



# MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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## Goaltending Quick Hit #4 – Gaining that Competitive Edge

There is lots of talk in the goaltending community about the need for goalies that are not just fundamentally sound, but are able to battle/compete when something unexpected arises. The goalie must be the most competitive player on the team, even moreso than any other player. This one is dedicated to Scott Frizzell at the SHA; three simple keys, among many, to gaining a competitive edge as a goaltender:

The first way a goaltender is able to gain a competitive edge over other goalies is to do everything possible to **KEEP THE EYES ON THE PUCK, AT ALL TIMES**. Everything we do as a goaltender is based off of visual cues/inputs. Basically, if we see the puck we can often, very successfully, keep the puck out of the net. In order to see the puck at all times the goalie must do whatever is necessary to see the puck, regardless of what others are doing or what position a goaltender may find themselves in. Whether facing a massive screen or appearing to be down and out the goaltender must move themselves in a way as to allow them to see the puck. Possible tactics make include looking around, under, over, beside an object that distorts their view or by attempting to intelligently find a puck that may be lost for a moment. Basically, all goaltending begins with a burning desire to keep the eyes on the puck, as much as humanly possible.



In order to give oneself a chance to make a game saving play in every situation goaltenders need to be able to battle hard to get their body into a position to make stops. Just by establishing and holding one's ground the goalie has shown a compete level by showing they are in control of the situation at hand. Often scouts and coaches do not understand that getting into proper position, as much as possible, takes a very high compete level. Learning to gain position at the same time, or even before, a pass receiver gets a pass shows the goalie is aware their best option for success is to gain that proper position. Conversely, there are times when a goaltender

will not be able to get their whole body into position to make a save, or are required to do something desperate. Goaltenders need to have the ability to pull out a desperate street hockey move to keep the puck out of the net. Although a goalie that is always making desperation saves shows a lack of competitiveness (does not have drive to do little things correctly) every goalie, no matter how fundamentally sound, must have the skills set to pull something crazy out of the toolbox when required. Think of watching the TSN highlights of an NHL goalie like Pekka Rinne; TSN shows the goalie making one or two huge saves in the highlight pack, but often those are the only two times that goalie needed to do something desperate. Desperation goaltenders are not competitors, goalies that push and battle to gain full body position at all times with the ability to use some street hockey moves mixed in, are the competitors.



The last thing EVERY goaltender needs is a never give up, never say die attitude. Goaltenders are needed to cover up the mistakes of their teammates, no matter how often it happens and must be willing to do anything necessary to keep the puck out of the net. A goaltender must never give up on a play, no matter how dire the situation may look keep battling until the whistle, between every whistle, from the start of the game to the end of multiple OT's. The most successful goalies in the world have a strong technical base to work from, but have the ability to play outside the fundamentals box and NEVER give up on a play, no matter how ugly the save may be.

