

The Gaelic Football Goalkeeper Today

As the progressive world of gaelic football evolves and grows, systems, tactics and philosophies of training and coaching are constantly changing. As the games develops so too does the role of the goalkeeper. The goalkeeper remains the one true specialist on the pitch.

The importance of thorough preparation cannot be overstated. Through research and practical application, newer and more effective methods of goalkeeper training have been created over recent years. Remember that knowledge and information do not equate to success. Intensive specialised training, coupled with playing experience is needed to improve levels of performance. Mastery of goalkeeping skills and understanding of the game will be achieved through dedicated practice; working together, players and coaches reach these aims. Coaches can provide the training environment that prepares goalkeepers for the physical and psychological challenges of the competitive match. The goalkeeper brings the talent, which is nourished by the coach.

Remember that the goalkeepers primary function is to keep the ball out of the net. To meet the challenges of this, perhaps the most difficult of all team positions, the goalkeeper needs to demonstrate:

1. Mastery of the basic skills.
2. The mental sharpness required to produce the appropriate response in his/her decision making and the emotional balance necessary for this demanding position.
3. The fitness necessary to consistently compete at the highest level throughout the season, be it for club or county.

Mastery of skillsThe Techniques.....

- a. Handling
- b. Shape
- c. Mobility
- d. Positioning
- e. Fielding and Distribution.

Psychological AspectsThe qualities....

- a. Talent
- b. Belief
- c. Desire
- d. Perseverance
- e. Integrity
- f. Composure

Physical Fitness

....The Motor Elements....

Just as an outfield players need football fitness, goalkeepers need goalkeeping fitness. Though both types of fitness are based on the same five basic elements (Speed, Strength, Endurance, Coordination and Flexibility) the importance of the individual elements as part of this set is different. There are also differences between field players and goalkeepers in the way in which elements such as strength and speed are called upon and utilised. This is a consequence of the different tasks and functions required of field players and goalkeepers. It is not the case that all conditioning methods used for field players are equally suitable for goalkeepers – the content is different.