

Mitch Korn Goalie Session  
Country Springs Inn  
March 15, 2007

Also attending was Karl Goehring, Admirals goalie.

40 goalies in attendance.

Playing Goalie –

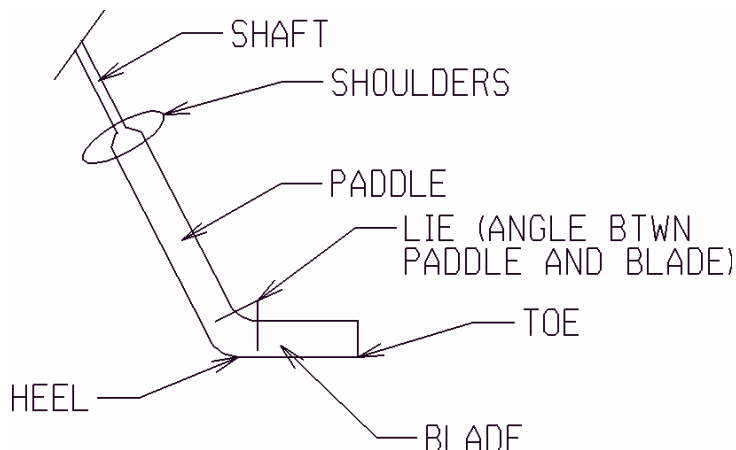
- You have to have thick skin! Nothing can bother you and you have to be willing to put a team on your back and deal with it.
- You never know who is watching, so always work hard and do your best.
- It's not worth doing unless you do your best – Nothing ½ way.
- Must have effort and passion.
- Make the most of your time. Time is perishable, like picked fruit – make the most of your time. Hard work will prevail; apathy will fail.
- Teach the goalies to use their mouths to communicate with teammates. If the team isn't aware of something and the goalie is, they need to make sure the information is communicated – “Back door”, “pucks free”, “I'm screened”.

### **3 Main Goalie problems**

- 1. Stick**
- 2. Skates**
- 3. Style**

Stick, the goalies greatest asset and worst enemy.

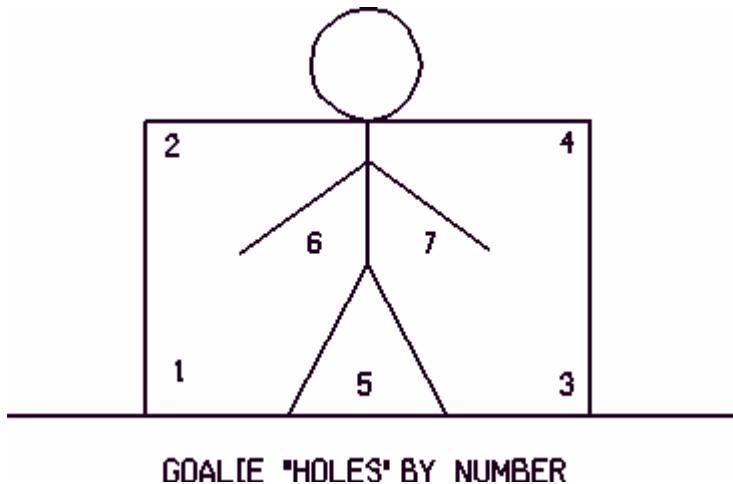
The stick:



What can you do with the stick? Saves with the Paddle and Blade; Block passes and make passes.

How can a stick be your enemy?

- When it gets sloppy.
- Lose control of the stick when you get lazy. Example, it stays back when you move to another position on the ice.
- When it gets too far out and the blade becomes a ramp over the goalies shoulders.



Fitting the Stick to the Goalie:

Goalie stick fit is in the PADDLE and not the SHAFT (unlike a skater).

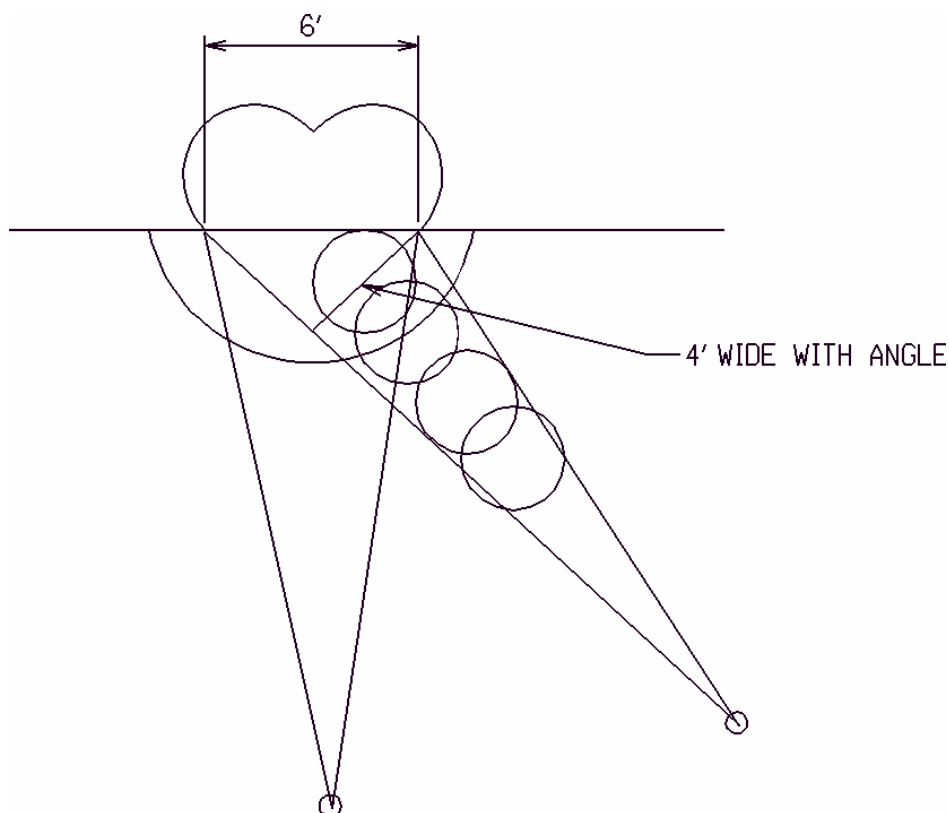
A goalie stick is balanced with at or near the shoulders – cutting down the shaft will cause the stick to be out of balance.

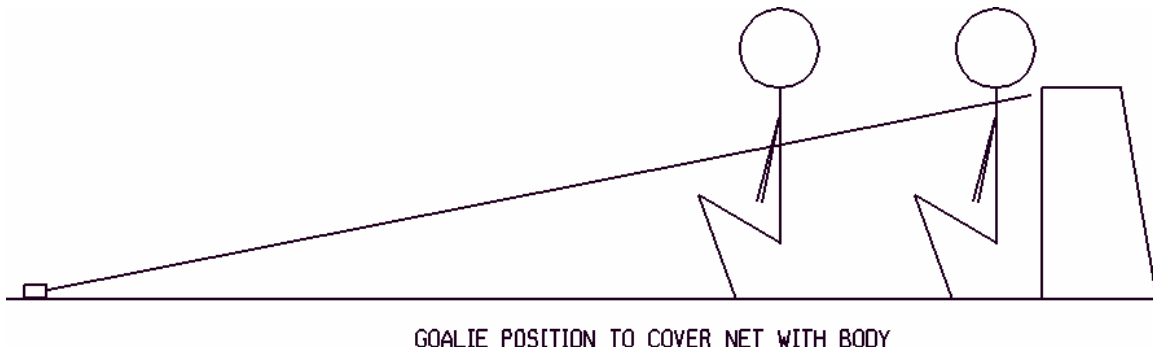
The stick needs to fit the goalie in a standing and saving position. Mitch Korn feels that too many young goalies have paddles that are too long for them and they open up the area under their arms when they are down (6/7 hole above).

*FOLLOW-UP WITH Mike Lane after the meeting – Mike feels that the point of fit in standing and saving/down position is very valid, he thinks this is really for older goalies. Young goalies don't necessarily have the leg strength to stay low for 30 to 40 seconds while the puck is in the zone, so having them fit for a more normal standing/crouched position as opposed to low with a lot of leg bend may be better, then as they age and get stronger they can keep getting lower and lower, maybe even keep the same length paddle as they grow.*

What is a good position for the goalie?

- Goalie holds the stick at the paddle, with an index finger controlling the paddle. The stick isn't a baseball bat!
- Arms in front of the body a bit, with blocker/catcher near waste.
- Stick on ice, 6" in front of skates. Too far out, ramp created. Too close, can't move it to the sides when you rotate.
- Make sure the stick is centered.
- Stick moves in a semi-circle to get to puck.
- Biggest area of coverage is from neck to the knees. Make sure the goalies are covering the aerial angles, where the puck can get into the net in the 2 or 4 holes, by moving the blocker/catcher.
- Make sure that blocker/catcher is covering the net and not glass (not out of position). Below, the goalie on the right is too close to net and puck can get over the shoulder easy or the goalie has to move the blocker/catcher an awful lot. The goalie on the right is covering the net with body. If the goalie gets too far out, then their body is covering a puck that would be over the net.
- Need to stay off the goal line, but not too far out either.
- Cutting down angles improves chances of being in position. In the next picture, the circles represent the goalie. Notice as the goalie moves out, they block more and more of the net.





### Skates

- Boot – what the foot sits in and is laced up.
- Cowling – the plastic shell and skate blade are one piece, and replaceable. Professional goalies go through two to three cowlings per boot.

Traditionally, goalies have been told that they need dull skates, sharpen once a year whether they need it or not. Many pro shops have a special wheel for goalies that sharpens to a 1" hollow.

Traditionally, the distance from the ice to the bottom of the cowling (rise of the skate) has been low. New trend it to raise this distance (taller blades) so that the goalie can get down faster on their pads. With a low rise, the edge of the goalie pad can get caught when the leg rotates to get down.



## SKATE "HOLLOW"

The sharpest a skate can be done to is a 1/4" hollow.

Hasek = 1/4"

Rinne Pekka (Admirals) = 3/8"

Sharper the skate, the more grip the goalie has when they push off to move. The game has evolved, now the goalie has to be able to move a considerable amount of the time in a very small space – quick movement and strong pushes.

*FOLLOW-UP WITH Mike Lane after the meeting – Mike uses a very sharp skate as well. Again, he thinks this is really for older goalies. The sharper the skate, the more resistance to sliding there is. Young goalies don't necessarily have the leg strength to push through a very sharp skate, but will develop that over time.*

Goalie has to be careful to make sure that pro shop doesn't "round" their skate or round off the toe. The blade is meant to be flat for a considerable distance. The big push to move is from the toe of the skate, so if the toe gets rounded, a goalie will lose their grip.

What skates to use and when. If a young goalie is playing net and skating out, they should stay with their skater skates. The skate and how you skate is different in the two skates and working back and forth is too difficult on a young goalie. As a goalie chooses full-time goalie, then goalie skates become a must – proper technique in strides and lateral movement, getting used to the blade on the ice, etc.

### Style

Can there be a "butterfly goalie"? No, the Butterfly is a SAVE and not a STYLE. The goalie goes down on the pads and takes away the lower portion of the ice. When a goalie goes down a lot, they are termed a "butterfly goalie", but this just a generic term for it.

The butterfly save is a blocking save, generally leaves a rebound. The butterfly save quick saves around the net, particularly the lower portion of the net. The save has the goalie down, with the legs on the ice and flared out wide (for coverage), with the 5 hole blocked with a sealed set up pads.

There is also a ½ butterfly, where the goalie extends one leg to the side and reaches for a far puck. Back leg is still up (or off the ice) when this occurs.

The butterfly requires the goalie to leave their feet. Is this a bad thing? NO, the game requires that the goalie leave their feet from time to time. The big thing is timing.

When – Leave too early and the puck goes over you; leave too late and it goes under you.

How – Body positioning, stick in right spot, skating, etc.

Learning to track the puck off the stick (from the shot release) is important is getting into the right position. Quite often, this is a learned response to how to move, not something that you are born with.

Tracking off the stick, how much time does a goalie have?

Assuming a 75mph shot (pretty fast for a squirt, peewee):

From the Blue Line, it takes  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a second to get to the net. The distance is 60 feet from blue line to the goal line.

If the shooter is at the top of the circle, then that might be cut to  $\frac{3}{8}$  second.

Based on where the shooter is, how the player is positioned on their skates and with their stick, will dictate somewhat how they shoot and where the puck will go. If there blade is forward, then likely it will go up; if it's back, then goalie has to react differently.

### **3 Simple Decisions that All Goalies have to make.**

Basics of the game is that it's a game of situations, not distinct plays that happen over and over again. There is a flow, or lack of flow, to the game that means the goalie has to be aware of what is happening.

During the course of a game, a goalie makes about 30 saves and each save takes about 1 second from shot to save. So, in a game what does the goalie do for the other 59:30 (or for youth, it's 35:30)? They react to situations that arise:

- Where is the puck?
- Who's on the ice?
- Where are their players?
- Where are my players?

They will make the saves or not, depending on if they are able to react to situations and were ready when the shot came.

Reading the puck off the stick (above) also buys a goalie time when reacting to situations.

With all the above, the 3 Simple Decisions are:

1. Where to Stand
2. What Save to Make
3. What to do with the Puck

#### **Where to Stand**

The goalie wants to cut the angles to the goal, staying square with the puck the whole time, as the puck rarely stays in one spot (unless it's up against the boards).

The goalie needs to watch the front door, the back door and make adjustments to where they are based on the puck and player positions.

While they are cutting angles, staying square, watching the game situations and reacting, they have to be aware of their stick position and make sure it's where it needs to be.

### What Save to Make

What kind of save is to be made? Is it a glove save, blocker, butterfly, ½ butterfly? Does the goalie suck it into their chest, push the puck to the corner? The big thing is not to “serve up the pizza” – which is serving up a huge rebound right into the house for a shot right away, when the goalie isn't in position.

### What to do with the Puck

The goalie has to think beyond the shot – where do I put the puck, where will the puck end up, how do I get there (movement) and who might be there to help me or hurt me?

Talking Session – Audience Q & A.

**When should a goalie start playing full time?** They should learn to skate and do both at an early age. Mites, every kid should rotate in. Squirts, two goalies and alternate between the net and skating out; sitting on the bench during a game doesn't help the kid at all. Playing out gives them perspective on how the game moves and is played.

2<sup>nd</sup> Year Sq or 1<sup>st</sup> Year PW is when full-time should start. By PW, the game changes due to body contact – it's hard enough to play the game out full time, let alone spending half of it in the net.

Kids are better off skating!

**What about Stats?** Don't care about stats. The team is a big part of any shutout. If you get a shutout and saw 3 shots, did you have a good game? Win or lose, play the best that you can. A goalie is measured on how they play, not on wins and losses.

**When do I poke Check?** Depends on how good you are. Learned skilled, used in the right situation.

**When do you start weight training?** Development of the child is key – Puberty. Don't use weights without professional training and testing.

**What about camps?** “You're best coaching comes in the summer, when the pro's are on the ice all week” – Mitch Korn.

Talk about on why “you play goalie”. Lots of ideas from the kids. Afterwards, the following comments came from Mitch Korn...

- Goalies are the last line of defense.
- Individual position in a team game.
- You get to make a difference in winning a game; you have a burning desire to make a difference.
- You have lots of responsibility for yourself and the team.
- If a goalie has a bad game, the team likely loses. If a forward or defenseman has a bad night, the team still has a chance to win.

Mitch Korn on Parents –

1. Hockey is a kids event. Parents should be seen and not heard.
2. Don't stand behind your kid on the glass, banging on the glass when they make a mistake.
3. Don't yell at the goalie when they are watching a play. This will distract them when they need to focus on the puck. It's a game, let it happen and move on.
4. More pressure = less interest/passion.