

Prior Lake HDC wants the Prior Lake-Savage Hockey Association to play fast, competitive, and fair. We believe in a style of hockey that focuses on puck possession, with skating and skill development as the foundation. We understand that every coach has their own approach, and we support that—this document is just meant to be a guide.

Prior Lake Youth Hockey HDC Philosophy

Squirts

For Squirts, we aim for about 80% skills and 20% systems. Let's use ice time wisely!

Skills

- **Skating:** This is a prime age to shape players' strides. We want them to be efficient skaters who know when to transition while using crossovers more frequently.
- **Passing:** Quick passing is key! At this level, some top players will skate end-to-end, but let's encourage everyone to pass and receive pucks. "Playing fast" means moving the puck quickly. Let's master hard, flat passes before saucers, and don't overlook catching on the backhand.
- **Shooting:** Velocity matters—players should be working on their shot both on and off the ice. Show them how to use their wrists and bodies properly to shoot, not just flick the puck.

Systems

Systems play a small part at this level, but let's build some good habits.

- **Centers:** Work on tying up the opposing center and being a third defenseman in our zone.
 - **Wings:** Know when to get on the boards for a breakout, but understand that wings have the flexibility to help create clean breakouts through other spots in the zone.
 - **Defensemen:** Generally, one D should stay in front while the other is in the corner. This will evolve as they get older, but for now, focus on when to switch and protect the front.
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Peewees

For Peewees, we're looking at 70% skills and 30% systems.

Skills

- **Stick Skills:** Handling the puck on both forehand and backhand, especially in tight spots, helps players become creative. Practice using sticks effectively in battles, and work on catching pucks off the boards.
- **Passing:** Start introducing saucer passes and passes into open spaces where a teammate can pick it up. Not every pass will mean immediate possession, and that's okay.
- **Skating:** No more looping! Keep building those fundamentals, but focus on stopping and starting. Encourage players to stay below the puck, transition well, and open up to receive passes.

Systems

This is when we start introducing special teams, defensive zone draws, and zone entries.

- **Special Teams:** Players need to understand that just because we're on a power play (PP) doesn't mean they can take it easy. They've got to work just as hard.
 - **D-Zone Draws:** Everyone should line up the same way each time and know their responsibilities.
 - **Zone Entry:** On a 3-on-2, the middle player should drive to the net. Let's cut down on drop passes and aim for more 2-on-1s close to the goal.
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Bantams

At Bantams, we shift to about 60% skills and 40% systems.

Skills

- **Hand-Eye Coordination:** Tipping pucks and making plays with tips is important. Both the shooter and the tipper play a role in this, so we'll work on it.
- **Wrapped Pucks:** The game speeds up here, so players need to handle wrapped pucks more often. Passing speed, spin, and timing are everything.
- **Give and Go's:** Getting the puck, moving it, and getting it back should happen all over the rink. It helps with clean breakouts and creates quick scoring chances.
- **Shooting:** Players should practice one-timers with good power. A common struggle is stickhandling too much before shooting—let's work on shooting in stride.

Systems

More complex systems come into play at this level, like power play, penalty kill, and various forechecking setups.

- **Power Play:** We're aiming for a 1-1-3 setup (see Figure 2).
- **Penalty Kill:** Run a diamond shape and put pressure on the opponent's power play.
- **D-Zone Draws:** Let's keep it consistent and organized.
- **Forechecking:** This will change throughout the season—no one style fits all. Players should be familiar with 1-1-3, 2-1-2, and 1-2-2 so we can switch up mid-game.
- **Zone Entry/Chip and Chase:** On a 3-on-2 entry, the center lane player should drive to the net. At this level, players should learn the difference between a smart play and simply dumping the puck. We want possession, but sometimes a soft chip or wrap to the opposite corner is the best choice. The goal is always to make purposeful plays.

This guide is here to help players progress naturally—from mastering skills to learning systems—so they're ready to play competitive, fast hockey at every level.



Figure 1: D Zone Lineup on a Draw

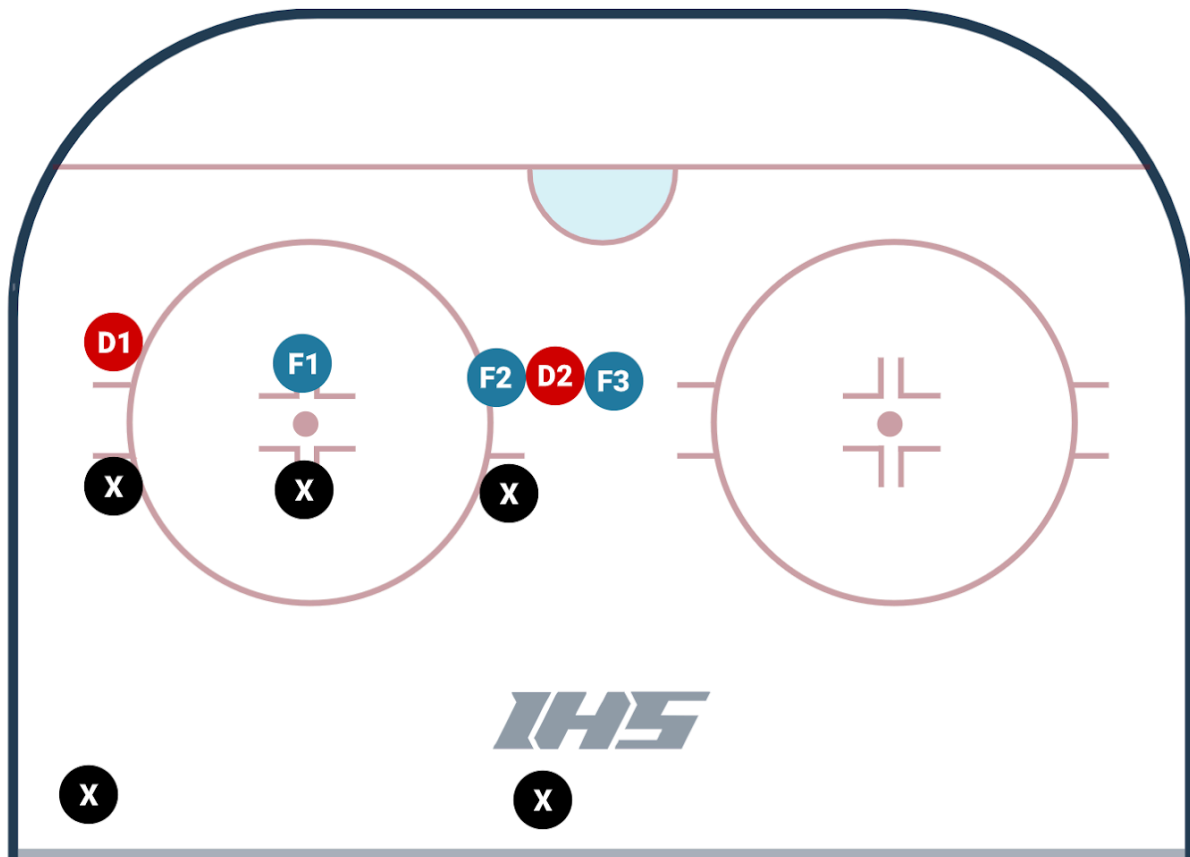
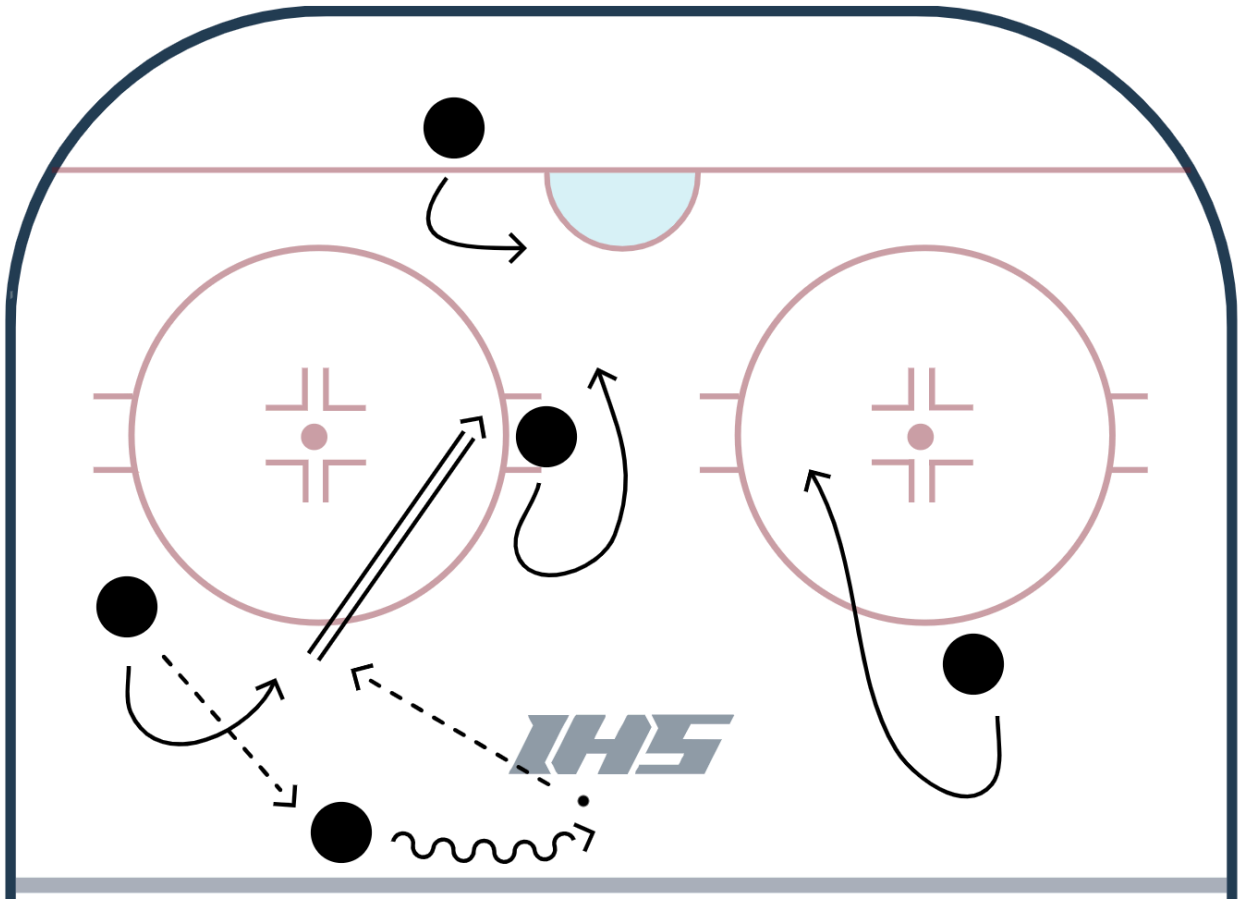
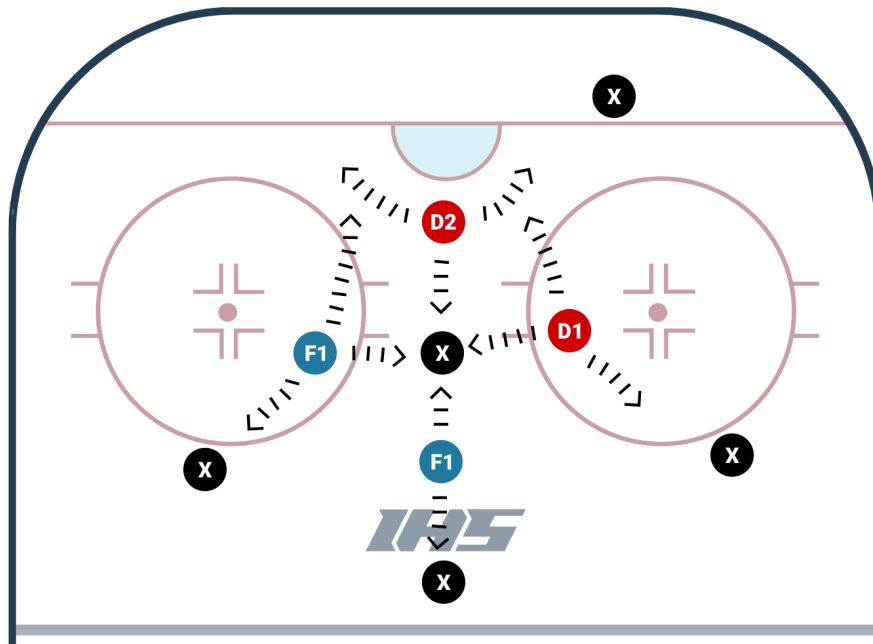


Figure 2: 1-3-1 PowerPlay Setup



Diamond PK



Example of a HS Game Sheet Keys

Prior Lake Game Notes -

- Discipline Hockey
- Win Face-Offs - Wings Help Out
- Smart Shift Lengths - Smart Changes
- Establish A Forecheck Early
- Efficient Dump-Ins - Soft Corner Dumps
- Be Hard To Play Against, and control the puck. control the play
- Win Special Teams
- NO HOPE PLAYS - Protect The Puck - Poise With Puck
- Play A Full 51 Minutes - STARTS FROM PUCK DROP

