The background features a large, faint watermark of the New York Rangers logo. The logo is a shield with a red and white design, containing the words "NEW YORK" at the top and "RANGERS" at the bottom. The shield is outlined in white.

**DEFENSIVE ZONE  
COVERAGE  
IN THE  
“NEW” N.H.L.**



# **EMPLOY A SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY**

## **Protect the Middle of the Ice**

- The rink inside the rink
- Define 'your' prime scoring areas

## **Play Zone Defense**

- All five skaters defend an assigned area of the of the defensive zone
- The one on – box behind philosophy

## **Support the Critical Component to Good Defense**

- Create the confidence to be aggressive
- Position to allow for transition to offense

## **Create Simplicity and Clarity in Role (Job) Assignments**

- Clear uncomplicated jobs in each zone of coverage

## **The Goaltender Effect**

- Expectations for helping the goaltender
- Define areas of protection
- Goaltending philosophy's effect on DZC



# Hit Zone

- Create as much pressure as possible on the puck carrier
- Keep your stick on the puck
- Play the man
- Separate (if possible) the man from the puck



# **BASIC ZONE DEFENSE**

**Hit Zone**

**Support Zone**

**Net Zone**

**Slot Zone**

**Point Zone**



# Support Zone

- Keep your self between the puck and the net
- Two key reads:
  - 1) Hit Zone teammate
  - 2) Your opponents support man
- Two main roles
  - 1) On a finished check by your teammate (hit man), take possession of the puck
  - 2) If your team mate (hit man) is beaten 1 vs. 1 steer and play his man (take over the hit zone)

**NOTE:** Communication is a crucial tool in successful execution by the “hit” man and the “support” man. Their roles are interchangeable and dynamic.

# Net Zone

- Protect the “middle” of the ice
- Position so you can see the whole defensive zone (feet up ice)
- Two reads
  - 1) Oppositions 3rd forward in the attacking zone
  - 2) Hit zone/support zone – know when there is a threat of attacking the middle of the ice
- Half way concept – halfway between their 3rd forward and your net
- Lined up to take away a potential shot (i.e. penalty killing)
- Awareness of any threat from the backside (especially weak side defenseman)

# Slot Zone

- Responsibility for weak side defenseman but also positioned to help deny entry to prime scoring area in the slot
- Reads
  - 1) Where oppositions high (3rd) forward is positioned
  - 2) Who are puck carriers passing options
  - 3) Where is the weak side defenseman (means head on a swivel)
- Will collapse deeper versus imminent danger, will expand as threat against the middle of the ice subsides



# Point Zone

- Responsibility for strong side (puck side) defense man but also positioned to discourage entry into the prime scoring area
- Can collapse deeper when there is no passing threat to the strong side point, must close the gap as the passing (to the strong side point) threat grows
- Reads
  - 1) Position and aggressiveness of strong side D man
  - 2) The puck carrier and hit zone team mate
  - 3) Shows awareness of high man (3rd opposition forward)

# **SIMPLE DEFENSIVE ZONE ROTATION**

- Side to Side Low
- Low to High
- Side to Side High
- **Explanation of Grey Areas**
  - Face off hash marks to just above top of the face off circles
  - Behind the net (Gretzky plays)



# TRACKING BACK TO DEFENSIVE ZONE

- Protect the middle of the ice first – pressure the puck second COVERAGE
- Understanding the rink inside the rink
- We can afford to give up space in the outside rink – we must take away space in the inside rink
- Pressure is put on from the inside out
- Collapse first–expand as pressure on the puck increases and support is positioned
- Stop and start in “D” zone coverage
- Face the play (allow yourself to read the situations)

# TRANSITION

## THE PURPOSE FOR PLAYING GOOD DEFENSE

- Away from Pressure
- Short Side
- Connecting the dots – good defensive position leads to speed in transition
- Moving the puck away from pressure
- Generating support in transition



# **THE CHALLENGE OF NEW RULES IN THE NHL**

- **Obstruction as it pertains to sticks and to pinning in the hit zone**
- **Bigger Offensive Zone (more space from the top of the face off circle to the blue line)**
- **Support the Critical Component to Good Defense**



# **Obstruction as it pertains to Sticks and to pinning in the hit zone**

- **Teaching hit and release technique**
- **The importance of stick on puck technique while playing 1 vs 1's in hit zone**
- **Positioning of support man, freedom to react to all situations**



# **Bigger Offensive Zone (more space from the top of the face off circle to the blue line)**

- **Playing a collapsing – expanding zone defense**
- **Point zone – slot zone, don't over react and create space behind you (rink inside the rink)**
- **Playing point possessions like you might killing penalties – LINING UP!**



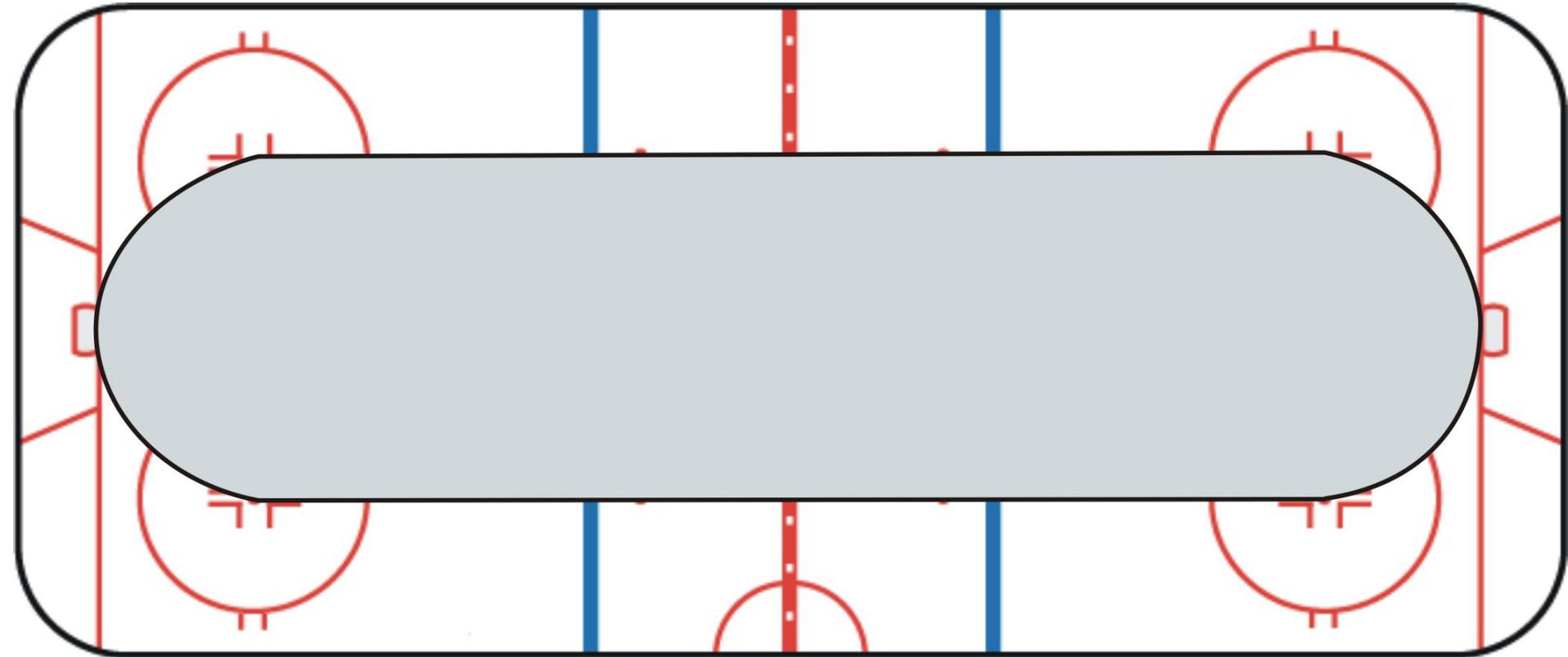
# Playing the front of the net on point shots

- Goalie philosophy (front shots or not)
- Positioning, key challenge is denying rebound shots

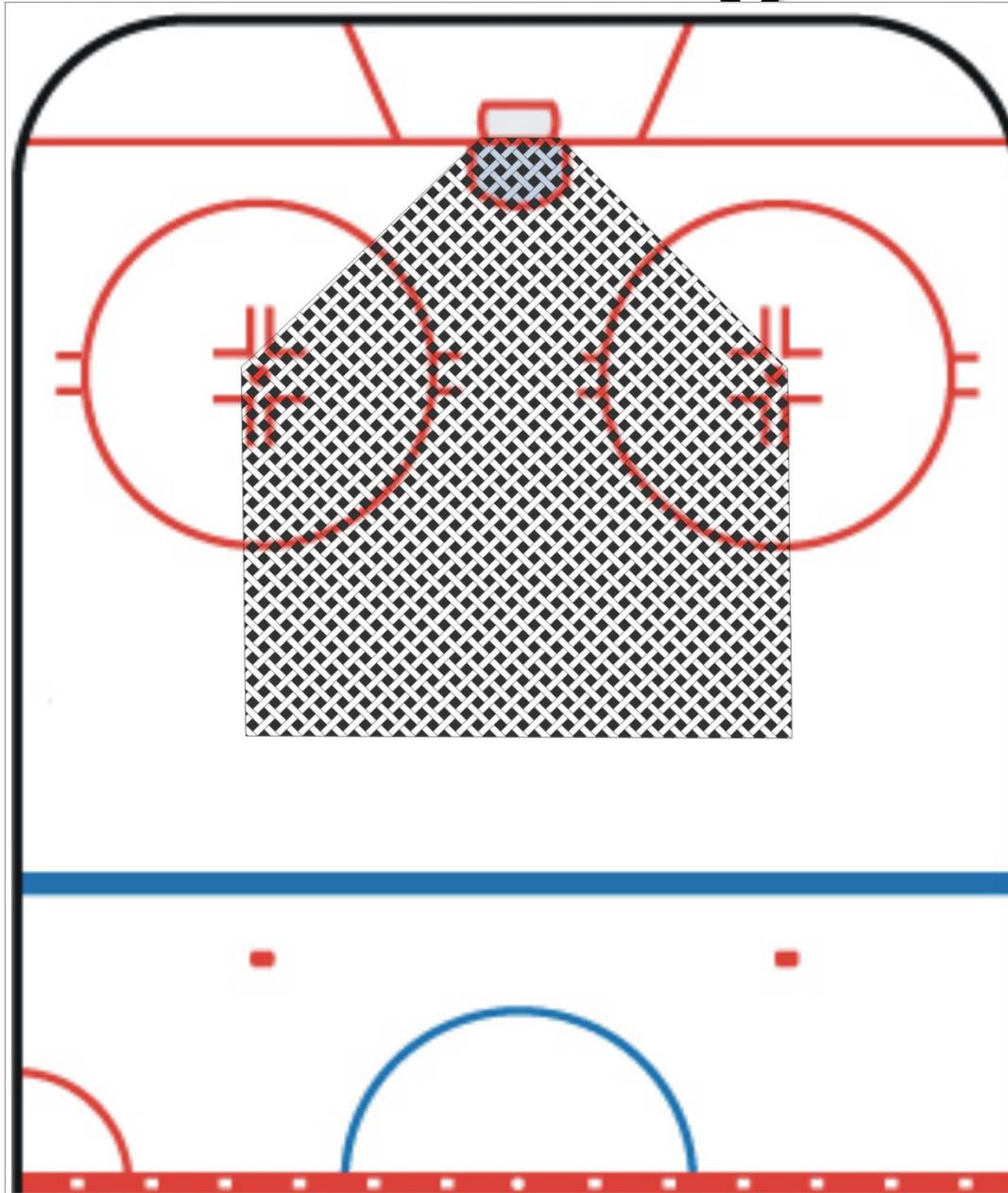




# The “Rink” Inside the Rink

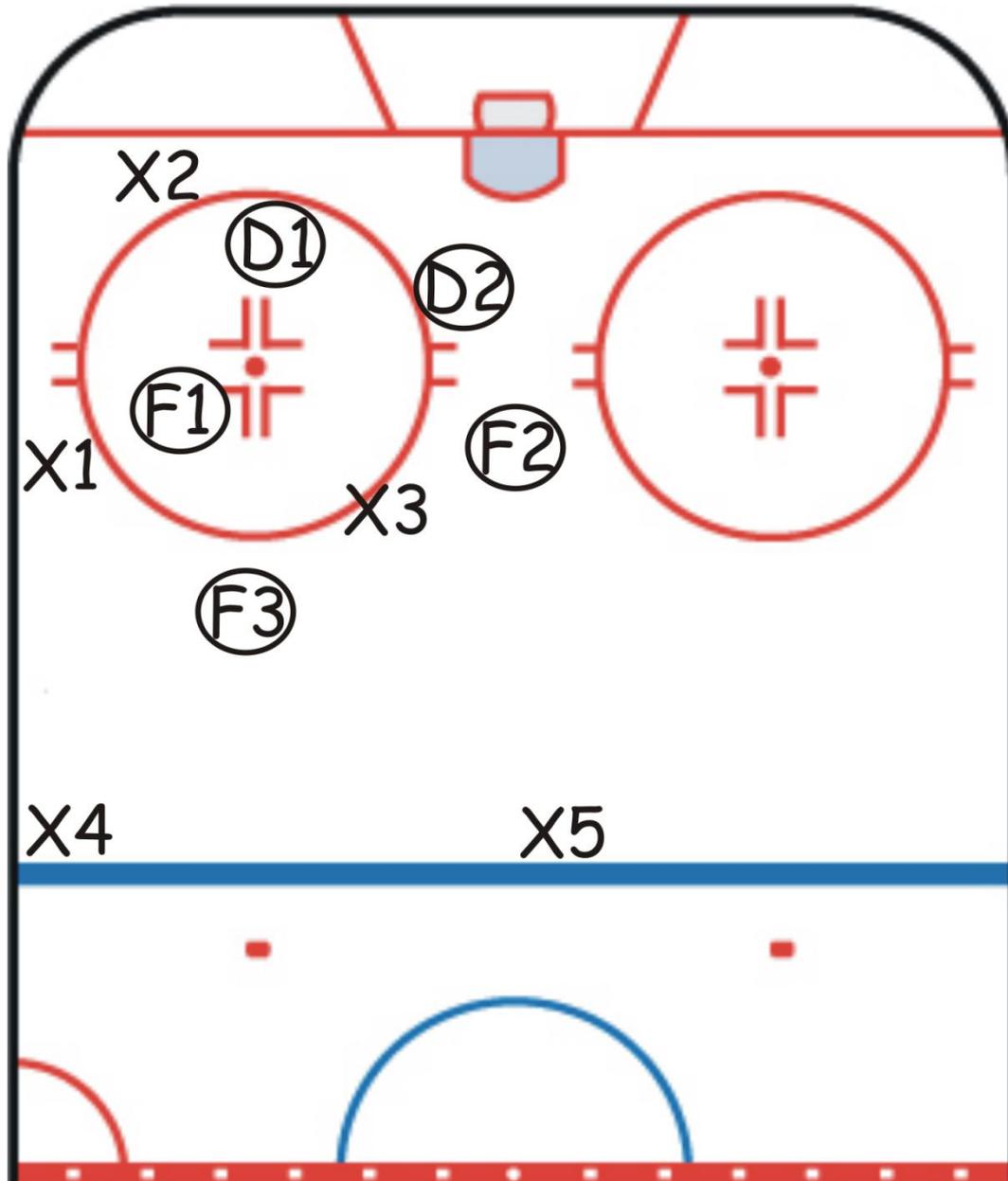


# “Prime” Scoring Areas

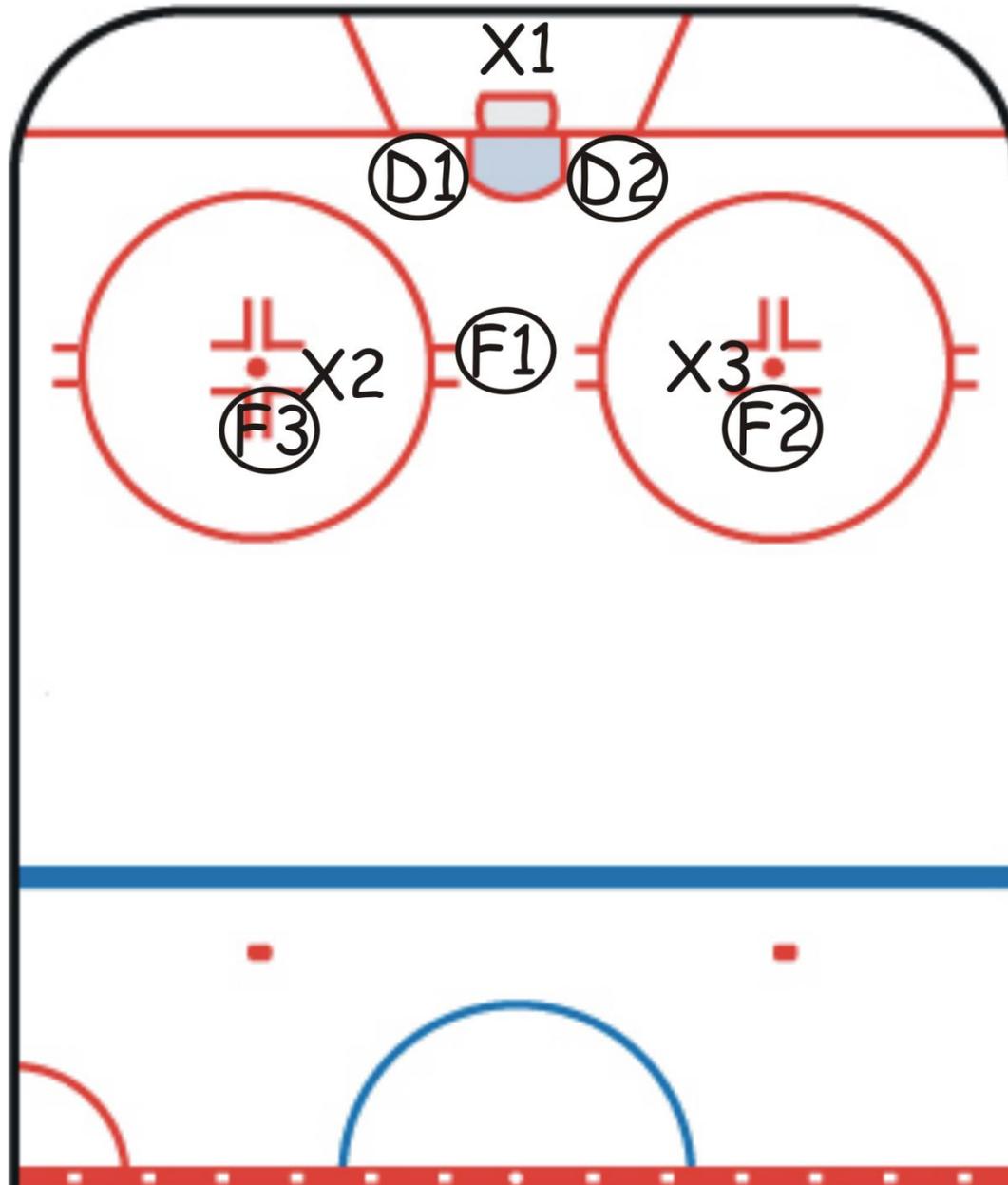




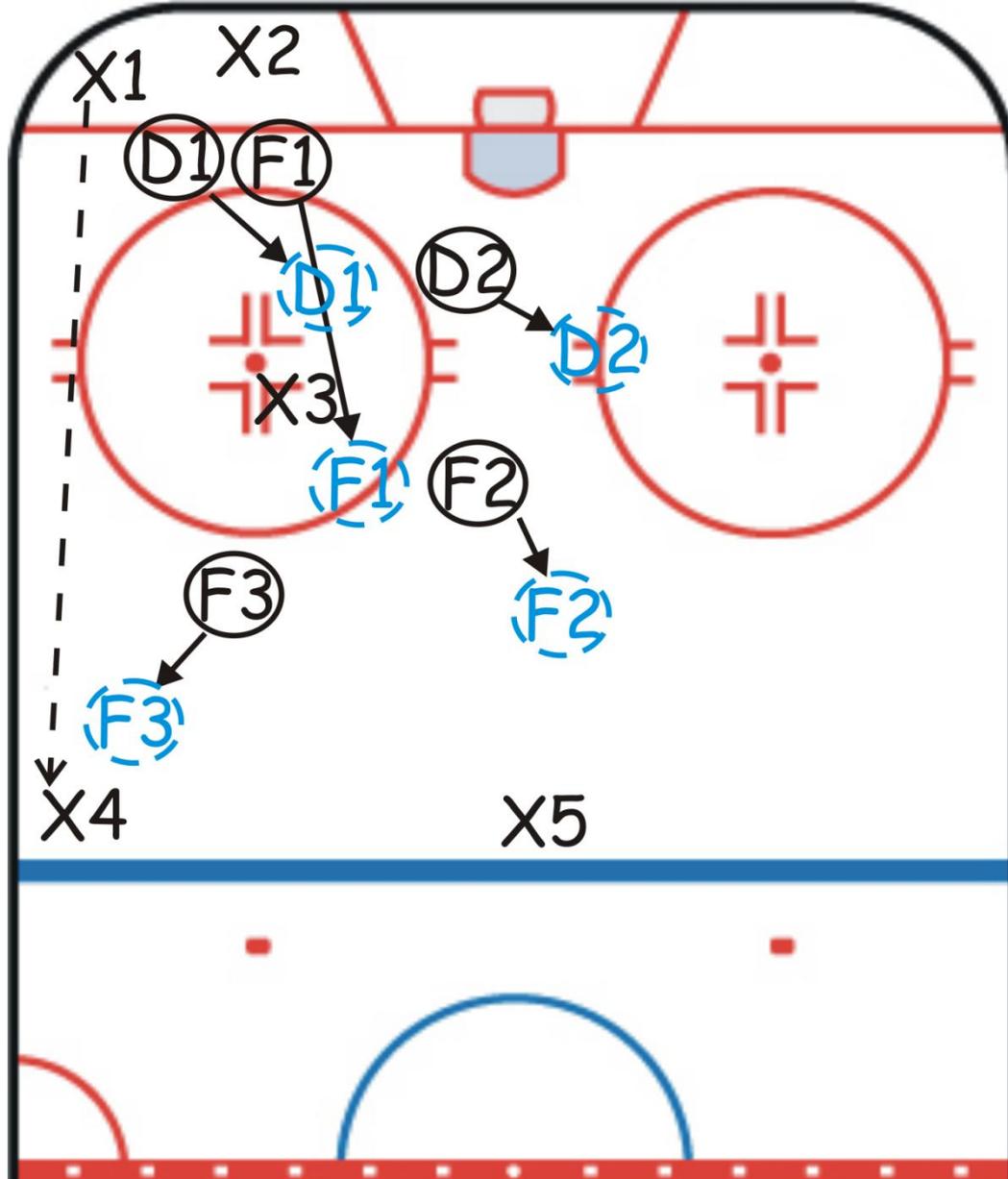
# Grey Areas



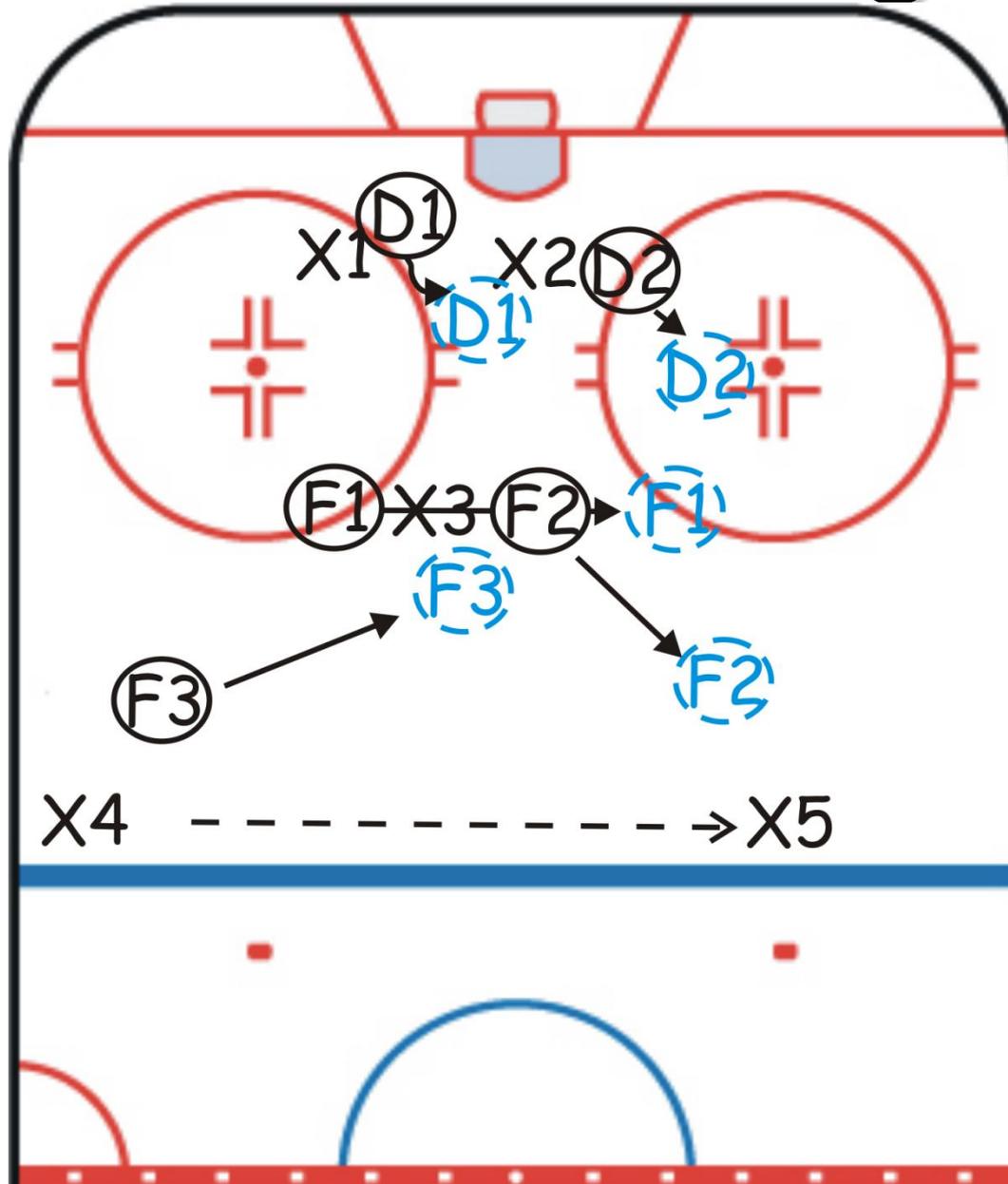
# Grey Areas



# Low to High



# Side to Side High



# Tracking Back to DZC

