



# MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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## Advanced Rebound Control

Goaltenders have often been compared to a general, the army leader taking the troops to battle, the person who stays calm in the face of attack. As the person teammates look to for confidence and strength, it is important the goaltender is able to read the situation at hand, in order to control the flow of the game, to give their team a chance to win. The best way for a goaltender to show they understand the needs of their team is to be able to control their rebounds in a way that controls the pace of the game. The basic equation of GRC (good rebound control) + GPC (game pacing control) = ICW (increased chance of winning) holds true for a goaltender with advanced rebound control. Since advanced rebound control is an integral part of goaltending an in-depth MTN analysis is required.

### The Five Rebound Control Priorities

In almost any practice/game situation a goaltender can encounter a number of different variables that effect how well a rebound is controlled. Despite the possible complications of any situation a goaltender that focuses on the five rebound control priorities, in the order they appear, will have a greater chance for success.

1. **Control the puck at the body.** Goaltenders should always strive to control the puck at the body. Controlling the puck at the body may involve an active glove, body traps, or using active stick skills to pull in rebounds for a whistle. The reason a goaltender should strive to control the puck at the body is that it is the safest form of rebound control that allows the goaltender to make a decision whether to freeze the puck for a whistle or safely become involved in the transition. If in doubt... control the puck at the body for a whistle.
2. **Deflect the puck over the glass.** By sending the puck over the glass the goaltender has controlled the flow of the game by incurring a whistle. Sending the puck over the glass ensures that the opposition will not get another shot on net making the situation less dangerous. The best tactics to deflect the puck over the glass is to use a strong stick with angle approach, or deflect the puck with the glove, blocker or shoulder.
3. **Deflect the puck into the corner.** In the past coaches told their goaltenders to send the rebounds into the corner. The major disadvantage to option three is that the puck is still in play with a strong chance the opposition will gain possession of the puck with a possibility of another scoring situation. A deflection to the corner is best done with the stick (if pulled back into the pads or the shot does not have enough momentum to be deflected over the glass), blocker, or pads (as long as the pad is not too square to the play).
4. **Send the rebound directly back to the shooter.** There may be times where the goaltender has a hard time seeing the entire trajectory of a shot or has traffic close to the goalie requiring a square rebound. A square rebound has a trajectory directly back towards the initial shooter. Yes, the attacker may get another shot on goal but, the shooter may miss rebound attempt, rush the shot/panic, and will most likely shoot the puck directly at the goaltender. If the shot is taken

immediately the goaltender does not need to panic because they are already in position for the second shot.

5. **Direct the rebound away from the shooter.** This may sound similar to the rest of the rebound options but this option requires a more aggressive approach to rebounds. This approach involves sending “hard” rebounds that move too fast for an open player to control or may require the goaltender to direct the puck to a teammate or out of the zone. This option is very advanced as a goaltender must understand the mechanics of rebound control and be able to read a situation very well.

As a goaltender progresses into elite hockey they will begin to understand when and why they use different rebound control tactics with the most important and safest option being control at the body. Now that the goaltender understands different types of rebound control they can now apply some...

### Save Selections for Advanced Rebound Control

#### Stick with Angle

The stick with angle approach takes the stick from the traditional six inches in front of the goaltender’s skates to one foot or more away from the skates depending on a goaltender’s stance and stick paddle length. Below is an example of the stick with angle approach from a ready stance.



*Blocker side view*

*View from in front*

*Glove side view*

*Notice that a stick with angle also brings the hands forward creating a more balanced ready stance*

A stick with angle from a standing position requires the goaltender rotate the blade of the stick in an arc without pulling the stick back in towards the feet.

By simply moving the stick in an arcing pattern the goaltender increases the chance of deflecting the puck over the glass and with greater stick control.

The true benefits of the stick with angle approach come when making a save from the down position whether using a butterfly or half butterfly save selection. When driving into a down save selection the goaltender will place more pressure on the back of the blade. **\*\*The goaltender will feel the pressure of the stick with the front of the forearm and wrist.\*\*** In order to place more pressure on the back of the blade the goaltender must keep the hands and stick forward. The goaltender must be sure to keep the stick forward with angle so as not to open the hole between the blocker and body. **\*\*The hands and stick forward will automatically close the holes between the arms and body without the goaltender squeezing the arms.\*\*** In the following examples the goaltender maintains strong stick with angle without compromising coverage of the five hole or holes by the body.



*Notice the hands and stick are forward.*

*The stick with angle improves coverage and balance.*

*All that is required to deflect the puck high and into the corner is a simple arcing of the stick. No wrist flip, which leaves the goaltender vulnerable to deflections or shots off the hip, is required.*

The stick with angle approach has many benefits. The first benefit is the closure of holes through or under the body. A compact save selection will make a goaltender more successful with greater chance of controlling the puck at the body. With the stick forward even a goaltender with a really wide butterfly will be more balanced; less likely to fall backwards. By arcing the stick rather than using a wrist flip to direct the puck to the corners the goaltender has kept the arms compact and eliminated a premature lifting of the stick thus reducing the amount of movement and reducing the chance of error. The most impressive benefit of the stick with angle is the consistency of being able to deflect the puck over the glass or into the torso.

Why would a goaltender want to deflect the puck up into the torso? By deflecting the puck up into the body the goaltender can then use a body cradle and glove hand trap to control the rebound at the body. Even if the puck does not ramp up the stick into the body the puck will still “give” leaving a rebound that is close to the body for an easy cover up. In some cases the rebound will automatically be deflected high into the corner without any stick movement. Coupled with the following the stick with angle approach the following rebound control tactics will help to increase goaltender success.

### Body Cradle with Glove Hand Trap

One of the best ways to control a rebound on a shot a foot high or higher is to use a body cradle. The body cradle can be used when a goaltender is using a butterfly or paddle down save selection. The body cradle involves proper timing and proper read of the shot release. What happens in a body cradle is that the goaltender collapses the body once the puck is about to hit the torso. Collapsing the body means that the goaltender will drop the upper body from the upright position for a normal butterfly movement; see “Butterfly Basics”. The body will collapse, like an accordion, while maintaining balance and closing holes. By collapsing as the puck impacts the body the puck will become caught in the chest and arm protection controlling the puck at the body. In order to aid a body cradle most goaltenders will use the hands to trap the body in case the rebound is moving fast enough to bounce away.



*The goaltender maintains balance and uses the hands to aid in rebound control.  
The puck will lose momentum and stick to the torso or drop into the glove.*

Even the body cradle has an advanced technique that further aids with rebound control. Rather than try to use both hands to help the body cradle the goaltender should strive to only use the glove to aid with the body cradle. By only using the glove to work with the body cradle the goaltender is able to maintain strong compactness with the blocker and body as well as keeping the stick in position to cover the five hole. The benefit of keeping the stick and blocker in position is for guarding against possible deflections. Most often a puck that is shot in the air is more likely to be deflected downwards thus a goaltender that maintains compactness and stick position will stop a handful or two worth of goals from going in per season. A few less goals against may seem insignificant but may make a big difference during the season. Take a look at the example below.



*The blocker and stick maintain control while the glove controls the puck at the body.  
Very little coverage is lost in case of deflection.*

### Body Activation

The final and most advanced rebound control technique is the use of body activation. Body activation can be broken down into the idea that the goaltender will shift the body into the path of the



puck in order to get the most body behind the puck as possible. By placing as much body/equipment behind the puck as possible there is less chance of having the puck find a hole or miss an out-stretched limb.

The execution of body activation involves the goaltender pushing laterally to meet the puck with as much body as possible. In most cases the body must only shift a couple of inches to a maximum of two feet. The goaltender must be able to explode into the save with control in order to maintain angle and compactness. Most often a body activation will involve a butterfly slide into the new position. **\*\*A** goaltender's ready stance must not be too wide to ensure more power for a push into a save. If the ready stance is too wide the goaltender loses the power of extending the pushing leg.**\*\*** By activating the body the goaltender has improved the chances of controlling the puck at the body.



*The goaltender is pushing/ activating the body towards a high blocker shot  
The body is controlled. Strong visual attachment is key.*

Body activation is especially helpful in a deflection situation because the puck has changed angle because the deflector is the new shooter. A deflection should be considered a new shot from a new shooting angle which requires an adjustment by the goaltender; body activation is the best way to make the angle adjustment.

In conclusion, a goaltender that has superior rebound control through the use of the advanced rebound control techniques will have the ability to control the game leading to increased success. Be a leader, take charge, and control the team's destiny through these helpful hints.