

"I'M TAKING MY NETS AND GOING HOME!"

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Jeff awoke early on Saturday morning as usual. He quickly dressed in the first clothes he could find on the floor and thundered down the stairs like a wounded elephant. He inhaled some breakfast and just as he finished he heard a knock at the door.

He peeked out the curtain to see who it was and standing at the front door were about ten kids from his neighbourhood with their road hockey sticks in hand. Saturday mornings in the winter was Hockey Day on Ormond Drive, where the cries of 'he shoots he scores' and 'move....carrrrrrrr' could be heard all day long.

The usual kids were there.



The ones he knew were Allan the mouth breather.



Runny nose Jed River.



And the husky boy who mostly played goalie, Phil.

Jeff barely knew some of the other kids, just their names.
It was his best friend Roy who had knocked on the door.

"Jeff are you going to play road hockey today?" asked Roy.

"Yeah, just give me a sec," replied Jeff.

"Can we take your two nets and your goalie equipment?"



“Sure.”

Jeff had two brand new nets. He was the only kid in his neighbourhood with two nets. He also had tennis balls and goalie equipment. A lot of the guys Dads were laid off from GM, but his Dad was a supervisor so he was still working.

Jeff showed up to the usual spot on the street, but the game had already started. “Jeff you’re on the team with Jed, Terry, Mike and Robin,” shouted Roy. Jeff was ticked off. He was on the team with the older kids and they never passed the ball. Jed was on the team and he had to stop every five minutes to wipe his nose on his sleeve. Sure enough after ten minutes of playing Jeff never touched the ball once.

Later in the game Jeff wanted to play net. After all he owned all the goalie equipment. Jed was in net now, and was playing like New York Islanders goalie Billy Smith in the Stanley Cup Final. What made Jeff even angrier was that Jed was getting snot all over the inside of his authentic Mike Palmateer goalie mask.



The game continued and Jeff had barely touched the ball, or been allowed to play net. Just then somebody accidentally high stuck him hard in the face causing his lip to bleed a little.

“That’s it. I’ve had enough. I’m taking my two nets, my ball and I’m going home!” screeched Jeff.



“Come on Jeff, don’t go,” pleaded Roy. “The game is just getting good.”

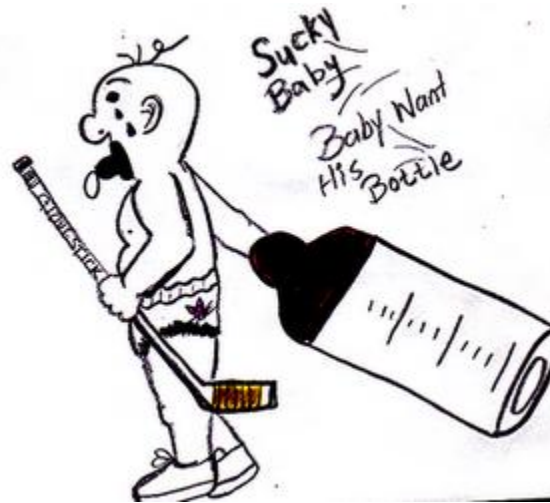
“Forget it. I’m the only one whoever brings this equipment. I should be able to do anything I want.”

Jeff gathered his two nets and goalie equipment while the others stood and watched in silence.

As Jeff walked away dragging his stuff he heard somebody yell out.

“Sucky baby, sucky baby you’re a big suck Jeff.”

“Yeah, go home and get your mommy to bring you a bottle,” somebody else yelled.



Then the rest of the kids started shouting some pretty nasty things at him. Jeff didn’t look back and walked quickly back home.

On Sunday Jeff awoke early again to get ready to play road hockey. Suddenly he realized that no one would be playing since he was the only kid with nets on the street.

He took a quick look outside to see what the weather was like. To his astonishment he saw all the usual kids playing road hockey down the street. They were using boots for net posts and one kid had old phones books taped to his shins for goalie pads. Even more surprising was that everyone was having a good time



It was killing Jeff to watch them through his front window. After a while he got dressed and went outside. He gathered up his two nets and went over and stood on the curb beside where the kids were playing. He waited there but no one paid attention to him.

He sheepishly called out, "Hey guys can Iplay?"
Still everyone just ignored him.

Soon he gave up and gathered up his nets and began to slowly walk home. Suddenly he felt a hand on his shoulder, it was his friend Roy.

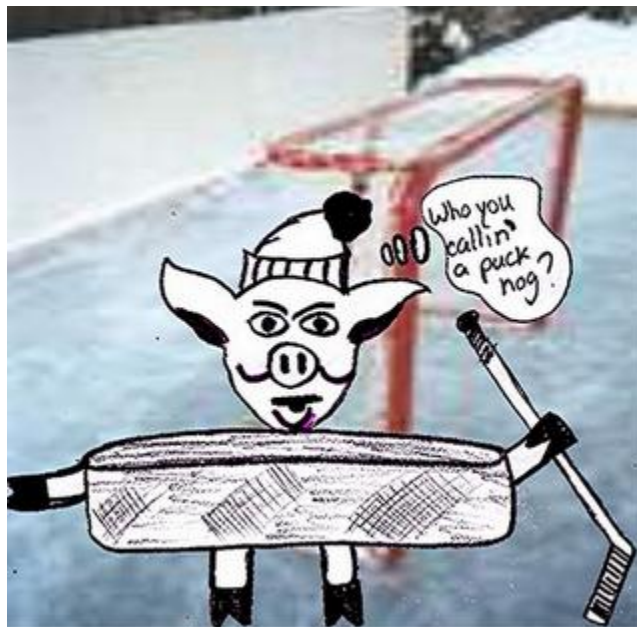
"Hey where are you going?" asked Roy.



"Well, I thought that....."

"The other kids and I talked it over and we want you to come back." Roy continued, "Listen it's no fun playing with just boots for nets, but that doesn't mean you get to tell us all how the game should go."

"Okay, deal. Do you think you can stop putting me on the team with the big kids? They're a bunch of puck hogs."



"Deal, come on let's go," replied Roy.

Jeff put his nets on the street and he even gave his goalie equipment to the team with the big kids. It didn't matter because Jeff and Roy scored at will and whipped the big kids all day long.

The End