



LEADERSHIP

*Game Day Preparation:
Locker Room & Bench Management*

*The USA Hockey Coaching Education
Program is presented by*



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OBJECTIVES

- To provide coaches with an idea of what it takes to prepare
- To provide coaches with game statistical sheets
- To provide an outline of game day responsibilities

INTRODUCTION

The second most important preparation task of a coach is game preparation. Your preparation or lack thereof can set the team up for a win or loss. This part of coaching is your “bread and butter,” so no stones should be left unturned. A coach should prepare his team for what will be expected during a game, so there are no surprises for the players and coaches. Proper preparation will enable the coaches and players to focus on the task at hand.

Preparation will vary with a coach depending upon:

- age group he or she is coaching
- level of play he or she is coaching (professional, college, junior, high school, etc.)
- resources available
- man power
- job type (full time, part time, amateur, paid, volunteer)
- time available to prepare

Having your team and individual players well prepared will:

- give your players confidence
- send a message to your team that you, as a coach, are well prepared

STATISTICS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN PREPARATION

The use of statistics is very helpful for you in your game preparation:

- show the tendencies of your opponent
- reaffirm your thoughts on your opponent’s strengths and weaknesses (team and individuals)
- give necessary feedback to coaches

- give necessary feedback to players
- give valuable information to coaches during the game
 - modify strategy
 - shift time of players
 - line matching /combinations
 - scoring chances
 - specialty teams

Also, remember to keep statistics in perspective when talking to your players about their own statistics.

Facts to Consider

- ice time logged
- their experience
- their role on the team

GAME DAY PREPARATION

Considerations

- home game or away game
- two game series with the same team
- two game series with two different teams
- single game
- number of games in a number of nights
- distance traveled/mode of transportation
- day of the week
- time in the season
- type of game: exhibition, conference, play-off
- size of rink/type of building

Information Needed to Gather

- opponent’s scouting report (team breakdown, key players’ tendencies)
- opponent’s tendency tape
- statistics on opponent

- opponent's last game information
- line-up/specialty teams
- opponent's tendencies on when they pull their goaltender
- opponent's line changes (on the fly, after a goal, after a penalty, after a power play, etc.)
- tendencies during the first and last two minutes of a period

- when they pull their goalie
- when we pull our goalie
- when do we pull our goalie
- in the last five minutes (down by one and two goals)
- in the last five minutes (up by one and two goals)

Game Plan

- style
- how your team will start the game
- line rotations (match, units, short bench, 3/2, etc.)
- tempo
- putting right players on the ice at the right time and in the right situation
- bench game plan
 - who's up
 - who's next
 - who's up after a power play
 - who's up after a penalty kill
 - who's on the checking line
- what to do

LOCKER ROOM MANAGEMENT

When to Report to the Rink

- staff
- players
- trainer/equipment manager

Responsibilities and Assigned Areas at Rink

- head coach
- assistant coaches
- equipment manager
- trainer
- players playing tonight
- players not playing tonight
- locker room cubicle assignments for players
- trainer location
- equipment/skate sharpener

GAME DAY OUTLINE

TIME	AGENDA
	coaches preparation meeting
	team breakfast
	pregame skate
	individual meetings
	coaches detail meeting
	pregame meal
	team meeting
	depart for arena
	team stretch
	pregame warm-up
	game time
	postgame meal
	depart for home/motel

Locker Room Policy

- Personnel is allowed in the locker room before, during and after the game
- talking/no talking
- trainer roles
- individual player reinforcement
- team discussion
- assistants make individual adjustments
- head coach makes team adjustments
- need quiet time
- If the team needs a stern talking to:
 - speak to the team in a direct tone of voice
 - leave the team alone
 - go back in the locker room and be positive

End of Game

- cool down
- be positive
- look ahead to the next challenge
- support personnel role

BENCH MANAGEMENT

Arena Layout

- size of rink
- size of zones
- location of benches
- location of penalty box
- arena entrances/exits
- location of scoreboard
- location of press box/video
- location/electrical outlets
- type of lighting in arena
- normal temperature of rink

Utilization of Assistant Coaches

- bench/press box; one in each area for the whole game
- define their roles
- the assistant on the bench makes individual small corrections, answers player questions, keeps coach informed regarding pertinent information.
- the assistant in the press box watches individual players, opponents, systems and affirms preparation details.
- the head coach gives pats, watches the ice at all times, makes unit changes and makes specialty team changes.

Bench Configuration

- two tier bench
- one level bench/open front/no behind
- one level bench/open front and back
- two gates vs. one gate
- neutral zone gates
- two zone gates
- glass in back vs. no glass
- area size
- zone sizes

Operation of Bench During Game

- The most important element is the lines of communication.
- Support personnel and their responsibilities
 - trainer
 - equipment manager

- stick boys
- gate operators
- on ice/hop over; off ice/through gates
- defense/forwards sides
- move toward the middle
- penalty over change/position of player
- pull the goaltender play
- special plays
- change lines: regular; goal for; goal against
- stall time/player; goalie

Head Coaching - Game Time

- Define personnel roles.
- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Your system on the bench:
 - no notes
 - index cards
 - plastic plan sheets
 - tape recorder
 - steno pads
 - preparation notes
 - line-ups
 - specialty teams
 - notes
 - between period remarks
- The players must know all of the personnel's roles, and the system and lines of communication.
- Tone of the bench:
 - players sit or stand
 - getting ready for the next shift
 - keep the confusion down
 - tone of the head coach
- The head coach sets the atmosphere
- Rotation of the line:
 - do you get the last change
 - who plays best on the road
 - who plays best at home
 - matching/not to match
 - units of five
- Late in the game:
 - short bench
 - down a goal
 - up a goal
 - goalie pulled
 - time outs