



Setting Goals For The Season (Part 1)

Aachen Blue Elks

Setting Goals For The Season

- Understanding strong goals versus weak goals
- Set realistic goals for individual players and as a team
- Ensure the goals being set are achievable
- How to measure if we successfully achieve goals
- Goals should help create team spirit “no-one is bigger than the team”
- Goals should allow players to grow their hockey IQ as they progress

Understanding Strong Goals Versus Weak Goals

- When setting goals it's all too easy to be sucked into the common mistake of looking only at the end result, instead of breaking down what is needed to achieve the end result.
- Setting weak goals typically causes friction within the team, as those weak goals will mainly focus on an individual instead of the team
- It's possible to set strong goals for both the individual players and for the team which work well together to achieve the best end result

Weak Goals

How do you normally set yourself goals before a game or season?

- D: *“I want to get 1 goal and 1 assist in this game”*
- D: *“I want to have the most number of hits this season”*
- F: *“I want to get at least 50 points this season”*
- F: *“I want to be the top scorer this season”*
- G: *“I want to get a shutout in the next game”*

The above examples are all weak goals because they purely focus on an end result, and not on targeting the skills needed to achieve the end result.

Strong Goals

If you set yourself strong goals, these will target specific aspects of your game and they will most likely lead to you achieving the end results from the “weak goals” anyway.

Some examples of strong goals:-

- F: *“I want to win 75% of my loose puck battles per game”*
- F: *“I want to create 5 good scoring chances on line rushes per game”*
- D: *“I want to make quick and accurate passes first time every time on breakouts”*
- D: *“I want to support my forwards by getting shots on net from the blue line”*

The above examples give you a good starting block, from which specific training and drills can be used to help improve on those aspects of your game.

Setting Realistic Goals

When you set the goals for the individual players and for the team, if those goals are not realistically achievable, then the bar is being set too high.

One way to look at this is *“Instead of trying to climb a mountain in a single day, break the climb down into smaller climbs over several days.”*

- Your end goal is exactly the same, to climb “the mountain”
- Trying to climb “the mountain” in a single day has a higher likelihood of failure as it requires a lot of effort to achieve, many things can go wrong
- Climbing “the mountain” over several days has a higher likelihood of success as it takes less effort each day and achieving the goal of each day is much easier to measure and evaluate the success of

Ensure The Goals Being Set Are Achievable (TEAM)

Lets face it, we have all probably dreamed of being able to hoist the Stanley Cup over our heads, but the reality is that none of us will get to do it. If we take the above comment and apply it to hobby league hockey, you could translate that as “We want to win every game we play this season”.

This isn't a realistic goal unless you have a team packed with superstars, which unfortunately we don't

Therefore we ensure that strong goals are set to improve our team game, i.e.

- Support one another better via use of “triangle” positioning in the O zone
- Backcheck using lane control through the N zone to break up opponent rushes
- Focus on much better player/area coverage in the D zone
- Ensure we break down 50% of the shooting chances from the high slot
- Ensure all rebounds in and around the goal crease are cleared to the corners or out of the D zone

Ensure The Goals Being Set Are Achievable (PLAYER)

In the same way as we focus on goals to improve as a team, we also need to set achievable goals at the individual player level too, some examples:-

- Ensure you communicate with your line mates each and every shift
- If you are the puck carrier on zone entry, drive wide and deep
- If you are following the puck carrier, get into position for a drop pass or cycle on the corner/half wall
- Don't puck watch, instead ensure you know where the player you are marking is and keep inside position on them
- Ensure you stay focused on your tasks for 100% of your shift, no daydreaming!

How To Measure If We Successfully Achieve Goals

There's no point in setting goals if we don't know if and when we are achieving them. We can normally set a number or percentage for each goal, which allows us to track how successful we are against each goal.

Using this approach is shown already on some of the examples in the previous slides:-

- Ensure you stay focused on your tasks for 100% of your shift, no daydreaming!
- Ensure we break down 50% of the shooting chances from the high slot

Goals should help create team spirit

As goals are set for the individual players and the team, they should all have one top level goal in mind, to create team spirit.

When we step out on the ice together, we win as a team and we lose as a team

No single player is bigger than the team

Helping your teammates to improve should be encouraged, but it needs to be done via constructive criticism, not by negative criticism:-

Constructive: *“Do you want me to help you with your slapshot?”*

Negative: *“Your slapshot is a mess, you should be doing it like this!”*

Be willing to accept help from the players with more experience than you, as there’s always something new to learn (every day is a school day!)

Goals Should Allow Players To Grow Their Hockey IQ As They Progress

Setting goals for one season is only the start of the process. Ensuring the players and team retain the knowledge from this season and apply it to the following seasons while continuing to learn and grow as a player/team is the end goal.

- By achieving this, the individual players hockey IQ will increase
- Hockey IQ takes time to grow, it's not an overnight process
- If all of the players on the roster can increase their hockey IQ together each season, the team has a much greater chance of success as each season passes
- If your hockey IQ is high enough, you won't have to think about what you want your feet to do, they will automatically do what you need them to do



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