

Coach Rex

Favourite Drill – Puck Control “Commands”

By Rex Tucker

One of my favorite drills for teaching a player moving puck control is the puck control “commands” drill. With this drill, I randomly place 20 – 30 pylons in the neutral zone. I shout out a command, explain the key teaching points and demo the skill, then have the player perform the skill around different pylons. I switch up the command every 20 – 30 seconds.

Puck control commands can include the following:

- * Slalom – Both half speed and full speed
- * Fake Left – go right
- * Fake Right – go left
- * Toe Drag
- * Figure 8 – glide and crossover turns
- * Full 360 turns – Both forehand and backhand
- * Forward to Backward Pivots
- * Backward to Forward Pivots

This drill allows for a variety of puck control moves and skill development.

The average Calgary minor hockey player will only handle the puck 10 – 20 seconds in a game. However, with this 10 minute puck control drill, factoring in a rest to work ratio of 1 to 1, a player will handle the puck for 5 minutes, or 300 seconds the equivalent of 15 to 30 minor league games!

Yes, playing games are fun but good practice drills greatly enhance hockey technical skill development such as puck control.

*“Variety is the very spice of life,
that gives it all its flavour”*

- William Cowpen