

## How Do You Approach a Showcase as a Coach?

Showcases are a way for college coaches to see a lot of players in hopefully the same location in a short amount of time. We could debate the Pros and Cons but better to do that at a different time. I guess my thoughts on having a team in a Showcase would be to show the uncommitted players to as many college coaches as possible. To me, that means getting my players to hustle in and out as quickly as possible so that no time is wasted between innings. I would want as many pitches, at bats and fielding opportunities to occur during the allotted time for both teams. I would want to get the players on base as many times as possible and show off those players by attempting steals, bunts, slaps, double steals, delayed steals, squeezes, hit and runs and anything else possible to show off their abilities.

I would also want my team to act like they wanted to be there and act like they really cared about winning each inning of each game. I would want them to exhibit enthusiasm, hustle and have positive emotions when playing their defensive position and when batting. I would want to see them playing a leadership role by showing those positive emotions in dealing with tough situations and when supporting their teammates. I would want them to be a leader on the bench when not playing and to show that positive emotion to every player who is playing at that time.

College coaches watch everything on the field, in the dugout, in the stands, in the parking lot, in the hotel and every other place that players and parents may be during the weekend. College coaches stay in the same hotels as the teams. Then can hear and see the teams that are allowed to run up and down the halls and the players who are not courteous to others at breakfast. College coaches are at the games to watch the players perform and show their abilities and attitude.

Here is a situation we had last year at a Showcase with college coaches wanting to watch the players perform. With about 5-10

minutes remaining in the game, one coach decided to stall since his team was winning. First of all, is the idea of a Showcase to win the game or to show the players abilities to the college coaches?

This coach decided to have a long talk in between the innings with his players before releasing them to go play defense. Then during the warm-up pitches, the centerfielder went over and stood by one of the corner outfielders. The catcher, in throwing the ball down to the shortstop, threw it way over her head. The ball went all the way to the fence. The outfielder jogged after the ball to retrieve it and slowly brought the ball back into the infield. Then the team met on the mound and chatted while taking their cues from the coach. Needless to say, the time ran out instead of the other team getting their turn at bat.

What did this coach really teach his players? That it is ok to stall in a Showcase? That it is ok to have your 14-18 year old players be a part of this type of strategy in a Showcase? This isn't a basketball or football game where running out the clock is a legitimate part of the game strategy. He was taking time away from his own players to play defense or the other team's players to hit. He took away time from all of those players to show their abilities in the hope of being recruited by a college just to win a Showcase game. This was not the type of message to send to your players nor their parents.

The real purpose of a Showcase is not to win at any cost? It is great to win but isn't letting the college coaches watch as many plays as possible and see every kid hit and play defense the real point of them.