



MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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How do you let go of goals against?

“Another shutout in the books for illustrious goalie...” exclaims Hockey Night in Canada announcer Jim Hughson. Just then your alarm goes off. It was just a dream. Unfortunately, as much as goalies would love it, no goalie has ever gotten a shutout in every game of a season. Hockey is a game of mistakes which sometimes includes a goalie’s mistakes. Since we all know that goals are going to happen we need to discuss ways to stop goals from ruining what could be an otherwise good game.

One of the hardest parts about being a goalie is the pressure that is placed on that goalie to be the life support of the team. It is because of this pressure that the goalie feels so frustrated and embarrassed after a shot has gone by, and also why the goalie must know how to recuperate after a mistake. There are some key issues that a goalie must face after allowing a goal.

1. *Get up and get ready.*
 - do you want to pull the puck out of the net or do you want the ref to pick it up?
 - your team looks to the goalie for confidence. How will teammates and the opposing team react if you lie on the ice and sulk?
 - try not to show any counter productive emotions. Miikka Kiprusoff is excellent at showing indifference after a goal.
2. *Once the goal is let in the goalie must make a quick analysis of the mistake and learn from that mistake.*
 - a goalie needs to make sure that they can understand what went wrong and how to correct that mistake.
 - this analysis should take less than three seconds while getting ready for the face-off.
3. *How will the goalie get the goal out of their head?*
 - some goalies will analyze the goal in their head and then have a lazer blast the replay out of mind’s eye.
 - another idea is to picture the goal going into the goalie’s stomach with a drink of water.
 - often a physical routine will help a goalie to trigger a mental elimination of the goal.
4. *Eliminate counter productive self-talk.*
 - do not allow yourself to say things like: “That sucked.” “Now we will lose for sure.” “Please do not shoot on me again”, etc...
 - goalies should look forward to the challenge of overcoming obstacles. Letting in a goal is an obstacle.
 - recognize what constitutes counter productive self talk.

5. *Begin productive self-talk.*

-possible productive self-talk can be: “Just have fun.” “Take it one save at a time.” “Be a warrior (Patrick Roy had this written on his equipment!)” “I play my best when my head is up and my mind is clear”, etc...

-find something that is productive and easy to remember.

-a routine for getting rid of goals will help to eliminate inconsistent play.

Once a goal is let in it should not be the end of the world. Are goals against ideal? No. Will goals against happen? Inevitably, yes. The key is finding a way to show your team and the opposition that you are in control and that you are ready for anything that will come towards you again. Remember, the goalie needs to give his/her team a chance to win. Flying off the handle will not help anyone.

*****Mental tip for being scored on. Keep it positive. You did not give up the goal, the shooter scored it. You always hear the shooter say: “Did you see the goal I scored?” you never hear him state “did you see the goal the goalie let in for me?”*****