



MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

www.mtnagoaltending.com

Ready or Not?

One area of concern that Mind The Net Goaltending has is the constant lack of readiness by goalies of all ages and levels. There are a couple of questions a goalie must ask:

1. When do I get ready?
2. When can I relax?

Often we see goalies at various stages of readiness while the puck is either entering or moving in the offensive zone, which leads us to ask:

What are the definitions of ready and readiness?

read-y, read-i-er, read-i-est, verb, read-i-ed, read-y-ing, noun, interjection - adjective.

1. completely prepared or in fit condition for immediate action or use.
2. duly equipped, completed, adjusted, or arranged, as for an occasion or purpose.
3. prompt or quick in perceiving, comprehending, speaking, writing, etc.
4. prompt or quick in action, performance, manifestation, etc.
5. in such a condition as to be imminent; likely at any moment: a tree ready to fall.
6. immediately available for use.

read-i-ness - noun

1. the condition of being ready
2. ready movement; promptness; quickness
3. ready action; ease; facility

By using the definitions above can a goalie that uses various ready stances be TRULY READY? Only ready is ready!

Mind The Net Goaltending has been instructing and practicing, with our students, that they must be ready as the puck crosses the red line and they can only relax as the puck exits their zone (crosses their blue line).

The common argument against this seems to be that the goalie can not maintain their stance for that duration, that the puck is in the zone and that they must have moments when they can relax; such as when the puck seems to be in a safe area.

What is a safe area inside the goalie's own side of centre? The puck can change possession and locations in fractions of seconds, and the goaltender can not usually move faster than a puck on a turnover. So, then the lack of readiness on these quick changes in situation can be delayed, thus limiting our success on the possible save.

While watching the 2010 Stanley Cup playoffs, we got curious. How long and how often is the puck actually in our zone?

While watching two games of Chicago vs. Philadelphia, we counted the number of times the puck would enter (cross the blue line) the offensive zone and the length of duration it would stay in there. Over the course of the two games we watched, the puck would enter the respective offensive zones (either brought in by their own team or by the offensive team) 50 to 55 times a period. The total time spent in each zone was eight to nine minutes (480-540 seconds) per period.

The longest one time possession for Philadelphia, was one minute and 32 seconds. The longest Chicago had the puck in the offensive zone was 32 seconds. **This shows that the puck, on average, is only in the offensive zone seven to ten seconds at a time. Really, a goalie can't maintain ready stance for that length of time?**

One may argue as to why the goalie would be ready when their own team is moving the puck in their zone? **MTN Goaltending feels that the most dangerous players in our zone are often our own players.**

All goalies have had a defenseman who thinks that a pass, up the middle of the ice, through the slot, was a good idea. Only then the pass is intercepted and the puck is in the net. If the goalie maintained readiness throughout and puck tracked (moved with the puck) they would already be on angle with proper depth, making a quick turnover shot look like a rather routine save. However, if the goalie had been relaxed when a teammate had the puck, the turnover would require us to have a surprised, delayed response. The delayed response could be a difference between a goal and a save.

If you ever get a chance watch Jimmy Howard and Chris Osgood; they are constantly in a ready stance moving with the puck in zone. Even if Niklas Lidstrom (one of the best d-men of all-time) has the puck Howard and Osgood are ready for a possible turnover.

Why be ready as the puck crosses the red line? Today's players are taught to try and disguise the release points of their shots, and because of better technology they can also shoot harder. Goalies must not be caught off guard. Also, by being ready, with proper depth and angles, as the puck crosses the red line, we will be able to react quicker to dump-ins and rims. The quicker the goalie can get there, the more time, even if fractions of seconds, we will have to make a correct read, therefore a correct play with the puck.

Staying in stance requires a strong commitment to fitness, leg and core strength and skills that are vital to goaltending in general.

While the game is on, don't be surprised, BE READY!