

Coaches Corner #3

Thought/ quote of the week

Focus on intent not results

A great tip is “As hard as you can”. Swing as hard as you can, run as hard as you can, throw as hard as you can. Embellish and cheer the hard swings and misses just as much or more than the hard hit balls. Kids can understand “As hard as you can” but sometimes tips like: stay back, elbow up, elbow down, open up, you are closed may over confuse a player.

In many of the practice plans we have a lot of stations and drills, don't confuse that with over coaching. Figure out an item or two you can use as a reminder and let the kids learn. I know I have been guilty of not doing this; it will be a focus of my coaching this year.

Drill of the week

Coach rolled ground balls

Coach rolled ground balls are a great way to work on fielding technique. As a coach you can easily control both the speed and where the ball is rolled. It is important for both younger players who have weaker arms and older players moving to larger fields to be able to “get around” a ground ball and get momentum going. The below video shows players moving right of a line but a cone or other object can be used to go around.

[8 year olds “getting around the ball”](#)

AA Practice Plan of the week

0-10 Dynamic Warm Up and Baserunning

10-20 Catch Progression

25-35 Ground Ball Stations

- Setup 2-3 ground ball stations around the IF. Have coach rolling ground balls and players working on attacking the ball and [“getting around the ball”](#) < **amazing video same as above. A throw does not need to be made but the arm can be brought up as if they are going to throw**
- In the above video specifically watch how the players come in, move to their right and back left to field the ball and get momentum moving to first

45-60 Infield Defence

- Take time, instruct on where players need to go and why. On every hit ball there should be movement by all or nearly all players (covering a base or backing up)

65-95 Game 4 vs 4 vs 4 (if you have less than 12 at practice divide up into 2 even teams and coaches may need to play OF or 1B)

- Divide the team up into 3 groups of 4.
- Team A Outfield
- Team B Infield
- Team C Batting
- Every inning starts with a runner on first and a 2-1 count. Coach pitches and another coach can run in to cover home if necessary on plays at the plate. Inning ends at either 3 outs or 3 runs. A rotates to IF, B rotates to batting and C rotates to OF. Keep things moving quickly by penalizing 1 run if it takes a team more than 30 seconds to get to their spots

95-115 Fun Game - Optional if practice goes well. Offer the opportunity for a fun game at the end of practice if players work hard and pay attention

115-120 Break Down and pick up

TBall/A Plan of the week

0-5 Divide up groups by stickers

5-10 Baserunning

- Home through first
- Home to second - use a bucket to teach how to make a small bubble before getting to first.

10-40 Stations

- Rolled ground ball
 - Tee ball - rolled ground ball between P and 1st, have the player field the ball and run straight to the base to make an out
 - A - same as above but after a few times add a first baseman. Have the P field the ball take a few steps towards first and underhand a throw to the 1st baseman covering first
 - Make both of the above a game. Count out loud how many in a row the group is getting
- Catching station

- Tee ball - continue to use the sock ball and practice fingers up when blocking or catching the ball
- [Catching Progression Video](#) - I recommend using a sock ball as it's a bit smaller than a tennis ball and easier to catch.
- A - Football baseball
 - Have the player line up next to the coach. Coach plays QB and the player is WR. At hike the player will run a few steps and the coach will throw the sock ball. Begin with close, short throws, about 10 feet away
- Hitting Station
 - Tee Ball - Home run derby with a tennis ball
 - Use a tennis ball to see how far a ball can be hit. Place a marker, such as a cone or water bottle by the ball to see who hit the ball the farthest at practice - "As hard as you can"
 - A - front wiffle ball toss - "As hard as you can"

40-45 Pick up Stations

45-50 Ground ball game

- Line players up in a single file line and roll ground balls. If a player misses a ball they go to another station and work on ground balls with another coach. Last player standing wins the game and gets to "1,2,3 Team Name" at the end of practice

please contact me with any questions

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