

EJEPL Monthly Review

Volume 2 Issue 1

News for the Month of September, 2018

WWW.EJEPL.NET

It is our mission to prepare players to become the Junior, Prep School, and College recruits of the future. Players are introduced to elite practices, skill development opportunities, and academic guidance throughout the entire process.



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Our Starting Lineup



The EJEPL kicked off its 7th Season during the first Showcase of the year in August! Spanning across five different states and using eighteen different venues, the EJEPL is in full swing. The Southern Maryland Sabres 14u Silver team (above) started their year off playing four games at The Igloo Ice Rink in Mount Laurel, NJ during the August 24th-26th Showcase.

Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League in Review

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Adequate Protection Lays Groundwork for Improvement

With the EJEPL's 7th Season beginning in full swing with the first Showcase of the year already in the books, player safety is always a topic of discussion during, before, and after the hockey season. We would like to address some of the aspects that go into protecting our goaltenders and the fear of physical harm every goaltender faces each time they put on the pads, no matter the age level. Putting on the pads for practice and for games is no easy task for goaltenders of all ages who face shots from a frozen rubber puck at high speeds year round. Brian O'Connor, long-time hockey coach and player specializing in goaltending instruction at every age level is here to give us some tips on equipment safety for our goaltenders, to help protect them in practice and in games throughout the season.



Fear. Whether it's concern about physical harm or emotional distress, fear is one of the great obstacles facing any goaltender trying to reach his or her full potential. The topic is so big in fact that I'm going to take the next two columns to address it. This month's column will focus on the fear of physical harm, which I think is actually the easier of the two aspects of fear to deal with. That's because, for the most part, it can be remedied with better equipment. Of course, it's also the responsibility of coaches and, to a lesser degree, the players to make sure goalies — especially really young goalies — don't get beat up in practice. Almost every goalie parent I've met has a horror story of a knucklehead coach and/or older player ringing a shot off their kid's melon.

Toughness — physical and mental toughness — is a trait of most great goalies. But try telling that to a child, say, 12 years old or younger. All they know is that a rock-hard vulcanized rubber puck can hurt. A lot. If goalies get hurt, they run the risk of becoming "puck shy." And once a goalie becomes "puck shy" and starts to hesitate or balk on a shot, the odds of them developing into a top-tier goalie plummet. The game is simply too fast, and goalies who hesitate are always behind the shot. More often than not, they're digging the puck out of the net. Plus, being hurt is no way to start the season. So, with most youth hockey programs getting under way in September, here are some specific pieces of equipment that will help keep young net minders protected, and progressing.



Dangler. Seriously, this is one of the best, and simplest, pieces of equipment to help your young goaltender avoid serious neck injury. That's particularly true of youngsters who want to play the butterfly style but haven't developed the discipline to wait on a shot to judge its trajectory. Instead, they tend to flop, and that often puts their head square in the middle of the goal. While most mask and helmet/cage combinations are adequate at the lower (younger) levels of hockey, you never want the goalie's neck exposed. Not to be overly dramatic, but a shot to the neck can be extremely dangerous. A dangler is cheap, and effective, insurance.

The downside is the noise, with the dangler clattering against the mask as you move. I know this is true, having started using a dangler late in my "beer-league" career. The noise is annoying, but it's a minor annoyance. Now, some kids won't want to use a dangler because their favorite pro (like Tuukka Rask) doesn't use one. My answer is: You're not Tuukka Rask. Safety is paramount in youth hockey. Dangers worked for Hall of Famers Marty Brodeur and Patrick Roy. They'll work for your youngster.

Chest and arm protector. The reason we teach the butterfly style these days, and the reason that technique is so effective, is because of the improvements in body armor. A good chest and arm set-up allows you to keep your hands and arms to the side, making you bigger. The key word there, obviously, is "good." A properly padded chest and arm protector will blunt the impact of most shots, and you can almost see a goalie's confidence soar as a result.

The problem is far too many chest and arm protectors currently in circulation are almost criminal given their lack of "protection." Poor construction, poor padding and poor fit are all culprits. If the C&A you have for you goalie has open seams, I guarantee you a puck will find those areas. And those shots can sting, big time. And what happens next? The goalies start bringing their hands in front to protect themselves. They get smaller, and start giving up more goals. It's a nasty cycle. So make sure the padding is adequate, and that the C&A fits properly, so it will stay in place as the goalie moves around the crease. Plus, here's a pro tip. Almost every chest and arm

protector has a loop in front, near the belly button. Run a shoelace through that loop, and tie it into the laces in the front of the goalie pants. That will prevent the C&A and pants from separating, exposing the goalie's belly (which happens more than you'd think in goalmouth scrambles).

Goalie pants. The butterfly style requires goalies to "absorb" shots in their midsections. At Stop It Goaltending, we refer to these saves as "smothers," which is a great term, because it indicates that the puck is supposed to "stick" to the goalie, preventing rebounds. To do that effectively, it really helps to have goalie specific pants with sufficient padding. Regular hockey pants simply don't typically have enough protection above the thigh pads. The padding around the pelvic area is often poor to non-existent. Not a good option of goaltenders. You wouldn't have a goalie in net with a regular player's shoulder/chest pads, right? Same goes for goalie pants.



1. THROAT PROTECTOR
2. SHOULDER CAP
3. CHEST GUARD
4. ELBOW BLOCK
5. BELLY FLAP



Thigh protection. Most leg pads do a decent job protecting the legs from the knee down. But when they execute a butterfly save, the same leg pads rarely cover that incredibly tender area just above the knees. I've lost count of the number of times a young goalie has gotten hit in that spot, either because their pads don't have thigh guards, or the thigh guards didn't stay in place. Either way, the result is the same — a big bruise, and a young goalie questioning whether the position is worth the pain.

This is where parents can have a big impact. Make sure your goalie's leg pads are equipped with thigh protectors, and that they fit correctly. If the pads don't have thigh guards, you have the option of getting knee/thigh protectors that fit under the player's socks. Some strap into the bottom of goalie pants. Make sure that lower thigh is covered.

Granted, "protection" is not a sexy topic. But, trust me, it's critical in helping goalies play at their best. You want your goalies concentrating on stopping shots, not avoiding injury.

Next month: Dealing with anxiety.

EJEPL August Showcase Snapshot

The EJEPL started off its 7th season with the August Showcase during the weekend of August 24th-26th. With what felt like a quick offseason, each team in all age divisions were ready to start their EJEPL season, and the EJEPL family could not be more excited. This was a large showcase for us that spanned across 5 states, using 16 different venues that hosted more than 250 teams. Growth and expansion have played a major role in the EJEPL this year as we welcome 21 new organizations to our league. The EJEPL is thrilled to announce and welcome these new organizations: Aston Nordiques, Atlanta Kings, Carolina Jr. Hurricanes, Central Mass Outlaws, Connecticut Jr. Whalers, Easton Ice Hawks, Hagerstown Hockey, Hudson Valley Polar Bears, Kent Elite, Lawrence Nassau Association, Mid State Mustangs, Montclair Blues, Old York Road Raiders, Pelham Hockey, Philadelphia Blazers, Princeton Tigers, Ridgefield Lions, Rogue Warriors, Carolina Rage, Team Philadelphia, and Warwick Wildcats.



With the addition of all these organizations, we have been able to form two different divisions in our 18u Diamond Conference, two different divisions in our 16u Diamond Conference, and two different divisions in our 13u Diamond Conference ensuring a competitive balance across the board for all participating teams. Looking ahead to the 2019-20 season, we will also be adding 9u through 18u Split Season/Girls divisions as well as a youth developmental league. We will become an even more inclusive league allowing the opportunity to welcome new member organizations to the EJEPL.



Toms River Blackhawks, 14u Silver team were prepared and ready to go during the August Showcase as they won all four games played and currently sit on top in the standings with a 6-0 record

The first Showcase of each EJEPL season always brings excitement because not only is it the start of another season, but it is also a time where new players are introduced to their teams, practicing with new teammates and playing together in games for the first time for many. In our league, we match up teams that may not otherwise compete against one another in their local leagues, providing a new competitive experience to all member organizations. Not only do we look to provide a healthy competitive experience to our teams, but we also look to provide a memorable youth hockey experience that our athletes, their families, coaches, and parents can all look back on and be proud of.



Gulf Coast Flames 14u Gold Division team goes 5-0 in the August Showcase only allowing one goal during the weekend

Mid State Mustangs 12u Gold Division team participates in their first ever EJEPL Showcase



For many youth athletes not just in hockey, the bond you form with your teammates is a unique and special one. Memories are created that will hopefully last a lifetime and the EJEPL is proud to play a role in helping to provide this experience. Whether it be traveling with your team on long road trips to one of our showcases or going out for a team meal after a game, our athletes spend a lot of time together on and off the rink. One of our goals as a league is to see our players excel off the rink and in class going on to have successful prep school, junior, or college careers. So with our first showcase at its conclusion, we hope that all teams are able to enjoy a successful, competitive, and memorable season in the EJEPL and also in the local leagues, tournaments, and special events you may participate in additionally.



Delco Phantoms 14u Silver (Deprinzio) team wore their new camo jerseys at the first EJEPL showcase at the Igloo Ice Rink in Mount Laurel, NJ



Southern Maryland Sabres, 14u Silver team gather for a team photo before facing off against the Bayonne Rangers in the August showcase

September “Futures” Showcase

Our September showcase will feature our “Futures” division teams in the Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Rhode Island areas. Age divisions include 10u Silver, 10u Gold, 12u Silver, 12u Gold, 14u Silver, and 14u Gold. Please log on to EJEPL.NET to view full event schedule. Good luck!!

Venues for September Showcase:

Ice Line Quad Rinks

700 Lawrence Drive
West Chester, PA 19380

Revolution Ice Gardens

1621 Mearns Road
Warminster, PA 18974

Warwick-Thayer Front

975 Sandy Lane
Warwick, RI 02889

IceWorks Skating Complex

3100 Dutton Mill Road
Aston, PA 19014

West Warwick Civic Center

100 Factory Street
West Warwick, RI 02893

Warwick Warburton-Back

975 Sandy Lane
Warwick, RI 02889

Igloo Ice Arena

3033 Fostertown Road
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

Cranston Veteran Memorial

900 Phenix Avenue
Cranston, RI 02921

Smithfield Municipal Ice

101 Pleasant View Ave
Smithfield, RI 02917

Dayton Arena/ CT College

270 Mohegan Ave
New London, CT 06320

Meehan Auditorium/Brown University

225 Hope Street
Providence, RI 02912

“Organizational Spotlight” Featuring the Mid State Mustangs



The Mid State Mustangs are one of the new organizations to join the EJEPL for the 2018-19 season, and we would like to welcome them to our league! Based out of Altoona, PA playing at Galactic Ice this organization was established in 2004. Since its establishment, the Mid State Mustangs have provided opportunities for the area's most dedicated and talented hockey players looking to take their game to a high level. Through a formula rich in family, commitment, and player development, the Mustangs look to help players become better as a team, as individual players and better individuals in the community and in the classroom.

History behind the Mustangs



Mid State Mustangs 10u Diamond division team action shot

The Mid-State Mustangs have developed a program that is rooted in success. Founded in 2004 as a tournament team for higher level players in our region, the program eventually involved into a full season program providing a high level of training, development and competition for serious hockey players.

The first year the Mid-State Mustangs went year round was in the 2008-09 season. After that transition, the Mustangs have had tremendous success highlighted by 11

Western Pennsylvania State Championships, 1 Mid-Am District Championship, and 2 USA

Hockey National Championships. In addition, Mustang teams have also won 2 Silver Sticks Regional Qualifier Tournaments as well as numerous other tournaments.

In addition, Mustang Alumni Sam Lafferty took his career through prep school and became the first player from this area to be selected in the NHL draft when he was selected in the 4th round 113th overall by the Pittsburgh Penguins. After a 4 year collegiate career at D1 Brown University, Sam is currently playing for the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins of the AHL. We hope to continue an atmosphere of high level hockey that promotes development in an enjoyable, rewarding and challenging environment.

With the Mid State Mustangs being one of the new organizations to join the EJEPL, I was glad to have the opportunity to speak with Ryan Tyrell, 18u coach and Sean McTighe, general manager and learn more about this organization. With the 18u team full of a majority of new players and coaches, they will look to grow together as a group as they compete in the EJEPL as well as the PAHL, and any other tournaments throughout the year including the Buckeye Classic in Ohio. Ryan spoke with clear optimism in his voice regarding his 18u team and their level of commitment to the vision of the Mid State



Mid State Mustangs 12u Gold division team action shot

Mustang hockey program. With experience coaching at Indiana University, Ryan Tyrell will look to translate that skillset and coaching style into his 18u team for the 2018-19 season. The EJEPL would like to wish Ryan and his 18u team much luck and success in their future together playing in our league as well as their local league and any tournaments they will be participating in this year!



Mid State Mustangs 10u Diamond division coaching staff (left to right): Head Coach Derek Mathews, Assistant Tom Mathews, Assistant Jamesy Rossi, Assistant J.R. Gearhart

The Mid-State Mustangs will once again field teams at the 16U and 18U levels. The program will allow dedicated area players to train through the late summer months and compete in tournament play around a players' PAHL season. ***New for 2018-2019, Mid-State Mustangs teams will be a split season tournament team concept with no requirement to play PAHL hockey for the Altoona Trackers program. Players wishing to remain with their home PAHL program will be able to do so and be eligible to play for a Mustangs 16U or 18U team.*** As always, the goal of the 16U and 18U teams will be to compete at the USA Hockey state tournament with hopes of advancing to the USA Hockey National Championships.

Mustang Alumnus in the AHL



Sam Lafferty is a former member of the Mid State Mustangs youth hockey program (2004-2014). He won two National Championships with the Mustangs in 2011 and 2014 while also attending Deerfield Academy. Sam also played Division I hockey at Brown University until 2018 where he was nominated for the Hobey Baker Award. In the 2014 NHL draft, Lafferty was selected by the Pittsburgh Penguins in the 4th Round 113th Overall and signed an entry level contract with them on March 7th, 2018. He has since been assigned to the Wilkes-Barre Scranton Penguins of the AHL. We wish him luck in his journey to the NHL!



Mid State Mustangs 10u Diamond team action shot as they prepare to take the ice

“Organizational Spotlight” Featuring the Protec Ducks Organization



Jayson Lisk, defenseman on the 18u Protec team receives the Player of the Week Award helping his team to a 3-0 record in their first weekend of play recording 3 goals and assisting on 5. His tight defensive game helped shut out opponents on two occasions.

Background of Protec Ducks and Protec Ponds

Last September, Protec celebrated its 10th anniversary. This state of the art facility was officially open for business in 2007 and within its walls is an NHL sized rink, two training ponds and a workout facility. Fortunately for the Protec Ducks, the land was bought and built upon by a single family that loves hockey, which makes our organization a family organization. The Protec Ducks and Protec Hockey Ponds is owned by Pascal Magnollay and his family.

Having a single family owned establishment makes it much easier for the Protec Ducks to deliver upon their mission of serving and doing what is best for all players and their families. Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with Joe Bucchino who is the General Manager of the Protec Ducks and he had nothing but praise for the owners, employees, players, and facility saying; “I am surrounded by super people with owners that care deeply about the kids and all programs. We have a Disney World-like facility that is very clean, well maintained, and staffed with people who have a true passion for hockey, figure skating, and the development of all our youth

athletes and the programs that they participate in.” After asking Joe about the mission and core values of the organization, he said that serving everyone that comes into the facility and giving everyone an equal opportunity to participate in all programs offered is paramount, no matter the age of the customer. He also mentioned that within any organization, particularly the Protec Ducks, communication is key. Having a professional staff that includes Joe Bucchino himself, as well as Stephane Matteau, Brian Propp, and Brian Mullen is also something that the entire Protec organization takes great pride in.

Protec Ducks History and Recent Achievements

The Protec Ducks Travel Program started in September-2008 as an independent organization whose goal was the development of youth hockey players. For the 2009-2010 seasons, the Ducks were granted probationary membership in the New Jersey Youth Hockey League (NJYHL). The Ducks have now been full-time members of the NJYHL since the 2010-2011 season. In 2015-16, the Protec Ducks announced for the first time, their membership in the Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League (EJEPL). Going forward, all “AA” teams will have the opportunity to participate in this league in addition to the NJYHL. Player placement for the Protec Ducks Travel Teams is decided at our annual tryouts that begin each season in April. Each player will be evaluated during 3 training sessions. We will field teams from Mite through Midget at these tryouts. After being accepted onto a Ducks team, players receive discounts on Protec Ponds clinics and Summer Hockey Camps. Teams typically assemble in August for training



camp. Midgets may begin practice earlier due to the “short season” nature of the NJYHL Midget program.

After speaking with the Protec Ducks Director of Hockey, Patrick Alvin I was able to learn more about the Duck’s organization. Coming from a rich background in hockey, Patrick Alvin has been the head coach of Bridgewater-Raritan High School for fourteen plus years and recently nj.com Ice Hockey website called B-R Ice Hockey “The class of the Skyland Conference for the past several years.” In addition to coaching high school hockey and being the Hockey Director for Protec, Alvin also serves the community as a Social Studies Teacher at Bridgewater-Raritan High School. He discussed with me the growth that Protec has seen over the last number of years going from an organization with 124 players five years ago up to 285 players this year. Similar to Joe Bucchino, Alvin also praised the ownership and staff mentioning that the passion they have for the facility, players, their families, and the variety of programs offered plays a tremendous role in their success each year.

Hockey Director Patrick Alvin Receives the Paul Gilmartin Award as Executive of the Year from the EJEPL



At the EJEPL annual spring meeting, Protec Ducks Hockey Director Patrick Alvin was presented with the Paul Gilmartin Executive of the Year award. With over 70 teams in the league, this prestigious award was given to the Protec Ducks on behalf of their continuous growth as a program, success in the EJEPL, and organizational excellence. Coach Alvin

remarked, “This is a great time for our program and I’m proud of the work that has been done on and off the ice to make the Protec Ducks the successful program it is today.” On the ice, Coach Alvin’s teams have led the charge in the ultra- competitive EJEPL. In the past two seasons, his peewee teams (O4, O5) have won the EJEPL league championship and his squirt team (O7) lost the finals in overtime. Coach Alvin stated, “There is no doubt that the Protec Ducks have left their mark in the EJ the last few years and I look forward to seeing 7 of our teams compete in the EJ; our largest number of teams ever.” The Protec Ducks continue to grow and demonstrate success as we anticipate our largest program ever next season with approximately 270-275 skaters.

Collaboration with the NAHL’s Minnesota Magicians

ProtecHockey Ponds LLC, a state-of-the-art ice arena with a tier-2 youth travel hockey program in central New Jersey, announced that they will be collaborating with the NAHL’s Minnesota Magicians. In their joint effort, the two organizations offer departing midget level Protec Ducks’ players the opportunity to continue their hockey careers into the junior level. Protec Ponds Ice Center, established in 2007 as an independently owned LLC organization, provides opportunities for hockey players, figure skaters, and the general public to practice and improve on the ice, all year round. Their travel hockey teams, the Protec Ducks, have shown great growth and success over the past few seasons. While starting as an independent organization in 2008, the Ducks eventually joined the NJYHL (New Jersey Youth Hockey League) in 2010-11 as a full-time member with a total of 10 teams. Today, the



Protec Ducks consist of 18 teams and in addition to the NJYHL, also participate in the EJEPL, the Eastern Junior Elite Prospect League.

As of spring 2018, the Protec Ducks are now part of an affiliation with the Minnesota Magicians of the NAHL (North American Hockey League). As a Junior A tier-2 team, the Minnesota Magicians' mission is to develop young athletes into professional collegiate hockey players. According to the league website, the NAHL, operating for over 42 years, "offers junior hockey players the opportunity to develop, learn, train, grow and succeed, while playing for free. The NAHL is unique in the fact that a vast majority of players begin their NAHL careers without an NCAA opportunity, but earn one through the course of their development in the league".

"It's an honor to be affiliated with a strong junior program like the Minnesota Magicians. It's a great opportunity to provide the Magicians a look at quality Mid-Atlantic District prospects. This relationship is a testament to the direction, strength, and growth of our Protec Ducks hockey program." -Patrick Alvin, Protec Youth Hockey Director. AJ Buccino, the Minnesota Magicians Co-Owner, GM and Head Coach, adds, "We are very excited to announce the affiliation between the Ducks and the Minnesota Magicians in the NAHL. We have a great relationship with the management of the Ducks program and we are excited to offer their players an opportunity to learn about the Magicians organization and how we can help the serious athlete reach their goals. Our goal is to provide a bridge for these athletes to gain exposure and new opportunities to leverage their career at the junior level." This affiliation between the Protec Ducks and Minnesota Magicians will provide a great opportunity for midget hockey players to develop into quality junior hockey athletes. It will also allow the Protec Hockey program to stand out and prosper over the next decade of operation.






Protec Ducks 2017-18 Season Accomplishments



Ducks Bantam '04' team win the NJYHL Bantam Minor Championship with a 3-1 win over the NJ Freeze

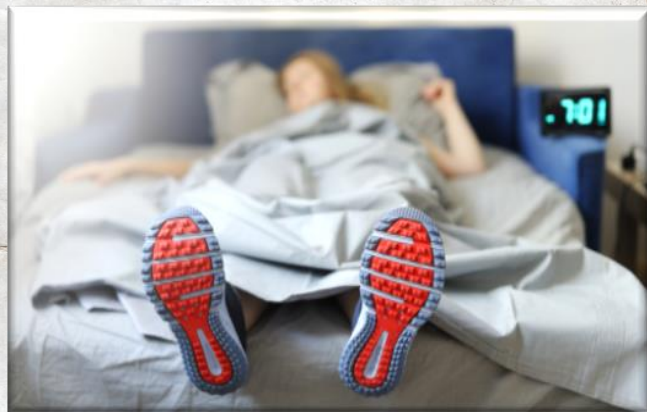


PeeWee AA Ducks Navy team win EJEPL 12u Division Championship at IceWorks Skating Complex

-  **Bantam '04 win NJYHL Championship!**
-  **Bantam '04 win Silver Stick regional championship at Bridgeport, CT.**
-  **PeeWee AA-Navy win EJEPL 12U Division Championship in Aston, PA.**
-  **Squirt AA U10 EJEPL Runner Up**
-  **We are proud to say 47% of playoff eligible Ducks teams made the playoffs this season.**

How Much Sleep Your Athlete Gets Directly Impacts Performance

With the EJEPL season already underway, keeping our athletes safe and healthy is always important. One great way for all youth athletes to stay healthy and perform their best during the season is to make sure that getting enough sleep becomes a priority. Many athletes overlook how the quality and quantity of their sleep has a lot to do with their performance. When sleep is disturbed, cut short, or if you don't get enough hours of sleep, it can disrupt your body's standard brain functions. When you don't get



sleep, it can result in memory issues and trouble with thinking and concentration. For an athlete, it means not having the focus to anticipate the opposing team's next moves. Lack of sleep could also result in having trouble with making the right decision during competition. Sleep deprivation leads to many health problems. As insufficient sleep leads to drowsiness, athletes are more prone to accidents on the court or field. It can also affect balance and coordination, increasing your risk of falls, sprains, tears, and muscle pulls, etc. And because your body heals when you sleep, your healing is deprived when you don't get enough sleep.

What Happens When you get Adequate Sleep?

If inadequate sleep can negatively impact an athlete's performance, enough quality sleep can, therefore, improve athletic performance. According to [WebMD](#), athletes should sleep an extra hour more than what is recommended for most people. A regular person should sleep 7 to 9 hours. Your body repairs itself when you sleep; therefore, when you don't get enough sleep, your body isn't given enough time to recuperate and recharge. When your body prepares for deep sleep, it relaxes and begins to produce the human growth hormone (HGH), increasing the growth of muscle tissue and regulating the body's metabolism. During deep sleep, HGH floods your body, helping the recovery process and re-energizing of your muscles.

Prolactin has anti-inflammatory properties; they are released and aid in the recovery of your joints. During sleep, extra oxygen is supplied to your muscles, assisting in the breakdown of lactic acids. During your most profound and most restorative sleep, your muscles are most relaxed, increasing blood supply to tissues. As mentioned, insufficient sleep impacts brain function. Therefore, adequate sleep is essential to proper brain function and necessary to learn a new skill. A good night's sleep enhances memory, improves mental clarity, and boosts mood. And because it improves your mood, it makes it easier for you to accept new information such as new techniques and skills.

How to Get Enough Sleep

As sleep plays such a critical role in an athlete's performance, ensuring you get enough of it should be a priority. An excellent way to make sure you get adequate sleep is by committing to a schedule; go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. If for whatever reason you don't get enough sleep at night, take naps during the day. The key to getting enough sleep is to recognize that rest is as critical to your athletic performance as your training and diet.