

# TOP 10 TIPS

## Coaching Boys' Youth Competitive Football

By S. Wager

### #1 Three Words — Move Your Feet — “Feet of Stone Allow Opponents to Roam & Foam”

No matter what sport, an important key is for athletes to move their feet. Good balance creates good leverage and good leverage creates competitive advantages. REMIND YOUR PLAYERS to always be moving their feet quickly and nimbly.

### #2 Check the Mirror - “It Starts With Our Reflections Staring Back at Us”

You may need to look in the mirror. You might unwittingly/unintentionally be contributing to a kid not getting what you want out of them. When coaching youth sports, the kids will normally say they understand, but you may have to explain or show them using a different way to get your message across.

### #3 Team Self-Image - “We look good...”

Teach/coach your team to look and play crisp — sharp in everything they do. If they do warm-ups before the game and it looks organized and together the other team is watching. In football, the huddles should always be sharp and organized. Your players should go to the line of scrimmage in unison and all the players should get set at the same time in a rhythm. Looking sharp and crisp instills a team attitude of discipline and hustle.

### #4 Projecting a Team Image - “...and they know it.”

It also projects an imposing impression on opponents... they sense that they are facing a formidable opponent across the line and coming in off of the other sideline.

### #5 Fundamentals - “Do it right...”

Prepare them for the next level. Work on fundamentals every practice and warm-up. After initial warm-up drills, break into individual stations and teach each group: Backs, lineman, quarterbacks. Sometimes they would think this was boring, but it will show-up in their play every time – for better or worse.

### #6 Repetitions - “...and do it often!”

Repetition — It takes many times doing the plays over and over to get it right. But most of these kids will soak it up like a sponge. You can have up to 50-60 plays that are mirror to each side out of three different formations. They can do it – just be sure to make it fun!

### #7 Practice Efficiency and Time Usage - “apply the grease where the squeaks are.”

Spend the most time on what is needed to be successful. In football, most kids are pretty good at tackling and defense, because it is more fun. Offense is typically harder to get coordinated. Special teams are normally only a few plays a game, so it is recommended that you spend most of your time on offense.

### #8 Adapt to Your Players - “Fords aren't Ferrari's — both get you where you want to go.”

The good coaches opposing coaches can adapt to what you have. Defenses may have to be a 5-3 or a 6-2 depending on your players. Do not run an offense or defense just because that is what you want to run in spite of your team's inability to successfully execute it.

### #9 Allow All to Succeed - “...no one kicks-off to lose.”

Do what you can in both games and practice to allow all to succeed and make it known to all when they do. Use your own coaching style... pats on the back should be given when earned. Competitive sports aren't recreational level – but remember you are coaching boys and that they are still growing into manhood.

### #10 Own It - “...your way, their way... the right way!”

Face-to-face — do not get into it on the phone or email. Do not let it fester/boil over. Explain your decision. If wrong, say so. If not, explain your position; then listen. Put it to bed, then move on to the next game.

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