



A TYPICAL COACH'S DAY AT PRACTICE

Before:

Coaches should be sure to:

- Plan for the day's training session
- Have all necessary equipment
- Have current medicals on all athletes
- Have a first aid kit and water readily available
- Know where the restrooms are

Practice Should Include:

- Warm-Up
- Take attendance
- 15 minutes of jogging and stretching
- Introduce coaches/volunteers (if necessary)
- Review athletes' names (if necessary)
- Verbal review of the day's training plan
- Review and practice past skills
- Introduce new skill ("Skill of the day")
- Try to be personal and specific
- Use proper terminology
- When correcting an athlete's form, pick one area to be worked on per event, per practice. Try to pick that area that, if improved, will give the greatest success.
- Hold "mini" meet or simulation of actual competition.
- Just like a competition.
- Follow all the rules.
- Simulate competition situation.
- Give only coaching tips, not detailed instructions.
- Warm-Down
- Verbally review each athlete's progress.
- Ask: "What did you learn today?", "How did you improve?"
- Recognize improvements.
- Announce important information.
- Group Cheer

After:

- Inventory equipment.
- Record notes on athletes.
- Start thinking about the plan for the next practice.

Each sport is different but this basic outline is appropriate for almost everyone. The warm-up, where names are reviewed, etc. and group cheer at the end is very important. At the beginning of the season practices, need structure with a definite beginning and end. This ensures that athletes new to the program understand what is going on. This also builds a real sense of team spirit. Special Olympics is a sports organization, not just a social gathering. Practices should be a training session, designed to improve sports skills. Do not overlook the importance of starting with the very basics, including a review of sportsmanship. Even athletes with experience will benefit from this.