



## PREPARATION TO EVALUATIONS

### *The Butterfly Style*

During the last 15 years no other position in any sport has evolved more than that of goaltending in hockey. Until the mid 1980s most goaltenders would stop the majority of shots standing up as it was believed that going down on your knees to make a save considerably reduced your chances for success. In the late 1980's, Francois Allaire, (Patrick Roy's goalie coach with the Montreal Canadiens), realized that more than 90% of the shots taken during a hockey game were directed toward the middle and lower parts of the net, thus, the introduction of the **butterfly technique**. Allaire realized that having the goaltender go down on his knees in a blocking position with his legs flared would be a far more productive method for stopping pucks. During the mid-1990's, butterfly goaltenders were concentrated mainly in the province of Quebec, but by the early 2000s the butterfly style had become the way of playing goal throughout the world. At the turn of the century, the butterfly style evolved. Shooters began focusing more on the upper part of the net and it became a problem for goalies that would drop to their knees in a blocking mode. Goalies had to be more patient before dropping down and were also becoming more active with their gloves.

### **When to use the butterfly**

The butterfly should be utilized in most situations. It can be used to stop a straight shot from the slot, or the blue line or to react against a situation from close range.

### **Reactive vs. blocking butterfly**

When facing shots from far out, the goalie should use a *reactive butterfly*. When facing situations from close range the goalie should use a *blocking butterfly*. The timing of the goalie's descent and the positioning of the hands will depend on the situation. Against a play from close range (less than the length of a stick) the goalie can afford to go down slightly before the shot is taken. In addition the goalie brings his hands in tight along his body in order to create a big "wall." This kind of butterfly is referred to as a "block." In all other situations the goalie needs to be more patient. For example, when facing a shot from the slot, the goalie does not want to drop down into a blocking mode before the shot. Too much net would be exposed to the shooter. Instead the goalie needs to identify where the puck is going before he does down. He *reacts* to the shot.





In addition the goaltender needs to keep his hands a little more in control and be ready to react in case the puck is directed toward the upper corners. In both cases there are 3 steps the goalie should always follow in order to achieve a successful butterfly.



1. *Drive your knees towards the ice.* It is important that the goalie recognizes that there is a difference between dropping the knees on the ice, and driving them down. When you drive your knees down you actually give them momentum towards the ice, which is much faster.
2. *Push your hips forward.* This is important for 2 reasons. By pushing the hips forward the goalie actually uses his core strength, which creates more speed. The second reason is that it allows the goalie to be tall in his butterfly. When down on the ice the goalie should be in a position whereby the knees, hips and shoulders form a straight line.
3. *Elbows into ribs* with forearms close to the goalies thighs. Although this may not be as important to the execution of going into the butterfly, having elbows in tight helps eliminate holes under the arms. If the goaltender has his arms up in the butterfly

there are more decisions for the goalie to make a save. The fewer the options the easier the save for the goalie.