



LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

You are coaching a team of 7- and 8-year-olds. You rush straight from work to the diamond in your work clothes. You throw all the pens and papers in your pockets on the dashboard but as you get out of the car, your coffee goes flying, spilling coffee all over yourself. As you are rushing from the parking lot to the diamond, you stumble and drop your back pack and the equipment bag you were carry and everything spills out.

Running across the field, you notice that your players aren't on your assigned diamond. When you reach them, they tell you that the "big guys" are using the "good" field and that you have to practice on an old uneven field with hard bare patches. Within seconds, your entire team is standing around looking at you. As you look toward the clubhouse, you see your assistant coach, and she yells to you that she has to go inside and give equipment to the new players.

Suddenly you realize that your feet are starting to feel wet from the puddles you walked through as you crossed the field. Last night's downpour obviously hasn't drained completely. Thinking of last night's downpour gets you to look at the sky. You see black clouds moving in from the west but since it's almost 30 degrees, you don't expect rain until much later this evening. You reach into your pocket to get your practice plan and you realize it's one of the pieces of paper you left on the dashboard of your car. Not sure what to do without your plan, you tell players to take a couple of laps. As you watch them running around the field, you notice that they are slipping and sliding on the grass and dirt on the infield.

While you're still thinking about what to do next, the players' huffing and puffing tells you that the team is back from its laps. You also notice that their shoes are heavy with mud.

Three new players joined the team this evening. Eager to get out to practice, they haven't done up their shoelaces.

Looking for a dry spot on the field to do the warm-up, you sense that the skies have darkened—the black clouds have moved in quickly. There's only a small patch of grass that's dry and you wonder how you can get all your players to practice in this small space. Just before you start talking to your players, you look over their heads and see a number of parents sitting on lawn chairs, there to watch their child become a star player.