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8 16

PITCHING-WEEK 1

EQUIPMENT NEEDED: Baseballs, home plates, towel, set of bases, and cones

DO NOT PAIR UP PITCHERS TO PLAY CATCH: They were advised to provide catchers when registering for the camp. Catchers younger than 18 years of age are required to wear a mask.

WARMUPS: The throwing progression is the warm up session each week.

DRILLS SHOULD BE APPROX. 8-12 MINUTES EACH

- 1.0 **STRETCH**
Keep this short to assure proper length of instruction (5-6 minutes)
- 1.1 **WRIST FLIPS** *Glove Shelf*
Pitchers and their catchers will stand approximately 10-15' apart. Pitcher will cross forearms while throwing ball from the elbows to partner.
Coaching Points: Elbow in front of shoulder, ball out in fingertips, gap between ball and palm of hand, proper wrist action, release point, spin/rotation. Do not cock or turn wrist during throw.
- 1.2 **DOUBLE KNEE THROW**
Pitchers will throw while on both knees isolating upper body
Coaching Points: Arm slot- getting on top, elbows on same plane, hand behind ball. Arm action-elbow leads forearm, front elbow clears path, tension free follow thru at 7 o'clock.
- 1.3 **SQUARE UP THROW**
Pitchers will square up to their catchers with a wide foot base and rotate shoulder and lining up elbows and finishing out front
Coaching Points: same as above just adding lower half
- 1.4 **ONE KNEE THROW**
Start pitcher on back knee to isolate upper body mechanics while throwing to catcher
Coaching Points: break of hands, thumbs down/palms opposite, front elbow to plate, back elbow to 2B, getting on top, chest on knee, arm slot and follow thru.
- 1.5 **POWER POSITION THROW (No Release)**
Start pitchers in "Power Position" (Wide Base) do not release back foot
Coaching Points: setting stride foot, hip turn before shoulders, backside turn into firm closed front leg, finish with chest over front foot, back foot straight at finish and eyes parallel with ground.
- 1.6 **POWER POSITION THROW RELEASE/FINISH**
Start pitchers in "Power Position" (Wide Base) release back foot and finish
Coaching Points: setting stride foot, hip turn before shoulders, backside turn into firm closed front leg, finish with chest over front foot, back foot straight at finish and eyes parallel with ground.
- 1.7 **LECTURE – 1 THRU 7 PITCHING MECHANICS (15 minutes max)**
You will lose players focus after that amount of time.
 1. **Position on Rubber** - Good posture, relaxed exhale, ball in glove, elbows down, feet inside shoulder width apart, balanced, glove- center of body below chin, shoulders square to plate, eyes on target and hand on top of ball.
 2. **Rocker Step** - Small step back or to side remaining heel to toe, balls of feet, hands still, head stays on target, nose over toes.
 3. **Pivot** – Contact with rubber, outside of foot touching rubber, hands still, pivot foot down, shoulders point directly to target.
 4. **Balance Point** - Lift leg to 90%, take knee to glove, back vertical, toe pointed down, weight back, front leg middle of body, glove in middle of body, hands in glove, eyes on target, front shoulder pointed at target, back knee flexed and head level.

5. **Leg Drop - Lower body**...down and out, alignment, balance, glove in middle of body, foot slightly open, power position, front side closed, stride length, **upper body**...glove down when stride leg starts, break of hands, thumbs under, elbows on same plane, head level, front arm or elbow pointed to target, back hand behind ball, and getting on top.
6. **Power Position** - Athletic position, balance, 50/50 weight position, front toe to back toe aligned to target, hip turn before shoulders, back side turn into firm front side, back foot straight at finish, shoulders level and pointed to target.
7. **Throw / Follow Thru** - Elbow lead forearm, front elbow clears path, front elbow in rib cage, glove in front of body, release of back foot, balance throughout, release point, eyes on target, front knee bend, chest over knee, extension, alignment and level head on target.

1.8 **1 THRU 7 MECHANICS WALK THRU (No Throw)**

- Have the pitcher's line or circle up and walk pitchers through the seven steps without a pitch and critique each pitcher.

1.9 **PFP – COMEBACKERS**

- Set-up mound area and take turns having each pitcher simulate a pitch to the plate with a good follow-through to good fielding position. Pitcher will field a fungo or rolled ball (depending on space) then make a throw to catchers covering 1st. Pitcher will use proper footwork and alignment to base.



DRILLS SHOULD BE APPROX. 8-12 MINUTES EACH

- 2.0 STRETCH**
5-6 minutes
- 2.1 REVIEW**
1 Thru 7 Mechanics briefly 5-6 minutes
- 2.2 THROWING PROGRESSION WARM UP**
No more than 2 minutes on each following drill: Wrist Flips, 2-Knee, Square up, One Knee, Power Position
- 2.3 1 THRU 7 COMMAND THROW**
Pitchers will partner with catcher focusing on 1 Thru 7 mechanics. Coach will call out the commands 1-7 and throw as group to catcher.
- 2.4 LINE DRILL**
Pitchers will straddle a line on the gym floor and go through mechanics and check to ensure stride foot lands in-line. Repeat drill down the line without throwing ball
Coaching Points: alignment, front toe slightly closed, stride length and balance throughout.
- 2.5 SIT-UP THROW DRILL**
Pitcher will lay on ground in sit up position with knees bent and keep glove in center of chest. Pitcher will rise up, separate and throw to catcher or wall.
Coaching Points: front elbow to target, chest to glove, chest to knee and release out front.
- 2.6 STRETCH POSITION**
Focus on balance, wide base, power position, set position, glove position, stride leg and holding runners while throwing to catcher.
Coaching Points: Demonstrate three options: (1) balance point delivery (2) knee to knee and (3) slide for older kids.
- 2.7 EXTENSION / TOWEL DRILL**
Pitchers will partner with catcher approx. 4-6' apart. Catcher will take a knee with glove extended out over knee. Pitcher will go through mechanics and reach out front to slap the catcher's glove with finger tips or towel
Coaching Points: proper alignment, head out over front foot while getting maximum extension.
- 2.8 3 - BALL FIELDING BUNTS / FOOTWORK**
Set up three balls in front of home plate approx. 6-8' apart. Put tape on floor to use it as a pitching rubber approx. 30' away. Pitchers simulate a pitch to plate and hustle to ball and alternate throwing to all bases. The ball on 1B line gets thrown to 1B. The ball in middle is thrown to 2B and ball on 3B line goes to 3B.
Coaching Points: footwork, alignment, balance and proper throwing technique. CATCHERS WILL CATCH AT BASES

**DRILLS SHOULD BE APPROX. 8-12 MINUTES EACH****3.0 STRETCH**
5-6 minutes**3.1 1 Thru 7 Throw**

Pitchers will partner with catcher and throw without commands and as group to catcher. Coach will critique each player.

3.2 BALANCE 4,5,6 COMMAND

Coach will call out "4" = Balance Point "5" = Leg Drop and "6" = Power Position and pitcher will pause at after each command before pitch.

Coaching Points: lower body mechanics while keeping upper body level and balance throughout.

3.3 FLAMINGO DRILL

Pitchers will stand facing coach and set a ball on floor or cone (LH ball beside left leg/RH ball beside right leg) and lift leg to the balance point. Pitcher will bend at knees and reach down and pick ball up without opposite foot touching floor and get back to balance point before throwing to catcher.

Coaching Points: keep weight back and balance.

3.4 3 – BALL BALANCE DRILL

Pitcher will set three balls in front of feet approximately 12" apart. One near the outside of the back foot, a second ball below the belly button and a 3rd inside the front foot. Have pitchers get to balance point, drop leg to all three balls, one at a time and going back to balance point each time and SIMULATE a throw

Coaching Points: keeping weight back, balance, leg down, not swinging open and alignment.

3.5 WALL / FENCE DRILL

Pitcher will start with throwing shoulder facing wall and lift to balance point and then lead with hip/butt to wall and hold for 3 count simulating driving thru wall to plate.

Coaching Points: explosion, head level and eyes on target, pivot foot heel off ground.

3.6 PICK-OFFS

Set up 3 bases and place three taped lines on gym floor side by side as pitching rubbers approximately 4' apart. Pitchers stand behind the lines. The line on 1st base side does pickoffs to 1st. The middle line does pickoffs to 2nd and the line closest to 3rd does pickoffs to 3rd. Catchers will cover the bases and pitchers are to alternate.

3.7 PFP – COVERING 1ST

Set up simulated mound and 1st Base. Pitchers will alternate simulating a pitch and pitcher will sprint in a straight to base line approximately 12-15' from bag, square up to base inside line and break down to receive ball from fielder (catchers playing 1B).

Coaching Points: call for ball while catching with two hands before touching bag with right foot on the inside half of bag, check runners



DRILLS SHOULD BE APPROX. 8-12 MINUTES EACH

- 4.0 STRETCH**
5-6 minutes
- 4.1 THROWING PROGRESSION WARM UP**
No more than 2 minutes on each following drill: Wrist Flips, 2-Knee, Square up, One Knee, Power Position
- 4.2 STRETCH POSITION**
Focus on balance, wide base, power position, set position, glove position, stride leg and holding runners while throwing to catcher.
Coaching Points: (1) balance point delivery (2) knee to knee and (3) slide for older kids
- 4.3 PICK-UP DRILL**
Pitchers will line up with ball in front of right foot and in balance point position facing the ball. Pitcher will rock forward over ball and pick up baseball then come back up to the balance point hold and repeat 3 times.
Coaching Points: staying balanced and aligned throughout.
- 4.4 RHYTHM DRILL**
Pitchers will get to balance point position and break hands land stride leg while getting "on top." Repeat three times and the 3rd one will be a pitch to a catcher.
Coaching Points: rhythm and balance, stride foot down with arm back to launch position at same time.
- 4.5 BREAKING BALL**
- Coach will teach and demonstrate proper grips, arm action, pressure points and spin. Let them throw briefly from short distance to get a feel for pitch.
 - GRADES 4-6 = Two-seam fastball and straight change-up only
 - GRADES 7-8 = Two-seam fastball, straight and circle change-up, slider and curveball.
- 4.6 PFP – WILD PITCHES**
Set up home plate and mound area. A catcher will take knee 20' behind the designated home plate holding ball. Pitcher will sprint towards home plate breaking down while squared up to catcher in front of plate inside baseline protecting himself and receive throw from catcher, putting a simulated tag on a make-believe runner with two hands and turning back to infield to check other runners.
- 4.7 LECTURE – MENTAL APPROACH**
Use this time to talk about the mental side of pitching including being a pitcher vs. a thrower, playing catch with a purpose, best pitch in baseball, 1st pitch strike, 1st out of inning, important counts, challenge hitters, 9 vs. 1 rule, location, hitters tendencies, confidence in catcher, pitch selection, situation pitching, Seven C's of pitching: control, command, confidence, composure, consistent, compete and concentration. **DON'T LET YOUR HEAD FAIL YOU BEFORE YOUR ARM HAS A CHANCE TO.**