

\$5.00



BULLS/SOX ACADEMY



NEVER SETTLE™

CHICAGO WHITE SOX

BASEBALL TIPS & LESSONS

PITCHING - HITTING - INFIELDING - CATCHING - THROWING

Hitting Tips & Lessons



STANCE ABSOLUTES

- ATHLETIC STANCE

Knees inside ankles, toes pointing straight ahead

- ATHLETIC POSTURE

Weight on balls of feet, slight chest lean forward, butt sticking out

- TWO EYES ON PITCHER

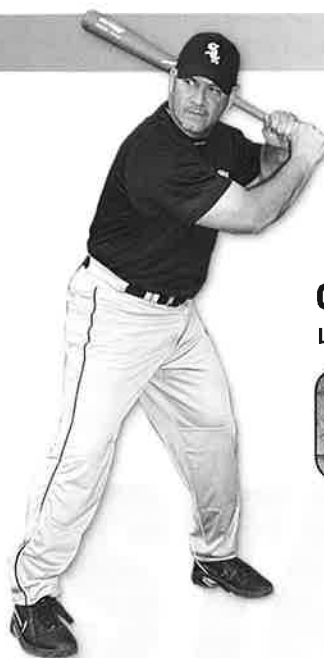
Eyes level to ground

- WHIPPING GRIP

Knocking knuckles somewhat lined up to get proper whip action of barrel

- RHYTHM

The body must stay in motion to work fast



COACH PASQUA SAYS...

La Grange Academy Director



"Good hitting starts with a solid foundation."

SET-UP ABSOLUTES

- LOAD

We must take energy back before we take it forward. Load is NOT a rock backwards. Weight stays on inside part of back leg and foot.

- STRIDE

Back side must gain ground with front side. Think of the stride as the back knee pushing the stride foot forward. Stride must go right towards pitcher. Stride length is dependant on stance width and height. Hitters should land approximately 60% of their height.

- 50/50

Body is in a 50/50 balanced position when the stride foot lands. If you drop your bat when you stride, you should be in a perfect basketball defensive position.

- HANDS BACK

When the stride foot lands, the hands are shoulder level beyond the back shoulder.

- KNOB AT CATCHER

The knob of the bat will point to the catcher's feet when you land. This will allow you to get your hands in a straight path to the ball.

DRILLS

- FORCED HAND MOVEMENT

Great for Load and getting hands back.

- STRIDE AND SEPARATE

This is good drill for the hitter to check his absolutes at toe touch.

COACH PASQUA SAYS...

La Grange Academy Director



"You must put yourself in the correct position to start your swing."



CONNECTION / CONTACT

- HANDS ON-LINE

Think of the hands working in a straight path to and through the ball. The back elbow will come just inside the rib cage instead of away from the body. Visualize hitting the inside seam to stay inside the ball. We stay on line through extension.

- HANDS ON-PLANE

On plane essentially means, "LEVEL." The longer we are on plane and on line, the bigger our hitting zone is. The bigger the hitting zone is, the less perfect our timing has to become! We stay level through extension.

- PALM UP, PALM DOWN AT CONTACT

The power position at contact.

- HIP ROTATION

The hips will turn the lower body. It is not a "squish the bug" movement (which would be the foot turning the lower body). Usually the hips will pull the back foot up onto the toe with the shoelaces facing the pitcher.

- FIRM FRONT SIDE

The knee stays inside the ankle, the nose stays inside the knee at contact.

DRILLS

- FEET TOGETHER, STEP AND HIT DRILL

Really teaches hitters how to properly use their lower body.

EXTENSION / FINISH

- EXTENSION

The barrel follows, or chases the ball off the bat until the arms get locked out in front of you. We want to keep our energy behind the ball in a direct line.

- FINISH

A one handed or two handed finish does not make a difference as long as the hitter gets through extension.

DRILLS

- TEE EXTENDED DRILL

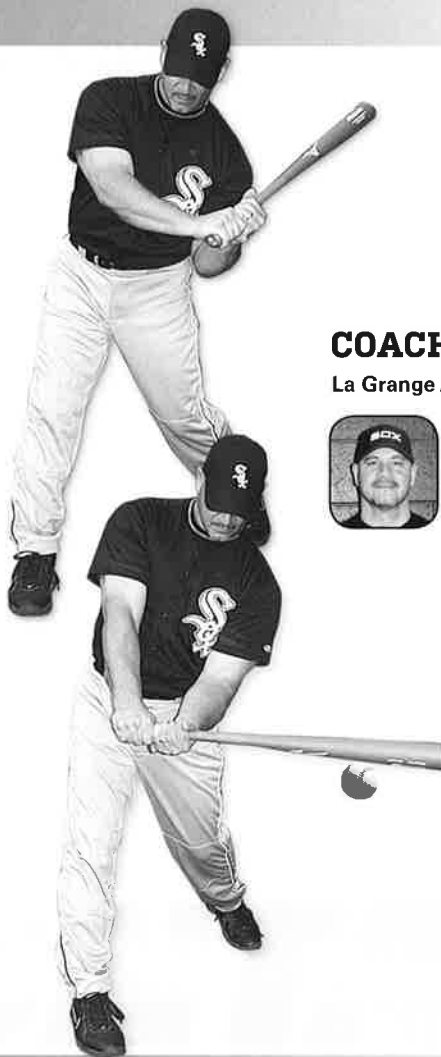
When we normally do tee work middle, the hitter's stride foot lands even with the baseball. In the tee extended drill, the hitter should move back a few inches so that the stride foot lands two inches behind the baseball. The hitter still tries to hit the ball up the middle. This can only be done with proper extension.

COACH PASQUA SAYS...

La Grange Academy Director



"Full extension keeps the bat on the proper path longer."



COACH PASQUA SAYS...

La Grange Academy Director



"The swing is started by hip rotation, which puts the bat on the correct plane."



Throwing Tips & Lessons



FOOTWORK

- No matter what position you throw from, you should take a power step toward your target.
- A power step is your throwing side foot gaining ground in the direction of your target. During the step, you turn the inside of the throwing side ankle directly to the receiver.
- As the glove side foot steps to the target, the hands will separate (see below).
- When the glove side foot lands, the toes should be in line with the receiver and the body will be in the "SHAK" Position.

COACH ZAGORAC SAYS...

Lead Baseball Instructor - Lisle



"Catchers take a short, quick power step because they have to get rid of the ball the fastest. In an infield power step, the foot doesn't come off the ground very high, but it should gain ground toward the target aggressively. Outfielders take a higher and farther power step (often called a "crow hop") to get more on their throws."



"SHAK" POSITION - SHOULDER • HIP • ANKLE • KNEE

- This is the strongest position from which to throw.
- The body posture should be: Knees flexed, chin over toes, butt sticking out slightly.
- SHAK means, "Front Shoulder, Hip, Ankle and Knee" are all closed to the target.
- Hands will be separated and in a throwing position with a four seam grip.
- A Four seam grip (across the fat seams of the ball) will be the straightest, fastest throw.

COACH ZAGORAC SAYS...

Lead Baseball Instructor - Lisle



"The SHAK position is critical to throw the ball straight, without sailing, to the target."



STEP 2

SEPARATION

- Players will separate in different ways, but here is the most efficient way to do it: First, as the ball is taken out of the glove, both thumbs work down and away from each other.
- The arms will make a circular arc, thinking, "Thumbs to thighs, show it to the sky."
- The glove palm will face the target and both arms will have equal bend at the elbow.
- The ball will face away from the body. The player's fingers are facing him/herself.
- In the "Throwing Position" the elbows should be as high as the shoulders.



COACH ZAGORAC SAYS...

Lead Baseball Instructor - Lisle



"Any error in this phase can lead to weak, inaccurate throws as well as injury."

THE THROW

- The body's backside begins to rotate forward to a firm front side.
- A firm front side means, the body will work towards a stationary glove.
- The glove turns toward the body as the shoulders turn and the ball is brought forward.
- We want to get extension on the throw, meaning the release should be out toward the target. To do this, the chest has to continue forward over the front leg of the thrower.



COACH ZAGORAC SAYS...

Lead Baseball Instructor - Lisle



"Pay close attention to the glove side. Think of the glove as being your direction. If the glove flies off the target, the throw will too."

FOLLOW THROUGH

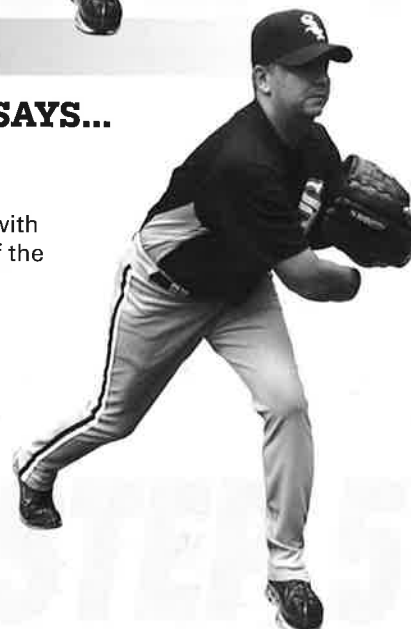
- The follow through is key to throwing safely.
- The chest should continue forward over the front leg, which will result in a bend at the waist. This allows the energy of the throw to primarily be absorbed by the lower back, hamstrings and glutes (which are all big muscle groups) instead of the shoulder.
- The forward momentum of the chest and rest of the body will bring the back leg off of the ground. Let that momentum continue as the leg swings around.
- The throwing arm should finish its range of motion all the way past the opposite leg.

COACH ZAGORAC SAYS...

Lead Baseball Instructor - Lisle



"Let the back leg continue around with the momentum of the throw."



Infield Tips & Lessons

CREEP STEP/ANGLE STEP

CREEP STEP

- Right-Left step for right handed players
- Left-right step for left handed players
- Last step should hit ground as ball crosses home plate.
- Arms are relaxed in "gunfighter" position, near hips, but not lower than knees.
- Body should be in best athletic position when landing.
- Middle infielders stand a little taller because they are farther away from home plate and must move more laterally. Corner infielders are lower because they are closer to home plate and the ball is on them faster.

ANGLE STEP

- The first step will be with the play side foot at an angle to the baseball. The step should be one foot in length, thinking "heel replaces toe."

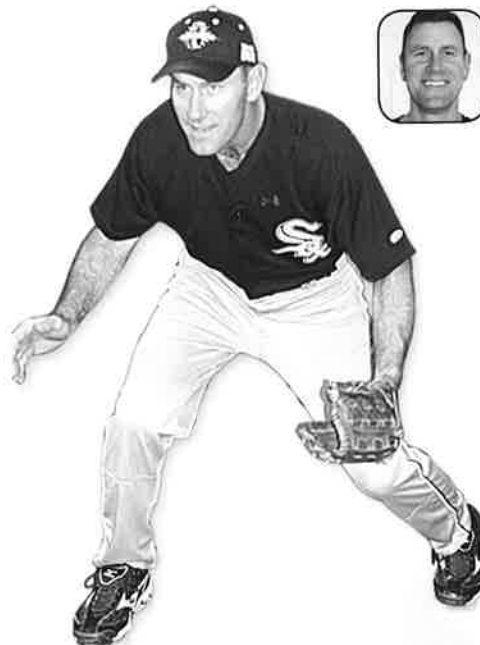
COACH CITARI SAYS...

Lead Instructor



"The creep step must be made every pitch of every game. The timing of it's critical. If the last step comes down before the ball crosses home plate, momentum is lost; step too late and the ball may be in play before you can take a step."

"The angle step is often over-looked, or not taught at all. But, it is the step that will determine if you get to those hard-to-reach balls."



APPROACH

- Go to the ball with a natural flow. Arms still work as when walking or running.
- Play the ball from right to left when throwing to your right. The opposite applies when throwing to your left.
- Whether you charge the ball ten steps or only three steps, your last two are always the same: Right, left, field for righties and Left, right, field for lefties.

COACH CITARI SAYS...

Lead Instructor



"Good feet usually equals good hands. Make sure the feet come down one at a time as you get into a fielding position. If the feet come down at the same time, as in a basketball jump stop the ball will play the infielder."



STEP 2

FIELDING POSITION

- On a routine ball, the toes will be close to being lined up. The throwing side foot should not be any deeper than the instep of the glove side foot.
- Square the ball up slightly to the glove side of the belly button.
- Players should be bent at the knees, hips and waist so the butt is down and the back is flat.
- The glove should be out in front of the chin, with slight flexion still in the elbow.
- Off hand stays near, above the glove to make a quick exchange. We often call the off hand the "gator hand" imagining the two hands making an alligator mouth.
- Glove fingers work through the ball to the bare hand and continue to the body.

COACH CITARI SAYS...

Lead Instructor



"The biggest error infielders make is letting the ball get too deep on them. Make sure you are low enough to field the ball out in front of your chin!"



THROWING POSITION

- The body should field and throw the ball in one fluid motion.
- Immediately after fielding the ball, the throwing side foot makes a "Power Step" toward the target. In this step, the inside of the ankle should be directed to the target.
- Take the next step making sure your toes are in line and your front shoulder is on the receiver.

COACH CITARI SAYS...

Lead Instructor



"Take an aggressive 'Power Step' in front of your body. It will help you shorten the distance to your receiver and give you more momentum into your throw!"



Pitching Tips & Lessons

WIND UP

STANCE - STEP 1

- Feet shoulder width apart, heels on rubber, toes in the dirt, eyes on the target, start to finish

STEP-BACK - STEP 2

- Short side step or 45 degree angle
- Turn pivot foot so it's parallel to and in front of rubber
- Hands over head (for rhythm) or in front of chest

BALANCE POSITION - STEP 3

- Lift/Drive knee up to balance position
- Foot under knee and nose over toes
- Maintain a tall back side



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3

ARM ACTION - STEP 4

- Down, back, and up (smooth circular arm arc)
- Fingers on top of ball
- Ball is facing away from the hitter at the top of the arc (show the ball to the center fielder)



STEP 4



STEP 5

LATERAL MOVE - STEP 5

- Hands break when feet come apart
- Stay back, lead with your lower half, and create the power angle
- Continue to stay tall on the back side
- Front elbow up, shoulder closed and on the target
- Keep eyes and head on the target



STEP 6



STEP 7

LANDING - STEP 6

- Toe-to-Toe or slightly closed with landing foot
- Closed position with foot/knee/hip/shoulder
- Maintain the power angle
- Front foot down, arm must be up (elbow even with or above shoulder)

THE FINISH - STEP 7

- Flexed but firm front leg
- Work back to front (Energy in a straight line to the target/Throw down the hallway)
- Hips square to target and back laces turned down, then back leg comes up and over
- Eyes on target start to finish
- Glove stays out front

Pitching Tips & Lessons



STRETCH

STANCE - STEP 1

- Back foot (pivot foot) parallel to and in front of the rubber
- Hands apart/Feet apart
- Eyes on target get your sign from the catcher



STEP 1



STEP 2

SET POSITION - STEP 2

- Hands come together (set) in a comfortable position (at chest or belly)
- Feet shoulder width apart
- More weight on back leg (60/40, 70/30)
- Tall set position

BALANCE AND BREAK - STEP 3

- Short tuck or lift back with stride (front) leg
- All your weight is now on the back leg
- Hands in front of chest as you start your lateral move



STEP 3



STEP 4

LATERAL MOVE - STEP 4

- Stay back, lead with your lower half, and create the power angle
- Strong front side, shoulder closed and on the target
- Tall back side
- Keep eyes and head on the target

LANDING - STEP 5

- Toe-to-Toe or slightly closed with landing foot
- Closed position with foot/knee/hip/shoulder
- Maintain the power angle
- Front foot down, arm must be up (elbow even with or above shoulder)



STEP 5

FINISH - STEP 6

- Same finish as windup
- Deliver ball to plate 1.3 seconds or less to give catcher a chance to throw out base runner



STEP 6

Pitching Drills



ONE KNEE DRILL

- Throwing/back knee on ground with the front foot out in front in a closed position
- Hips and shoulders closed and in line with target. Back leg should be perpendicular to body

COACH SHEEHAN SAYS...

Glen Ellyn Academy Director



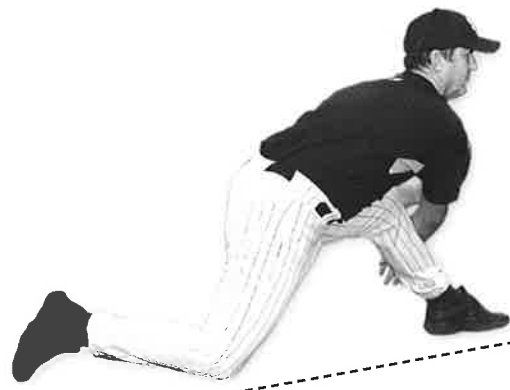
"This is an excellent drill to assist the pitcher in creating torque, across their core thereby increasing velocity, by separating the shoulders and hips."



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3

STRIDE POSITION DRILL

- Wide stance, closed position toe-to-toe
- Hands together, eyes on target
- Break hands as you shift your weight back to create the power angle (this is VERY important)
- Front arm up and on target
- Work back-to-front with upper body
- Square hips to target and back laces down

COACH SHEEHAN SAYS...

Glen Ellyn Academy Director



"This drill breaks down the delivery (or mechanics) from planting your foot to the release point. This is a great drill to improve accuracy."



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3



STEP 4

Pitching Drills

LOW BALANCE POSITION



'SET POSITION' DRILL

- Front foot 2"-4" off the ground, eyes on target, and hands together in front of chest or belly (hold this position for 2-3 seconds)
- Lift leg, break hands, and throw (creates rhythm)
- Create power angle
- Land closed and work front-to-back
- Throw down the hallway.

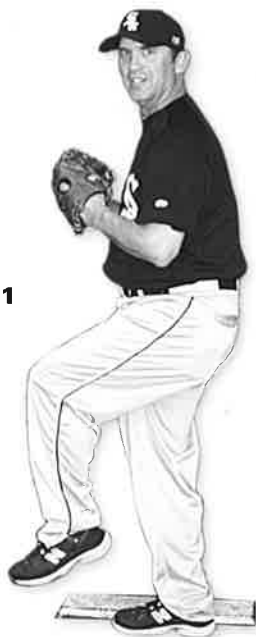
COACH SHEEHAN SAYS...

Glen Ellyn Academy Director



"This drill simulates momentum down the mound to the release point. It helps a pitcher maintain balance, posture and proper glove position, and correct pitching sequence."

STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3



STEP 4



STEP 5



Catching Tips & Lessons



STANCES

SIGN

- Used when giving signals to the pitcher.
- Feet should be about shoulder width apart, toes parallel and pointing toward center field, back should be fairly straight and head over shoulders.
- Weight on the balls and toes of the feet, knees pointed toward pitcher. Signal hand follows inseam of pants and rests in between the legs
- The glove should be relaxed and hanging down to shield third base coach from seeing signals.



RECEIVING

- From the sign stance give target with fingers pointing toward the sky, then take a short jab step with right or left foot and distribute weight on insteps. Toes are pointing in the direction of baselines.
- Back is straight and relaxed. Head is over balls of feet to maintain balance and posture.
- Keep throwing hand behind body to keep it protected and out of the way.
- Depending on flexibility and body type, every catcher will have a slightly different stance.



BLOCKING/THROWING

- This is the most athletic stance of the three and used when there are two strikes or men on base and the ball needs to stay in front of you.
- Lift rear end up an inch or two higher than in the receiving stance.
- Widen the feet, place weight over the balls of the feet.
- Keep feet in good athletic position can drop right foot back slightly to line up with arch of left foot.
- Bring throwing hand from behind body to a few inches behind the glove.



Catching Tips & Lessons



POST-PITCH MOVEMENT

BLOCKING TECHNIQUE

- From the blocking/throwing stance, both knees go straight down to the ground and outside the hips.
- The whole body is square and perpendicular to the flight of the ball.
- Head stays above hips and back is relatively straight with the arms relaxed and outside the body. The glove covers the gap between the legs and the ground. The head follows the path of the ball and comes down as the eyes watch the ball bounce into the dirt.
- "Catch" the bounced ball with the middle of the chest, don't try and pick the ball with the glove.
- Always anticipate the ball in the dirt and work on blocking in the bullpen when catching pitchers.



THROWING FOOTWORK

- Receive the ball one handed with the glove hand.
- Going to the ball with two hands pulls your upper body ahead of your lower body and causes loss of balance.
- Keep throwing hand back and head over hips to allow your body to stay centered and balanced.
- After the ball is caught, the glove and bare hand meet about eight to ten inches in front of the chest to make the exchange.
- Take a small jab step with right foot to get front shoulder, hips, and momentum towards target then step with left foot and throw.



STEP 1



STEP 2



STEP 3

PRIVATE LESSONS

NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME TO TAKE PRIVATE LESSONS!

Our most valuable tool for delivering championship quality instruction to young athletes is our team of expert instructors. The Bulls/Sox Academy has assembled one of the finest coaching staffs in the country. Our talented team of instructors features former professional players with Major League and Minor League experience, as well as some of the best collegiate and high school coaches in the Midwest.

This hand-selected group of men and women are not only gifted instructors, but also people of outstanding character dedicated to teaching the game in a positive and fun atmosphere. This blend of professional and instructional experience enables us to create a balanced and comprehensive curriculum for all of our students.

The conduct of our coaches is of the utmost importance; therefore profanity or physical contact in any form is not tolerated.

In order to maintain the professional standards we insist upon, coaches are required to participate in an annual process of certification. Our mandatory certification process ensures that our entire staff is well versed in the newest coaching techniques and theories of instruction.

There are a variety of private lesson packages for all ages and skill levels, or we can build a package for you. We feel that an evaluation is a very important part of the education process. This format helps us develop the proper curriculum for each student.

LOCATIONS



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Lisle, IL 60532



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**Bulls/Sox Academy -
Glen Ellyn**
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BullsSoxAcademy.com

BASEBALL BIOS

DAN PASQUA - LaGrange Academy Director

A former White Sox Slugger, Pasqua joined the Bulls/ Sox Academy more than three years ago working as a private instructor. Dan runs all programming out of LaGrange, developing ball players through private and semi-private training lessons. Dan Pasqua was a left-handed power-hitting outfielder and first baseman known for hitting tape-measure home runs for the White Sox from 1988 to 1994. In 1988, Pasqua led the White Sox with 20 home runs; in 1989 he hit the second-to-last roof shot at old Comiskey Park and in 1991 hit a home run 484 feet – which still ranks among the top five longest home runs in U.S. Cellular Field history. Over his 10 year major-league career, Pasqua appeared in 905 games with the Yankees and White Sox, where he slugged 117 home runs and 390 RBI.

MARK SHEEHAN - Glen Ellyn Academy Director

Mark Sheehan, a Minnesota native, has an extensive background in training young athletes in baseball and softball. Mark is also a strong proponent of the conditioning aspect of the game and integrates this with other programming. Sheehan is regarded as one of the best pitching instructors in the Midwest and is a certified member of the prestigious National Pitching Association.

SAM ZAGORAC - Lisle Lead Baseball Instructor

Sam Zagorac has been with the Academy on and off since it first opened but has been a regular since 2008. Sam oversees all youth programming as well as instructing on both the youth and Elite levels. Sam played college baseball at Elmhurst College and has worked with John Mallee (former Florida Marlins Hitting Coach and White Sox Academy instructor in Northwest Indiana) for 8 years. Coach Zagorac is a high school and college instructor, and has been an assistant coach at Mount Carmel High School in Chicago for 10 years.

MARTY KOBERNUS - Lisle Elite Pitching Instructor

It's not just Marty's 21 years and thousands of lessons given that distinguish Marty, but rather his constant pursuit of pitching knowledge. Marty pitched in the Cleveland Indians organization and has 25 former students pitching professionally. His trained eye can see things that most instructors cannot and his liberal use of high-speed video only adds to his mastery of mechanics. Marty is one of the best there is and look no further than his impressive list of current and former students as proof.

MIKE MADSEN - Glen Ellyn Hitting & Fielding Instructor

Mike Madsen is a hitting and defense instructor with the Glen Ellyn White Sox Academy. Coach Madsen brings an incredible baseball mind to each and every lessons he teaches. Coach Madsen's awareness of the game comes from his experience as a player and coach. Mike played professionally in the German Professional Baseball League for Regensburg Legionare. Madsen's collegiate career started at Moraine Valley Community College then on to Dominican University and was named the top junior outfielder in Collegiate News (2002). He was a member of the U.S. National Team that competed in Europe during the Summer of 2003. Madsen is also the former Head Coach at Indian Creek High School.

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CHRIS SALE

Mizuno Brand Ambassador