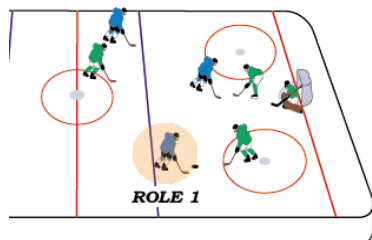
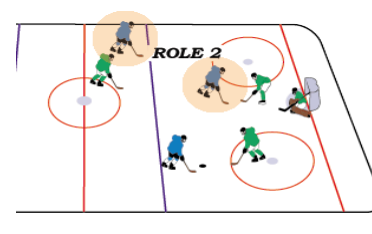


### THE FOUR PLAYER ROLES

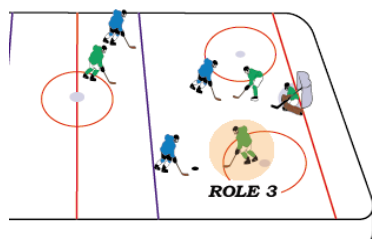
Both in offensive and defensive games, the moves of the players are determined by what role they are playing. The roles are determined by their closeness to the puck and whether they are on defense, offence or in transition. During any of these situations each player will be fulfilling one of the four playing roles.



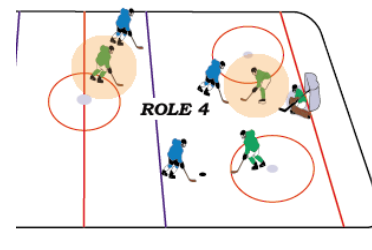
**Role One:** the puckcarrier, or for loose puck situations it is the offensive player closest to the puck.



**Role Two:** the other offensive players who support the puckcarrier by getting open for a pass, screening or giving width and depth to the attack.



**Role Three:** the checker (defensive player) closest to the puck or puckcarrier.



**Role Four:** the other defensive players who cover man-to-man or an area of the ice. All maintain the defensive side and deflect the attack to the outside. Depending on the distance from the puck and whether he is the third, fourth, or fifth player closest to the puck, the player in the fourth playing role must support by covering an opponent, switching, or double-teaming.

When each player assumes the proper playing role, the team can think in the same way. There is never a question of the goalie's role, and the same clarity of role and responsibility should apply for every player on the ice. Player roles constantly change in the game, and the players must be able to instantly react in the appropriate manner in all game situations. The puckcarrier must always move into open ice, but it is too difficult to be effective if his teammates don't also move into open ice. One defensive player always tries to force the puckcarrier wide out of the danger areas, and the other defenders support and eventually gain possession of the puck.