

2010-2011 Winter Workouts
“November 2010 - Have A Plan”



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All-Star Performance
Greater Midwest Baseball Tournaments

As teams gear up for Off Season Training, it is imperative that a good practice plan is thought out.

If structured correctly, indoor practices can accomplish more than an cold / wet outdoor winter practice.

In planning for the practice sessions, coaches should take into account

- 1) The space you have available*
- 2) The duration of the practice session*
- 3) The number of players attending the session*

With this information you can divide the players into small groups, and your available space into core fundamental stations.

Based on your available space, there is no reason that you cannot incorporate Hitting, Fielding and Pitching into each Indoor Practice.

If your space is limited consider alternating week to week, Fielding/Hitting and Pitching Stations.

The following are some examples of Fielding, Pitching and Hitting Stations that can help structure a successful Indoor Practice Session.



Station 1 - Fielding

Infield/Conditioning - A cage can be used for this station if necessary

The Fielding station can consist of a basic groundball drill, in which a player holds the groundball position (wide base, butt down, hands out) while a teammate roles him five or 10 balls (this number can increase as players build strength in their legs)

The player should maintain that position each time after fielding the ball. From there the player can hold a lunge to the backhand side and catch five backhands rolled by a teammate followed by a lunge to the forehand side and five forehands rolled by a teammate. Again, the lunge position should be held throughout this drill

Station 2 -Fielding

Live Groundballs/Fielding and Throwing Drills

The live groundball/throwing station can have several components. Fungoes can be hit, with players throwing to a teammate after catching the ball. A gym floor is a great place to learn proper fielding technique without worrying about bad hops.

A basic throwing drill in which players start with a ball in fielding position at one cone, shuffle and throw at the second cone and follow to the third cone, can be included. Players can throw to a teammate or at a target in the cage to for accuracy

Quick Hands drill has a player face a wall in fielding position with another player behind him. The player behind throws a ball off the wall so that the player in fielding position has to field it on the short hop.

This can be done with almost any type of ball and with or without a glove





Hitting Stations

These stations help players develop the building blocks for a fundamentally sound swing. Even in a gym with no fancy amenities a lot of hitting can be done.

The set-up is very simple - Three Stations

- 1) One station with a batting tee
- 2) One station with small plastic balls and a stickball bat
- 3) One station with either Quickballs, Softies, or Baseballs for soft toss.

Station 1 - Tee Station

The traditional hitting off a batting tee drill. This drill is used to work on a specific component of the swing.

When hitting off of a tee you want the players to concentrate on their weight shift. You want them to think about going back to go forward. The hitter should load all of the weight onto the back foot (almost like a pitcher's wind-up) and then take it all forward as the swing is completed. Again, the hitter should swing with authority.

Station 2 - Soft Toss Station

One player tosses balls to another, who hits them into the net (or a toss machine can be used). The player can hit until he is tired, but this is not a race.

The hitter sets the pace.

For this drill you don't want players to think about the lower half of their bodies. All we want them to think about is having a loose grip and a quick bat. The loose grip unlocks the wrists and allows for greater bat speed.

Players should always swing with authority.

Station 3 - Stickball Station

At this station use small plastic balls and a shaved down wood bat, or broom handle, called a stickball bat.

There are variations of stickball bats – wood and metal – available on the market. This is a great drill for eye-hand coordination.



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All of these stations can be turned into games or contests to help keep them interesting. Sometimes it is fun to set up a scoring system at each station and to have each small group keep its own score. Then, at the end of practice, the winning group is rewarded at coaches discretion.

We hope this helps you start the process of planning your Winter Training. Use this as a guide. Be structured but creative to make the most out of your Winter Indoor practice sessions.

Be On The Lookout For Our Monthly Workout Planner

December 2010 - Pitching, Build Your Foundation

January 2011 - Long Toss and Arm strength

February 2011 – How To Structure and Throw a Bullpen Session

March 2011 – Pitch Counts For The Early Part of Your Season

April 2011 – Communicating With You Catcher

May 2011 – Pain vs Soreness, What To Look For

For Additional Training Information Contact

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2010-2011 Winter Workouts "December 2010 – Pitching Foundation"

Pitching Foundation

Pitching and pitching mechanics are developed from a number of sources. Primarily it is built on years of trial and error and input from highly accomplished leaders in the sport ranging from Hall of Famers to established teachers of the game. These core principals are what All-Star pitchers and coaches follow. There are many ways to get a baseball across a 17" target. Kicking it is one way but not the most productive. The approach is one that will use a sound mechanics and that are easily teachable, and repeatable, so that they can maximize velocity and location in a healthy manner.

Creating The Core Position: The Power Position Check Points

- 1.Weight is on the ball of your landing foot
- 2.Landing foot is slightly closed
- 3.Landing leg knee is slightly bent
- 4.Body posture is in an athletic position: head forward, butt behind you.
- 5.Both elbows are even with your shoulders and front side forearm is parallel to the ground with the palm of the glove facing down.
- 6.Stride length is so that the knee of your landing leg does not go past the toes of your landing foot.. (If this happens the upper body collapses at the waist or opens up to your glove side. Neither is conducive to staying in the poser position.) The stride length is typically 80-85% of your height, or about 5 ½ of your shoe lengths.
- 7.Plant leg/ Push leg is straight, because we have pushed to this position.
- 8.The heel of the back/plant foot should be on the ground. This ensures that the hips are closed.
- 9.Ball is seen just above the pitchers head. This is the result of the throwing elbow being even with or slightly above the throwing shoulder and in the power L position.





Arriving at the Power Position

Upper Body Fundamentals:

1. At set up, palms are together with the forearms in a vertical position. (If the elbows are flared, chicken winged, you lead with the elbow causing the elbow to go below the shoulder. This puts enormous stress on the front of the shoulder as well as decreasing power.
2. The upper body is slightly forward, backwards C position, athletic position, with the head forward and butt behind you.
3. Once the balance point is achieved, (see Lower Body Fundamentals), the hands separate and a LONG ARM SWING occurs.
4. The arm swing and the pull down of the glove side elbow by the rib cage is what generates power in the upper body. The thought process is thumb down to thumb up, or thumb to thigh, thumb to the sky, as the ball goes just below the belt, resulting in a long arm swing.
5. The glove side arm is "quiet ", as the separation happens, with only a subtle reach with the glove, so the glove is just past the elbow, when the landing foot touches the ground.
6. The front arm provides two things in the pitching delivery, Balance and Direction. The direction is provided when the glove elbow pulls "down and back ", by the rib cage. This pull occurs just AFTER the Hip starts to Rotate.





Arriving at the Power Position

Lower Body Fundamentals

1. Set up in the stretch position has the plant leg (back leg) foot flush against the rubber, so that the body is lined up to the plate.
2. 85% of the pitcher's weight should be on the back leg, so that the front leg is light and easy to lift.
3. The plant leg has a slight bend so that we can go laterally powerfully. (A deeper bend will only allow us to go UP powerfully. We do not want to lose height on the back side.)
4. The width of the feet in the set up should be around shoulder width. (A closer set up with the feet will cause a toppling effect with the upper body, this is not powerful)
5. The feet should be lined up in a straight line to the target.
6. The front knee is LIFTED into the hands, where the knee is at an angle and just inside the front hip. This is the Balance Point. (The pitcher should be able to look down and see the toes of his plant foot if he is in the proper Balanced Position) Everything in our delivery happens from Balance. This sets the body up so that the lower body is going to the plate in front of the upper body, resulting in a powerful delivery.
7. On the knee lift the foot should stay under the knee. If it gets outside the knee this will result in a reach or swing of the leg. The front leg is and remains quiet. It is our shock absorber. It catches us when we land and holds us back while we rotate.
8. We want the knee lift for our pitchers to occur while they "are over the rubber", and the separation of the hands to occur while they are still "over the rubber". Otherwise they will, "lift and drift", meaning they are going toward the plate with their hands still together. This causes our timing to be off and will also result in a shorter arm swing.
9. Once the knee is lifted, and the pitcher is in the "balance point", 3 things happen at once. 1. The arm swing. 2. A Fall to a Push with the back, plant leg. (As the fall begins the plant leg knee gets just inside the plant leg foot, this is when the push occurs) 3. A Quiet, subtle reach with the glove arm. The length of the push and the arm swing should be the same distance and happen at the same time. This gives us Power and Timing.
10. There IS NOT and SHOULD NOT be a, "swinging of the front leg" or a "reach with the front leg. If either of these occurs we are either going across the target (results from a "swinging of the front leg"), or we are "pulled off our back leg, which is our strength,(results from "reaching with the front leg") causing a loss of power, direction and location. The front side of the delivery gives us 2 things
Balance and Direction
11. When the front foot lands the pitcher should be in the previously described Power Position.
12. From the windup position there is one step added: The small step back, a turn of the plant foot and it being placed flush against the rubber, followed by a lift of the knee into the balance point.





Fundamentals From the Power Position

- Once the Power Position is attained there is a rotation in one spot. Anytime in sports that power is required and attained (hitting, boxing, golf swing, tennis swing, figure skater) there is a rotation of the body in one spot.
 - Landing in this Power Position allows us to Rotate Late, which generates more power.
 - This rotation happens because our front foot is slightly closed and we have a bent front knee.
 - The hip rotation happens just before the pulling of the glove side elbow.
- At the time the body begins rotating the glove side elbow pulls, “down and back”. This gives us direction to the plate by staying close the body with the glove side elbow.
 - The follow through is NOT something that we practice. It is a result of our delivery. When the mass of our body goes down a hill and is caught and turned a natural follow through will occur.
- THERE IS NOT TO BE MENTIONED A BENDING OF THE BACK TO GET THE BALL DOWN!
 - Say “Stay above the Ball and Behind the Ball” on release.
 - We want to ‘Stay Taller Longer’ so we accelerate through the core.
- The ideal finished position is one where the pitchers head and chest are up, and his feet are parallel and slightly pigeon toed. The head is, and has remained throughout the delivery, in between our knees.

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