



Ongoing proud sponsors of **Camden Cricket Club**

Warm up, Stretches and Hydration

Cricket is a unique sport and has its own physical demands. It is vitally important that correct training and strength exercises are performed to reduce the risk of injury and enhance performance. Physical strength and fitness programs should reflect the demands of the game. Research suggests that sudden increases in activity or continual excessive workloads can lead to injury. It is therefore vital to have a gradual introduction of workload pre-season and then a balance of rest and activity through a game and the season. Be aware of athletes competing for several teams and allow clear lines of communication on workload and training requirements between all teams and coaches.

Warming Up

It is vital that all players are involved in warming up before training and playing. This should involve a gradual increase in intensity of general movements and then progress to more specific intense drills that will reflect what the session ahead will entail. The ideal warm up will help the athlete perform at their maximal intensity, be mentally focused and help reduce the risk of injury.

The warm up will consist of two to three segments:

1. Running Drills – technique drills – (ankling, a skip and b skip), high knees, heels to buttocks, backward jog, carioca
2. Mobility Drills – lunging variations, spiderman, caterpillar, single leg arabesque
3. Sprint warm up – progressive running over set distances, change of direction, acceleration, and deceleration drills



Following these segments athletes should go into game specific drills including fielding, catching, throwing and batting. These drills should also be graduated with speed and distance finishing at game intensity.

Ideal Warm Up

- Depends on the level and age of participants, gradually increasing in intensity as the players age increases
- Should incorporate all muscles groups/activities, such as arm and leg and trunk movements
- Start at low intensity and gradually build to the level required in competition
- More emphasis should be on moving muscle groups through full range of movement (active stretching) and less emphasis on static stretches
- Sport specific movements and activities
- 15-20 minutes is usually enough, however in cold weather the warm-up should be increased

The cool down helps the body to clear lactic acid that builds up during any activity and muscles and joints to return to resting levels. It allows the heart rate to drop back to resting level gradually. Less lactic acid means less soreness and stiffness the next day.

Ideal Cool Down

- Occurs immediately after training/games, and should include rehydration
- For 5-10 minutes
- Low intensity body movements such as walking instead of running, then some light active stretches
- Ideally this should be followed by an ice bath for 4 minutes up to waist height or a pool visit in cool water for 15- 20 minutes which would involve walking forwards, backwards, sideways and some light backstroke and floating exercises. This is still of benefit up to a few hours after play.



Stretches

Stretches can be considered as either static (sustained stretch) or dynamic (taking joints and muscles through active movements). Dynamic forms of mobility, stretching and movement can be more effective in preparing the body for competition by reducing stiffness and muscle tightness. Individuals may find a need for static stretching as part of a preparation for training or playing as part of a rehabilitation routine. This may enhance neurological and biomechanical efficiency. In some instances tightness of muscles may be a reflection of compensation for weakness of other muscle groups. Research suggests that static stretching in this instance could be detrimental because you are taking away the little support the athlete has with these tight muscles. Just remember don't make stretching a competition.

Hydration

Hydration is a key component in cricket as it is played outdoors in the summer months with cricketers generally wearing long clothing and most protective equipment inhibits cooling efficiency. The effects of dehydration on sports performance are well documented. It is important that all players have their individual fluid plan that is tailored to the demands and intensity of the sport they are playing, taking into account the temperature and humidity they are exposed to. If you are thirsty you are dehydrated!

Hydration levels and body water content play key roles in the bodies' ability to cool itself, control lactic acid, aerobic performance and electrolyte balance. Poor hydration could lead to increased risk of heat cramps, dizziness, lack of concentration and coordination and poor decision making, more rapid onset of fatigue and higher perceived exhaustion. A 15 % reduction in bowling line and length accuracy has been documented with dehydration levels just under 3 %.

Your hydration status can be monitored in several ways. Urine colour should be straw colour, you should be aiming for regular need for urination, weighing in before and after an innings/training session to give a guide on fluid replacement. Aim to consume 1.5 litres per loss of 1 kilogram.



As a general rule 4 hours prior to a training session/match 400-600 ml fluid should be consumed and 20 minutes prior to a training session 200-300 ml fluid should be consumed. During training or play aim to consume 600ml per hour. Take advantage of regular intervals to consume fluids.

Water versus sports drinks for hydration. Electrolytes and sodium in particular are important in allowing water to be absorbed by the body easily. Care should be taken with sports drinks sugar content and its effects on body composition in relation to calories. If you are trying to lose weight water should be your main fluid of choice, sports drinks would be appropriate for sessions longer than 90 minutes. If you are trying to gain lean mass then low fat milk drinks and juices are appropriate for hydration.

Refer to your hydration sheet for appropriate amounts of consumption. If you are playing over several days a supplement of an electrolyte drink with water may be beneficial in your rehydration management as described above.

Acknowledgement

The information provided above has been sourced from the Sports Medicine and Science Players Handbook from Cricket NSW 2011. For further information please see the full text.