

FORWARD MOTION

With the game of hockey changing ever so fast, the goalie has had to make some huge adjustments to his game. More recently, with all of the clutching and grabbing taken out of the game, it has opened it up. The game itself has taken on a new look, and for the goalie, everything has gotten faster. The speed of the game has taken on a whole new dimension.

Forward motion is a way of dealing with the speed of the game that allows the goalie to have the coverage that he needs as well as the speed to get across the net for back door plays. While forward motion is not for everyone, many of the principles can be very effective and implemented in most styles and systems with ease!

When forward motion is applied properly, it will appear to the player that you are deeper in the net, with more net to shoot at. But, once he takes the shot it's like you were already out higher on top of your crease, making it seem to the player that you possess incredible speed. Forward motion gives you more time to react to the shot while the forward thrust makes it seem that you were out high all along.

In principle, by staying a little deeper in the net, you can see everyone as well as read the plays better. You have less distance to travel to make the back door plays, and you only give the illusion of being deeper in the net. Using forward motion on the play gives you the same position as if you were high on your crease. The distance you are from the puck, combined with your reaction time, translates into better control with the same movements.

Sometimes, being too aggressive will take you out of position on back door plays or rebounds. Using forward motion means that it is as if you were one step in front of where you are, giving the illusion that you are deeper in the net.

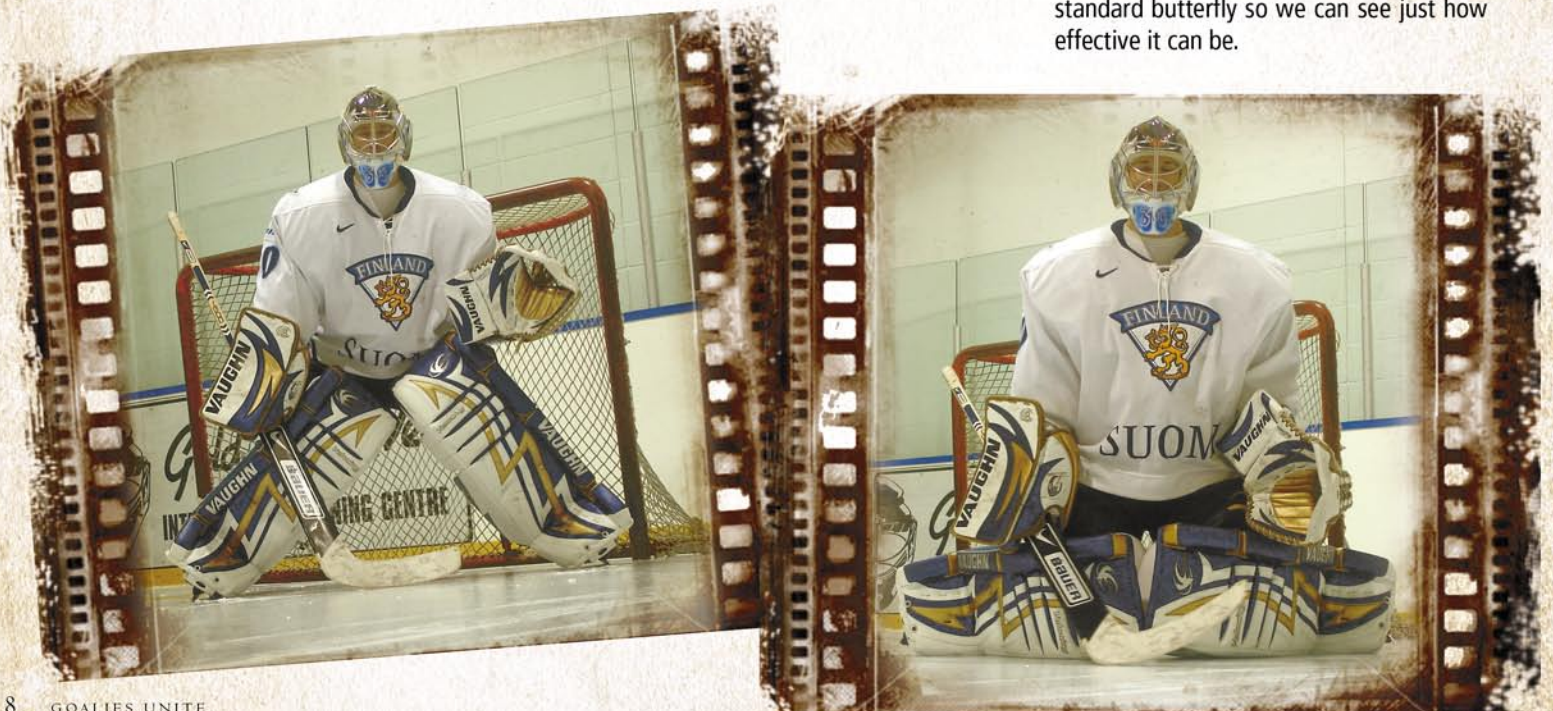
When the goalie stays slightly deeper in the net and takes the time to read the plays, he will have the ability to reach all back door plays prior to implementing the forward thrust. It is like reversing the sequence of events that presently exist.

Today, when the goalie plays further out of the crease and takes the net away from the players view, it leaves the shooter with so many other options. Possibilities to use plays such as going around the goalie or a pass to the back door strongly exist. This forces the goalie the need for an extremely quick recovery.

Taking the most opportunity away from a player begins with a proper angle, which is easily achieved by staying slightly deeper in the net and applying forward motion. This allows you to use your angle to perfection while bettering your position. It all comes together to provide the goalie with the ideal combination, utilizing both the angle and position. This gives the goalie the best opportunity to stop the puck.

If you stay outside of your crease, it makes sense that sometimes you might get lost or be slightly off of your angle. When you use forward motion and stay slightly deeper in the net, it is much easier to maintain consistency and be more accurate with your angles until you are ready to proceed with a forward thrust. When you apply a forward motion, you actually cover more of the net. You are coming out further and further and taking away more of the net.

Let's see what happens when you implement a forward motion movement to a standard butterfly so we can see just how effective it can be.





Standard Butterfly: As we make a butterfly, our skates actually retreat most of the time into the net, while our upper body remains constant. What the puck sees is factual; the upper body remains constant, but the lower legs retreat, opening up the corners of the net. What this means is that you maintained your upper part where you had coverage, but, as a result, lost coverage on your lower part of the net.

We implement a forward drop into your existing butterfly. This means that your skates do not retreat, and that they become more factual in coverage and remain consistent. However, the upper body has advanced outward with the forward thrust, taking away time and space for the puck to enter the net. Now, it is like you were higher out on the crease than you actually were, creating the illusion that the player had more room to shoot than he really did.

When we implement forward motion into other saves and movements, you will begin to see the real value in using the forward motion.

Glove Save: Most goalies will make a glove or blocker save by moving laterally into the puck or the shot. When the puck is far outside any threatening zone, it is easy to read and control. However, when the players are closer and in threatening areas to score, it is much easier to be beat high because your arm has to move higher. But if it moves forward on the play, it will appear you are taking a higher angle which would give better coverage up high and less distance for the glove to travel.

The more you move out at the puck, the lesser the distance will be that you'll have to move your glove

to cover the top corner of the net. By twisting the wrist and moving towards the puck, it takes away both the top corner of the net as well as the space between the glove and shoulder.

Taking a standard save, most goalies will move laterally across the net to make the save. This will take the goalie out to one side of the net, making a recovery much more difficult should the rebound end up on the other side of the net. However, moving forward will take you to the upper part of the crease while facing the shooter. This allows the goalie to take more net away from the shooter. It will give the goalie much better overall net coverage while allowing the goalie the ability to recover to either side of the net.

DO NOT CONFUSE AGGRESSION WITH FORWARD MOTION, THEY ARE DIFFERENT.....

Aggression is a style; forward motion is a movement.

A goalie is aggressive when he challenges the shooter, taking away net while forcing him to make a play or a shot. The goalie is limiting the player's options.

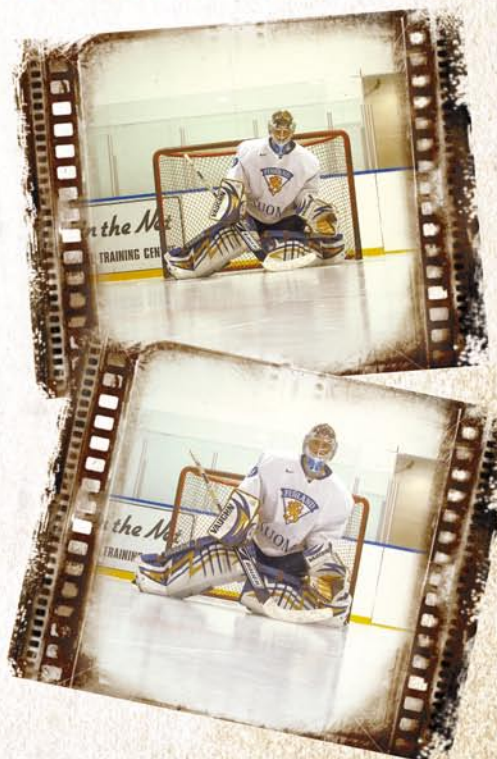
When a goalie uses forward motion, he is making a movement just like a butterfly, except he is adding the forward thrust to his movement. When it is implemented properly, the goalies skates will not retreat into the net. This movement compliments many of the goalies set movements which he has established in this existing arsenal of save selections.

Like any new movement, you first want to understand its function and where it fits into your game. You also want to assess any weaknesses or problem areas that you

may encounter. Here are some of the concerns you may have to deal with before you implement the forward motion into your game.

Timing

When you first start forward motion, your timing has to be adjusted because it requires combining reaction and movement together. Establishing the timing patterns that will help you perfect this movement is key. When you are standing still and you drop, it is a reaction. The speed in which you drop is very quick. When you're combining the drop with a forward thrust, it will need more time. Here, the goalie has to read the release of the puck much more efficiently.





Control

To make forward motion effective, you have to develop control of the finished movement. Some goalies have incredible explosive movements, and if they do not control the explosion, they will put themselves out of position should a rebound get loose. Using explosive recovery drills will enable the goalie to explode out at the puck and control the thrust, readying a recovery move while keeping his position current.

Hand movements

When implementing forward thrust, your glove must move forward towards the puck and not laterally across. If your save is purely reaction, your arms will just move outward in a lateral motion. When you apply the forward thrust, your glove would only cover outside the net. It also has to move towards the puck. Just as the thrust in the legs are moving you towards the puck, the same applies to your gloves.

Hesitation

One of the biggest concerns when trying to implement forward motion into your game is being set too deep in the net for the times that you do not move forward. It will not be as effective as you would like. When you get caught in this situation and the puck goes into the net, you must be aware of the consequence as your coaches will not be happy with you. They will not notice all the other saves you have made from this movement; they will only notice the times it does not work.

Reading the shot

Not taking the time to read the shot or play will result in the goalie rushing a movement without enough information to make the proper save selection. Often, its failure is due to the player altering his decision on a pass or shot placement after seeing which save selection the goalie has chosen. Be patient, read the shot or play, then select the movement and make the save!

"Forward motion works differently for everyone. Understanding what influences it can have on your game are directly related to your strengths and weaknesses. The mechanics remain constant, but the goalies strengths and weaknesses dictate the starting position to begin the forward motion, as well as the strategies applied to each different style or system."

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game and minimize my mistakes," says Lundqvist. "There is a difference between positive pressure and negative pressure. I think it's a good thing because it keeps me sharp, compared to if we were scoring lots of goals. Then it wouldn't matter as much if I were to let in a bad goal once in a while."

Everyone needs to relax a little bit and take their mind off of the game. Even if it is for a short while, Lundqvist is no exception. "Playing guitar takes your mind away from hockey. There is so much hockey going on all the time-games and practices- so it's fun to have something else to do," Lundqvist comments. "I like to walk in Central Park because it's like a sanctuary here in New York. It is such a contrast from the rest of the city. Going out for dinner with friends and family is always nice and it gets your mind off of things. It's also very liberating that I can still walk around town without being jumped. I think it's because there are so many people here."

Henrik Lundqvist and his long time friend and goalie coach, Michael Lehner, own and operate the Gold in the Net franchise in Sweden. Last season they helped over 450 goalies in Sweden to help bring the goaltending level up one more notch. This year, Gold in the Net will be sending one lucky student to have their camp in Sweden with Henrik. On behalf of Henrik, good luck to all Gold in the Net students who get the opportunity to participate in the contest!

