

Games - Always be a sportsman regardless of the result

There are important considerations to make during game day. A thorough warm up must be implemented, considerations of team line-ups and who starts and doesn't and crucial team talks at key moments.

This section addresses all these areas and provides you with ideas to help.

Pre-Game

Before the game starts you should consider the following:

Equipment needs for the game and warm up

For the game:

- Uniforms (what color? home or away?)
- Game Balls (4 recommended)
- Pump and Inflator
- Corner Flags (6)
- Goal Nets
- First Aid Kit
- Medical Release Forms
- Cell Phone
- Player Passes
- Ice and Cooler
- Water

For the Warm Up:

- Warm up "T" shirts Balls
- Cones
- Training Vests

Field Inspection

- Make sure field markings are visible.
- Check goal nets
- Select best suited footwear for the playing conditions. Screw-ins for wet surfaces, molded soles for dry conditions.

Find your Half Time Location

- Find out before the game where you will regroup at half time.
- Look for a shaded area in hot conditions.
- Look for shelter on wet days.

Check on Injured Players

- Before you can select a team line up you may have to check on the injury status.

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Decide on a line-up — Submit Team Roster

- Time to decide on your team line up. Some leagues may require that you submit a team roster or show player ID's before the game commences.

Pre-game team talk

- Keep the pre-game team talk brief and to the point. Identify a few main goals for the team to accomplish. You can be specific to each player minutes leading up to the game.

Warm up

- Allow 25 to 30 minutes for a team and goalkeeper warm up.
- Younger players under 10 may only need about 10 minutes.

Greet Officials

- Greet the officials before the game. It's a good way to get to know them on a personal level.

Coin Toss

- Captain to decide which side to select. Always take the advantage in the first half. For example, play with the wind in the first half, it may die down in the second half.

Half Time

At the interval you should consider the following:

Meet at your half time location

- Look for a shaded area in hot conditions.
- Look for shelter on wet days.

Rest

- Have your players sit down on the ground and relax.
- You are allowed a maximum of 15 minutes rest period in eleven-a-side games. Sometimes the referee may ask for 10 minutes.
- Take the full 15 minutes if your players are tired, you have only a few substitutes or if the weather is hot.
- Agree to 10 if minutes the weather is cold or conditions are deteriorating.

Fluids

- Players should have a small drink of water. Avoid drinking too much.
Have drinks ready in paper cups or bottles to save time.

Check injuries

- Check for any new injuries or recurring injuries to your players.
- Get treatment if necessary.

Review first half performance

- Because of the short time, limit your talk to 3 to 4 points.
- Be specific and clear.
- Make appropriate adjustments tactically based on your first half observations. Refer to your notes and confer with your assistant coaches.

Warm Up

- Use two minutes of your half time break for a quick stretch.

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Post Game

At the conclusion of the game you should consider the following:

Shake hands with opposing officials

- At the end of the game, players and coaches usually line up facing each other on the halfway line, walk past each other and touch hands and say "good game". Coaches are usually last in line and shake hands.
- Always be a sportsman regardless of the result.
- It is also a nice gesture and sets a good example for the coach to seek out the referee and assistant referees and thank them.

Fluids

- Players should have a drink of water to replenish fluid lost during the game.
- Have drinks ready in paper cups or bottles to save time.
- Parents usually take turns providing refreshments after games.

Check Injuries

- Check for any new injuries or recurring injuries to your players.
- Get treatment if necessary.

Cool Down

- Players should perform a brief 5-minute cool down after each game.
- Keep this a routine, even when you lose.

Review game briefly

- Review the game very briefly and only emphasize the positives. Your next practice session is the place to be detailed and comprehensive. Sometime after a loss, frustration can rule. It is good policy to restrain your comments until you have had an opportunity to reflect on the game.

Team announcements

- Make appropriate announcements for your next practice or game to parents and players.

Collect and check equipment

- Make sure all the equipment is collected and accounted for.
- Have the team captain and several players be responsible for this duty.

Replenishment

- Thirty minutes after any competition suggest your players eat a meal high in complex carbohydrates to help restore your body's blood sugar (glycogen levels).