

NORTH OLMSTED
EAGLES
HOCKEY



DEFENSIVE HANDBOOK



DEFENSIVE GUIDELINES

IN OFFENSIVE ZONE

- Be ready to pinch only if forward in position to cover for you isn't prevented from getting out to the point
- If the puck is in the corner one D should be along the boards on the strong side, and the D partner should be even with the goal post on the weak side (the side where the puck isn't)
- Be alert for breaking forwards on any clearing attempts by the opposition – don't leave your feet to attempt to glove down a puck over your head at the opposition blue line
- Shots to the net should be low – knee level and lower – and have to clear the first man attempting to block the shot
- If playing the puck on the backhand at the point, play the puck toward the corner, not the front of the net
- Look for open forwards along the goal line
- No unsafe stick handling – if pressured, get the puck into the corner or behind the net
- No blind passes back to the point
- Keep your feet moving – especially when the other team gains possession of the puck
- You are the last line of defense to our net – even in the other team's zone!

NEUTRAL ZONE (Defensively)

- Try to read opposition play as soon as possible
- Stay with breaking forwards down the wing – turn and go if you get beat
- Don't let opposition "hang" behind you
- Stay in passing lanes and break up cross-ice passes
- Talk to forwards and defensive partner

IN DEFENSIVE ZONE

- Confront early, preferably in the neutral zone, but at least at your own blue line!
- Cover the front of the net – start with one man in front
- Be aware of where your man is at all times – never more than a stick length away
- Be alert on defensive zone face-offs
- Finish checks in the corners, maintain defensive side position (man-you-net) – pin forward on boards if battling along the wall and dig the puck out with skate or stick
- One man take the shooter on 2 on 2's and 3 on 3's
- "Get Big Low" on 2-on-1 to eliminate cross-ice pass
- Avoid giving too much ground or "backing in"
- When the puck goes to the point, find a player and eliminate chances for deflections or rebounds
- Skate hard back to every loose puck
- Communicate with teammates to sort out the rush



- Don't over-handle the puck – GET IT OUT
- Never hesitate to dump the puck out – high off the glass is the most effective dump out
- Mistakes 5 feet either side of our blue line usually end up costing us a goal!!
- A face-off in our zone is better than a face-off at center ice after we dig the puck out of our net!!!

TRANSITION (Out of our defensive zone)

- Breakouts – E² = Early, Easy
- Early – make a direct pass to a forward as early as you can
- Easy – make the play easy on yourself – fancy plays don't look good if the puck ends up in your net
- Tape to tape passes
- Listen to other D and Goalie for directions on where to go with puck
- Pucks shot around boards must be hard in order to clear the D zone
- Use the net to screen forecheckers
- No cross-ice passes in front of our net
- Look for post-up forward on far blue line on opposite side of the benches

TRANSITION (In the neutral zone)

- Quick counters on opposition turnovers can be a great opportunity to attack – look for open forwards on the move
- Don't over-handle the puck
- If pressured, get to the red line and dump it in – if not at the red line, take something off to avoid icing
- No cross-ice passes
- D to D passes have to be crisp and executed quickly

**ALWAYS SUPPORT YOUR DEFENSIVE PARTNER WITH
GOOD POSITIONING ON THE ICE!!!**



POWER PLAY

OFFENSIVE ZONE

- First objective on the power play-don't get scored on!!!
- Gain possession of the puck (loose pucks, entry, and control). We must outnumber the kill and win every battle!
- D must establish shots from the points early. It is important to stretch out and disorganize their penalty killing box, which early point shots accomplish.
- Look for screens in front of net – point shot must get past first forward on their PK (it cannot get blocked at point).
- Support the puck - players with the puck who find themselves in trouble need close help and a passing option.
- If no one is open and you are pressured put the puck behind the net or in the opposite corner.
- Puck movement - don't skate the puck to a teammate, pass the puck. Avoid long risky, cross-ice passes, if possible. Also avoid trying to beat your man 1 on 1, let the puck do your work.
- Our best play is always a **SHOT ON GOAL!**

BREAKOUTS

- First man back to puck must be patient. Wait for teammates to return to breakout positions before initiating breakout.
- Puck carrying D must move puck ahead as soon as possible, with best option being the easiest pass (don't pass through checkers). All players must be ready to receive pass at all times in order to be an option.
- Drive our legs through neutral zone; **SPEED KILLS!** If opposition lines up at blue line, puck must go in deep with at least 2 people on puck.

GENERAL REMINDERS

- Return to defensive zone as quickly as possible for loose pucks-don't get lazy!
- Try to beat first forechecker with a pass.
- Know and understand options (read play).
- Use speed through the neutral zone (under control).
- If dump-in is only option, recognize this early, use hard around or cross- corner dump in.
- Work hard, remember the other team is playing in fear of being scored against and is working even harder than at even strength. Let's make sure we work even harder.
- Poor decisions often lead to short handed goals against us.



PENALTY KILLING

GENERAL

- Do not let yourself get tied up with opposition forwards – “bump and run.”
- Once puck has left our zone, defense must also move up quickly in order to support forecheckers (Do not leave a big gap between you and the forwards.)
- Toughness on boards - especially in our zone when the puck has been shot hard around - do not get pinned on the boards in any zone. You must beat your opponent off the boards and back to your zone or net.
- Stick on ice in all zones, but especially once you have set up on the PK. Try to protect all passing lanes with your stick, make all opposition passes difficult.
- Quick changes - 30 to 40 seconds, if possible. Make efficient changes on PK. Remember that you have a long change in the 2nd period and must change when given the opportunity.
- Hustle at all times, referees often call PP team for a penalty to “even up” power play chances.
- Bear down on all clearing attempts and be strong on your stick. Don’t over-handle the puck; shoot puck out high on glass.
- Be aggressive if opponent doesn’t have complete control of the puck, especially when on his backhand.
- Pressure power play in the corners and on the half-wall.
- Be ready to lend your stick to your goaltender if he loses his and get one from a forward.
- Keep the puck on the perimeter of the zone – most goals come from the middle of the zone (“the house”).