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Philosophies of Goaltender Training

Just like the philosophies of goaltender play from earlier in the manual there are many factors that go into off-ice training. Off-ice goaltender training involves training many different physical aspects that all require varying degrees of focus, but it is important to understand what actually is required for goaltending.

Here are the areas of focus for goaltenders when off-ice training:

AGILITY AND QUICKNESS

The goaltender's ability to start, stop and/or change directions, while staying under control and balanced is integral to his/her success. By replicating patterns used while performing the basic stance a goalie can improve their athleticism.

LOWER BODY POWER

Having an explosive lower body should be a major concern to the elite goaltender. Being able to be in the optimum save position requires a powerful: skating movement, stop, and first save. Lower body power increases the goalie's ability to regroup, recover, and/or make multiple skating or save movements. The more efficient a goalie can make the save, staying in proper, balanced position, the more successful they will be.

ABDOMINAL/TORSO (CORE) STRENGTH

The core is the center of gravity for the body and all related athletic and goaltender movements. Again, the quicker and more physically efficient a goaltender is at making saves in a balanced position, the more success the goalie will have.

FOOT SPEED/QUICKNESS

A combination of foot quickness and dexterity drills, coupled with movement and transitional drills should be part of all goaltender training. The goal is to have the goalie improve their foot speed as well as be able to transition from one direction to another. Foot speed plays a role in virtually all positions.

FLEXIBILITY

Injuries often occur in extended or awkward positions. Proper flexibility will improve a goalie's strength through a greater range of motion. Greater flexibility will improve a goalie's ability to scramble, close holes, and to cover a greater area in front of the net in a quicker more balanced manner.

HAND/EYE CO-ORDINATION

All athletic performances have a co-ordination between limbs and eyes. Hand/eye co-ordination is critical for a goalie whom must stop a three inch puck traveling at 80mph or more.

CONDITIONING

Aerobic and anaerobic training should be used. Conditioning builds an overall base to help the goalie recover quicker from intense bouts of exercise. Emphasis should be placed on position specific conditioning. This allows the goalie to adapt to short, intense bouts of action while maintaining the proper level of play required for success. Proper conditioning will help to reduce body fat, making movements quicker and more efficient.

UPPER BODY STRENGTH

Upper body strength is important in maintaining strength base during the demanding season. Emphasis should be on functional, explosive techniques that help to improve goaltender movement. Use lighter weight with higher repetitions. Light weight training can improve muscle co-ordination and quickness and also strengthens joints through greater range of motion.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

This concept is nothing more than taking specific skills and implementing them in the goalie's on ice/off ice practice and game routines.

Reference

Korn, M. (2005). *The philosophy of training a goaltender*. Goalie Book 2005.