

The Art of Passing and Receiving

Mike Johnston

GM/Coach

Portland Winterhawks



**WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY**

Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen

Game and Practice Analysis

- The biggest difference in play as players move up through the system is not skating, shooting, or puckhandling – it is passing and receiving.
- Puck possession time of elite players in a game ranges from 20 seconds to 70 seconds (as charted at the 2002 Olympics)
- Number of shots for the average player in a game is 1.8.
- The number of passes and receptions per player in a game is approximately 30.
- Today many teams want to play an up-tempo puck possession game and therefore the primary ingredient is passing and receiving.
- In an effectively run 60 minute practice a coach should be able to ensure every player passes and receives the puck at least 80 – 100 times. Now they have a chance to improve!



WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY
Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen

Passing

- Pass hard – even short passes should be crisp (habit)
- Sweep the puck
- Flat pass vs. saucer pass
- Triple threat option – best for deception and best for passing technique
- Quarterback in football – scans options and picks the best one
- Direct vs. indirect passes
- Area passes – to the space behind the checker – much more prevalent now with the new rules
- Using deception to buy time – great players all have mastered the art of deception

2010



**WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY**
Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen

Receiving

- Show a target – blade square to the passer – this is the most misunderstood skill in receiving
- Cushion and trap the puck
- Eliminate the practice 10ft bounce – clamp down on practice habits – players focus on reception
- In the offensive zone a player should have the blade ready at all times to shoot or receive a pass
- Receiver in football - move into holes – “get open” - eye on the passer
- Work to become an option – uncheck yourself – too many receivers make it easy for the defenders



**WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY**
Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen

Receiving (continued)

- Close support is first priority and then becoming a stretch support option is second
- Requires hockey intelligence – players who always get the puck usually read the play better than others - “hockey smarts” ie. puck follows them around
- Defensemen must not be so programmed to stay back - but know they must be active to get available for a pass – teams with four men off the puck active and looking to be an option are the most successful
- Passing to late attackers and players coming with speed from behind the play is an effective strategy
- Once you pass now work to become a receiver – don’t sit and admire your pass



**WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY**
Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen

Thank you!

INTERNATIONAL ICE HOCKEY FEDERATION

Mike Johnston
GM/Coach
Portland Winterhawks
Portland Oregon

PHONE +503-927-5118
MOBILE + 503-927-5118
E-MAIL mikej@winterhawks.com

www.IIHF.com



**WORLD
CHAMPIONSHIP
GERMANY**
Cologne - Mannheim
Gelsenkirchen