

## Welcome to the MNLL Coaching Corner

Thank you again for dedicating yourself to help the kids and the growth of baseball. Each week I plan on adding new content such as practice plans, drills and ideas to help strengthen your players and team. This page is for coaches and parents. Each week the coaches will have their players for a few hours, which can definitely help improve their skills. Working just a few minutes per day is how you will see the most improvement with your children.

### Thought / Quote of the week

“Baseball/Softball IS THE BIGGEST SELF ESTEEM DESTROYING SPORT IN THE WORLD-I DON'T NEED MY COACH, PARENT, OR TEAMMATE TO BEAT ME UP, THE GAME WILL DO THAT BY ITSELF” - Steve Springer

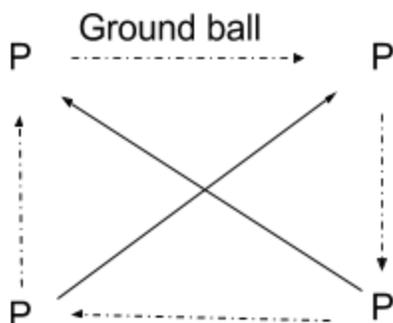
Please note this is NOT a negative statement, but the truth. Baseball is hard, it's not fair and it will lie to you. A player can go 0-4 and hit 4 line drives. A player can go 4-4 with 4 jam shot bloopers. Focusing on a goal of quality at bats and not hits will help kids learn and stay positive.

### Drill of the week

#### 4 corners

This drill is very flexible and can be done many different ways. Players will always roll to the left and make a throw diagonally. You can work on slow rollers, backhand, forehand, short hops or even short fly balls.

**Make it a competition.** Have 2-3 groups of 4 players and see what group can make the most diagonal throws and successful catches in 60 seconds.



#### Practice plan of the week

The practice plan of the week will be a progressive plan where each week builds on the last. Every week or two a previous plan, drill or skill will be revisited to review. The first few practices should be a bit slower as you will want to take time to explain each drill, how to do it and why do it. Practice 1 is also an “evaluation” of where we stand and what we will need to work on most.

## **AA-Above**

Theme of the week: Little things lead to big things

0-5 min introduction

5-15 Dynamic Warm Up (normally about 5 minutes & running through first base)

15-30 Throwing progression (normally 10 minutes or so) when a player misses a ball the 2 players switch spots quickly. The player who made the throw runs to get the missed ball.

*\*important for older teams\* - warm up to throw, don't throw to warm up. Playing catch is a vital part of baseball and often gets overlooked.*

- Feet forward rotational throw
- [Rocker drill](#)
- Athletic Catch
  - Don't just play catch, make it game like. Players can act like they are taking a relay, turning double play, catching a pop up and throwing a runner out, etc
- [Long toss](#)
- [Flat Ground pitching](#)

30-35 Get ready for stations

35-65 Defence Stations 8 min each

- 4 corners (drill of the week)
- Pitching Station - close flat ground work. 30' - working on basic mechanics
- Ground balls on knees ([Ozzie Smith Drill](#))

65-70 drink and grab helmets

70-100 Offense/Batting stations 8 min each

- Circle BP wiffle station
- Super tee (heavy ball/ low air soccer or basketball)
- Soft Toss

100-110 break down stations and meet

## **T-ball and A**

0-5 Introduction and hand out stickers

Going to the \$1 store and getting a pack or two of stickers is a life saver. You can divide the kids up by groups (ironman group, hulk group, superman group). The kids love the stickers and also then know who to stay with in groups.

5-10 Warm Up/ Learning

- Jog from base to base and name each base. Run around the bases 3-4 times and yell as loud as you can when you hit the base. 1st base, 2nd base, etc.

## **10-45 stations (10 min each)**

Catching station

- using a sock/washcloth ball and without wearing the glove work on catching the ball with the glove hand and keeping fingers pointing up (forehand side, far enough out so that if a player misses the sockball it does not hit them). If a player masters that, move to back handed catching and finally to in front of the body last.

Hitting Station - Large ball off a tee

- If possible try to get a large ball such as an old soccer ball, basketball or even a beach ball, and let the kids go to town hitting that large ball as hard as possible. To make it a game, move it as far away from a fence as necessary and have a "goalie". If the hitter gets it past the "goalie" and the ball hits the fence it is a point. A large ball will teach confidence and also get the kids to use intent to try to hit the ball hard.

Throwing Station

For younger teams it's a good idea to separate throwing and catching so it doesn't turn into "fetch" instead of catch.

- Hit a target - make a target for kids at this station to throw at. You can use a hula hoop and a clip to attach to the fence, stack 2 buckets, or put a milk jug on an upside down bucket. Start close and back up each time the target gets hit. See how far you can go.

45-55 Baserunning Relay

- Start 1 team of players at 2nd base and another team at home plate. On "go" a player from each team begins running the bases until they get back to their original base and high fives their teammate who begins to run. First team done with all runners wins.

