

Ten Days of Commitment

Head Football Coach, Mike Kesler

Rochester Lourdes

Age: 36 Years old, Graduated from Lourdes in 1991. Went on to play linebacker at SDSU(DII at the time). Head coach at Lourdes for 4 years and have a record of 30-15. We have won the last 3 section 1AAA titles. Made it to the dome in 2006 for the semis and we lost in the quarters to DeLaSalle the last 2 years. I was the D coordinator for 8 years at Lourdes before being named head coach. I am married to my wife Jessie for 9 years and have twins that are 5 (Sam and Molly). I teach PE at Holy Spirit grade school(k-8).

As summer approaches, I have thought a lot about what I could write that could help you as a coach to figure out what your plan/approach is for your program in the summer. Summer is a time for relaxation with your family, friends, and maybe a little time with your players. All of us have a different approach on how to handle the summer time with our football program. How much time should we spend with the kids? How many practices should we have? Do we go to a camp? Who's watching the weight room? Etc. All of these are great questions that as a coach, we need to decide what is best for our program. I am going to write about what we do in the summer and how it has helped our program tremendously.

How much time do we need from our kids in the summer? Three years ago we came up with a "10 Day Philosophy". Basically, we tell our kids we need to see them for ten days in the summer. If you can get your kids to commit to those ten days, you will see the benefit. You will see it the first day of fall camp when you are running drills that they already know how to do and you're not wasting valuable practice time. More importantly, you'll see in your locker room that you already have a team that is "together" because of their time spent in the summer working as a unit. Getting our kids onboard to

this philosophy of ten days has shown that it works for us.

What takes place during those ten days and what about the rest of the summer? In early June, we have two practices (two hours each) before we head to a team camp. A few days after those practices, we head to a four day camp. Lastly, at the end of July, we have a four day team camp for grades 4-12 from 8:00 a.m. to noon. The two days prior to team camp is a time for us to put our basic plays in that we're going to run at team camp. It's good to get the guys together before going out to camp because we haven't had any reps since last fall. The next four days are probably the most important of all. We go out to South Dakota State's Team Camp. We have gone three years in a row and will be headed there again this summer. It is a tremendous camp and for those coaches looking to attend, this one has been excellent. Plus, being a former Jackrabbit and playing for Coach Stiegelmeier, I know our kids and staff would be treated right, just like all the other schools attending. The four days in late July we hold a non-padded team camp. This camp is four hours each day. We bring in kids from grades 4-12 and have them do drills together. It's a great time to review a lot of things and make some adjustments that we noticed at team camp.



Besides our ten days that we do together as a program, our seniors run the rest of their off-season. It's their program, not mine. If our seniors can set the tone when we are not around, then that will benefit us. As a head coach, I want our kids together for ten days in the summer. After that, I hope they will work on their other sports, and more importantly, spend time with their family and friends, because that's what summer is for.

I hope this article helps you in some way. Summer is a busy time for kids with all they have going on. As coaches, these are some of the hardest choices to make, what's too much and what's too little?

If you would like to contact me about anything in our program, please feel free to do so. Best of luck this fall and enjoy your summer!