

Body Mind Soul - The PreGame Warm Up

Too often I see teams hit the ice without a lot of structured warm up for a big game. Most slack out on the ice in small groups and saunter around the ice then some sort of shape takes place after the notorious smashes of pucks against the glass, boards, and empty net. During this period the players all look to the goalie who might be doing a couple stretches in the corner “hopefully he will hurry up and fill the empty void of the net.” Then the goalie takes to the net and they start to whip pucks towards him as though he is their worst enemy. One, two players at a time no organization no thought and then the half moon setup...“What the hell is with a half moon circle of players winging pucks at their last defense the goalie as hard as they can...it is like lets blow off all our pregame energy and try to blow a puck through the goalie...OUR goalie!” “This is the dumbest part of hockey I have witnessed, beat the hell out of your goalie, bounce a couple pucks off his helmet so he can’t hear and possibly sting him so bad he hurts for the rest of the game. This has to stop!” Neither the goalie, players nor coaches have warmed up and prepared themselves for the game to come. Neither goalie, player nor coaches have prepared their Body, Mind or Soul for the game.

So what then is the Body, Mind, and Soul, warm up? Follow through the steps below:

BODY All players and goalies should be somewhat stretched before they even hit the ice take 5 minutes in the dressing room to do this then the ice drills will complete the body warm-up. Arrive at the ice gate together as Team.

Players. Get the heart beat going and get those legs going. These are all ½ ice drills. The player and goalie drills happen at the same time. The usual 5 minutes pregame time is a lot of time if organized.

- 1) Circles - All but 3 players (we will see what the 3 players are doing later) skate the end circles forwards and backwards 3 times each circle.
- 2) Board to Board - (the 3 players not in the first do the second drill, a second set of 3 layers are out for the goalie warm ups.) All players skate together board to board across the rink. First lap slow, second lap medium, third lap sprint. Repeat again two sets. That’s six time across the ice.
- 3) Board to Board passing - (the 3 players not in the second join in a third set of 3 players are out for the goalie warm ups.) Players ½ on each side of the rink with pucks one side starts off the board 3 strides and passes puck to on coming player. He continues to other side then repeat the same pass ...4 sets each.
- 4) After this all players are now ready for the regular horse shoe drill be quick and run through 4 sets of the horseshoe drill.
- 5) Last drill is 3 lines- rush to the net with one puck, must be passed 2 times before a shot. Players at the blue line create a 3 man rush on to the net. Two sets

Goalies. They need to get their legs stretched, pads, gloves, blockers and body going. The 3 players from the line work with the goalies. (10-12 Pucks required)

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- 1) Wrap Around – the first set of 3 players (from above) are in front of the goalie approx 3 feet above the crease. First player skates behind the net and wraps around, the next player wraps opposite side repeat 3 sets each player. The goalie starts at top of crease and follows the player to the low side then has slide across to stop the wrap around and then back to the top for the next. Three wraps per player for 9 complete moves for the goalie.
- 2) Top Point Shots. (The second set of 3 players joins the first set go back to the player drills.) The 3 players are at 30, 90, and 120 degrees in front of the net. Alternating from right to left, center, 3-5 shots from each player. The player yells out “yup”, “now”, or a signal. The goalie has to move from opposite side of shooter to the puck. No slap shots concentrate on wrist shots to the glove and blocker or pads. Make the goalie move glide and slide.
- 3) Scramble pass (again alternate 3 players) 3 players in front, one puck, 3 passes before the shot is taken goalie has to follow the puck and make the save. 6 shots maximum
- 4, 5) Goalies join in the horseshoe and the 3 lines.

Coaches need to get into the game as well while the team is doing it’s warm up. Coaches should be looking over the opposing team make a couple mental and physical notes of who is doing what. They should be discussing the line up to assure they know all is set and changes to be made to line up with the start of the game are good. Communicate the strategy and start up line to the Captains so in the huddle the captain can tell the players.

The Mind and Soul. There is a Captain and Assistant Captain for a reason not just to argue with the referee about a bad call. After the body warm ups Captains have all players in a huddle. The Mind of all join into the game, last minute strategy of who might have to be slowed down on the other team, the starting lineup is given to all players repeat it for all...then a good Soulful breakout cheer.

Now we have it Body, Mind, and Soul - Players, Goalies and Coaches.

Let’s play hockey.

Doug McLarty

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Doug has coached many teams over the past and found that as a father of a goalie there is just not real preparation of the warm up of players and goalies. This creates a slow start to games and injury from not being prepared. He hopes to change that with his Mind Body Soul warm up message. Practice the warm up at regular practice so everyone knows what is going to happen when you hit the game play warm up. Most of all Try it you will be surprised.

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