



# COACH PITCH

## WEEK ONE

### PRACTICE GOALS: What Your Team Should Learn

1. Be able to hold a ball with a four seam grip
2. How to throw to a two-hand target using a four-seam grip
3. Run through first base
4. Attempt to catch the ball using two hands
5. Properly grip a bat

### MATERIALS:

- Batting Helmets
- Bases
- Baseball Bats (various sizes)
- Baseballs (two buckets)
- Batting Tee
- Gloves
- "L" Screen



## POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE (PCA) | WEEKLY TIPS

### PRACTICE 1 TIP:

#### The Big Three

(Have Fun, Work Hard, Be a Good Sport)

There are three big things to work on this season — have fun, work hard, and be a good sport. If you can do all three, you'll have a great season.

**Have Fun:** When you enjoy what you are doing, you usually do it better.

**Work Hard:** Have everyone agree to give his or her best effort at every practice and game.

**Be a Good Sport:** You want to **Honor the Game** and treat your opponents and officials with respect even when things don't go the way we'd like them to.

Any one of these three things may seem pretty easy, but when you try to do all of them, it can be difficult. For example, it's easy to have fun when you don't work hard, but we can do both. We'll learn that hard work can be fun.

### PRACTICE 2 TIP :

#### Rebounding From Mistakes

(Mistake Ritual)

All athletes, even great ones, make mistakes, but great athletes know how to bounce back from mistakes.

**On your team it should be acceptable to make a mistake.**

If your players fear mistakes they won't try their hardest. Tell them to remember to just keep hustling and working hard, no matter what!

**Use a Mistake Ritual to help your players focus on the most important play — the next play.**

When someone on your team makes a mistake, they can get past the error by making a throw-away motion with their hand.

Also, tell that person, "That's okay. Toss it! Get ready for the next play."

### PRACTICE 3 TIP :

#### Everyone Belongs Here

(Emotional Tank)

**It is very important to have every one of your players feel like he/she is an important part of the team** — Help them understand that they each belong there and deserve the opportunity to play, have fun and learn.

We all have unique strengths. We are all different in some ways. But we are all similar in some ways.

**Being a great team member involves encouraging each other and supporting each other.**

Being kind to each other and trying hard together. Encourage your athletes to make each other feel good about being on the team. This will not only make it fun for everybody, it will help everyone improve and play well.



# QUICK PLAN

## 90 MINUTES

**3 MINUTES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- Welcome players
  - Review names (players and coaches)
  - Focus on the reason for being there/PCA tip of the week
- 

**7 MINUTES**

### **STRETCHING AND WARM UPS**

- Players run along the fence with the team
  - Coach leads the team in a series of leg and arm stretches
  - Finish with 20 Jumping Jacks
  - (See full practice plan for complete instructions)
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**15 MINUTES**

### **BASEBALL GRIP**

- Players gather in circle
  - Grip baseball with whole hand using fingertips
  - Show players two-and three-finger grips
  - Have players demonstrate correct grip before going to spots to throw
- 

**20 MINUTES**

### **CATCHING AND THROWING**

- Players learn two hand target
  - Coaches show how to catch thumb to thumb
  - Coaches show how to catch pinky to pinky
  - No throwing until you see a two hand target
  - 5 steps of throwing
  - Start in launch position
  - Focus on two hand target and four-seam-grip
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**3 MINUTES**

### **BREAK**

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**20 MINUTES**

### **HITTING**

- Players will grip the bat with knocking knuckles lined up or shifted slightly
  - "Athletic" stance
  - Bat should be able to cover the entire plate
  - Dry Swings
  - Coach throw off knee
  - (See full practice plan for complete instructions)
- 

**7 MINUTES**

### **BASE RUNNING**

- Run from home through 1st base
  - (See full practice plan for complete instructions)
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**15 MINUTES**

### **FIELDING**

- Review 5 Steps of Fielding
  - Alligator Hands
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### **CONCLUSION**

- High fives
- Review what they learned/PCA Tip of the Week
- Remind of next event (practice/game)



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## INTRODUCTION (3 MINUTES)

- Gather and welcome players. Introduce the coaches and player's by their names, review purpose for being at the field and show enthusiasm to start the very first practice.

## STRETCHING AND WARMUPS (7 MINUTES)

- **Have the team run along the outfield fence and gather in the opposite outfield from which you started.**
- Arm Circles: Short circles forward/backward, big circles forward/backward.
- Arm above the head and try to grab the middle of your back. Use the opposite arm to push arm down as far as you can reach.
- Right arm across the body, grab the elbow to stretch.
- Wrist Pull Downs: Extend your Right Arm / Left Arm out with the palm up, grab the finger tips with opposite arm and pull fingers down/back creating the stretch.
- Wrist Pull Ups: Extend your arm out with the palm down, grab the finger tips with opposite arm and pull fingers up/back creating the stretch.
- Touch your toes (standing)
- Touch your toes (sitting with both leg straight out, legs spread apart, grab toes with opposite hand, each leg once)
- Triangle seat: Seated pull feet together in to the body and use elbows to push the knees flat to the ground.
- Jumping Jacks: 20 times.

## BASEBALL GRIP (15 MINUTES)



1.1      1.2      1.3

- Proper four-seam grip (See Fig. 1.1). Hold the baseball using a four-seam grip.
- Show two-finger (Fig.1.2) and three-finger (Fig. 1.3) grips. Index finger on the top of the ball, thumb on the bottom of the ball, middle finger on the top of the ball. The spacing between fingers should be about the size of a finger.
- Players will grip the ball across the horseshoe or “C”.



### DRILL

Players grab a ball off of the ground and show you their four-seam grip. Each player does five balls. Players will line up in three single file lines of four. Match one coach per line.

#### GAME: FOUR-SEAM RELAY RACE

Player will start from their line about 15 feet away from the coach and run up to the ball and pick it up and show their coach, the four-seam grip. They will return to the end of their line.

Once they return to the back of their line the next player can go.

Do this drill until all players in their line have gone. The relay is to be done after the drill.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## CATCHING AND THROWING (20 MINUTES)



### CATCHING

- **Two-Hand Target (2HT)** When playing catch, the thrower should not deliver the ball until the receiver shows the thrower a two-hand target.

The 2HT is when the player receiving the ball has both arms extended straight out from their body with a little flex in the elbow. Hands straight up, with thumbs towards each other, once the thrower sees this, they may deliver the ball. This is the 2HT. (See Fig. 2.1)

- **Thumb-to-Thumb (T2T)** When receiving the ball above the waist the receiver should show a 2HT and catch the ball thumb-to-thumb.

This is important because it emphasizes using two hands to catch the ball. This will allow the receiver to quickly make the transition from their glove to their throwing hand, while using the four-seam grip. (see Fig. 2.2)

- **Pinky-to-Pinky (P2P)** When receiving the ball below the waist the receiver should show a 2HT and catch the ball pinky-to-pinky.

Just like T2T this is equally important because it stresses using two hands and teaches the proper way to catch a ball below the waist. (See Fig. 2.3 & 2.4)



### THROWING

- Do not throw the ball until you see a Two-Hand-Target (2HT)
- Use a four-seam grip.
- Explain and demonstrate the Five Steps of Throwing

#### FIVE STEPS OF THROWING

##### Step One: Step

Start square to your partner, step towards your partner with the foot of your throwing hand. Plant your foot with the inside of the foot facing the receiver, this will align the glove shoulder to your partner.

##### Step Two: Shoulder-to-Partner

You will want to have your glove shoulder facing your partner. The thrower's hands are to move downward towards the center of their body until they separate. This will lead you to the launch, which is the next step.

##### Step Three: Launch

At this point the thrower will turn their thumbs in to get the elbows up putting the arms in the launch position. The ball will be in the throwing hand away from the receiver with a four-seam grip and the knuckles of the throwing hand facing the receiver.

##### Step Four: Delivery

The thrower should stay behind the ball when throwing and snap their wrist when throwing to the receiver.

##### Step Five: Finish

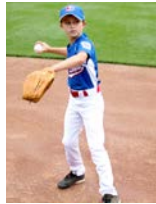
The thrower's weight will continue towards the receiver and the arm will follow through to the 2HT.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE



3.1 Start



3.2 Shoulder-to-Partner



3.3 Launch



3.4 Delivery



3.5 Finish

## DRILL

Start in the “launch” position, focus on the 2HT using a four-seam grip. Continue Drill for 15-20 throws.

## BREAK (3 MINUTES)

## HITTING (20 MINUTES)



3.1

### – One: Grip

Each player will take a bat. Place both hands out flat and lay the bat at the base of the fingers. Lightly wrap your fingers around the bat. This grip will align the players knuckles up. The knuckles can be in a straight line or slightly shifted either way. (Fig. 3.1)

### – Two: Stance

Have the players get into an athletic position with knees bent slightly and shoulder width apart. There should be more weight on the back foot, with the weight distribution being about 40 percent on the front foot and 60 on the back foot. (Fig. 3.2)



3.2

### – Three: Coverage

The bat needs to cover the entire plate. Have the player get in their stance; place the bat at the corner of the plate closest to the catcher. You want to make sure that your stance allows you to have complete plate coverage, so you can hit the outside pitch. (Fig. 3.3)



3.3

## DRILL

### Dry Swings

Each coach will have four players in their group. Players will be about 10 to 12 feet away from each other. They will place their fielding glove on the ground and use it as home plate. The coach will have each player take a swing on their command and work with them to correct their swing.

Each player will properly grip the bat, get into a good stance and make sure to cover the plate. A coach will throw off of one knee from about 35 feet away from the plate. (The use of a protective “L” screen is highly recommended.) The coach will throw five pitches to each player. Split the team into three groups of four players. The other three players will be outside the fence waiting to hit. Once all players on Group A have hit then Group B who was in the infield will hit and Group C who was in the outfield will move into the infield. Group A will move out to the outfield. Rotate through until all groups have had a chance to hit, play the infield, and play the outfield.



# PRACTICE SEQUENCE

## BASE RUNNING (7 MINUTES)



### – Purpose of Base Running and How to Score:

Explain that the idea is to score more runs than the other team. To score you need to get on base. You are a game piece and you need to get on the board. The board is the bases. The first thing you need to do is go from home to first, then first base to second base, second base to third base, and finally third base to home plate. Once you or your teammate crosses home plate your team scores a run. The team who scores more runs wins. It doesn't matter how you get on base. You could get on first base by a walk, hit, or an error. All that matters is you are on base and have a chance to score.



### DRILL

#### Run through First base:

Form four lines of players, with three in each line. Explain that on a ball hit in the infield you want to run as fast as you can through first base. Do not slow down in front of the base. This drill will help eliminate running and stopping on the base.

Use home plate to first base as line one. Create line two, three, and four using the same distance beside line one. If you have throw down bases use them, if not use a fielding glove or something similar.

A player will run through first base hitting the front of the base with either foot. Once the player runs through the base the player will chop their feet to stop, while looking to the right to see if the ball was overthrown. Do this drill five times each.

## FIELDING (15 MINUTES)



### FIVE STEPS OF FIELDING

#### – Step One: Creeper Steps

Player will take two steps towards the hitter. First step is with the throwing hand, second step is with the glove hand. The glove foot will be slightly out front of the throwing foot. (Fig. 4.1 Pg. 7)

#### – Step Two: Bend Knees / Lower Torso Down

Player will have knees bent and will have their body lowered down so that their glove is touching the ground in a "ready" position. Imagine sitting down on a chair; now come off of that chair where you are barely standing above it. This will be the position that you need to be in. (Fig. 4.2 Pg. 7)

#### – Step Three: Glove Out Front

Player will be in ready position with their arms extended out in front of their body. The palm of the glove will be facing the hitter and low to the ground. The throwing hand should be above the glove forming the mouth of an alligator. (Fig. 4.3 Pg. 7)

#### – Step Four: Receive / Suck / Funnel / Move

Players will field the ball out in front of their body with "alligator hands" and bring the ball into their mid-section. At this time the player will use the throwing hand of the alligator hands to grip the ball in a four seam grip. At the same time the player should move their body, throwing foot then glove foot towards the direction where the throw will be made. When finished with this step, the shoulder of the glove hand should be pointed at the target. (Fig. 4.4 Pg. 7)

#### – Step Five: Throw to Target

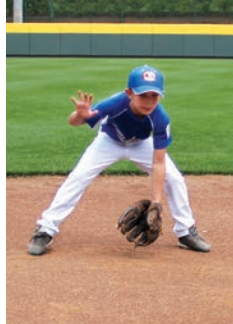
The ball will be in the launch position. From this position the player will deliver the ball to the target. (Fig. 4.5 Pg. 7)



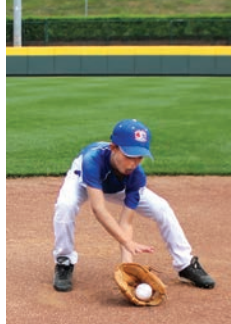
# PRACTICE SEQUENCE



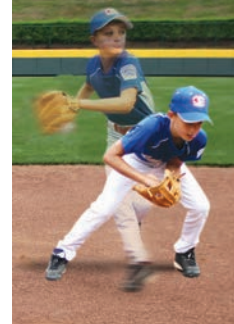
4.1 Creeper Steps



4.2 Bend Knees / Lower Torso



4.3 Glove Out-Front



4.4 Receive / Suck / Funnel / Move



4.5 Throw to Target



5.1

5.2

## DRILL

### Alligator Hands:

Players will be in the third step of the five steps of fielding (glove out front Fig. 5.1). Players will do this drill with their gloves. Coaches will have 3 to 4 players in each of their lines.

Coaches will roll balls to players once they are in proper fielding position. Players will field the ball out in front of their body with glove hand down and throwing hand on top of the "alligator mouth" (Fig. 5.2) and perform step four and five throwing the ball back to the coach.

## CONCLUSION

- High fives
- Review what they learned/PCA Tip of the Week and remind players of next event (practice/game)
- Dismiss