

Roof Shots – Gettin’ it up in a hurry

Raising or lifting the puck is a monumental achievement in every hockey player’s life. It can be a tough and time-consuming skill to learn, but it is more than well worth it to be able to tuck a puck up over a fallen goaltender. The first step in being able to get the puck up quickly is the flip shot. Unfortunately, many players work on it at the expense of proper shooting technique and the result is just that – a shot that flips end over end through the air. At the younger age groups, this works just fine. But as a player progresses, he or she needs to be able to shoot the puck more quickly, more accurately and much harder.

The flip shot is not a substitute for the wrist shot or snap shot. It is a shot that is utilized in tight to the net when the puck needs to be lifted over a fallen goaltender. Usually there is not much room and more often than not, not much time. Statistics show that most goals are scored on rebounds. A rebound means that the goaltender made the first save. And usually when a goaltender makes a save he or she ends up on the ice. The best, and oftentimes only place to score is up high. So a flip shot is a valuable weapon in any player’s arsenal.

Flip shot may or may not be the correct term for this particular skill. At the younger ages, it is just that. But as players become more experienced and the pace of the game quickens, it becomes more of a “quick riser” or “top shelf” or “roof” shot. Everyone loves to stick one up on the top shelf with the cans of corn.

Quickness counts

The shot must be taken in a hurry – so there is no time to handle the puck. A player must get himself into a position where the puck is “in close” so that his or her arms are not extended. In most instances, a player is not able to “sweep” the puck, but in effect has to “scoop” the puck up.

Puck position

As in all shots, the puck should start on the heel of the blade of the stick – especially on the backhand. It is virtually impossible to get the puck up in the air quickly off of the toe of the back side of the blade. With the curve, the puck slips quickly off of the end of the blade. On the forehand side, especially with an “open” curve on the blade (meaning the bottom comes out farther than the top) it is sometimes easier initially to

use the toe of the blade, but it is very important to use the whole blade for what ultimately will be a harder, more accurate shot. The puck should start on the heel and spin down the blade to be released toward the toe. It should not be flipping end over end, but should in fact be spinning and flat as it rises into the net.

Blade position

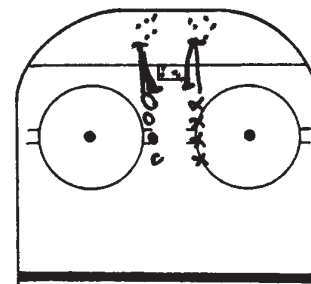
On both the forehand and backhand, the blade of the stick needs to be “open” to be able to “scoop” underneath the puck. The blade should be “opened” up with the wrists just at the point of contact with the puck.

Bottom hand is most important

It is very important to get a lot of “bottom hand” into the shot, as in effect what a player is doing is “lifting the puck”. It requires that the bottom hand is moved down the shaft to about the halfway point. Then, while opening the blade with the wrists, lifting upward and spinning the puck from the heel to the toe, effectively “scooping” the puck up quickly.

Roof Shot Practice Drill

This can be a fun competition between two players who can do the drill on the same net, simultaneously competing for quickness and accuracy. Spread five pucks along the boards at each side of the net. Players start at the corners of the crease in front. On the whistle, they pick up a puck on their side of the net, bring it out to the top of the crease and “roof it”. Then they return for the next puck. It is important that the players stop and start as they pick up the puck and shoot. Players should strive to shoot from just outside the crease (as they would in a game) and to get the shot off as quickly as possible. Players should switch



sides to be able to utilize both the backhand and forehand shots in roofing the puck. You never know what weapon you will need at your disposal in a game.

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