

As a coach, you have a major influence on your athletes. Not only will you affect the development of their skills and long-term enjoyment of the sport, you will also play a role in their development as individuals. It is important that you have effective resources to help you.

The Coaching Association of Canada, in partnership with the national sport organizations, compiled the following coaching tips.

Bench Management



Are you a good bench manager?

Bench management is your ability to organize activities during a game and is an extension of effective pre-game planning.

Bench management begins with establishing clear roles for all support staff. The Head Coach must be in complete charge of the bench and players and make all final decisions, while Assistant Coaches and other staff act in supportive roles.

Bench responsibilities will vary depending on the strengths of your support staff. The Head Coach can take full responsibility for changing lines, or delegate authority for handling defence or forwards to assistants. Whatever you decide, ensure everyone knows their role.

Here are some suggestions:

- Supervise your team during the warm-up, ensuring that all players complete proper warm-up routines and goaltenders are warmed-up with safe shots of increasing difficulty.
- Use rink diagrams for quick, visual explanations.
- Remain positive, relaxed and in control: your players will reflect your personality.
- Only the Head Coach or captains should address officials, and this must be done in a controlled, professional manner.
- Ensure players are ready for all line changes and see that all players receive fair and equal ice time.
- Never contradict support staff, it only confuses the players: address support staff individually after the game, if necessary.
- All individual and team feedback should be positive and specific.

The way your players perform and conduct themselves is a reflection of your bench management skills.

For more ways to improve your coaching, contact your Branch office about the next NCCP Clinic in your area.

