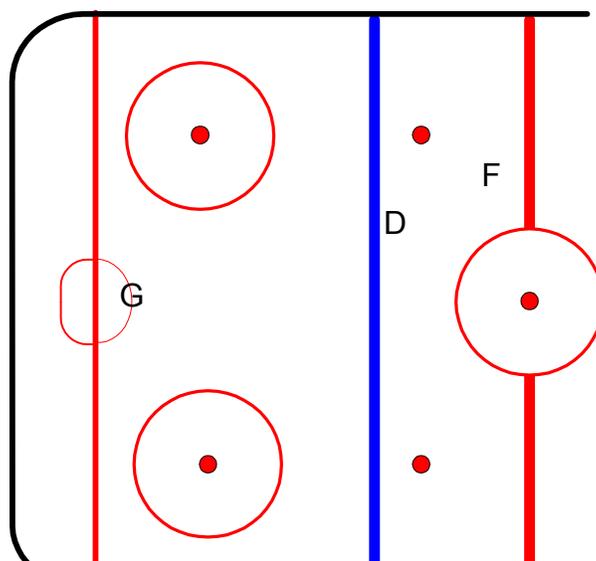


Figure 1 Position to force forward to the outside

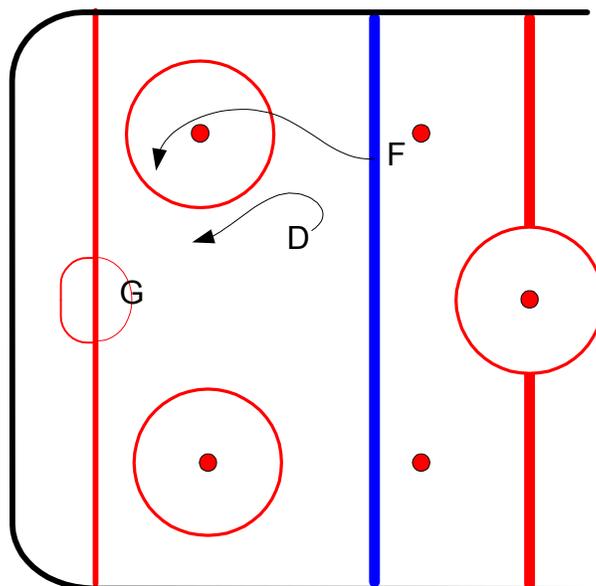


Figure 2 Pivoting facing the forward

2. Fake one way then move the puck between the heel of the stick and in front of the player's toes on his skates
  3. Move the puck through the skates, go around the defense and pick up the puck on the other side.
  4. These options are shown below.
- The skates and the stick make a triangle. Attack the triangle at an angle and not straight on. Make your move at least one stick length away from the defender to avoid the poke check. To fake the defender, shift the puck to either the forehand or backhand using a deliberate move. Then pull the puck wide to the opposite side and drive around the D using your body to shield the puck.

Another approach is to use a change of pace. Approach the D at 3/4 speed and then just as you reach the defender, accelerate and cut around him, again using your body to shield the puck.

## Basics -- Two on

The objective of the defensemen in the two on one situation is two fold. Force the puck carrier to the outside to cut down on his angle for the shot and to prevent the pass to the other forward. It is usually better to let the puck carrier make a poor angle shot rather than letting him make the pass. This way the goalie doesn't have to move to make the save. The defenseman should line himself up between the attackers in line with the post of the goal giving the puck carrier some room to the outside. If the puck carrier goes deep into the corner, then the defenseman should be guarding against the pass to the other forward who will most likely pull up into the high slot. Once the forward gets below the line from the goal post to the face off dot, the goalie should be able to make the save off the shot. The defenseman should get his stick out to take up space. The defenseman should make sure that the forward with the puck doesn't beat him by cutting in behind him.

If the puck carrier pulls up short on the boards, then the defensman should defend the other forward crashing the net looking for a pass or tip

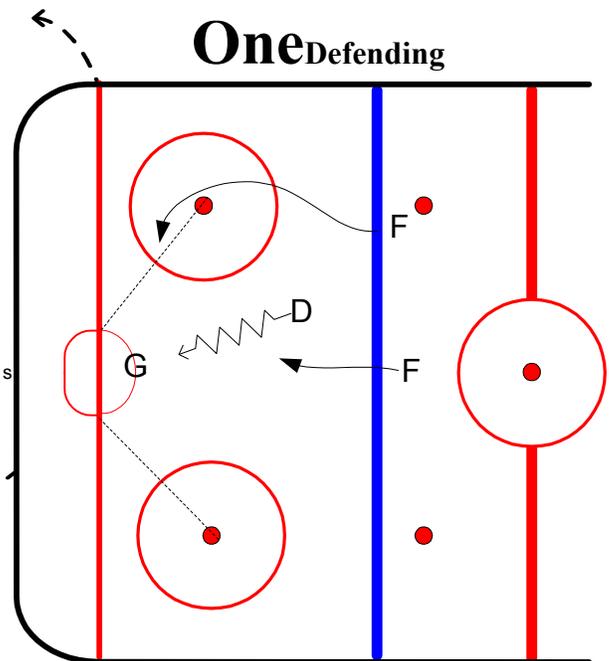
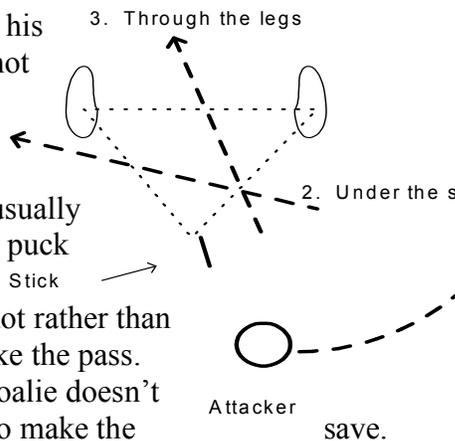


Figure 3 Defending the 2 on 1. Puck carrier goes wide

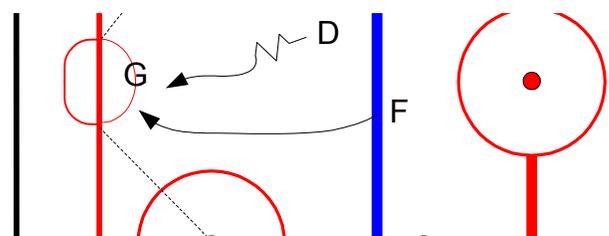


Figure 4 Defending the 2 on 1. Puck carrier "pulls up"

in. The goalie will take the shot from the puck carrier.

## Basics -- Two on One

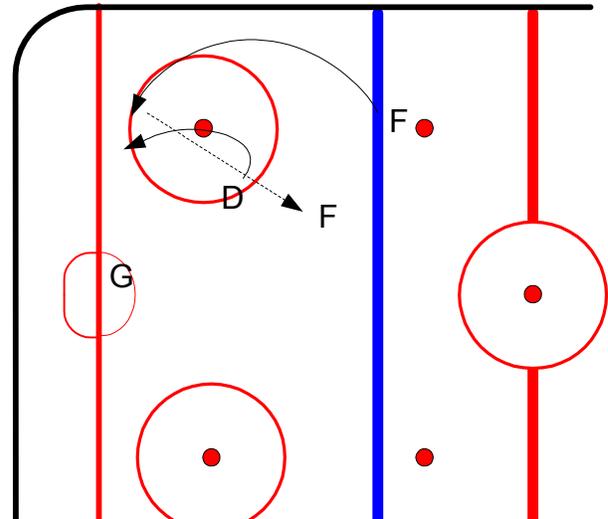
### Attacking

The key to attacking on the 2 on 1 is for the forwards to stay spread apart. This makes it much more difficult for the defenseman to cover both forwards. The puck carrier will attempt to draw the defenseman out of position allowing the other forward to get open to receive a pass. The positioning of the trailing forward depends on the reaction of the defenseman.

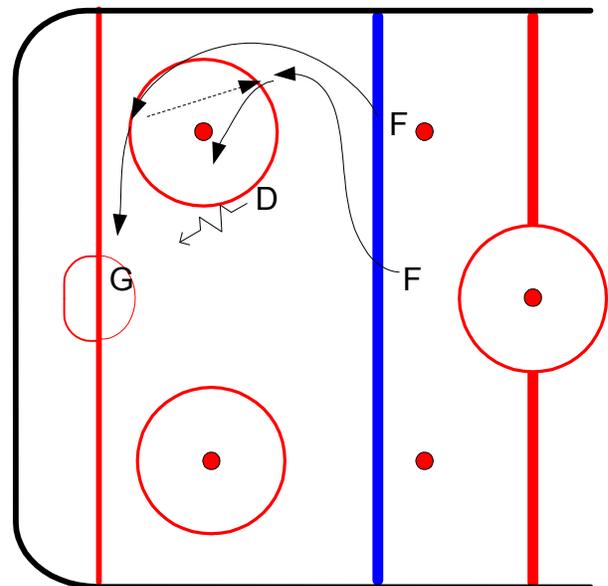
The puck carrier should take the puck deep and wide into the zone heading for a spot around the bottom of the faceoff circle. If the defenseman concentrates on the puck carrier and commits himself to him, the second forward can position himself in the high slot to receive a pass and then go to the net to get a good shot. The trailing forward should position himself so that the puck carrier can make a clear pass without being intercepted by the defenseman (see figure 5).

If the defenseman does not commit to the puck carrier and stays in a line down the near goal post, the trailing forward may position himself behind the puck carrier to allow for a pass back to him. Once the pass is made, the trailer can head to the net. The original puck carrier should also move to the net for either a rebound or to allow for another pass.

The pass should be made from the puck carrier after they have made eye contact with one another. The trailer may also take a wide route into the zone getting out of the view of both the defenseman and the goalie. He then moves up on the far post side for a quick pass across the front of the net and a one time shot. The pass must be far enough out so that the goalie cannot poke check the puck away.

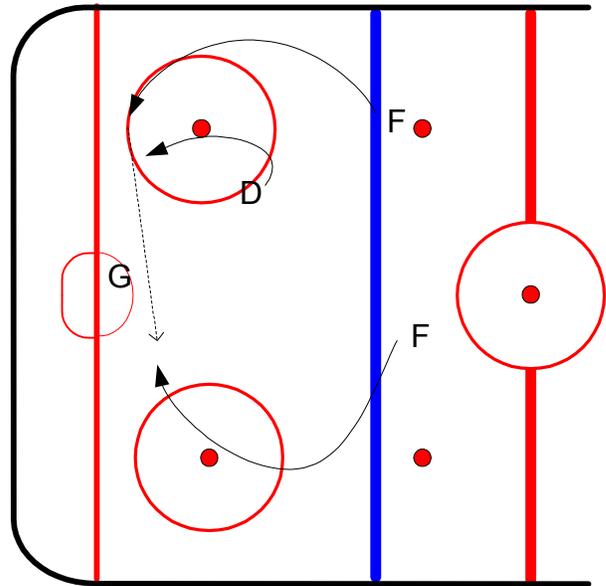


**Figure 5** Defenseman commits to the puck carrier. Trailer goes to the high slot.



**Figure 6** Defenseman doesn't commit to the puck carrier. Trailer follows in behind.

There are many other options, but the key elements are for the first forward to draw the D out of position and for the second forward to always be moving to a position to receive the pass and be ready to go 1-1 with the goalie and shoot.



**Figure 7** Trailing forward takes a very wide path into the zone.

# Basics -- Two on

## TWO Attacking

The key to attacking on the 2 on 2 is to turn the play into a 2 on 1 by isolating on one of the opponents defenseman and then playing one of the basic 2 on 1 situations.

In the example shown the puck carrier drives the puck wide. The second forward cuts to the inside of his defenseman getting between him and the puck. This effectively takes him out of the play.

### Defending

The defense has the advantage in this case as they have the extra man (the goalie). Each defenseman is responsible for taking his man. The defenseman on the puck carrier should challenge the man between the blue line and the top of the circle, not letting him get in too deep on the goalie. The defenseman on the free man needs to keep between him and the puck. He should attempt to tie up his stick by either lifting or pressing the stick.

The defensemen want to make sure that they both don't cover the same man. This means that the defensemen must talk to one another and call out their man by saying "puck carrier" or "trailer".

If the first defenseman gets beat, the second defenseman must recognize this. He then plays the situation like a 2 on 1.

# Basics -- Three on Two

### Defending

The general rule for defensemen on the 3-2 is that one plays the 2 on 1 situation and the other covers his lane responsibility.

In the situation shown, the puck carrier takes the puck deep and wide. The

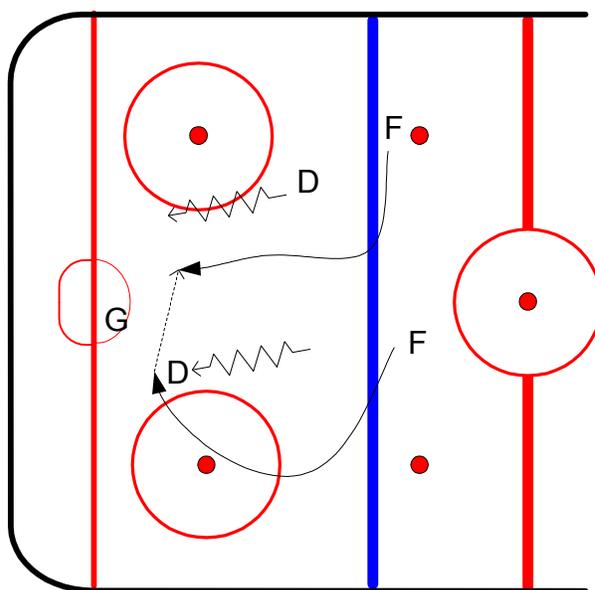


Figure 8 Attacking on the 2 on 2

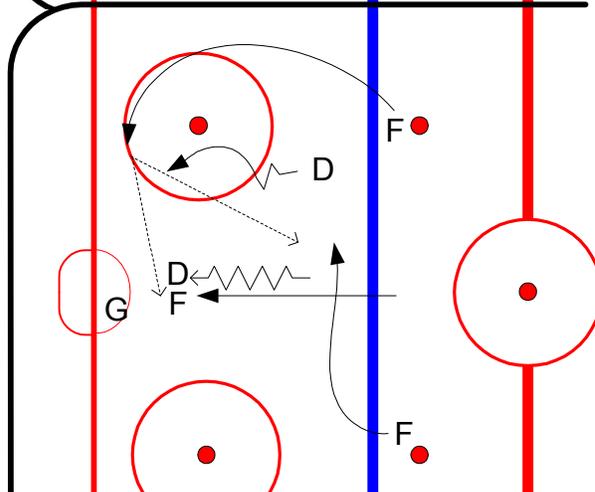
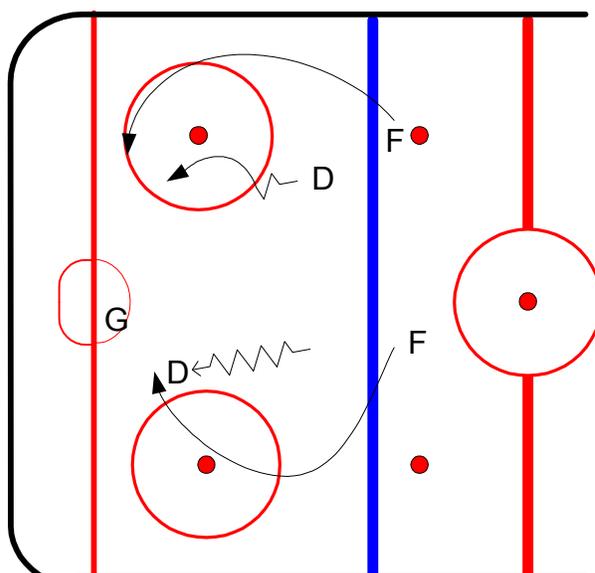
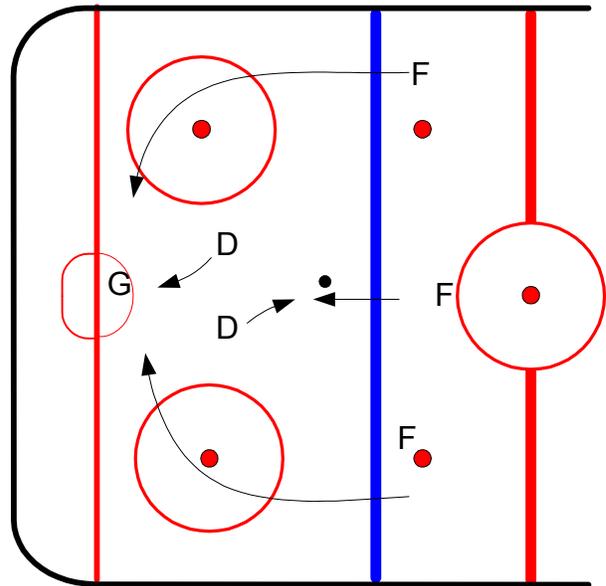


Figure 10 Forward positioning for 3 on 2

middle forward skates hard to the net and the third forward trails behind and fills the high slot.

The strong side defenseman plays the puck carrier as in a 2 on 1 situation, forcing him to the outside and protecting against the pass. The second defenseman plays the slot protecting against the second pass to the high slot.

In the second situation, the puck carrier crosses the blue line and stops. The two wings drive down the outside and to the net. At this point, the defenseman need to communicate, one calling out the puck carrier. This one steps up to challenge the puck carrier. The other defenseman drops back to the slot to cover the two wingers. If the puck carrier passes, the second defenseman plays the other two wings like a 2 on 1. If he shoots the defenseman must cover the most dangerous winger and clear the rebound.



**Figure 11** Alternate positioning from 3 on 2