

NORCHESTER BASEBALL

G.E.L.L. COACHING CLINIC

2011

WARM-UP

- Jog-Stretch- dynamic stretches
- This is a time to get loose and get better.
- How you throw in warm-up is how you throw in the game
- Coach should monitor
- Full-range of motion-“down the line”
- Hit your partner in the head to chest every time!
- Catch the ball, hand with glove- 2 hands, INF important

WARM-UP

- With a partner, start on two knees 10 yards apart, throw with full-range of motion. Touch your opposite hip with your throwing hand 10-15 x's.
- 10 yards apart facing one another. Drop to your throwing knee. Throw 10-15x's.
- Stand-up, move to 15 yards apart. Keep feet parallel and shoulder width apart. Without stepping, rotate your trunk and throw to partner. 10-15 x's
- Back up to 20 yards, throwing regular. Working back to a long toss.
 - Work on simulating game motions, INF move feet like throwing to 1st, cut-off or DP, catchers move feet like throwing down or to 1st or 3rd, OF crow hops.
- Long toss- the only proven way to increase arm strength. Throw on a line, reaching down the line. Do not throw a “rainbow”.
- Work back in to short throw, INF work on quick hands
- Always get a full range of motion, this is a serious time! Not a time to fool around and get into bad habits.

INFIELD RULES

- Know how many outs and where you are going with the ball. (BALL, BASE, BACK-UP RULE)
- Know where you need to position yourself (1 out, 2 outs, DP depth, etc.)
- Work in on the pitch, with “prep steps”! Start with glove in front of you and work to a low fielding position as the ball crosses the plate with hands like pistols. Be on the balls of your feet, balanced!

FIELDING

- Always think the ball is coming to you.
- Attack the ball, don't be afraid of it.
- When fielding the ball: field the ball out in front of your body under your glove eye, palm is always up, feet should be shoulder width and parallel, don't “flip” your glove, throwing hand on top, funnel ball in towards throwing hip turning thumb over, drop head to see ball in glove.
- Good range=anticipation, footwork, angles
- When throwing: going towards the base, shuffle your feet, don't cross your right leg behind your left, shorten arm-get rid of the ball, hit the first baseman in the chest, be smooth, not mechanical.

DRILLS:

- **Shuffles:** 30-60 seconds, palm up, body low, good fielding position, don't cross feet. Shuffle back in forth 10 yards, maintaining good fielding position.
- **Soft hand:** Put throwing hand behind your back, palm up, in fielding position, funnel balls in to body, drop your head. Work w/ partner 20 x's
- **Soft hands:** same as above, except throwing hand goes on top. w/ partner 20 x's
- **Backhands:** field off left foot, get “soft” with hand, don't stab. w/ partner 20 x's
- **Forehands:** glove side, stay low, get soft. 20 x's with partner
- **Short hops:** stay low and still, pick through, see ball into glove, don't pull chin. 20 x's w/ partner
- **Back hand and forehand short hops:** 20 x's each w/ partner- stay low and soft, pick through
- **Quick hands:** partners stand 10-15 yards apart- see how many throws they can make in a minute. Hit partner in head to chest, move feet, always keep hand with glove, hands and feet move at the same time.
- **Flip drill:** use 3 or more players- you are going to flip the ball to the person on your left, switch to the right after 2 minutes. Start with the ball on the ground, field it, Present the ball (get glove out of the way)so the partner can see it the whole time, stiff wrist, hand under ball, follow your flip “chase the ball”. Yell “flip” every time you flip the ball. Give the partner a good feed to his hands. Partner should have both hands out presenting a good target.
- **Box drill:** Players will look to use quick hands and feet to throw around the box. Players will throw glove side, arm side, and half turn glove side. Throw to chest and then vary drill by throwing below knees.

- **Line drill:** working in 2 lines throwing grounders back and forth to each other, work on getting the good hop, long hop, short hop, back hand, fore hand, slow rollers.
- **Pop-up drill-** Infielders will run left, right, or straight back on your cue, yell “go” and throw a pop-up. Infielders will always catch the ball with 2 hands, get under the ball if possible, yell “mine”.
- **Cut off drill-** players line up in a row and work on riding the throw, quick feet and hands, turning glove side, throwing to next in line.
- **Fungo-** hit the infielders ground balls. All angles, back hand, forehand, slow rollers, high chops.
- **Paddle drill-** use a paddle to promote softer hands

OUTFIELD RULES

- Work in on the pitch, “don’t kill grass”.
- Know the situation (2 outs, man at 3rd, man at 2nd, etc.) What am I going to do with the ball?
- Always back-up bases, throws, and other outfielders.
- Get as much as you can, if you can catch a ball, call off the infielder. Centerfield is always in charge, all other outfielders give way to the centerfielder.
- Communicate- “mine, mine, mine” “you, you, you”

FIELDING

- Catch the ball with 2 hands, throwing side.
- Hit the cut-off man when necessary.
- Take good angles, don’t turn a single into a double
- Take a knee when fielding a single with no one on base.
- When fielding a ground ball with a possible play at a base, field the ball off your glove foot out in front of your body. Bring the glove up to your throwing shoulder and get rid of it. Always throwing through the cut-off man.
- Come “through the ball” when catching a fly ball.
- Round the ball so you are going to the base you want to throw the ball to. This can be done with both groundballs and fly balls.
- Always crow-hop
- Sprint to where you need to be, don’t coast or drift. Do not run with glove out!

DRILLS

- **Crow-hop drill**- player will pretend they are catching a fly ball and crow-hop about 30 yards up and back continuously. Practice with ground balls.
- **Belly Drill**: players lie on their stomach and the coach yells, “go”. The player gets up as fast as they can, finds the ball, and catches it with 2 hands. Good drill for little league kids.
- **Fly ball drill**- players will line up facing coach. One player at a time will go, coach will throw the ball up in the air about 5 yards in front of the player. The player will come through the ball, catching it with 2 hands, crow hop and hit the cut-off man.
- **Group ground ball**- there be as many players as you need, spread out in two parallel lines, facing each other about 30 yards apart. Players will use one ball and throw a ground ball to random players. The player who receives the ball, will round it coming through the ball in the direction they are going to throw it. Crow hopping and throwing it to another player. You can also practice taking a knee.
- **Over the shoulder drill**- one player at a time will stand in front of the coach. The coach will point either left, right, or straight back. The player will turn and run and when the coach calls “now”

the player will look for the ball. Player should open up and run, throwing the elbow in the direction they are going. Sprint to where you need to be, don't drift.

- **Fence drill**- Players work on communication with fences or playing the ball off the wall
- **Two player drill**- two players will go about 30 yards in front of the coach facing him. The players will be about 20-30 yards apart. The coach will throw balls in between the players and they will practice communicating calling the ball and backing one another up. Use groundballs as well as fly balls. "mine, mine mine" or "you, you, you"
- **Fungo**- hit the players fungo. Balls at them, right, left, behind, in front of, ground balls, line drives, and gapers. Have players throw to all bases and hit cut-off men
- **Do or Die**- players will go to their positions and practice throwing runners out at 2nd, 3rd, or home. This simulates game pressure.
- **Live soft toss or short toss**- players hit soft or short toss to the OF and players must practice reading the spin on the ball.

CATCHING:

WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR:

- Good athlete
- Tough
- Hard Worker
- Good hands
- Team player

STANCE

- Comfortable
- Weight on inside of feet
- Knees inside feet
- Show good target, arms like a “boxer”
- Hand behind knee or behind glove, not behind back. Always make a fist, protect fingers
- Beat ball to spot with glove and body, be subtle
- Glove thumb should be at 2 o’clock

SECONDARY STANCE

- Square feet, 2 inch stagger with right foot
- Raise rear end, keep glove down
- Rotate heels out, even with toes
- Weight on middle of feet
- Hand with glove in fist

THROWING

- Catch in the middle of body
- 2 hands across nose when throwing
- Arm makes a “C”, not “bow and arrow”
- Feet, jab step, 1,2....gain ground
- Outside pitch, rock and pivot
- Let ball get deep to body, don’t go get it!
- Bent front knee when finished
- Throw to first, drop right knee, need good arm

DRILLS

- Sway Drill- Follow ball around zone, glove always faces zone, give with pitch
 - Catch ball deep on high pitch, go out and get low pitch
- Frame Drill- stick drill catch and hold with bare hand, tennis balls
 - Can use glove and hard balls, go around circle
- Balance Drill
 - Stand on a balance beam and work on bare hand and glove catching
- Blocking Balls- stay down, elbows out, cover 5 hole, round shoulders in, watch ball hit body
 - No hands block with tennis balls
 - ABC drill, coach calls out A, B, or C to block ball in that area and get right into stance
 - Short blocking drill
 - Live blocking, with spin (curves, sliders, etc)
 - Fungo blocking drill, hit fungo at catcher
- Bunt Defenses- communicate, catcher only speaks, gather ball in with 2 hands, call inside or outside
 - Throwing to 1st, 2nd
- Footwork drills
 - Work on feet throwing to 1st, 2nd, 3rd
- Blocking plate/ feed drills
 - Work on blocking plate on throws home
 - Feeding pitcher on passed ball
- Home to 1st DP
 - Stand on the plate with 2 feet go meet the ball with 2 hands, step with left foot, clear the runner and throw to 1st

BUNTING

- Bunting is a critical skill in the game of baseball
- Every player needs to know how to bunt.
- Sell bunting to all your players, make your best hitter your best bunter
- A good bunter can greatly increase his batting average and on-base percentage

SACRIFICE BUNT

- Square early (all is reverse for a LH batter)
- Right foot in the front right corner of the box-right handed hitter
- Arms slightly bent with bat at top of strike zone
- Angle bat to get ball down to third, top of barrel should be pointing at the first base coach and switch if bunting down first.
- Bunt nothing above bat, bend knees to get to low ball in strike zone.
- Don't drop barrel!

BUNT FOR A HIT

- Don't square
- Drop bat to sacrifice position quickly and drop right foot back to sprinting position
- LH batter, jab step or throw hips over
- Fair or foul down 3rd base line
- Don't show it too soon

SQUEEZE

- Pivot bunt when pitcher is releasing pitch
- Must bunt any pitch, preferably to 1st base side

SAFETY SQUEEZE

- Bunt for hit down first base

Hitting Philosophy and Drills

Hitting Philosophy:

- Get a good pitch to hit
- Use the entire field

Quality at bat:

- Player took a good swing at a good pitch
- Player used good discipline if they didn't get a good pitch to hit

Team Offense:

- Every player will do whatever necessary to help their team with their at bat
- Most important stat is on base percentage

Key components of a successful hitter:

- Positive mental approach
- Good vision and tracking skills
- Good plate awareness and discipline
- Good timing and the ability to make timing adjustments
- Uses the whole field
- Good, consistent swing:
 - Solid base, proper footwork, and a level swing that stays on the path of the pitch as long as possible

All Swings should be...

- Balanced
 - The player should hold their balance at the end of each swing during practice
- Consistent
 - The player should strive to take the same swing each time
- Taken with a purpose
 - When practicing, work on ONE thing on EVERY swing
- Hit towards the center of the field (gap to gap)
 - Use the lines for timing mistakes
- Process driven
 - Think about the process, not the results

- Taken at quality pitches
 - Take all pitches that are not strikes

Drills

Positive mental approach:

- Be positive.
- Positive attitude towards failure
 - Failure is feedback only!
 - Look for the opportunity in adversity, not excuses

Vision and tracking drills:

- 2-ball soft toss
 - Player feeds 2 balls during soft toss and calls top/ bottom or color
 - Works on recognition and hands
- Colored/numbered balls
 - Player will read the color or number of the ball during short or soft toss
 - Works on: vision and recognition
- Live tracking (no swinging)
 - Player will track a live pitcher without swinging. They may say “pitch” when the pitcher releases the ball or they may call out the pitch that is being thrown
 - Works on: tracking the ball from the release point and reading rotation

Plate awareness and discipline:

- 7 ball plate
 - Player will be hitting in a yankee drill and saying aloud which ball of the 7 they hit.
 - Works on: plate recognition and vision
- Yankee “hit” or “take”
 - Player will listen to a coach’s queue to “hit” or “take” when they release the ball
 - Works on: making the hitter a little more patient allowing them to recognize the pitch before they swing

Timing and adjustments:

- Drop Ball
 - Two player drill- one player drops the ball and the other hits into sock, can use chair to stand on
 - Helps with quick hands, tracking
- Yankee “fast” and “slow”
 - Coach will toss a ball to the hitter saying “fast” and “slow.” The player will have to make the timing adjustment and hit the pitch appropriately
 - Works on: timing and adjustments to off speed pitches

Using the whole field:

- Tee or Soft Toss fields
 - Hit ball off tee or soft toss to all fields
- Yankee fields
 - Player will hit the ball where it is pitched
 - Works on: the player's ability to use the whole field

Swing mechanics: Base

- Bball slam
 - Player will hit small basketballs off a tee.
 - Works on: hitting through the ball with power and a strong base
- Weighted sleeve
 - Player will hit with a 10 oz. weighted sleeve attached to their bat.
 - Works on: bat speed as well as a strong base
- Walk up
 - Player will walk towards a tee with their back foot first, take another step with their front foot (similar to a stride) and then they will hit the ball.
 - Works on proper weight shift and body control

Swing mechanics: Footwork

- Rocker
 - Player lifts the front heel, rocks their weight back, then drops the front heel and brings the back side.
 - Works on: negative move, toe touch, and heel plant
- Knee the pitcher
 - Players swings and bring their back knee towards the pitcher. The player will then re-load the back foot with half of his weight.
 - Works on: synchronizing the upper and lower halves and a proper back foot
- Helmet on back foot
 - Player hits with a helmet next to their back foot. When they swing, they should knock the helmet over.
 - Works on: getting up on the back foot, using lower half
- 3 second hold
 - Player will pick up front leg and hold for 3 seconds, as player puts foot down partner soft tosses.
 - Works on balance, taking a negative move and their weight back
- Step back
 - Player will take a small step back with their back foot and then load and swing. This can be done on a tee, soft toss or yankee situation.
 - Works on: taking a negative move and keeping their weight back into their load

Swing mechanics: Level

- Bat and hammer
 - Player will swing a rubber mallet into the end of another bat that is slanted slightly down like the angle of the pitch. The player will do his best to match the end of the hammer to the end of the bat
 - Works on: connection and arm swing
- Skip the rock
 - Player will assume their stance without a bat. They will hold a baseball in their top hand and attempt to “throw” it during their swing in the same manner that they would skip a rock.
 - Works on: connection and staying connected
- Two tee
 - Player will put the back tee about 2 inches below the front tee where the ball is located. They will attempt to hit the ball off the front tee without hitting the back tee.
 - Works on: level swings
- Two-tee #2
 - Player will put two tees a little further apart, level, with a ball on both tees. The player should hit the back ball through the front ball and knock it off the tee.
- Shadow Drill
 - Player faces a fence or wall and stands a bat’s length away, player should be able to swing bat short to long without hitting the fence or wall
 - Prevents casting the hands
- Shadow Drill #2
 - Player will stand bat’s length away from fence or wall from their back hip. Player should be able to swing without hitting the fence.
 - Prevents dip or upper cut
- Inside the ball on tee
 - Player will position the ball so that the label is on the inside of the ball and they will work on hitting that part of the ball
 - Works on: staying inside the ball
- Torque Drill
 - Player takes a swing and holds their finish, take their hands back now and hit soft toss or off tee
 - Works on: Strengthening core muscle groups, staying inside the ball, finish
- Knee Torque
 - Player takes a knee on their back leg, opens up front side with straight leg and hits soft toss.
 - Can use top and bottom hand only
 - Works on strengthening core, staying inside the ball, and bat control
- Barry Larkin Soft Toss Drill
 - Player hits soft toss with a tee about bats length in front of the batter. The tee will be off the back hip and have a ball on it. The coach will soft –toss to the player. The batter

must hit the tossed ball without hitting the tee. If the coach fakes the toss, the batter hits the ball off the tee opposite field.

- \$100 challenge
 - Player will hit off a tee (using a two tee) into a target that is about 10 feet away. If they hit the ball into the box ten times in a row we will give them \$100.
 - Works on: repeating a consistent, level swing that produces line drives

Live/mental drills:

- Incredi-peg
 - Player hits live in a cage with a bucket full of baseballs as well as incrediballs. Every once in a while the thrower will pick up an incrediball and peg the hitter.
 - Works on: being confident in the batters box, feet discipline as well as getting hit the right way
- Live BP or Home plate live
 - Player will hit in as close to a live situation as possible. Make the situation as real as possible.
 - Works on: mental approach and live game feel
- Simulated at bats
 - Player will hit in the cage off a pitcher or machine. Their result will be randomly determined by a coach.
 - Use wooden bats and/or mini-Diamond balls early in season
 - Works on: mental approach and attitude
- Angle BP
 - Set-up L-screen at an angle facing the batter, throw BP and the batter must keep front shoulder in to hit the ball up the middle or opposite field
 - Helps keep front shoulder in, and stay on the ball deeper in the zone

Pitching Philosophy and Drills

Pitching Philosophy:

- Execute a quality pitch to a location

Quality pitch:

- One that is delivered on time, to a location, with the appropriate amount of movement and/or change of speed from the previous pitch

Team Defense:

- We pitch to contact on our terms and let our defense, including the pitcher, make plays.

Key components of a successful pitcher:

- Positive mental approach
- Good, consistent mechanics
 - Posture, little to no head movement, leading hip, staying closed, etc.
- Ability to locate the fastball
- Two or three quality pitches that they can locate
- Fields their position well

All Pitches/Throws should be...

- Located to a target
- Mechanically consistent
 - The player should strive to have the same mechanics on every pitch or throw
- Executed with a purpose
 - When practicing, work on ONE thing on EVERY pitch or throw
- Process driven
 - Think about the process, not the results
- Executed in a game like bullpen

Drills

Positive mental approach:

- be positive.
- Positive attitude towards failure
 - Failure is feedback only!
 - Look for the opportunity in adversity, not excuses

Drills to work on mechanics, location, and pitches:

- Step behinds
 - Player gets set up in proper posture, steps behind with their arm side foot, lifts their leg, strides, and releases the ball
- Crossovers
 - Player crosses the glove side foot over their arm side foot, bends both knees, pre-sets their hip, lifts their leg, strides, and releases the ball
- Narrow stance
 - Player put their feet together with their glove side foot half way in front of their arm side foot, lifts their leg, strides, and releases the ball
- Orel Hershiser
 - Player takes two steps away from the wall, postures up, and lifts their leg and hits their hip and only their hip into the wall
- Mirror drill
 - Player can use a wall or another person. They set up at the end of their stride, push their knee to the wall, separates into their opposite and equal, turns their hips and back foot, and then takes their head, glove, and forearm to the wall
- Rocker drill
 - Player sets up in landing position, rocks both knees keeping the head level and throws ending up at release point position
- Total towel
 - Player attempts to hit a target (hand) at stride plus 5 distance
- Rocker towel
 - Player sets up in landing position and attempts to hit a target (hand) at stride plus 5 feet with them ending up at release point position
- Knee drill
 - Player sets up on their knees, winds the rubber band, and throws. They are encouraged to adjust their knee angle until they are comfortable and the glove is stabilized properly.
- 5's bullpen
 - Player will throw a bullpen session throwing 5-7 of each pitch to get the feel and release of each pitch
- Live bullpen

- Player will throw a “live” bullpen with simulated batters, runners, and game situations.

* Each of these drills can be used to work on mechanics, pitches, and location. The mental approach should be monitored constantly. The last drill allows the pitcher to practice with a game like feel.

PFP Drills:

- Grounders play at first
- Grounders play at second
- Grounders play at third (almost never do unless ball takes you that way)
- Grounder to the right side
- Bunt down the third baseline
- Bunt down the first baseline
- Pop ups in the infield
- Covering home on a passed ball
- Backing up 3rd, and home plate
- Pick-offs to 1st, 2nd, and third
- Any other situation and/or pick-off plays where the pitcher plays a role