



Coaching Today's Goalies



By Steve Carroll
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Goalie Coach-in-Chief*

Hockey goalies are a special breed. They play perhaps the most important position on the team. The outcome of the every game depends on their performance, they're the difference between winning and losing.

Yet despite their value, goalies are often the most under coached players on the team. During practice time, some coaches choose to focus most of their attention on the other 15 players, working on breakouts, power plays and and other team situations.

Coaches like this believe that they only have so much practice time, or they're not really sure what to work on with their goalies. They figure as long the goalies see some shots during these drills, they should be ok. Shots are only part of the package necessary for building the proper goalie skills.

Think of it this way. If you practice your team's power play by only having the kids work on their shots, it's not going to help you execute your power play in a game. Shots are only part of the goalie development package as well.

For many youth hockey coaches, figuring out how to coach their goalies is often most challenging and intimidating aspect of their job. But it doesn't have to be!

Below are some helpful tips that will help you, your goalies and your team.

- Pay attention to your goalie. Make them feel like an important member of the team.
- Learn as much as you can about the position so you can teach the proper techniques. Visit www.usahockeygoaltending.com, read books, watch videos and ask questions.
- Goaltending is all about repetition. Encourage your goalies to practice their moves over and over again. At first, they will have to think before reacting, eventually, they'll react without thinking.
- Goalies should be among the best skaters on the team. Having them participate in the team skating drills is fine, but they also need time to work on their goalie-specific skating skills. (side to side, forwards and backwards etc). Have them be at the front of the line for skating drills instead of having them at the end of the line. Working on goalie-specific skating/movement skills for 15-20 minutes of every practice can make a huge difference in their development.

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- Remember the three "R's" of goaltending
 - READY** for the shot
 - REACT** to the shot
 - RESPOND** to the puck

- Stick to the basics, most kids need to improve their fundamentals.
- Encourage your goalies to work on their own individual skills while your team is doing other drills. You want your goalies to make the most of each practice time.
- Work on making practices fun, yet challenging for your goalies. You want them to be excited about playing the position, excited about coming to the rink and practicing to become a better goalie. A goalie who is bored in practice will not improve as fast or play as well as one who is thrilled to be on the ice working to become better.
- Encourage your goalies to work on their puckhandling and shooting skills.
- Make sure your goalies always get a good pre-game warm-up with plenty of quality stoppable shots.
- Talk to your players about not shooting pucks at your goalies' head at any time. This rule should be enforced from the beginning of the year. Nothing destroys a goalies' confidence more than shots aimed at their head.
- Do not allow you players to take slap shots from inside the top of the face-off circles during warm-ups. Again, it's all about building up their confidence.
- Teach you goalie to talk it up and give instructions to their teammates.
- Try not to criticize your goalies in front of their teammates. There are usually 3-5 other players on the ice at the same time who share the responsibility of preventing a goal. If you choose to discuss performance issues, it's best to do it on a one-on-one basis.
- Think carefully about removing your goalie during the game for poor play. When possible make the change between periods.
- Goaltending is all about confidence, build your goalie's confidence, improve their play, improve their play, improve your team. Be good to your goalies, and chances are, your goalies will be good to you!

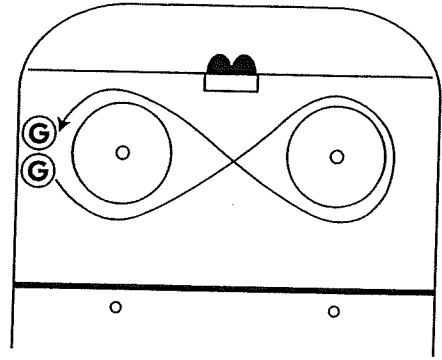
Good luck coaching your goalies, the most important players on your team!

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GOALIE SPECIFIC MOVEMENT DRILLS

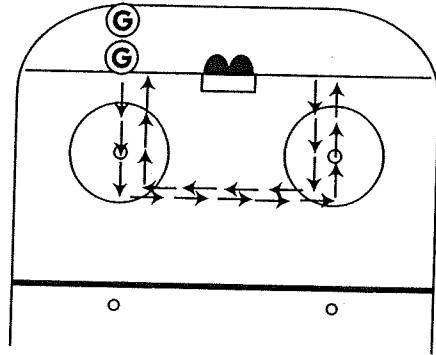
Drill: CIRCLE FIGURE 8s - Forward and backward

- Do in Goalie Stance
- Use "C" Cuts
- 3-5 times Forward and 3-5 times Backward



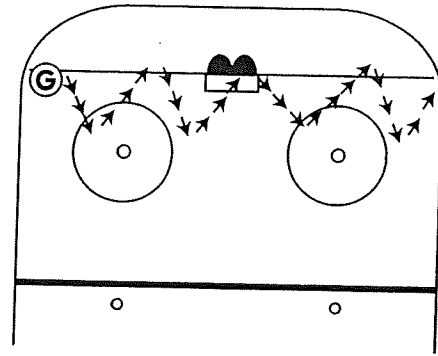
Drill: BOX DRILL FACING BOARDS

- Move from goal line to top of circle across to top of other circle, turn and move towards goal line.
 - Do 2 times doing Shuffle Step
 - Do 2 times with Lateral T-Glide
 - Do 2 times with cross-over slide move



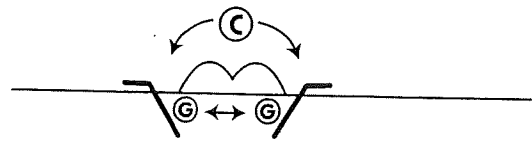
Drill: THREE SHUFFLE STEP & PIVOT ZIG-ZAG

- Come across goal line doing 3 shuffle steps to left, pivot, then 3 shuffle steps to right.
- Repeat zig-zag pattern until reaching side boards.



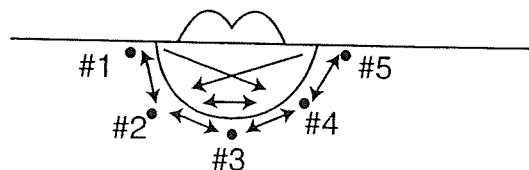
Drill: POST TO POST MOVEMENT

Goalie starts on one post and parallel slides to other post. Goalie always looks over inside shoulder. Never turn skate, wrap elbow around post. Put stick in a position on goal line to block puck coming out from behind net.



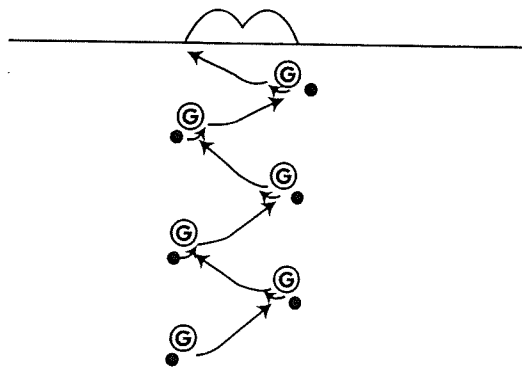
Drill: "5" PUCK MOVEMENT

Place 5 pucks one foot out from arc of crease, evenly paced. Coach calls out numbers. One number difference, do a Parallel Slide. Two number difference, do a T-Glide.



Drill: "6" PUCK BACK DIAGONAL PIVOTS

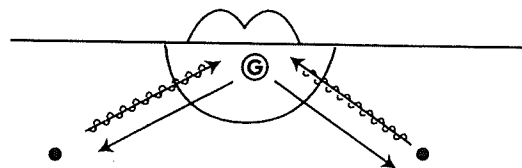
Set up 6 pucks staggered as wide as the goal crease. Start goalie squared off on puck at a 45 degree angle to boards. Do a 1/4 pivot & T-Glide to puck on opposite side. Stop and square on puck each time.



Drill: "V" MOVEMENT DRILL

Goalie starts in middle of net. Goalie does 1/4 pivot to right. Push on right skate to puck, stop on right skate and push backwards on right skate to middle of net. Then pivot to left and repeat (always stopping and starting with left skate).

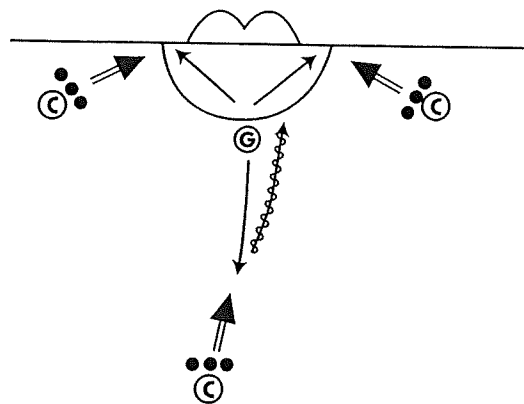
Option – Shoot puck when going out & back.



Drill: "Y" MOVEMENT DRILL

Goalie starts at top of crease in middle. Goalie moves forward 6 to 8 feet. Stop with either skate and go backwards to top of crease. Pivot 1/4 turn and parallel slide to post. Repeat movement back to other side.

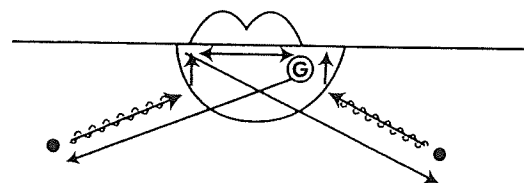
Option – Shoot back when moving forward or backward and when pivoting and sliding to post.



Drill: "X" MOVEMENT DRILL

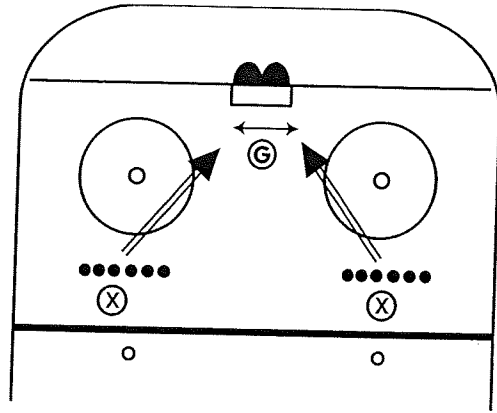
Goalie starts at one post and moves out on an angle to opposite side to a puck. Stop at puck and move backwards to crease ... then move parallel slide to near post. Repeat movement to opposite side.

Option – Shoot when parallel slide to post.



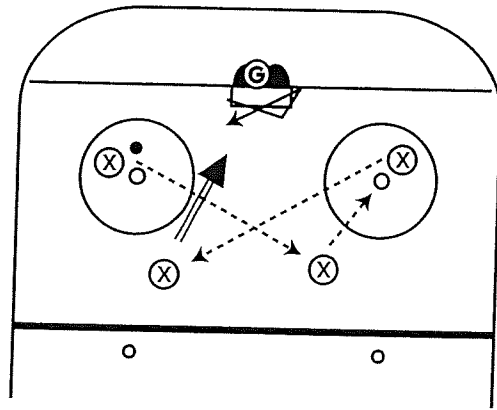
DRILL: SPECIAL SPOT - 6 PUCK ALTERNATE SHOOT

- Six pucks are placed in a line halfway between the face-off dot and the top of circle, on both sides.
- One shooter on each circle.
- Shooters alternate shooting pucks (side to side). Goaltender should be given time to make save before 2nd shot is taken.



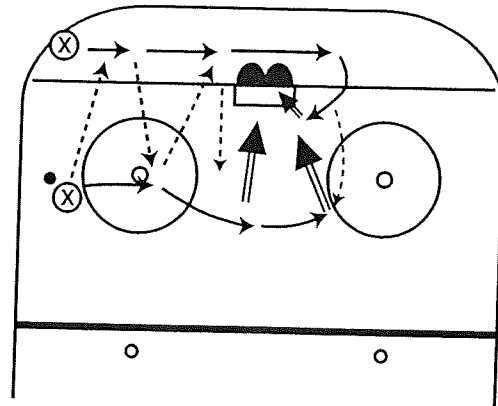
DRILL: FOUR PLAYER SEMI-CIRCLE - PASS & SHOOT

- Four players position themselves in a semi-circle from face-off dots to top of circle.
- Players pass puck rapidly between them, then occasionally taking a shot at the net.



DRILL: 2 on 0 CORNER TO NET PASSES & SHOOT

- Two Players start in corner, one behind the goal, the other in line with face-off dot.
- Both players skate towards the net, passing the puck as they approach.
- Player Options are:
 - Pass from behind to front and shoot, just before skating behind net.
 - Fake pass at net and try and beat the goaltender going around net & stuffing puck into far corner of net.
 - Or go behind net to other side & passing to player out in front for shot.



Goalie Game Evaluation Form

Date: _____ Game number: _____ Goalie name: _____

Time played:
 1/2 -- game
 Full game
 Other

Opponent: _____ Home or away

Final score: Us _____ Opponent: _____

	1	2	3	OT	Total
Shots faced					
Goals allowed					
Saves					

How was goal scored?

Solution for stopping that goal next time

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____

Coach's comments: _____

