



THE WARM-UP

Much more than a
preparation tool

Online CPD

**ATTENDEE
NOTES**



IS IT REALLY WORTH IT?

One of the most universally accepted practices in sport is that of the warm-up. Today, few players at any level train or compete without some sort of "warm-up".

However, while the general principles surrounding the need to warm-up remain valid (raising the body temperature, and preparing the muscles to avoid injury), there are questions as to how effective current practices are.

WHY DO WE WARM-UP?

It's important to start by looking at the reason why we warm up. In its simplest terms, the goal of the warm-up is to prepare players mentally and physically for exercise or competition.

A well-designed warm-up can increase muscle temperature, core temperature, and blood flow, improve performance, and reduce the risk of injury in the upcoming game or training session.



**Increase body
temperature**



**Improve
performance**



**Reduce
injury risk**





THE TRADITIONAL WARM-UP

If the aim of a warm-up is to prepare for a game or training session, the optimal warm-up is likely to vary between different sports, however, a number of key phases have traditionally been recognised, a **general warm-up** and **specific warm-up**.

The general phase has been associated with increases in heart rate, breathing rate, blood flow, and getting the joints moving, and normally consists of light activities such as jogging. The specific phase has traditionally consisted of stretching and sport-specific movements.

GENERAL WARM-UP

SPECIFIC WARM-UP



THE USE OF STRETCHING

Perhaps the greatest debate regarding a warm-up is the use of static stretching. Static stretching has become an integral part of many warm-up routines, with injury prevention and performance improvement being given as justifications for its inclusion.

However, there is little, if any, evidence that stretching before or after a game or training session prevents injury.

Similarly, in terms of improving performance, research suggests that rather than enhancing performance, static stretching can actually compromise muscle performance.

**LITTLE EVIDENCE
THAT STRETCHING
BEFORE OR AFTER
A GAME PREVENTS
INJURY**



TAKE A NEW LOOK

One of the greatest challenges of a sport like football is the range of fitness parameters (strength, speed, agility, endurance, power, and flexibility) that a player has to develop. Add to this the technical and tactical requirements of the game and the challenge for a coach becomes complicated.

Therefore, training practices that are able to address multiple training goals, but at no increased cost in terms of time or energy, become especially valuable. One of the most powerful tools available to a coach, is the warm-up where several different training objectives can be accomplished.

**TO MAXIMISE
THE BENEFIT
OF THE WARM-
UP A SHIFT IN
EMPHASIS IS
REQUIRED**

RAMP UP YOUR WARM-UPS

Given the opportunity that warm-ups present, the "RAMP" system helps provide coaches with a method by which warm-up activities can be classified and structured.

This system identifies three key phases of effective warm-ups

1 RAISE

- Raising body temperature, heart rate, breathing rate, blood flow and joint viscosity.

2 ACTIVATE & MOBILISE

- To activate key muscle groups
- To mobilise key joints and ranges of motion used in football.

3 POTENTIATE

- Activities that will improve the effectiveness of performance in a game or training session



RAISE

This phase has the aim of raising body temperature, heart rate, breathing rate, blood flow and joint viscosity via low intensity activities.

Whilst this is common practice, the methods used to achieve it often represents perhaps the biggest waste of valuable training time, with the jog around a field still a common sight.

Given the limited time of the warm-up this phase can be dedicated to movement skills and/or sport skills that still provide the elevation elements needed.

**DEDICATE
THIS TIME TO
MOVEMENT
SKILLS SPECIFIC
TO FOOTBALL**

Example Activity

THROW HEAD CATCH

PLAYER CHALLENGE

In 2 teams players move about the pitch using the sequence 'throw-head-catch'. A goal is scored by successfully heading the ball to a designated player in the end-zone



FOCUS

- Skill development, teamwork, and raising the body temperature (no standing still!)

COACH TIP

- Explore a variety of skills your players can perform eg: 'throw-volley-catch'

**Example
Activity**

PARTNER SKILLS

PLAYER CHALLENGE

In pairs, one player is server the other receiver. On your call receivers will perform a selected skill (side foot pass, side foot volley, thigh volley, jump header) 4 times and then find another server and repeat. After 30 seconds players swap with their partner.



FOCUS

- Skill development, teamwork, and raising the body temperature.

COACH TIP

- You are limited by your own imagination with what skill challenges you set your players!

Example Activity

FOOTBALL TAG

PLAYER CHALLENGE

A traditional game of tag, 3 footballs are required. Select 2 'taggers' who can only tag players without a ball. Once a player is tagged they become the 'tagger'



FOCUS

- Skill development, teamwork, and raising the body temperature (no standing still!)

COACH TIP

- Increase or decrease the number of balls in play to make it easier or more challenging for the taggers.



ACTIVATE & MOBILISE

In terms of specific activation this will depend upon the needs of the player. In some instances, where key muscle groups may need to be stimulated, exercises can be selected that target these key muscles.

This can often involve exercises traditionally associated with prehab such as mini band routines, glute bridges, overhead squats etc.

The mobilisation phase of the warm-up takes a radically different approach than the traditional static stretching approach. Rather than focus on individual muscles, the approach is to work on movements.

This has a number of key advantages. First, the dynamic nature contributes to maintaining the elevation effects of the raise phase. Secondly the movements are more specific to those found in the sport, and thirdly it is really time efficient.



Additionally, it has a physiologically different approach. Whilst static stretching involves a relaxation of the muscle, the activation and mobilisation approach involves actively working a muscle through its range of motion, which has the effect of activating all of the key muscles involved both directly in the movements and also in the stabilisation of the body through the movements.

In this way preparation for activity is boosted, as muscles are activated, as well as mobilised through key movements. A series of dynamic stretches can be selected providing the activation and mobilisation needed for the game or training session.

This approach helps maintain the beneficial effects of the raise phase of the warm-up, and can also be really time efficient, as by focusing on movements, many muscle groups can be activated and mobilised with the same movement, rather than with the single muscle approach of traditional static stretching routines.

**EFFECTIVE
ACTIVITIES ALLOW
FOR STRENGTH
AND MOBILITY
DEVELOPMENT**

Example Activity

BODYWEIGHT SQUAT

PLAYER CHALLENGE

The 'bodyweight squat' develops lower body strength which is vital for running, jumping, and kicking movements associated with football.

But it also strengthens the muscles in the hips and lower back making it a great exercise to develop core stability.



FOCUS

- Heels shoulder width apart, chest up, shoulders back, and weight through the heels on the way down, and through the sole of the foot on the way up.

COACH TIP

- Explore a variety of 'bodyweight squats' your players can perform - hands on hips, hands on opposite shoulder, hands above head.

Example Activity

BODYWEIGHT LUNGE

PLAYER CHALLENGE

the 'Bodyweight Lunge' develops lower body strength, muscle balance, and coordination, which is vital for running, jumping, and kicking movements associated with football.



FOCUS

- A neutral position of the trunk (no forward lean), no stepping across the centre line, and the ability to push back into the standing position with one fluid movement

COACH TIP

- Explore a variety of 'bodyweight lunges' your players can perform - hands on hips, hands on opposite shoulder, hands above head.

Example Activity

SQUAT JUMP

PLAYER CHALLENGE

A progression from the 'bodyweight squat' 'Squat Jumps develop lower body explosive strength which is vital for running, jumping, and kicking movements associated with football.



FOCUS

- Same as the 'bodyweight squat' but extra focus on landing softly without the knees falling in

COACH TIP

- Explore a variety of 'squat jumps' your players can perform - hands on hips, countermovement jumps with arms propelling players higher



POTENTIATE

The term 'potentiation' refers to activities that improve effectiveness, and in the case of the warm-up involves the selection of activities that will improve the effectiveness of subsequent performance in a game or training session.

This phase of the warm-up will see a gradual shift towards the actual sport performance, and will normally involve sport specific activities of increasing intensity. Including high intensity dynamic exercises can improve subsequent performance, and is the essence of the potentiation phase of the warm-up.

What is important is that a series of activities are performed that allow players to achieve their peak performance when the game or training session begins.

Speed and agility drills are ideal in the potentiation phase and can be a very time efficient way of ensuring players receive a regular dose of progressive speed and agility training.

**AN IDEAL
TIME FOR
SPEED AND
AGILITY
ACTIVITIES**

Example Activity

3 TEAM KEEP-BALL PLAYER CHALLENGE

Split your players into 3 teams, this is a game of 'keep-ball' where 5 successful passes is a goal. 2 teams work together to achieve 5 passes, the team that loses possession is the chasing team.



FOCUS

- Game ready activity with rapid turn-overs, passing and receiving, and communication

COACH TIP

- Encourage intensity of play for both passing teams and pressing team.

Example
Activity

REACTION RACES

PLAYER CHALLENGE

Whole squad in a line reacting to the signal from the coach.

The race is the fastest to react when players hear the shout 'left' or 'right'.



FOCUS

- Agility activity encouraging players to be READY, REACT, and ACCELERATE

COACH TIP

- Include different movements (squat, lunge, turn etc), and opposites to challenge the players

PLAN FOR LONG TERM

The "RAMP" approach provides a framework for you to provide an **effective** and **time efficient** warm-up for your players.

At all times the aim of the warm-up must always be kept in mind, that is to ensure optimal preparation for performance, and activities should be selected that provide for **raising, activation, mobilisation** and **potentiation**, but without tiring players out before a game or training session.

Effective planning of warm-ups throughout the season can provide a longer term advantage for your players.

- Effective **movement** or **skill based** activities allow for a great deal of skill or movement development.
- Effective activation and mobilisation activities allow **strength** and **mobility** development.
- And the potentiation section provides an ideal time to carry out **speed** and **agility** activities.

**EFFECTIVE
PLANNING
PROVIDES
LONG TERM
BENEFITS**

GET IN TOUCH

If you have any questions following the workshop around some of the topics discussed, or for any general strength and conditioning queries, please contact me on the email address below.



**THANK YOU, AND
HOPE YOU
ENJOYED THE
WORKSHOP**

Andy Lindegaard MSc

andy@healthyactive.co.uk