

Preseason Conditioning - Intense

Introduction The dynamic, nonstop action of soccer demands that players develop and maintain high levels of physical fitness. Endurance is needed from all players for eighty minutes. Quick bursts of speed are needed to explode past defenders, recover from tackles, and move quickly into position. Power is needed for explosive movements, jumping to head the ball, shooting at goal, and hitting tackles. Finally, flexibility and agility are needed to move efficiently while helping to prevent injuries.

Our progress as a quality program is at a stage where we are one of the teams to beat. As a squad we need to be prepared to meet any challenges that may face us. Every player will need a high level of conditioning. This is the aim of the conditioning schedule. Remember that once the season begins players need to concentrate on skills and tactics. Preseason is used to sharpen speed, endurance, skill and develop the team structure. It is not for getting in shape. Thus the year can be divided into five units. Each section will have specific goals to be achieved. If these are not followed, you as a player will suffer which means the team suffers. Certain sections remain constant (weight program) and others will change (running) depending upon the time of the year.

The conditioning program will consist of five areas: **Flexibility; Strength; Power/Speed; Agility; and Endurance.** Work ethic, accountability, and a positive attitude are very important points in our system of evaluation. We expect our athletes to not only improve physically, but to also develop a passion for training that is equivalent to their hunger for competition. We introduce competitive situations as frequently as possible in our training program to facilitate this purpose.

Flexibility High degrees of flexibility increase a player's mobility and help reduce injury. Each session should begin within a stretching routine including all major muscle groups. It is important to discipline yourself to stretch correctly, followed by a light jog. The stretching schedule applies to all phases of the conditioning process.

Strength A vital component of soccer is applied strength, which will manifest itself as power. That in turn means speed for the player and ball. A weight program will be provided. It must be completed twice a week, lasting 35-45 minutes in duration. Each of the three main areas of the body upper, lower and torso will be involved with four exercises per body area. The emphasis is on building strength not bulking.

Power/Speed Most of the activities involve sprints of less than 40 yards and in many cases 2 to 3 yards. Thus the team that has players capable of producing the most power in the shortest time increases their chances of success. These exercises will, with short recovery periods, be 35 seconds or less. They can involve work with a ball or not. Activities will include shuttles, up and backs, pyramid work and pass and follow drills. Speed is an integral part of every sport. The athlete's mobility, special strength, strength endurance and technique influence speed.

Agility The player who is not easy to knock off the ball will always win. Your ability to perform a series of explosive power movements in rapid succession in opposing directions will aid in your growth as a soccer player.

Endurance High endurance levels allow players to perform for the whole game at desired levels of intensity. Endurance work trains the body to supply the muscles with energy over longer periods of time at a given workload while performing specific skills, such as heading shooting and dribbling. Activities will include 2-3 mile runs, 120's, interval training and acceleration sprints.