

Coaching Ringette Goalies

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STRETCHING AND WARM-UP

In Practices:

- Goalies should definitely do the skating warm-up with the team. Have your goalies at least do the first few skating drills, and then if you get into skating techniques such as tight turns, you can let the goalie go stretch in the crease if you wish.
- When your team is skating circles, have the goalies do 1-foot c-cuts around the curves rather than crossovers.
- When your team is skating backwards, have the goalie be backwards in her stance.
- Here are some warm-ups for goalies:
 - Lightning drill, always facing one direction (in -stance when going backwards)
 - Iron Cross (in “Drills” section)
 - W-Drill (in “Drills” section)
 - Ship to shore: Goalie always faces the same direction, moves in the direction the coach points their stick. This involves shuffling, telescoping, and butterflying if you choose.

In Games:

- Ensure that goalies have about 30 seconds to stretch and get warm in their crease before warming up with shots.
- Your first set of shots should be straight shots from around the hash-marks, make sure your skaters know that they shouldn't be deking out their goalie.
- If you have 2 goalies that are splitting the game, make sure that the goalie starting the second half gets some shots before going in.
- Stretching is, of course, extremely important for all players, especially goalies. The main muscle groups that they should be stretching are the large groups of their legs and trunk. Groin muscles and hamstrings are especially important, especially for a butterfly-style goalie, as well as the quads, hip flexors and abdominals.

EQUIPMENT SIZING AND OPTIONS

GLOVES:

- D-Gel (broomball glove): This is used more often at Novice, and it is not recommended after that because of the lack of padding and its small size.
- Double blocker: This is a great alternative, because they generally have slightly more hand padding and a lot more space. In most blockers (such as DR blockers), you can cut out the thumb portion to make it easier to throw the ring.

- Hockey trapper: These do provide padding and cover a lot of space, but I do not recommend them because it makes it very difficult to throw the ring well.
- Keely glove: These combine the best of blockers and trappers, as they cover as much space as a trapper but you can move your hand freely in it.

UPPER BODY EQUIPMENT:

- Most goalies use a regular hockey goalie suit. However, there is the option of getting player shoulder pads and a lacrosse rib guard. This generally provides more mobility.
- Another option is the baseball back catcher pad. This is fine for goalies just starting out, but as it is not symmetrical it can be somewhat inconvenient.

GOALIE SKATES

- As soon as the goalie decides that she wants to be full time you should start considering goalie skates (around Petite or Tween)
- Goalie skates are **very** difficult to adjust to, so expect to break them in for at least 4-8 ice times until they feel natural in them
- Goalie skates are generally slightly looser at the tops than player skates, but this depends on preference

GOALIE PADS

- Because they are not having pucks shot at them, ringette goalies do not need bulky pads. DR and Itech are two brands of relatively lightweight pads.
- Goalie pads should come up to slightly lower than the middle of the thigh. If goalie pads are too tall, they will get caught when the goalie butterflies. If they are too short, there is the possibility of injury.
- Straps: Make sure that the bottom and middle straps are snug, the toe straps are tight, and the top straps are loose.

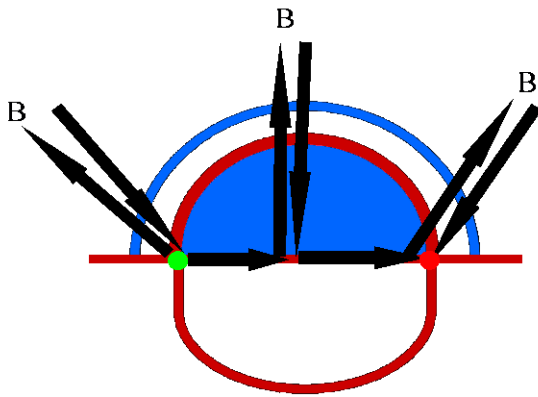
GOALIE STICKS

- Where the goalie places their hand should be at or slightly lower than the height of the goalie pad when in a crouch.
- Sticks can be cut. However, as long as the butt end is not excessively long this is usually not necessary.

DRILLS

STANCE/ANGLES

W-Drill (Petite +)



The goalie starts at one post, telescopes out and butterflies, then comes back to the post and shuffles across. This is repeated for three points. This drill is

This can be done without butterflies.

Ropes

String a long rope through the crossbar so that the string is coming out where the crossbar meets the post. Hold the ends of the rope and move back and forth while the goalie tries to stay centered in between the ropes.

Reset Under String (Petite +)

Hold one end of a rope while somebody else holds the other. The goalie should be under the rope in her stance, with the rope just touching the top of her head. She makes "saves" by moving out to either side, leading with her glove or stick. She then tries to reset under the string as quickly as possible. She makes her way down the rope and then repeats it going backwards. This can be made more difficult by making the goalies do butterfly slides or dives to either side.

Reset Drill (Best for Novice-Petite. Great with more than 1 goalie)

The coach names one or several body parts, and the goalies must touch these body parts to the ice, (ex: shoulder, back, ear, 2 knees). This is to be done in a controlled way, but when

you shout “shot!” the goalies must get up into their stance as quickly as they can. This is great for young goalies not used to bulky equipment.

MOVEMENT

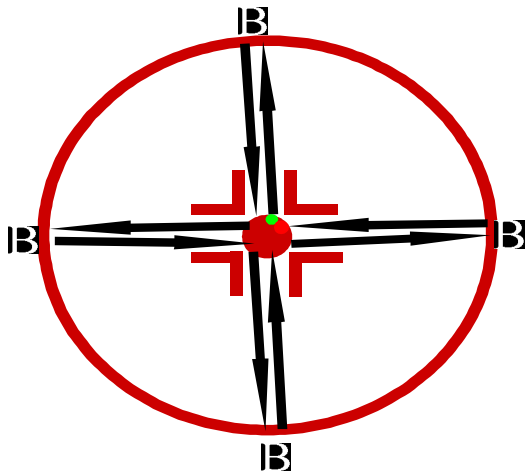
W- Drill (see above)

7-shuffle Drill

This drill is done entirely on the outer blue line of the crease. The goalie starts on one side and uses 7 even shuffles to get to the other side. Repeat the same do the same thing going the other way. Repeat with 6 shuffles, 5, 4, and 3, if possible. The number of shuffles can be modified be age level.

For example: Novice: 9-6, Petite: 8-5, Tween: 7-4, Junior: 7-3 (this will depend on the goalie’s skill level)

Iron Cross



The goalie always faces the same direction. She starts in the centre, telescopes to the top and butterflies, and then telescopes back. Then she repeats for the other sides by shuffling to the left, telescoping to the back, and t-pushing to the left. This can be done without butterflies. Iron Cross is a good warm-up.

Y-Drill (PP1 +)

Goalies start at the hash-marks and telescope back to the top of the crease. As soon as they get there, they transition into a T-Push to the post. Hug the post, and then repeat the drill for the other post.

Chase

This can either be done with two goalies, or a goalie and a coach. They start at the goal line facing each other, and start telescoping towards the blue line (one is going forwards and the other backwards). They should work on keeping their sticks flat and in line with each other, and keeping eye contact. As soon as they get to the blue line, they head back the other way (so they have switched directions).

Modification: Hold one end of a short string (a rope for rings works well), as the goalie holds the other. Keep this string at exactly the same length throughout the entire drill.

Mirror Drill (Petite-Tween)

If you have two goalies, have them face each other, and pick one to lead. The second goalie will mirror the first as quickly as possible as she shuffles, telescopes, T-pushes, and butterflies.

Power Shuffle

This can also work for two goalies. Line up two pylons no more than 5 ft apart. Each goalie stands between the cones and shuffles back and forth between them. The goalies are facing each other, sticks must be touching and centred at all times.

RING DISTRIBUTION

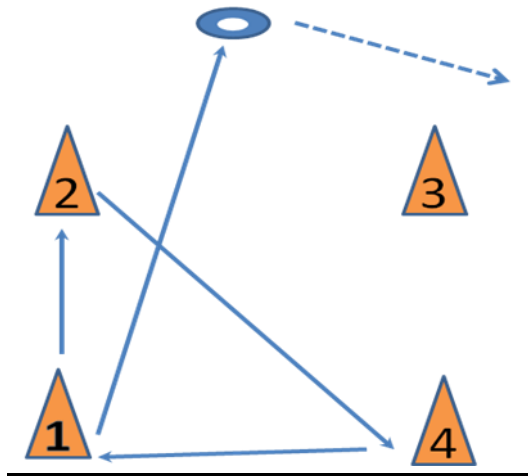
7-Ring Drill

Goalies have 7 rings, either in their crease, or shot at them consecutively. Two go to the low post right behind the net (as if a defence were coming behind the net). Two go to the corners, where the goal line meets the boards. Two go to where the ringette line hits the boards. The last ring is thrown as far as they can over the blue line, but not up the middle. This should be a fast-paced drill. If you want to make this a full team drill you can add players to receive these rings.

Shot and Curl

A coach shoots at the goalie and then becomes a defence. The coach either curls behind the net or flares to the corner and calls for a quick pass.

X-Drill



Arrange pylons in a square that is roughly the size of the crease. Goalies always face forwards, and go from P1 to P2 to P4 to P2. Then they skate in a regular player's stance to hit the ring to either side with their stick. Repeat going the opposite way.

REFLEXES

Open/Save

Have the goalie stand in her ready stance in the crease with her eyes closed. Shout "go!" and shoot, so that the goalie has to react quickly. As they improve decrease the amount of time the goalie has.

Leg Reflexes

The goalie lies on her back with her feet close to the boards. She looks straight up, and a coach behind her shoots rings over her head. She has to react, and lift either leg to stop the ring from hitting the boards.

BUTTERFLY

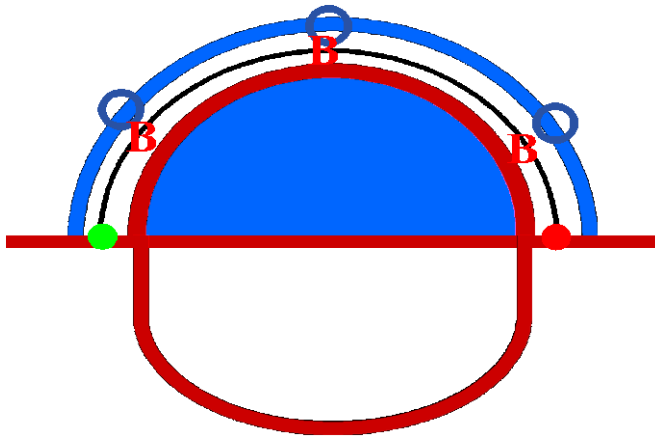
20 seconds (Tween +)

Have the goalies do as many proper butterflies as they can in 20 seconds. Keep track of how many they can do. This is a very gruelling drill so allow some time for recovery.

Butterfly Wall (you need min. 3 goalies)

Have the goalies start in their butterfly, lined up next to each other so that in their full butterfly their feet almost touch. Shoot rings in between them and at their sticks, to emphasize that they need to keep their legs out on either side of them.

Butterfly at Rings



Have the goalie start at one side of the crease and shuffle over to the first ring, until their stick is just touching the ring. They should butterfly here *without moving the ring*, which means that their stick will have to stay in the same place. Shuffle over to the other ring and do the same thing. You can do this with 3-6 rings on the crease.

BUTTERFLY SLIDE

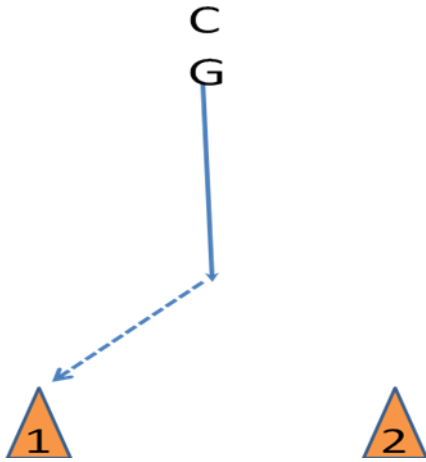
Y-Drill

Do the same Y-Drill as above, except use butterfly slides instead of T-pushes. Start with pylons, progress to posts, and then pegged posts.

Inside Edge Push (Tween A +)

The goalie is in her butterfly with her right leg up. The goalie uses this leg to push herself on the ice to the left. The coach provides some resistance by pushing lightly against her left shoulder. Start without a stick.

Breakaway simulation (Tween +)



The pylons are placed about the same distance apart as posts. The goalie backs up quickly in her stance, and then the coach holds up either a number 1 or 2. The goalie must immediately butterfly slide to that pylon.

DRYLAND

Cardio and general strength are important in a training program for any ringette player, and goalies should and can be incorporated into most parts of off-ice training. However, things like reflexes, flexibility, and plyometrics hold particular importance for goalies in dryland. Here are several goalie-specific dryland ideas.

THROWING

- Frisbees: Throwing a ring should be done similar to throwing a Frisbee, so have them practice with Frisbees, (with their non-dominant hand). Have them aim for targets, and keep the disc flat.
- Resistance throws: Attach one end of a resistance band or thera-band to a sturdy object, and loop it in a ring. Have them grip the ring and go through the movements of throwing it. The ring will always be in their hand, and the band will provide resistance.

LEG STRENGTH

- Monster walk: The goalie puts both feet in a thera-band. They then walk with very large steps, moving forward with diagonal steps outwards. They must stay very low and push their legs in a controlled manner.
- Squats: Quads are the essential goalie muscle, so any sort of squat or squat modification is definitely worthwhile.
- Reflex cross: Goalies stand in the centre of 4 pylons placed directly in front, behind, to the left and right of them. A coach calls out numbers, and the goalies go to that pylon, always facing forwards and staying low.
- Wall Sit: Goalies sit against a wall to build quad strength. This is difficult, but for Tween goalies have them attempt 30-45 sec. Junior and Belle should attempt about 1-1.5 mins.

OTHER

- If you have access to a BOSU ball, invert it and have the goalies try butterflies landing on the ball.
- Balance boards: If you have access to balance boards, use them for everything possible. Goalies can do squats or stretches on these, or toss rings or balls back and forth on them.
- Tennis balls: Have the goalie face a wall as somebody behind them bounces tennis balls against the wall towards them.

- Core strength: Core strength is also important for goalies. A good exercise for this is to have the goalie lie down on their back with their legs straight in the air. A coach or teammate then pushes their legs down and the goalie must bring them back up to 90 degrees with the ground without letting them touch the ground.
- Reflex ball: If you have access to a reflex ball, there are many possible options for drills or games. Even just throwing the ball in their general direction and having them stop it is a possible option.

PLYOMETRICS

Plyometrics is a type of training in which muscles are rapidly contracted and extended in sequence, which works on the “explosive” strength that is essential for goalies. The nature of plyometrics are that they place a large load on a muscle in a short amount of time, so this is only recommended for athletes who already have considerable strength, and are in at least Junior, so that excess stress is not placed on joints.

- Plyo square: There are several possible sequences, but the goalie always faces forwards and jumps with two feet quickly from square to square. This can be made with tape on a gym floor.

2	3
1	4

Possible sequences are: 1-2-1-2, 2-3-2-3, 1-2-3-4, and 1-3-2-4.

- Abdominal training: Attach a resistance band to a sturdy surface. The goalie sits so that her feet are off the ground, and holds this band so that it is at the right side of her. She then holds the band and twists quickly to the left and returns.

WORKING WITH TWO-GOALIE TEAMS

When a team has two-goalies, it is **essential** that they are working as a dynamic team, and not as competitors. This is a delicate balance, but as a coach you can help enforce the idea that they are in it together, and they are the ones in the best position to push each other.

In practice, what generally happens is that the effort one goalie puts in will influence the effort of the other. This can be used to your advantage, encourage them to push each other.

During games it is important that the goalie who is not playing knows that she still has a very active role on the team. Encourage them to watch the play and communicate with the team, they can also watch the other team and provide information on their goalie. They should also be an important source of encouragement to the goalie who is playing.

Pulling goalies during a game is a situation that is not desired, but in critical situations at highly competitive levels it is sometimes used, just as players are sometimes sat. A better option, if possible, is to pull the goalie for just a couple minutes to regain focus and calm down, and then put her back in. Goalies will sometimes pull themselves, and although as a coach you should allow them to do this in many situations, do not rely on a goalie to pull herself.

THE MENTAL GAME OF A GOALIE

In practice, the goalies are a huge part of how hard the team works, because the more they show that they don't want to be scored on, the harder the team will work to score, and vice-versa. It is important for the goalies to know that this responsibility rests with them. Although they may feel like a separate part of the team, they must know that this is their team, and they have a big influence in the mental game of the entire team. A goalie who appears hesitant or who looks as though they have given up will cause the defense to back up to counter this, which will cause the goalie to back up even more, opening up space for goals.

MENTAL WARM UP

For goalies, there is a fine mental balance in games between being worried about goals and being so pumped up that they are sliding all over the place. Visualization to help achieve this calm confidence before big games can prove very useful.

Other techniques are getting the 2 goalies to pass 2 rings with their hands to each other. If you only have on goalie, she can bounce tennis balls at a wall, back and forth between her hands. These sort of warm-ups are generally better for goalies in Junior and up. What sort of tactic you choose will depend entirely on the goalie.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

PULLING THE GOALIE

- Goalie must be completely off the ice
- You do not need to put another player out
- When the goalie goes back in, turn around at about the ringette line

FREE PASS WITH <2 SEC LEFT.

- The goalie should come right out to the free pass circle to prevent screens

LINKS

More goalie drills:

<http://www.angelfire.com/bc/firstattemp/RingettePage7GoalieDrills.html>

<http://torlingette.tripod.com/drillsgoalie.html>

Goalie Skills Matrix:

<http://www.ringette.ca/Images/LTAD/Pics/LTAD%20Technical%20SkillsENG.pdf>