



Goal Safety

Several years ago soccer clubs all over the world started using portable goals made of aluminum and other light materials. The advantages of being able to move the goals around for training and field maintenance was huge, but there was one drawback. Portable goals were far more likely to topple over than their old permanently fixed counterparts. There were cases of young players getting injured by goals being blown over, bumped into or by someone who thought it would be a great idea to swing on the crossbar - something that should never be done.

Due to these safety issues several different systems were created to help anchor goals. When we at Fayette County Youth Soccer changed from our heavy old cast iron goals to the current aluminum ones, we chose two methods to anchor them. We bought an extra back bar for almost all of our goals and we used sandbags to help as well.

Properly placed, sandbags are very effective in preventing goals from falling. Unfortunately, there are many times that we don't place them properly. When this happens, not only are the sandbags failing to do their job, but they also cause avoidable damage to the goal nets.

Common Improper Practices

The first thing is to understand that the sandbags are there to balance the goal and keep it from falling over. They are not there to hold the nets in place. The nets are held by a series of clips. They are clipped at the back of the goal posts, the back of the crossbar and along the bars that extend away from the goalposts. They are, very intentionally, not secured at the back of the net along the ground. It is felt that no matter how hard a shot, once the ball hits the back of the loose net, the ball will fall to the ground and it will be obvious that it is in the goal, even if it happens to roll out behind the goal eventually.

It is very common to see the net anchored to the ground using the sandbags. This is unnecessary and causes a couple of problems. First, the goal itself is not being anchored. This arrangement totally negates the safety aspect of having the sandbags. Second, this causes an added tension on the net which either causes the clips to pop out of the frame or the nets to rip. When the clips pop out it causes extra pressure on the remaining clips which also leads to the net ripping.



Not as bad but still a problem is wrapping the net under the bar and putting the sandbag on top of both. This does at least allow the sandbag to do its job of securing the goal, but it also causes extra tension on the net, leading to the same kind of damage to the net described above. Also remember that the bar is there to add counterbalancing weight to the goal. It is not there to secure the net.



The concern about damaging nets is that they are expensive and they have become increasingly harder to purchase. We would prefer not to have to replace them frequently. Kwik Goal no longer makes the type of goal we have. Consequently, they no longer make nets that fit our goals properly. We need to hang on to what we have as long as we can.

Proper Sandbag Placement



When properly placed the sandbag should be placed directly on the back bar of the goal. The net should be allowed to fall freely over the bag and the bar.

A few of our small goals don't have a back bar. In those cases the sandbags should be placed at the back corner of the extension from the goalpost, but not on the net. This will keep the goal secure without damaging the net.



It is very important that we place the sandbags properly in order to ensure the safety of our players as well as to ensure the longevity of our nets. Remember that the sandbags are used for goal safety, not for anchoring nets and that it's okay for the net to not be anchored at the back. As long as it is properly clipped in along the other places where the clips go, it will do its job.

