

Offensive Zone Entries

An analysis of Central Red Army vs. CJHL, March, 1995

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FOREWORD:

At the 1990 World Championships, Swedish coach Bjorn Kinding analyzed transition play, determining when and where it was most effective. His statistical summary concluded that a scoring chance must be gained within 10 seconds of puck recovery or risk reducing the chance to score by as much as 88%. He further postulated that a team had three seconds from puck recovery to mount an effective attack before the opposition could organize its defence.

These and other theories were further studied at the CODA International tournament in Calgary in March, 1993. There, he, the author and a group of other coaches carefully pinpointed the transition play of the Canadian Olympic team in games against the Czech Republic and Russia.

Little has been done at the junior level on aspects of transition play to see if what applied at the national level is similarly true at lower levels of play. At the CJHL playoffs in 1994, the author did an analysis of one team's transition play over 4 games. The results bore out many of Kinding's original views, particularly with respect to the trends teams have in moving from defence to offence. In general, it was observed that junior teams obviously take somewhat longer to make plays and are less consistent in positioning than professionals. However, they are subject to the same "rules" theorized by Kinding, specifically the need for quick movement with maximum use of the ice to obtain good scoring chances.

The visit of the Central Red Army junior club would enable a somewhat different view of transition. It would be interesting to see exactly what the Russians could do against local junior clubs AFTER regaining control from transition. This was something Kinding's original report and the Calgary project did not touch on - the specific type of offence used once a team went on the attack.

Considerations:

It is important to understand the conditions under which games are played. Both the World Championships and the CODA Tournament involved games with much at stake. How players react under such trying circumstances can be different from mere exhibition games. The Central Red Army's tour involved so many games against such a variety of teams, it would be difficult indeed for any team to maintain its intensity. Moreover, the host teams ranged from teams entering the playoffs and thus avoiding more rigorous play to those out of the playoffs whose motivation and intensity were inconsistent.

PROCESS:

1 - The author attended the Central Red Army's game against Smiths Falls Bears on March 5 to obtain anecdotal information on the style of the Russian team. While the Russians lost the game 5-3, it was their third consecutive game night. As well, the Smiths Falls rink is quite small and likely provided the visitors with a more difficult challenge to mount their traditional attacks than they expected. To the Bears' credit, however, their forechecking style and clogging of the small neutral zone made Russian attacks of more than two players the exception rather than the rule.

It was evident that controlled regroupings and one-touch passes could not beat the Smiths Falls system unless individual players made exceptional plays.

2 - The analysis began with the game against Cumberland Grads on March 12. Central Red Army won the game 6-2. Here, the Russians were permitted much more room to manoeuvre against a defensive style whose cohesion was suspect. While the study focused on zone entries, it would have been interesting to break down the Russians' scoring chances since it appeared so many plays were ruined either by poor shooting or excessive passing.

3 - There are numerous obvious differences between Canadian and Russian style offences, particularly on the transition from defence. In order to compare and contrast, an analysis was done of a Cornwall-Gloucester CJHL playoff game on March 15 from the perspective of the Gloucester Rangers. This team was chosen since they are hosting the Centennial Cup and further analysis of their play will be done during that tournament. The results of this one-game mini-study are included.

4 - The second Russian game was against the Nepean Raiders on March 19 which the Central Red Army won 10-1. In terms of simply examining the Russian style, the game was ideal since it was played on a large, fast surface. It was unfortunate that the host Nepean team made little effort to thwart their attackers' rushes.

offensive zone entries -3-

Key for Chart's columns

- Time: Time was recorded the moment the offensive team crossed centre ice.
If the offensive team regained possession on the offensive half of centre, the time was recorded as soon as the puck was under their control.
- Lanes filled: Lanes were determined by the faceoff dots.
Which lanes were filled when the puck entered the offensive zone (including the puckcarrier's lane)? (A player travelling in line with the dots was considered to be in the middle lane.)
When the raw data was recorded, the puckcarrier's lane was circled.
- # on SS: This refers to the number of attackers on the strong side of the rink.
To identify offensive support, attackers were strong side if they were across centre AND on the puck carrier's half of the rink, width-wise.
- # of att.: The total number of attackers, including the puckcarrier.
Any player on the offensive side of centre was considered part of the attack.
- Movement: How did the puck enter the offensive zone?
Ca, Dp, St, Was it carried, dumped in, shot on net, passed,
P, Rg or was it from a regroup?
- S.C. 1/2/3: What scoring chance ensued from the zone entry?
1 - An outstanding chance from inside the dots beneath the tops of the circles.
2 - A good chance from outside that area, or one inside the area foiled by a strong defensive play.
3 - A long shot, weak drive, or poor pass.
- Time to S.C.: How much time from the moment the puck crossed centre (recorded in the first column) to the first scoring chance?

O.D.H.A. Game Analysis - Offensive zone entries

Date: _____ Teams: _____ vs. _____

Period: _____ Goals in this period by _____ = _____
 _____ = _____

(Entries are timed from moment offensive team gets puck over centre line)

#	Time	Lanes filled	# on SS	# of att.	Movement:			S.C. 1/2/3	Time to S.C.
					Ca	Dp	Rg		
					St	P			
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									

*** Lanes filled: Right lane = 1, Centre = 2, Left lane = 3
 (Attack lane is circled)

2-Game Totals: Central Red Army vs. Cumberland & Nepean

An Analysis

Total number of zone entries = 145 Entries: Even strength = 88
Power-play = 52
Penalty-kill. = 5

61% of C.R.A. entries were in even strength situations.

Goals scored directly from entries = 12 of 16 in 2 games (75%)

Time to goals scored:

≤ 5 seconds = 4 6-10 seconds = 7 > 10 seconds = 1

Scoring 11 goals in under 10 seconds means that C.R.A. scored 69% of its goals in two games directly from entries. This would support Bjorn Kinding's contention of the importance of quick transition to obtain good scoring chances.

Scoring chances:

<u>1st class</u>	<u>2nd class</u>	<u>3rd class</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
24	29	24	77

Time to scoring chance:

≤ 5 seconds = 50 6-10 seconds = 21 > 10 seconds = 6

If we assume that a 1st or 2nd class chance is a dangerous one, then 69% of C.R.A.'s chances were dangerous.

More importantly, 92% of their chances came within 10 seconds of the puck crossing centre.

The raw data bore out other interesting statistics. All of C.R.A.'s goals scored from entries were on 1st or 2nd class opportunities. There were no "sloppy" or low percentage shot goals. Furthermore, of the 53 1st and 2nd class chances, 61% occurred in less than 5 seconds from the puck crossing centre.

<u>Lanes filled:</u>	<u>3 lanes</u>	<u>2 lanes</u>	<u>1 lane</u>
Even strength	23	43	22
Power-play	21	28	3
Penalty-kill.	0	1	4
Total =	44 (30%)	72 (50%)	29 (20%)

The success of C.R.A.'s offence is due to a number of factors aside from the speed with which the team obtains its scoring chances. Since width and depth of attack are two prime requisites for strong offence, the above illustrates that 75% of even strength attacks utilized at least two-thirds of the ice. Including specialty situations, 80% of attacks did so.

analysis of Central Red Army games -2-

<u>2-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left & centre</u>	<u>Centre & right</u>	<u>Left & right</u>
	32	24	16

78% of 2-lane attacks used adjacent lanes.

The raw data indicated that over 60% of 2-lane attacks using the centre/left or centre/right combination resulted in no scoring chance at all. It appeared that the Russians' attack needed 3-lanes to be the most effective.

<u>1-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
	9	17	3

16 of the 29 single-lane attacks resulted in scoring chances, a mere 55%. This does not mean only 1 player was involved. It simply means offensive support, if any, was from the rear rather than the side.

Total per lane where puck enters:

<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
65	37	43

The puck entered the offensive zone in an outside lane on 74% of entries.

When the puck entered through the centre lane, the Russians obtained more than twice as many scoring chances as if it entered through either of the outside lanes. The right and left lanes each produced 23% of scoring chances.

Of the 12 goals scored on entries, 5 emanated from each of the right and centre lanes, only 2 from the left lane.

Number of players on strong side (excluding puckcarrier):

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
30	84	31

This indicates that on nearly 80% of entries, there was support on the puckcarrier's half of the rink.

78% of all scoring chances occurred with 1 or 2 players providing such support.

Total number of attackers on an entry (including puckcarrier):

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
21	45	64	15

86% of entries involved 2 or more attackers.

87% of all scoring chances involved 2 or more attackers and 11 of the 12 goals came from these entries.

Movement of puck into offensive zone:

<u>Carry</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Dump</u>	<u>Shot</u>	<u>Regroup</u>
111	20	5	2	7

March 12, 1995 - Central Red Army 6, Cumberland Grads 2

Total number of zone entries = 61 Entries: Even strength = 40
Power-play = 18
Penalty-kill. = 3

Goals scored directly from entries = 6

Time to goals scored:

≤ 5 seconds = 3 6-10 seconds = 3 > 10 seconds = 0

Lanes filled: 3 lanes 2 lanes 1 lane
Even strength 10 22 8

Power-play 8 8 2

Penalty-kill. 0 1 2

Total = 18 31 12

2-lane attacks: Left & centre Centre & right Left & right
 13 9 9

1-lane attacks: Left Centre Right
 1 9 2

Total attacks per lane where puck enters:

Left Centre Right
16 24 21

Number of players on strong side (excluding puckcarrier):

0 1 2
14 32 15

Total number of attackers on an entry (including puckcarrier):

1 2 3 4
10 18 26 7

Movement of puck into offensive zone:

Carry Pass Dump Shot Regroup
48 7 4 1 1

Scoring chances:

1st class 2nd class 3rd class TOTAL
10 13 10 33

Time to scoring chance:

≤ 5 seconds = 26 6-10 seconds = 5 > 10 seconds = 2

March 19, 1995 - Central Red Army 10, Nepean Raiders 1

Total number of zone entries = 84 Entries: Even strength = 48
Power-play = 34
Penalty-kill. = 2

Goals scored directly from entries = 6

Time to goals scored:

≤ 5 seconds = 1 6-10 seconds = 4 > 10 seconds = 1

<u>Lanes filled:</u>	<u>3 lanes</u>	<u>2 lanes</u>	<u>1 lane</u>
Even strength	13	21	14
Power-play	13	20	1
Penalty-kill.	0	0	2
Total =	26	41	17
<u>2-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left & centre</u>	<u>Centre & right</u>	<u>Left & right</u>
	19	15	7
<u>1-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
	8	8	1

Total attacks per lane where puck enters:

<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
21	41	22

Number of players on strong side (excluding puckcarrier):

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
16	52	16

Total number of attackers on an entry (including puckcarrier):

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
11	27	38	8

Movement of puck into offensive zone:

<u>Carry</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Dump</u>	<u>Shot</u>	<u>Regroup</u>
63	13	1	1	6

Scoring chances:

<u>1st class</u>	<u>2nd class</u>	<u>3rd class</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
14	16	14	44

Time to scoring chance:

≤ 5 seconds = 24 6-10 seconds = 16 > 10 seconds = 4

March 15, 1995 - Ottawa Senators 5, Gloucester Rangers 2

* These statistics are for the Gloucester Rangers *

Total number of zone entries = 52 Entries: Even strength = 37
Power-play = 14
Penalty-kill. = 1

Goals scored directly from entries = 0

Time to goals scored:

≤ 5 seconds = -- 6-10 seconds = -- > 10 seconds = --

<u>Lanes filled:</u>	<u>3 lanes</u>	<u>2 lanes</u>	<u>1 lane</u>
Even strength	3	23	11
Power-play	5	9	0
Penalty-kill.	0	1	0
Total =	8	33	11

<u>2-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left & centre</u>	<u>Centre & right</u>	<u>Left & right</u>
	17	12	4

<u>1-lane attacks:</u>	<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
	0	8	3

Total attacks per lane where puck enters:

<u>Left</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>Right</u>
9	25	18

Number of players on strong side (excluding puckcarrier):

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
12	24	13	3

Total number of attackers on an entry (including puckcarrier):

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
6	20	18	8

Movement of puck into offensive zone:

<u>Carry</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Dump</u>	<u>Shot</u>	<u>Regroup</u>
44	0	5	5	0

Scoring chances:

<u>1st class</u>	<u>2nd class</u>	<u>3rd class</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
6	9	14	29

Time to scoring chance:

≤ 5 seconds = 13 6-10 seconds = 13 > 10 seconds = 3