



**Date:** Squirt Practice 33 & 34

**Number of Players:** 30 to 40

**Practice Theme / Goals:** Defensive Skills

**Equipment Required / Set-up:** Cones or tires

**Time:** 60 Minutes

**Warm Up: 5 minutes**

Free Play – Let the kids play with a variety of objects (black pucks, blue pucks, tennis balls, soft balls, ringette rings, etc).

**Skating: Cross-overs – 8 minutes**

Players should attempt to skate without breaking stride and focus on generating speed through the course. Drill is done from two corners and also with pucks.

**Passing: 2 on 0 – 8 minutes**

Pass the length of the ice 2 on 0. Finish off with a shot on goal. Lead partner with pass. Pass on backhand if on backhand.

**Stations: 3 Stations x 9 minutes**

On the whistle to change station, players do 2 forward roles before moving on to the next activity. Coaches distribute water at each station.

**Station 1: Skating Skills**

Players skate forward and backwards around the cones. Work with the kids on skating technique; bend knees, forward to backwards pivots. Pull kids aside for instruction.

**Station 2: 1v1 BO and Defense (Angling)**

Player X passes to player O who must stay wide until the cone. After passing player X follows up the play, pivots to backwards and plays the 1v1 back. Focus on player X gapping up to play the 1v1. Encourage body contact with good stick on puck play.

**Station 3: Breakout Skills**

Player passes to the coach and then widens out low for a return pass. The player finishes with a shot on goal. Work on player facing the puck and pivoting for return pass. Work both sides to keep repetitions high.

**Game: Breakout with Coach – 12 minutes**

On change of possession each team must pass the puck back to their coach and one player must skate behind their net before the team can attack. Work on Breakout skills and tactics. Coaches must encourage all players to come back to support the puck. Also stress not turning their back to the puck.

As the players learn the mechanics of the game talk to them about not pressuring the coach, as the coach cannot score, find an open opponent.

