# ABOVE THE PUCK

**COACH'S CUE SHEET | SYLVANIA NORTH STARS 11U | WEEK OF OCT. 26, 2026**

## ONE MESSAGE ALL WEEK

**"Stay connected. Protect the middle. Be ready for the next play."**
Above the puck means keeping support on the side of the puck toward our own net, especially when possession is uncertain. Stay close enough to help win it back and see both puck and threat. This is active support: pressure still attacks the puck; support protects what comes next.

## SCAN - SUPPORT - COMPETE

**SCAN:** "Puck, middle, next threat." Look before moving and as possession changes.
**SUPPORT:** "Who is above? Show an outlet." Adjust depth and angle as the puck moves.
**COMPETE:** "Lose it? Inside first, then pressure." First three strides recover useful position.

| ZONE / JOB | SHORT CUES | WHAT COACHES SHOULD SEE |
|---|---|---|
| OFFENSIVE<br>Pressure + F3 | "One hunts. Next helps. Third stays above." "Pinch? Who covers?" | F1 pressures with purpose; F2 supports the battle. F3 stays higher and inside, adjusts with the puck, and protects the middle. D pinch with support; partner protects depth. |
| NEUTRAL<br>Reload + connect | "Inside first." "Get above their speed." "Close together." | Nearest skater angles the carrier. Others recover through middle lanes, track threats and match speed. D manage the gap with support; avoid several skaters chasing the same puck. |
| DEFENSIVE<br>Inside + goal side | "Net side. Stick inside." "See puck and player." "Win it? Give an outlet." | Keep body between assigned threat and our net. Nearest player pressures; teammates protect slot and passing lanes. On recovery, spread into usable outlets without leaving the puck isolated. |

## COACH THE DECISION - KEEP THE CORRECTION SHORT

**All three deep:** "Who has above?" Let players identify the missing layer.
**Support too far away:** "Two strides closer; keep your angle." Avoid a stationary safety player.
**Turnover, then a wide loop:** "Three hard strides inside; find your threat."
**Good read:** "You stayed above, took away middle, and we won it back."

## ASK, REPLAY, REINFORCE

At a natural pause: **"If we lose it now, who protects the middle?"** Use a brief freeze only when needed; move players into position and replay. In station work and the battle game, praise a recovery, interception or quick attack created by good support above the puck.

## WEEKLY OBSERVATION CHECK

Track three things: **F3 above when the puck is contested; inside recovery after turnovers; a connected outlet after we win it.** Record one clear example per practice. Judge the read and positioning, not just whether a goal follows.