



MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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Goaltending Quick Hit #1 – Working with Multiple Goalie Coaches

This is the first installment of what we will title “Goaltending Quick Hits”; a quick look at something goaltender related in no more than three paragraphs. We hope you enjoy these pieces...

We get asked this many times during a season, “what should we do if our in-season goalie coach does not teach the same way (or same things) as you do?” First, it is still very strange to hear this question because 15-20 years ago a goaltender was lucky to have a quality goaltender coach even come out to practice to work with the goaltenders. Our first response is to enjoy the experience, as best as possible, because having quality goaltender coaching is still a luxury during the hockey season. It is important that goaltenders try to learn as much as they can, from as many sources as possible, throughout their entire careers. Different perspectives on goaltending and the position is always good to see and should not be a detriment to the goaltenders involved. As much as we, or any other goalie schools, may wish a student continues to work exclusively with one goaltender school/coach it is important to see what else is available or what other information can be found in the goaltending community.

Now, in order to make the transition to a different goaltending coach easier it is important that the goaltender is getting an explanation as to WHY they are being taught something. Once an explanation is provided it is then up to the goaltender to try, in practice, to do some of the things being suggested by the new goaltender coach. By experimenting with the new material the goaltender will make themselves appear to be coachable, which gets the coach-goalie relationship off to a good start. After the new information is processed, and experimented with, it is up to the goaltender to decide if the new techniques, strategies fit into their game effectively; if it is ready for game use. If they do, GREAT! If not, then the goaltender has at least attempted the new information, but must know why the new technique does not work for them. As goaltenders we should always expect to know why we should incorporate a new technique or why something does not work for us.

Unfortunately, there are times where one goalie coach tells a student that everything the other goalie coach or school teaches is completely wrong. This is an unfortunate circumstance that is starting to happen all too regularly. Goaltending, like life, does not have a lot of absolutes so for one goalie coach to say that another is completely wrong is usually the first sign of a coach that should be avoided. Goalies can still learn what not to do from a poor goalie coach. If the new goalie coach is not able to explain their methodology effectively this is usually a sign that the coach does not fully understand what and why they teach something themselves. If the goalie coach does not know why they teach something, or tries to completely overhaul a goalie’s game during the season, they are goalie coaches to be avoided. Despite, Mind The Net Goaltending, seeing some instruction that seems counter-intuitive we work hard not to say that what is being taught by another goalie coach is categorically and completely wrong; things don’t work that

way. All we can do is try our best to know WHY and WHEN to use a technique, tactic or strategy. If the goalie coach feels the need to completely change a goaltender's game, without thorough explanation, then it is up to the coach to talk to their parents and coaches about whether to continue with the new goalie coach or not.