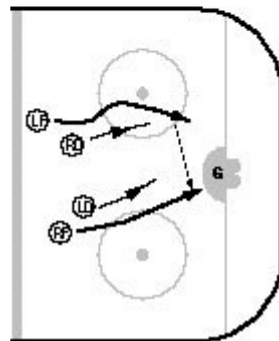


Creating a 2-on-1

By Greg Siller



Figures 1 and 2

The ability to turn any situation into one in which your team has the advantage is essential to creating scoring opportunities in any sport. In hockey, this situation is best seen when a team turns a 2-on-2 into a 2-on-1.

Your team's offensive strategy should be built around creating this situation — and then taking advantage of it.

Let's take a look at a typical 2-on-2 scenario in Figure 1. During many 2-on-2s, the puck carrier (LF) will initially see that his partner (RF) is being covered by one of the defenders (LD). So LF will put on a burst of speed and skate wide with the puck.

During this time, RF is skating toward the net in anticipation of a quick pass across the slot and a shot. What generally happens during this scenario is either a poor-angle shot by LF or a potential pass to RF (if RD or LD don't intercept the puck first).

One of the main reasons the 2-on-2 attack usually fails is due to poor positioning of one or both attackers as they approach.

A more effective way

There has got to be a more effective way to work the 2-on-2 scenario so that your odds of putting a quality shot on the net increase.

Well there is. It involves turning your 2-on-2 into a 2-on-1. That doesn't mean that one of the defenders disappears. It means either the puck carrier or his partner must neutralize the effectiveness of one of the defenders to create a virtual 2-on-1.

One way to rework the scenario in Figure 1 to your advantage is to have RF put on a quick fake to the outside of LD and then move to the inside lane (see Figure 2). That one little move created space for RF on the inside of LD and created a virtual 2-on-1 with LF.

Once on the inside lane, RF can skate to the net to receive that quick pass (and put a quality shot on net).

Another way to work the scenario in Figure 2 is by adding a give-n-go play (see Figure 3).

As LF begins to move to the outside of RD, RF puts the outside-to-inside fake on LD (as he does in Figure 2). When RF moves to the inside, LF dishes the puck off to RF. LF skates wide around RD and receives a return pass from RF. After RF passes the puck to LF, he should contain LD to give LF a little extra room to maneuver near the net. This play can quickly turn a 2-on-2 into a 2-on-1 or even a breakaway if executed properly.

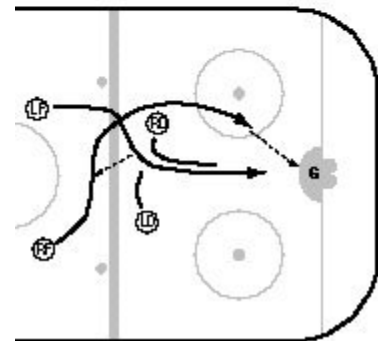
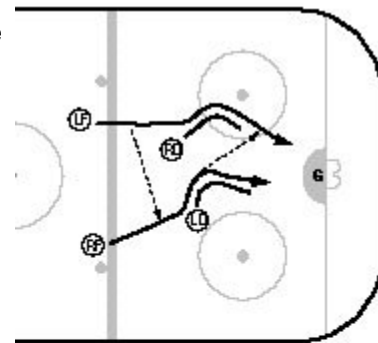
Leave heads spinning

This last scenario should have the defenders heads spinning due to all of the cross-rink movement and planned confusion. In Figure 4, LF cuts toward the middle of the rink and carries the puck toward RD and LD, forcing them to initially converge on him.

As this occurs, RF quickly moves across and behind LF to take a drop pass. RF continues quickly to the outside of and around RD. The split second (or two) of confusion caused by LF should convert the 2-on-2 into another 2-on-1. What's left is another scoring opportunity.

During each of these plays, don't forget to look for rebounds. They will give you a second chance to score on each play. Your team's ability to turn any 2-on-2 situation into the more favorable (and more exciting) 2-on-1 is executed through planning, creativity and practice.

Use these plays to improve your team's offensive firepower against any team.



Figures 3 and 4