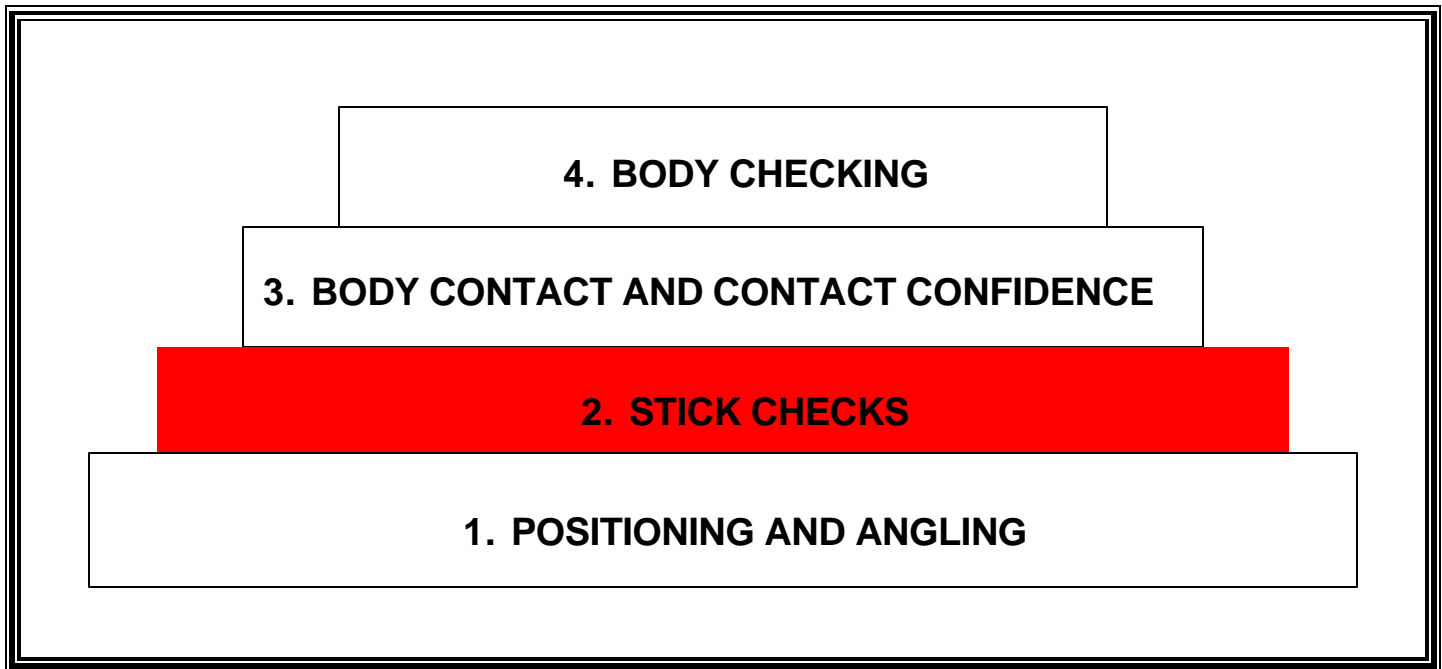


SECTION 2 – STICK CHECKS

NCCP CHECKING PROGRESSION MODEL



STEP 2 - STICK CHECKS

Stick checking may be considered the second line of defense as angling forces the opposition to a position where contact can be made with the stick.

When a player stick-checks, he/she must maintain control of both their stick and the opponent's stick. Stick checks are effective to:

- delay the advancement of the opposition
- force a loss of puck control by the opposition
- control the puck yourself or gain possession for one of your teammates

This section will discuss the teaching progressions for stick checking and provide an explanation for the following 5 stick checks:

- Poke Check
- Sweep Check
- Tap Check
- Lift Check
- Press Check

and discussion the teaching progressions for stick checking.

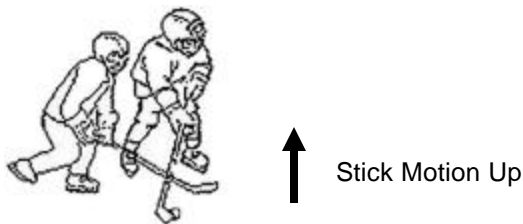
INTRODUCTION TO STICK CHECKS

The second step/phase of the teaching progression for checking is Stick Checks. This is a very important stage that players should master very early. Players should be able to use this effectively as their second line of defense once they have positioned themselves correctly and angled effectively. With the ability to angle and stick check in place these serve as a strong foundation for the progression into body contact, contact confidence and body checking.

Types of Stick Checks

Checking with the stick can be categorized into five categories:

1. Lift Check

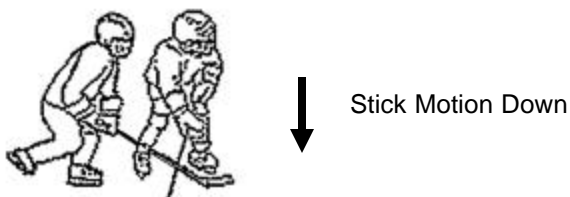


The lift check can be used anywhere on the ice. It is an excellent check often used when players are backchecking and attempting to regain possession of the puck.

Key Teaching Points

- Checker approaches the puck carrier from behind or from an angle behind them
- Lift the opponent's stick on the shaft near the heel of the stick enough to retrieve the puck under the stick on the exposed side of the player's body.
- Sealing off the puck carrier or isolating the puck carrier's arms and hands with pressure is effective prior to the lift check.

2. Press Check



The press check is used a lot in the neutral and defensive zones of the rink. It requires strength and timing on the part of the checker, who attempts to immobilize the opponent's stick momentarily

Key Teaching Points

- Close proximity beside opponent is necessary
- Place the stick over the shaft of the opponent's stick below the bottom hand
- Downward pressure timed just prior to or at the moment the opponent is to receive the puck for a scoring chance makes this check effective.

3. Sweep Check

The sweep check is used to check the puck from the opponent from the side or behind the puck carrier in a circular reach motion.

Key Teaching Points

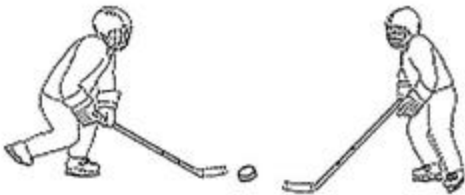
- Top hand on the stick
- The shaft of the blade lays flat on the ice
- Make this check while moving as it allows the checker to regain position if successful
- Bend over forward or lower body to one knee to reach ahead sweeping in a circular motion
- Last choice is to dive onto belly for further reach. Only used to try to check a breakaway attempt

4. Tap Check

The tap check is used to hit the opponent's stick to force them to lose puck control while carrying the puck

- Skate beside the puck carrier maintaining inside-out position
- While the puck is protected on the opposite side of the puck carriers blade, tap the blade firmly so as to cause loss of control of the puck
- Target the top near the heel of the stick
- Ensure that it is not a slashing motion

5. Poke Check



The poke check is primarily used while playing a 1 on 1. This check is effective to make attacking player make a decision with the puck. Unfortunately, players often tend to linger with this checking resulting in the player being off balance and out of position.

Key Teaching Points

- Player remains in a strong ready position stance
- Tuck elbow with top hand only on the stick
- Perform a quick extension of the arm and the stick straight out when the puck carrier is in the range of the check
- Maintain the ready balanced position at all times

REMEMBER: The following elements should be taken into consideration when deciding which stick check to use;

- Location and position of the checker
- Degree of puck control of the puck carrier
- Amount of defensive support

STICK CHECKS

STEP 2

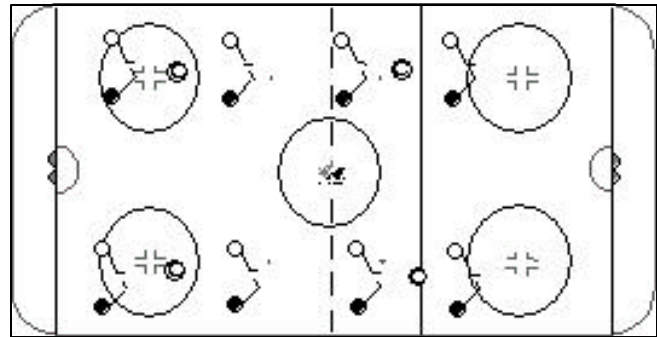
Stationary Stick Checks

Drill Objective

Players should be able to technically perform a stick lift and a stick press

Drill Explanation

- Demonstrate for players the press and the lift.
- Players pair up side by side.
- On whistle Player 1 handles the puck stationary. Player 2 stands beside Player 1 and on the second whistle traps or lifts the stick.



Key Teaching Points

- Demonstrate the skill
- Run at 50% so that players can have success at implementing the proper technique

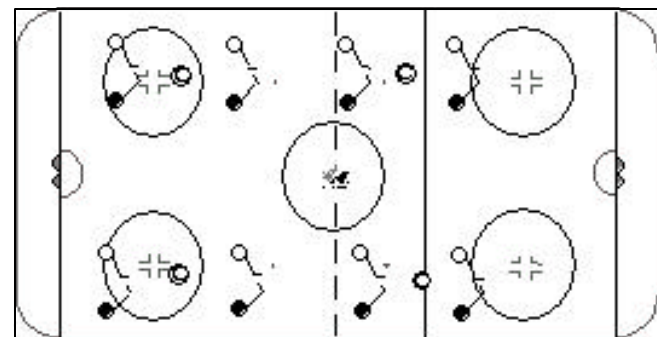
Stick Check Leap Frog

Drill Objective

To allow the players multiple repetitions to be successful in executing the stick checks while working with a partner

Drill Explanation

- Coach indicates the type of stick check - provide key teaching points
- O1 and O2 play at half speed
- O1 exposes the puck for O2 to stick check
- Reverse roles



Key Teaching Points

- Focus on the target area for the checker to check the stick
- Keep feet active, control skating

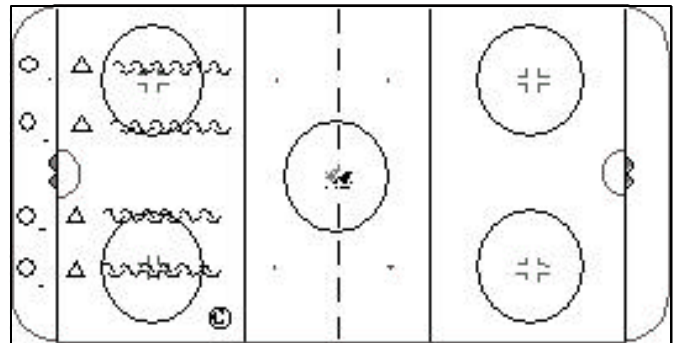
Partner Poke Sweep

Drill Objective

To allow players the opportunity to practice gap control and the basics of the sweep check and poke check in a 1 on 1 situation.

Drill Explanation

- Player 1 skates backwards facing O to execute poke or sweep check
- Coach reviews the key teaching points
- Play at 1/2 speed for 4-6 repetitions
- Alternate roles



Key Teaching Points

- Keep balanced, don't lunge
- Focus on the chest/crest with peripheral vision to puck
- Allow puck carrier into the poke/sweep check area

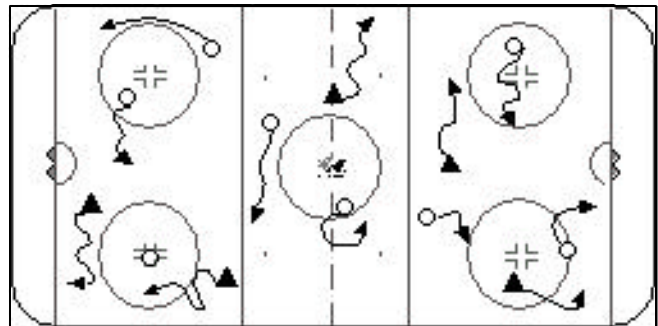
Puck Handle Keep Away with Confined Space

Drill Objective

Players should be able to technically perform a stick lift and a stick press

Drill Explanation

- Demonstrate for players the press and the lift.
- Players pair up side by side.
- On whistle Player 1 handles the puck stationary. Player 2 stands beside Player 1 and on the second whistle traps or lifts the stick.



Key Teaching Points

- Demonstrate the skill
- Run at 50% so that players can have success at implementing the proper technique

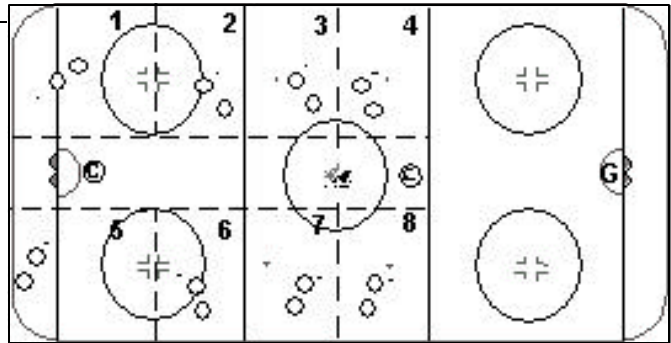
Head to Head 1 on 1 Confined Space

Drill Objective

To play 1 on 1 keep away, facing the opponent, with emphasis on checking skills

Drill Explanation

- Coach controls the drill with 20-30 second intervals
- Players stay within the confined space and play one on one keep away



Key Teaching Points

- Checker to focus on the crest
- Close the gap to the puck carrier

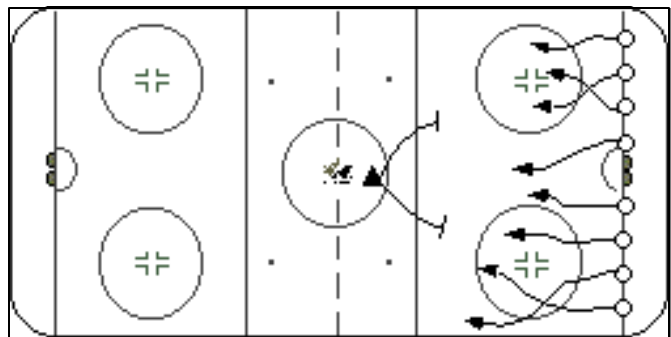
British Bulldog

Drill Objective

Game play fun activity to practice stick checking skills

Drill Explanation

- O carries the puck through the neutral zone - player at centre ice must attempt a stick check to cause O to lose control of the puck
- Any O that loses their puck goes to centre to become a checker
- Last O with the puck wins



Key Teaching Points

- Head up and down on puck for control
- Proper balanced position for checker
- Use angling and positioning to get in effective position to make stick check.

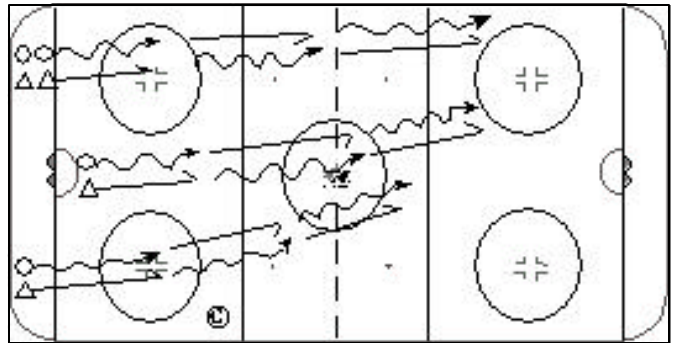
Partner Sweep Hook

Drill Objective

To allow the players the opportunity of multiple repetitions to execute hook/sweep checks in pairs

Drill Explanation

- O skates with the puck at 1/2 speed
- 2nd player skates parallel or slightly behind to execute sweep or hook check
- attempt several repetitions going down the ice
- alternate once control is gained



Key Teaching Points

- place shaft and blade flat
- sweep in a circular motion
- keep stick moving through the check

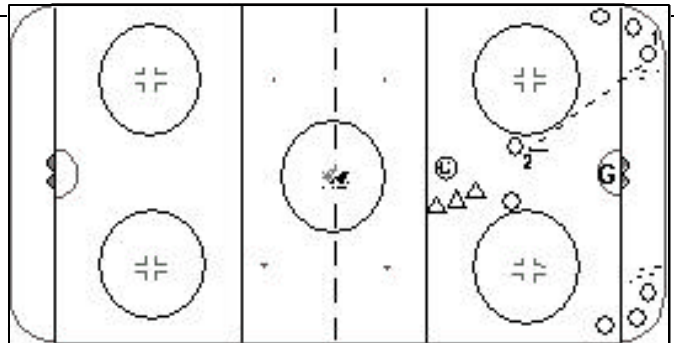
Stick Control Checking

Drill Objective

To allow game-like checking using lift and press techniques in front of the offensive/defensive net

Drill Explanation

- player in the corner passes to O2 in front of the net
- ?1 attempts to time and lift or press check
- O1 and O2 rotate
- Use both ends of the rink



Key Teaching Points

- Keep defensive side positioning
- Control the stick of the offensive player
- Take away the forehand