

PRE-GAME PREPARATION

COACHES: These are some ideas you might want to share with your players to help them prepare both mentally and physically for a game or tournament. They are guidelines only but experience shows that players perform better when they have set routines to follow. .

The best interests of the team must take precedence over the interests of individual players. This means every player must know their responsibilities to the team. Here are some ideas.

"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR YOUR TEAM LATELY?"

GENERAL POLICY

1. All players should be on the diamond, properly dressed and ready to start their pre-game warm-up at least 40 minutes before game time.
2. The Starting Lineup, including the starting pitcher will be prepared and submitted 25 minutes before game time.
3. The starting lineup should be prepared to take the field for the infield drill as instructed by the umpire. Outfielders should participate in the pre-game drill unless otherwise directed by the coaching staff.
4. Players not scheduled to start a game might be assigned one of a number of other duties to help the team. These might include;
 - Bull pen duties
 - Outfield warm up duty
 - Bat Boy duties
5. **THIS IS YOUR TEAM.** What you get out of it will be directly proportional to what you put in. Everyone is responsible for your success or our failure.

DO IT RIGHT - EVERY TIME - ALL THE TIME

In major softball competition, teams tend to follow established patterns of preparation. Some of this is individual while specified parts are team activities. For example usually a team will run and stretch as a group. At the same time the players might be going through mental exercises individually. Following are some guidelines and ideas to try with your team. Once the team is established, it might be a useful exercise for the players to discuss and plan their own pre-game routines. Consider these as starting points.

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL AT SITE

All players implement their pre-game focus plan to attain their Ideal Performance State. This activity is largely individual and could be done while travelling to the park. Start by getting your breathing under control. Concentrate on relaxing as you breathe deeply. Then focus on what you need to do to play your very best. Answer these questions:

1. On defence I need to.....
2. At bat I need to
3. On the bases I need to.....
4. On the bench I need to.....
5. To stay in control I need to.....

UPON ARRIVAL AT GAME SITE

Continue with pre-game focussing. Pay attention to the park layout, weather and ground conditions and consider what, if any, adjustments might be required to the way you play. Do whatever you need to do to increase your chances of having a best game ever. Work through your Pre-Game Mental Exercise to focus and stay positive.

40 MINUTES BEFORE GAME

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| 1. | Jog and run.
(shallow outfield) | Shuttle and ball pass drill |
| 2. | Stretch - team program. | Full team in circle. Captain to lead activity. |
| 3. | Throwing drills.
(Use outfield from baseline
towards center field) | a) Easy - focus on technique
10 throws @ 15 meters
b) Position distance - hard X 10 throws
c) Fast hands drill - 10 reps @ 10 meters |
| 4. | Fielding | a) Short hop drill, Pick-Ups or some fast
moving ball handling activity |
| 5. | Swings - circle formation.
Use personal bat working on
technique. | a) Stride X 3 swings
b) Hip rotation X 3 swings
c) Hand movement X 3 swings
d) Head placement X 3 swings
e) Smoothness X 8 swings
f) Snap Backs X 5 |
| 6. | Batting Practice | As per coach instructions |
| 7. | Wind Sprints. | Individual or team |
| 8. | | Line drills - for starting infield & outfield |

20 MINUTES BEFORE GAME

Starting Pitcher and catcher start warm-up

INFIELD/OUTFIELD DRILL - COACH OR PLAYER TO BAT INFIELD DRILL

The coach decides the exact routine for this activity, but generally here's what needs to be accomplished.

1. All players to get the feel of the ball. Throw to each other.
2. All players to handle several batted balls.
3. Rehearse most common plays
 - A) Force out at 1st from all positions including right field
 - B) Double play, 2nd to 1st & home to 1st.
 - C) Steal of 2nd - Catcher to 2nd Base
 - D) Outfield to 2nd, 3rd and home plate
4. Extra ground balls and throws as and if required.