



## **THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS!!!!!! Or Is It Simply the Way of the Future?????**

### **"HOW ABOUT CHANGING GOALIES ON THE FLY?"**

This one is for all minor hockey goaltenders and their parents. Who on earth came up with the bright idea of making a young hockey player give up an entire evening just to sit on the bench and watch his team play?

There is no reason why goalies cannot change every 3 or 4 minutes during a game. While players are changing lines, it takes no longer for goalies to change. By changing goalies throughout the game, coaches have an opportunity to give them instructions and encouragement. They also feel part of the team and can talk to their teammates while on the bench. Equipment can be adjusted if needed.

Changing goalies on a regular basis during the game will also force the rest of the players to focus more on the other team, especially if one goaltender is weaker than the other. Teams sometimes play differently in front of different goaltenders. It also reinforces the "team concept" in that wins and losses are shared by the entire team. A shutout becomes a true team accomplishment with both goaltenders involved.

In the older divisions, it is even possible for goaltenders to change on the fly while the play is in the opposite end. As for keeping warm and being prepared, skating back and forth to the bench will take care of that.

For many readers, this may seem like a radical suggestion, but it is no more radical than expecting a player to get fully dressed and sit out an entire game.

Two years ago while a goalie coach of 9 and 10 year olds, the head coach told me he was going to change the goalies every five minutes so that I would have a chance to talk with the goalies about good and bad on the ice. He also said that he had seen way too many goalies counting rivets in the roof when not playing. Having played nets all my life I thought he was nuts. In the first game of the year an inexperienced referee told us we could not change the goalies on the whistles. We did not argue but decided to stick to the plan, however, we would change them on the fly. It was an excellent experience because I got to work with both goalies throughout the year. We had so much fun doing this and the kids loved it. It also taught our goalies to read and react to game situations

away from our end, pay attention to the time and change accordingly. He also told the goalies not to allow an icing, therefore they had to skate out of their net and play the puck. It taught them skating and puck handling skills early in their development, as well as passing to the D men. Thanks Don, that was a great year.

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Changing goalies on the Fly, what a horrible thought! or is it? I got to experience this when I was reffing in the Valley East NOHA pee wee division. The coach who will remain nameless decided it would be a great way to keep his goal tenders in the game. Every 3 or 4 minutes on the fly his goalie would come to the bench and the other would jump out on to the ice. Is there a penalty for too many goalies on the ice? or why on earth would a team decide to do this? The coach is making a joke of the position. I heard comments like this in the lobby after the games. But of all of the games I did for that team that year you know who I never heard complain. The goalies. They really seemed to enjoy playing in every game, and when mistakes were made guess what, you could talk to the goalie on the bench and help make corrections during the game rather than after the period was over. This may be something we should consider more often. Why should kids sit on the bench?

In your editorial about hockey and your love of the game and officials you forgot to mention that every official on the ice is someone's child. I am currently still doing games although not in the Valley any more but a little farther north. I get to see new officials just starting out get yelled at, by coaches and irate parents who blame everything on the ref's. You know the teams who have coaches who yell, have parents who yell, have kids on the ice yelling and getting penalties and then the coaches and parents wonder why the kids are so mouthy. Last season I took my son who was 3 to a Bantam A game in Haileybury. We were to watch friends' kids play. A couple minutes into the game one parent stands up and starts yelling at the ref and he never sat down again for the entire period, pacing up and down, screaming every chance he had at the officials. My 3 year old who associates all refs with me, asked me why that man was always screaming at me. He couldn't understand. At the end of the period the man came over to talk to us and my son buried his head in my jacket. He was afraid of this man. The man asked why he was afraid of him and my son screamed at him "cause you never stopped yelling at my daddy!". With a strange look on his face the man asked me what he meant. I explained that I was a ref and that he never stopped yelling at them. He laughed and said I am not like that. Well I think he listened because for the next period that man would go to stand up and yell and he would stop himself and sit back down. At the end of the game he came over to see my son and apologized for yelling at me and that he never realized that he was doing this.

As an official I can give you hundreds of stories about parents, coaches and players that would make you wonder why I would want to ref this sport. I do it for the love of the game.