

The Sports Team Manager

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1. Introduction

The role of the Sports Team Manager can be very diverse but it does not need to be difficult or over-complicated.

The manager is part of a team that comprises the coach and other personnel such as assistant coach, physiotherapist or trainer (if the team has these positions). The importance of interaction between these people cannot be stressed enough.

The coach is always in charge of the team. He/she may wish to undertake some of the duties outlined in this resource - that is his/her prerogative. Mutual consent will often decide who completes what tasks and personal preferences and strengths need to be considered.

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Communication and organisation are the key to being a good team manager. They are skills that can be learned and improved.

You must always be prepared to put the team first and your own interests last.

The ideas discussed in this resource are only a guideline. Not all will be appropriate to every manager's situation. Considerations such as whether you manage a team, individual or team of individuals must be taken into account.

Always talk to other experienced managers and, if possible, the manager you are replacing.

2. Pre-season

A manager's pre-season activities will often start before the team begins training.

Team List

Compile a list of players' names, addresses and phone numbers. Make it available to the coach and other team members.

Activities

Organise promotion for players if required. Find out dates and times for training, selection and in-season practice times and advise players. Also advise players of pre-season game times and of a team get together.

Finance

Clearly set out players' subs and outline what it covers and doesn't cover eg Sub is \$100, players must provide own socks and shorts and a \$1 court fee is payable each week.

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Uniform

Are these available from the club for pre-season games and what must the players provide themselves? Check that the available sizes are correct, particularly if using an alternative strip. Allocate correct uniform before the season proper begins and keep a record of who is given what.

Competition

Find out details of when competition starts including date and venue and advise players. Also check out competition rules and restrictions with emphasis on areas such as player eligibility.

Code of Conduct

What is required of the players, both on-field and off-field? What is considered an appropriate standard of dress and behaviour?

Medical

Attend a first-aid and strapping course. Ensure a well supplied first-aid kit is available and know what the procedure is for restocking it (ie does the club pay or the team fund?). First-aid and strapping may not necessarily be the responsibility of the manager but you need to know

who is responsible and it never hurts to have a bit of extra knowledge yourself.

Equipment

Check equipment supplies such as balls, training aids, first aid kit, buckets, vaseline, etc that are available from club/association for the season. Keep a record of what is supplied and how to replenish as required.

3. *During Season*

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Draw

Obtain full season draw (if possible), check it, understand it and make copies available to the coach and team.

Any duty requirements should also be included with a roster of players responsibilities if appropriate.

Cancellations

Know when and where cancellations will be broadcast and ensure all team members also know. Organise a contact system for last-minute changes so everyone can be contacted quickly.

Liaison

You are an intermediary between the club, the player and the coach. Ensure you are aware of what is expected of players with regards their responsibility to the club and that this is communicated to the players. Be careful not to become involved in coach/player disputes. Do not take sides where it relates to team selection policy or similar matters. You may find yourself also handling PR matters with a concerned parent or supporter who has lots of good advice for the coach!!!

Practice

Advise everyone of practice and game times and reconfirm when appropriate. Establish a routine with the coach for when you get a chance to speak to the players during practice. If you have any important message for the team, everybody must get the same message at the same time. If the situation warrants it, written notices are also appropriate.

Public Relations

Be an available contact person for media and club officials. Know where to send results and what information is required. Provide reports for club newsletter or local sports paper if appropriate. Find out about a media skills workshop and attend one if you wish to develop these skills.

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Subs

Generally subs should be paid prior to the first game of the season. If this has not been done, overdue subs will need to be followed up. Club and representative requirements will need to be considered because unfinancial members may not be eligible for team selection or representative honours.

Judicial

If players are involved in judicial hearings ensure they are aware of the time, date and venue. Also establish who is able to support them at the hearing and the procedure that will be followed.

Transport

Establish who has a vehicle that can be used regularly for away fixtures. A routine also needs to be established for covering running costs.

Social

If a team fund is established to put money away for an end-of-season trip or function the manager should be involved. Either administer the fund yourself or oversee it if someone else is doing so.

4. Post-season

Uniform/Equipment

Gather in all uniforms and check them against the original allocation. Also collect all other equipment such as the first-aid kit and the ice bucket and return it to the club.

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Photo

Organise the team photo. Check when it will be ready with the photographer and how much each one will cost. Organise the distribution of the photos and collecting payment. Ensure that you receive any extra copies which may be required (ie for club records).

Reports

Furnish reports to the club as required for permanent records, club newsletters etc.

Trip/Function

Assist in organising the end-of-season trip or function if required. Check club requirements for sanctioning of any travel away (eg must play a game). Section 6. Touring on page 9 may assist in planning trips.

Next Season

If available, provide players with a pre-season training schedule (in writing) for the next season and ensure an accurate contact record is maintained.

Thanks

Send letters/visit to thank sponsors and others who have assisted you. The local referees association would probably also appreciate the gesture if it is appropriate to do so.

Rest

Have one — you've earned it!

5. Tournaments

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A tournament can be viewed as a season rolled into one day, weekend or week. Many considerations are therefore the same and this section should not be read in isolation.

Finance

Money is required for entry fee, travel, accommodation and meals. It must be immediately ascertained who is paying for what and how much. Players need to be aware of their contribution and what it covers so they can also organise their personal spending money.

Fundraising may need to be organised and, if so, a separate plan of action needs to be followed. You should discuss this with your team and club and contact your Regional Sports Trust for some direction.

Uniforms

An alternative strip will probably be required to allow for colour clashes against teams you don't normally play. You will also need to be aware of laundry considerations if uniforms are to be re-worn and the tournament is spread over a long period.

Meals

Teams often cook/provide some of their own meals when at a tournament. If this is the case everybody needs to know what they are

expected to bring and how they will help.

Meal times need to be set giving consideration to game times. Special diet requirements may also need to be met.

Transport

Who will provide transport and if private vehicles are used how will they be compensated? Transport at the tournament venue needs to be organised and checked prior to departure.

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Managers' Meeting

You need to know when and where this is before travel arrangements are made. It is always held before the first game and you need to ensure you are there. At this meeting protest procedures should be discussed and all other tournament conditions confirmed.

Rules

Specific rules relating to the tournament need to be considered as these may differ from regular competition. Player eligibility must also be checked for the same reason.

Medical

Establish what medical facilities are available at the tournament (eg first aid; physiotherapist etc), where the closest hospital is and the after hours doctor and dentist. Any player's individual medical requirements also need to be considered.

Drug regulations for the tournament should also be checked if appropriate.

Programme

All team members should have a programme. Establish a routine for meeting prior to each game.

Cover

If the tournament is outdoors, players need to be able to keep out of the sun, wind or rain. A tent may be required. This may be provided by the tournament organisers but must be checked.

Mascot

What is it to be, who will provide it and who will look after it?

Media

Establish a contact and routine with local media for reporting results and information. This is particularly helpful when away from home.

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6. Touring

This section looks primarily at the non-playing side of touring. These aspects are covered under section 5. Tournaments and 7. Games.

Finance

This aspect will generally be handled by someone other than the manager such as the club or governing body. The manager should be kept up to date with what is happening so the best interest of the players are always considered.

Medical

An extended medical kit is required for a tour, particularly overseas where the availability of some items may be limited.

Inoculations will be required for some countries. This should be checked with your travel agent.

Insurance

As well as standard travel insurance it is recommended for some high risk sports (eg skiing, mountain climbing) that extra cover is taken. This does not apply to most standard and team sports but it pays to check with your travel agent.

Transport

Most vehicle rental companies have age restrictions for drivers. These need to be checked before leaving, along with driver's licence requirements. As with tournaments, internal transport arrangements need to be reconfirmed before leaving.

Passports/Visas

Establish a routine for passports before you go. The manager may choose to hold all passports (particularly for junior teams) or instigate a regular checking system. Visa requirements will also need to be met and can be checked with your travel agent.

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Itinerary

All players need at least one copy of the full tour itinerary including accommodation and contact details for each place visited. An extra copy is also recommended for players to leave behind. The manager should also know the point of contact for each player at home.

The itinerary should include details such as organised spare time activities and free time. An indication of what spending money may be required would also be useful. It is often a good idea to have a mix of team spare time activities and some optional times.

Local Considerations

Food requirements need to be considered when travelling. Players' special diet needs are important, particularly when away from home. Travel agents can usually obtain information on meals and types of food served by different establishments.

The availability of fresh water must be established. Purification tablets should be carried to help overcome any potential problems.

Maps

Maps of all places to be visited should be included in a manager's kit. These are necessary for locating accommodation, playing venues, etc.

Reports

A report will be required at the end of the tour. It may be worth keeping a diary and noting any problems or aspects that worked especially well. Check before leaving what reports are required, who you will be reporting to and when the report is due.

Other

Sunbathing or any excessive exposure to the elements should be discouraged - Players must remain rested for their event. This is often difficult when a night game is involved and requires careful planning of spare time activities.



National Anthem - If travelling outside New Zealand a cassette copy of the national anthem should be carried either for pre-game or victory ceremonies - the last thing we need at these times is Advance Australia Fair!

Religion - All players' religious requirements need to be considered particularly when organising spare time activities.

Curfew - Must be realistic and enforced, especially for junior teams.

Give-aways and items to swap with opposing teams need to be taken - These are often supplied by local or national body and can either be for player-to-player or for clubs played against or visited.

Baggage - Advise players what baggage limits apply for travelling, allowing for purchases that will be made on the trip.

7. Games

Pre-Game

Assembly

What time and where do players need to assemble? Set a routine from the start of the season. This may be determined by the reporting time

for sports that have this. Players will also need to know what to wear for assembling.

Coaching Requirements

Different coaches have different requirements with regard to dressing room procedure. Some prefer a time just with them and their players, others prefer to leave the players alone for a short time. The manager needs to be aware of this and help keep others out.

Player Requirements

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Every player has a separate ritual or requirement. Some require strapping, others some form of massage and other may wish to be left alone. The manager needs to be aware of these and respect or assist with them where appropriate.

Local Conditions

All playing arenas have their own peculiarities (eg short deadball area; multiple court markings etc). The players should have an opportunity to identify these before the game begins.

Uniform

Have uniforms on hand and set out for the players when they enter the changing rooms. Have spare socks and shorts to accommodate those who have forgotten their own. Ensure players have race numbers or team numbers and that these are secured in the correct place.

Water

Have plenty of water containers filled before warm-up. Know what grounds don't have easily accessible water as you may need to take your own. Other supplements of food/drink requirements such as oranges or fluid replacement may need to be organised. This is determined by the event or game conditions and the players' regular pattern.

The manager also needs to know if certain individuals need other supplements.

Team Sheet

This generally needs to be completed or handed to the officials well before the start of the match/event. Check the requirements for your sport.

Security

Players' valuables need to be secure during the match and the changing room should be locked. Valuables should be removed even if the room is locked.

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During Game

First Aid

If the manager is not personally responsible for first-aid, they need to know who is and that they are available at all times. To complete a basic first-aid course, or at least CPR, would be of immense value. Know the quickest route to the hospital and the proximity of the closest telephone. Ensure the first-aid kit is well stocked and on hand - it's no good locked in someone's car!

Water

Keep containers as full as possible, particularly leading up to half time. Re-hydrate players whenever they request it within the rules of your game. Every 15-20 minutes is recommended as being appropriate.

Half Time

Know the requirements of your sport and the procedure preferred by your coach. Some players may have specific requirements (eg asthma inhaler) that the manager needs to address. Ensure all players have plenty to drink (this should also be the case at training).

Substitutions

For sports that allow substitutions, the manager should be aware of local requirements. Ensure you are in harmony with the coach when communicating with the players - this is generally the domain of the coach but he/she may request assistance from the manager.

Score

Keep your own score card or check regularly that it is being done correctly. Records may also be required for your club or association and some players may keep individual statistics.

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Post-Game

Officials

Thank the match officials and the opposition team management. Sign the score card if required.

Equipment/Uniforms

Gather in the uniforms and organise for them to be cleaned. Also collect all equipment such as first-aid kit, ice bucket, water bottles, towels etc and replenish as appropriate ready for the next game.

Protest/Disputes

Know the correct procedure for lodging these and work within the set parameters if the situation warrants it.

After-match Function

Ensure all players know when and where any function is, particularly if it's away from home. They should also know what is expected of them as representatives of their club/association with regard to attending these types of functions. Be punctual and appropriately dressed.

Results

Get the results to those who require them as soon as possible. This could include club or association representatives and media sources.

Injuries

Follow up any injured players to ensure they receive the correct follow-up treatment where necessary. This may need to be done a day or so after the game. If they are in hospital, make sure their team-mates and coach are aware of where they are and when they can be visited.

T.L.C

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Different players required different things. Some need reaffirmation after the game, particularly if they perceive they played badly. The coach is often not a good person to give this and it may fall to the manager.

If players are away from home, particularly juniors, managers may take on a pseudo-parent role.

8. Junior Considerations

Permission

Ensure the correct school/parental/guardian permission is sought and received for junior players, particularly if travelling. Verbal permission is not adequate - written permission is required as a safeguard.

Parent Liaison

The manager will often be the best point of contact for parents/guardians. They can also liaise between the parent/guardian and coach. A pre-season meeting with parents/guardians should be arranged stating practice and game times, what is required of the players and what is required of the parents/guardians (eg get to game 30 minutes before start; observe code of ethics with regard to fair play).

Any special needs a child has will need to be known and a record kept.

Determine what will occur if there is late collection from practice or games. Always keep a contact list for your players at all times when the team is together.

Age Restrictions

Most sports differ in age restrictions and some from regular season to tournament play. Check with the governing body before the season starts and identify any times where some players may be excluded from playing.

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Behaviour

Set out clearly what you expect of the players in terms of behaviour. This must be adhered to at all times so the players do not get confusing ideas. A written list for parents and players can be used so there can be no confusion.

9. Conclusion

The role of the sports team manager is an interesting and exciting one.

It is often suited to people who are happy to work behind the scenes and can adapt quickly to changing situations.

Remember to communicate regularly with the players and develop a good working relationship with the coach. Be sure of your roles before you have contact with players. A simple job description may be helpful.

This resource is designed to give some useful pointers to assist in the role of a manager.

Good luck. You will find the role rewarding and something to be enjoyed.

Sample Team Rules

The Rules

- 1 Be on time to all games, practises and associated events.
- 2 Turn up to game with correct gear.
- 3 Respect the game and its rules.
- 4 Congratulate team mates on good play while game is in progress - be positive.
- 5 Keep negative comments to yourself.
- 6 Enjoy your team mates' company.
- 7 Recognise the different jobs your team mates have and give credit when these are done well. e.g goal shooting; defending; scoring.
- 8 Set yourself goals e.g speed of take off; rate of turnover, make sure these are realistic! Constantly reassess and change these.
- 9 Be happy with your performance but never satisfied - always aim to do better next time.
- 10 Don't brood on mistakes once they are over.
- 11 Beware of developing the losers limp i.e getting 'injured' after making a mistake or in a heavy defeat.
- 12 Be prepared to accept criticism in the right way.
- 13 Give everything you attempt your best effort - not just in sport. Attitude in sport shows up the individual's attitude to all things.
- 14 Don't shout about what you are going to do before the match. Do most of your talking on the court - 'deeds not words'.
- 15 Listen to all advice but don't accept it all.
- 17 Ignore any remarks made by spectators or the other team.
- 18 Appreciate the efforts of your team mates, parents and supporters. Realise some of the things they have given up so you can play.
- 18 Try to learn from everyone, even if you learn what not to do.
- 19 If you can't practise, phone - you should turn up even when injured.

National Qualification Framework

Following completion of this course, some participants may wish to seek credit for relevant unit standards registered on the National Qualifications Framework.

This **Role of the Sports Team Manager** *Running Sport* contains, wholly or in part, similar content to the competencies specified in the following unit standards:

Unit Number	Unit Title
4872	Administer a sports team
4873	Manage the personnel of a sport team

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Those wishing to pursue this option should firstly seek up to date information, as new unit standards continue to be added to the Framework and registered unit standards are subject to regular revision.

Further information can be obtained from:

- the **Sport, Fitness & Recreation Industry Training Organisation (SFRITO)**
P O Box 2183
WELLINGTON
Telephone 04-3859047
- your local **Regional Sports Trust**
- your local **training providers** (eg, polytechnic, schools or private training establishments)

These organisations can advise on next steps and, if appropriate, put the participant in touch with a registered assessor in their area.

The Sports Team Manager

Sport is an integral part of the Kiwi lifestyle. It enriches our lives, enhances our health and brings people and communities together. Sport fosters the development of excellence, team spirit, competition and pride. It unites people of all ages and walks of life.

Sport and leisure is a huge growth industry in New Zealand. Spin-offs include substantial benefits to the economy - millions of dollars in the case of big events. As a nation, we're mad about sport and justifiably proud of our successes.

Sport is now big business and clubs are needing to keep ahead of the latest principles and practices in marketing and development in order to survive and prosper. To do this, many clubs today are adopting a strategic approach to club administration and are becoming more business-like in the way they manage their programmes and events. As a result sports bodies and other non-profit organisations throughout New Zealand are achieving some spectacular results.

By becoming more entrepreneurial, clubs and non-profit organisations are gaining an enhanced public profile, growing their membership and attracting strong commercial partnerships, such as through sponsorships.

Sport in New Zealand is still dependent, to a large degree, on the huge number of dedicated volunteers who give so freely of their time and energies. Therefore, SPARC has developed a series of information packages with volunteers like you in mind.

Reproduced by the Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure in 1996, with kind permission from the Manawatu Sports Foundation.

The topics in this series include:

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers

The Club Secretary

Managing Meetings

Marketing and Public Relations

Funding and Sponsorship

Club Planning

Managing Money

Event Management

The Sports Team Manager

Some of these resources may be new to you, while others may simply summarise areas you already know a lot about. It's up to you to choose the topics that are of greatest interest and relevance to the volunteer work you do in sport.

The Sports Team Manager