



## MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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### The Verdict is In... Overdrive Blades are Overrated

Over the last ten years there have been impressive improvements in the way goaltenders respond to rebounds particularly through the introduction of using a power leg for recoveries and lateral movements while down. Due to the nature of a lateral movement while down and the fact that it is used against rebounds, within 12-15 feet of the net, the introduction of the Overdrive blade was initially a great idea. Emphasis on initially being a good idea because it is through working with several goaltenders that Mind The Net has found Overdrives to be more of a hindrance to goaltenders and their development.

What are Overdrive blades? Overdrives are small 3-4 inch blades that are attached to the bottom of the inside of a goalie skate cowling. These blades are essentially attached under the spot where the big toe and meatiest part of the balls of the feet are located in the skate. Of course, these blades are shaped to run along the edge of the inside of the cowling making the blades rounded and lacking sharpness.

What are Overdrives designed to do? Overdrives are designed to make lateral slide recoveries quicker because the goaltender does not need to bring the power leg as far under the body to get a strong push. If the power leg does not have to come right under the body then supposedly the recovery and repositioning process is faster. This is all fine and dandy but there are numerous ways these small blades can hurt the development of goaltenders from Atom to aspiring Junior hockey players. The following is...

#### **The Top 5 Reasons Overdrives are Overrated**

##### **1. Overdrive Blades are an illegal piece of equipment(according to Hockey Canada).**

Essentially, all goaltenders playing Junior "A" and Major Junior, and all levels of professional hockey are not allowed to wear this equipment. Depending on your league a goalie may be assessed a penalty for illegal equipment up to a fine(at the NHL level).

##### **2. Overdrives make a goaltender's lateral slide less powerful and less effective.**

Often it is easy to pick out which goaltenders are using Overdrives based on a few reasons, one of them being, goaltenders that use Overdrives have less power for their recoveries and slides. Let's look at this phenomenon from a common sense perspective. First, the Overdrives are round, 3-4 inches long and dull. By using a 3-4 inch, dull, round blade as opposed to the full length of a sharpened goalie skate blade there is less surface area and edge to propel a goaltender across the crease. Yes, a goaltender that does not use Overdrives will have to drive the power leg under the body at a steeper angle but they will be able to cover more ground with more power, more than making up for the split second required to raise the leg higher. If a goaltender needs to slide six feet but can only go three feet using the Overdrives what do you think will be the effect on a goaltender's initial positioning? In short if a goaltender is unable to slide 5-6 feet while down they are more likely to give depth to the shooter to make up for the deficiency of power.

You will never hear anyone say that Marc-Andre Fleury has a slow lateral slide because he does not use Overdrives!

### **3. Overdrives hinder the “pop-up” recovery of a goalie.**

MTN has seen several goalies who have lost the ability to “pop-up” to their feet with both legs at the same time. The “pop-up” recovery of course being used when recovering to the feet on a rebound that has gone straight forward. The “pop-up” should be a quick and controlled recovery but instead Overdrives will catch on the recovery making it slow and harder work. In one case a goaltender with Overdrives was seen doing a “pop-up” that had two stages: one to get the goalie up to where the Overdrives would catch and then they would have to hop up to their ready stance. The move was slow and painful looking making life hard on the aspiring elite goaltender.

### **4. Overdrives allow goaltenders to stand too wide.**

Many goaltenders who use Overdrives are caught in the habit of standing too wide in their ready stance because they rely on the Overdrives to hold them up. Too often goaltenders are told to have a wide butterfly often developing a butterfly that is too wide causing a loss of balance and ability to recover efficiently. When a goaltender stands too wide they lose power, again, making lateral plays a nightmare. If the goaltender has no power to move they will lack confidence to select a depth that is at the top of the crease thus giving shooters too much of an advantage.

### **5. Overdrives hinder proper skill development.**

The fact is that Overdrives are used as a crutch and are a lazy way out for aspiring elite goaltenders to learn proper movement, and recovery techniques while in the butterfly or on their feet. Often Overdrives allow goaltenders to stand too wide causing the goaltender to lose power and efficiency in all directions of movement leading to weaknesses in the ability to select proper depth, move laterally or take part in the transition. In essence Overdrives stop goaltenders from being able to accomplish the goal; PERFECT practice makes perfect.

Although Overdrives were created to help the modern goaltender there are more cases where they are harmful to goaltender development. If you are an accomplished recreational goalie what you do with your game and your equipment is your business. If you are an aspiring elite goaltender it is best to remove or stay clear of Overdrives.