

Plymouth New Hope Little League Coaching Manual



Presented by
2012 PNHLL - Baseball
Development Committee

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PNHLL “DAILY’S”

The intention of this PNHLL manual is to develop consistent baseball coaching techniques and terminology organization wide. The techniques will focus on three fundamental areas; **Throwing**, **Fielding** and **Hitting**. This document will also serve as our dictionary of coaching terms, cues, points and explanations of these fundamental baseball skills.

Comment from Jake Mauer

“The main goal is to have all your coaches using similar terms and explanations of these fundamental skills”.

Comment from PNHLL

“Thank you for your dedication to our league. Our leagues Mission is only fulfilled with the commitment of our coaches.”

This manual is a starting point for our league in connecting best coaching philosophies with execution of consistent coaching. As anything good, this is a working document that will only improve in time.

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Glossary of PNHLL Baseball Terms and Cues

Balanced Athletic Position – This is the primary cue in preparing our athletes to perform baseball skills. This is a core stance where legs are bent at the knees; feet are at least shoulder width apart with hands in front of body in a ready position. The player’s weight is balanced.

Splits – The splits are the base movement that sets the arm slot and times the body for optimal performance of the throw. Every type of baseball throw should have splits i.e. in field, outfield and pitching. Be relentless on holding the player accountable on every throw in practice. This core movement, yet simple, is overlooked by many coaches.

High Hand – This cue is very easy to understand and used when discussing a players splits and ensuring throwing elbow is even or above the shoulder.

Every Pitch/Every Play – This statement is PNHLL organizational statement the promotes how we prepare every player for every play. ONE/TWO/READY





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Throwing Progression

Throwing Drills without Ball

#1 - Splits Drill – 20 to 50 reps

- A) Standing with glove shoulder leading towards target, hands in front of player and feet together
- B) Execute Splits - Separate legs and arms at the same time

Coaching Points and Cues

- Ball elbow is even or above the back shoulder (high hand)
- Glove arm pointing at target
- legs end in athletic position with front pinky toe pointing at target
- Balance check: with weight moving to back leg

#2 - Splits Drill with Throwing and follow through – 20 to 50 reps

- A) Standing with glove shoulder leading towards target, hands in front of player and feet shoulder length apart (Athletic position).
- B) Execute splits (see # 1)
- C) Throw (no ball)

Coaching Points and Cues

- Have chest finish at the glove and body follow through towards target

Throwing drills with Ball

#3 - Grip Drill - Cross seam grip (2 or 4 seem)

#4 – Flip Wrist Drill - 15 reps

- A) One knee (glove knee up) – With Glove hold elbow of ball arm above shoulder and release ball with flick of wrist

Coaching Points and Cues

- Ball always has backwards spin
- Receiving player has glove ready and catches with two hands





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#5 - One knee throw with Splits - 10 reps

- A) Execute Splits
- B) Throw

Coaching Points and Cues

- Upper body finishes to glove
- Ball always has backwards spin
- Receiving player has glove ready and catches with two hands

#6 – Standing Release Point drill - 10 reps

- A) Standing facing target (athletic position feet stay planted)
- B) Execute Splits
- C) Throw

Coaching Points and Cues

- Upper body finishes to glove
- Ball always has backwards spin
- Receiving player has glove ready and catches with two hands

#7- Full Throws – 30 to 50 reps

Coaching Points and Cues

- Every throw Execute splits (see #1)
- Ball always has backwards spin
- Body finishes to glove (complete follow through)
- Throw ball to chest of target
- Active catch – always catch with athletic position and with two hands

Other throwing drills - Long Toss, 4 Corners, Relay drill, Bucket drill





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Supporting Throwing Videos

Youth Baseball Throwing Drills

Drills youth baseball coaches can use to teach sound throwing mechanics and to correct common throwing mistakes.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-IS351mEkQ&feature=fvwrel>

Throwing Instruction and Drills

Throwing the baseball correctly is a fundamental skill youth baseball coaches must teach players. This video shows throwing techniques and drills like Ready, Break, Throw.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_zWCRbrV1Y&feature=relmfu

Properly Disciplining Athletes to Throw the Baseball Correctly

Once players have been taught how to throw the ball correctly, baseball coaches shouldn't be afraid to discipline their players and hold them accountable for not following their training.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bQgpduXT6I&feature=relmfu>





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Fielding

Grounders

#1 – Footwork – Agility for fielding a ground ball

- 1) ONE/TWO/READY
- 2) Athletic position
- 3) Shuffle, Drop Step, Crossover
- 4) Attack the ball
- 5) Ladder drill

#2 - Alligator "no glove" - "Focus on legs apart, athletic position, flat back always moving towards the ball"

#3 - Alligator "no glove" - Hat in mouth - field ball out in front of body

#4- Alligator "with glove"

#5- Alligator "with glove hat in mouth"

#6- Live grounders – Move feet always with a ONE/TWO/READY

Coaching Points – from Jake Mauer

- Move feet before getting into position to field (i.e. Right, Left, Field)
- Move feet during and after throw – follow thru (i.e. Right, Left, Throw...follow thru)

Fly Balls- "Catch in the window moving towards the ball"

#7 - Fly balls

A) pop up balls directly at them - coach throwing - Stress in the window & positioning their body always move towards the ball come up ready to throw to cut man.

B) Pop ups over each shoulder - coach throwing - stress opening body the correct way(drop step) come up ready to throw to cut man (catch, plant, step, throw)

C) Pop ups coming in on ball





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#8 - Grounders Outfield

- 1) Ground balls down one knee come up ready to throw to cut man - coach rolling ball
 - as players develop they need to learn fielding standing up with crow hop

Other Fielding drills

4 corners

Cut off drill

Get out of my infield

Supporting Fielding Videos

Keep Everyone Moving During Baseball Practice

There are so many ways to teach infield play without a coach hitting a fungo. Be productive with your practice time. Use a station model for each baseball practice to keep the kids moving and learning and developing their skills.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hms91pFiihY&feature=relmfu>

Infield Instruction and Drills

Youth baseball coaches can use these infield drills and techniques to teach players the correct athletic position and receive the baseball.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlh5wlXLSkg&feature=relmfu>

Outfield Instruction and Drills

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1Y78FzMI5M&feature=fvwrel>





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Wide Stance/Balance Hitting

Hitting Progression - Ready/Load/Fire

PNHLL Philosophy - Putting athletes in the best position to hit all types of pitching by minimizing body movement and understanding balance in the start, middle and end of the swing. We teach a hybrid of rotational and linear hitting.

Enter the Box

- Deep Breath
- Back Foot First
- Look at 3rd base coach

Ready

- Feet (more than shoulder length apart)
- Knees bent
- Balance check - 50/50
- Drills: Jump to the sky

Hands/Arms

- Knocker Knuckles/Pointer Fingers (sets up for coming through hitting area)
- Front elbow pointing to pitcher
- Back elbow **down** next to rib cage (stays there until ball is hit)
- Top hand facing down, bottom hand facing up through the hitting zone
- **Coaching points: Hands stay inside on swing, Quiet feet, Quiet head**
- Drills: Prayer hands, Frisbee

Load (torque of body)

- Front elbow comes over the belly button without over twisting shoulders
- Front heel comes off the ground
- Balance check – Weight moves to back leg
- Drills: Torque

Fire

- Hips open with back foot coming up
- Back elbow stays next to ribs





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- Balance check – **Weight Back** - weight will transfer to front when swinging and then finish to back. This is where kids will many times start lunging at balls which is a problem.
- Drills: Fence, Hip, Tee, Torque, Soft toss

Finish

- Hips and chest facing pitcher
- Back heel up
- Balance check - 40/60

Summary

- Enter the box
- Athletic Wide Stance
- Grip - **Knocker Knuckles/Pointer fingers**
- Front Elbow Up facing pitcher
- Back Elbow at Side
- Position of Hands and angle of bat
- **Load/Torque** – weight shifts to back leg
- **Fire** - Hips explode with hands **Palm Up/Palm Down**
- **Finish** Balanced

Supporting Hitting Videos

Rotational vs. Linear Hitting

Baseball hitting is both linear and rotational. It is not one or the other.

Hitting = Load (linear) + Stride (linear) + Swing (rotational)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jhuvTmzSDM&feature=relmfu>

Hitting Instruction and Drills

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NQfoC9Paw8&feature=relmfu>





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Hitting: No-Stride Approach

The No-Stride approach will keep the swing short and eliminate common problems youth baseball players have, including over striding.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7QkcSTLwHQ&feature=relmfu>

It's All About Balance

Hitting is about balance--both static and dynamic. Teach hitters balance by having them stand on a 2x4 or a curb and swing without falling over.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iszfiligQqQ&feature=relmfu>

Hip Rotation

After the stride, the hips begin to turn which pull the hands along. After contact, the hips explode through to the baseball and achieve full rotation. Every time you finish swinging the back foot should be pointed at the target, belly button should be left of the target, and the chest should be on line. Power comes from the legs and hips not from the shoulders.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEj3U17O2lw&feature=related>

The Importance of the Rear Shoulder

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmumzSQfTJs&feature=relmfu>

Correcting the Back Elbow

Simple ways youth baseball coaches can get their hitters to keep their back elbow down.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BywD4VcyjU&feature=relmfu>





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The Load

The load is a "J" motion with the hands, keeping the elbow soft. If the hitter's hands are too high or if he has the bat behind his head, coach him to bring the elbows down and bend them. Do not teach the "Pro Load."

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hH0Nw8-BXul&feature=related>

Extension and Follow Through

Extension is the knob of the bat going to the ball and then exploding the back hand to the ball. Coaches can teach correct extension using a tee or doing the wall drill we demonstrated earlier.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88TqnEKqP8g&feature=relmfu>

The Front Foot

When the front foot lands, it becomes an anchor. It should land at about a 45-degree angle in order to get full hip rotation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scDLZUuCUPc&feature=relmfu>

Head Movement

When hitting off a tee or during a flip drill, have the hitter look forward and come back to the ball.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Hn_OiI0ig&feature=relmfu





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Training & Head Movement For Hitting Success

Youth baseball coaches should have hitters work on head movement--starting forward, moving the head back to the baseball, and back forward. Flip drill will help work on this skill. Make sure that the player starts with his or her head forward.

To work on vision and seeing spin and rotation, coaches can mark numbers on tennis balls and have the players speak the number during the flip drill.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1YM5GIM32Q&feature=related>

Bat Control and Bunting

Youth baseball coaches can have players play Pepper to work on their bat control and hand-eye coordination. The drill also works on fielding at the same time.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FhYkbpL3Gs&feature=related>

Key coaching tips - Wide Stance, Weight Back, Hands/Head Inside, Finish Balanced, Quiet feet, Quiet head





PNHLL “DAILY’S” Pitching

Stretch

(PNHLL stresses stretch at earlier ages and child needs to display ability here before moving to wind-up)

#1 – Set, ball behind back,

#2 – close stance, ball in glove, glove held high at eye level, head focused on catcher’s glove

#3 – 90 knee, slight torque towards 3b, toe pointed down (HOLD)

#4 – MOST IMPORTANT – stay closed, good extension with front leg towards catcher, execute splits, front leg lands on balls of feet, hips open first

#5 – shoulders open (good torque), ball is thrown, power comes from backside following through having player end up in good fielding position

Wind-up

#1 – Set both feet on rubber facing catcher, glove held high, hand on ball

#2 – foot on glove side step to the side, pivot throwing arm foot 90 degrees into front of rubber, quiet hands, quiet head still focused on catcher’s glove

#3 – 90 knee, slight torque towards 3b, toe pointed down (HOLD)

#4 – MOST IMPORTANT – stay closed, good extension with front leg towards catcher, execute splits, front leg lands on balls of feet, hips open first

#5 – shoulders open (good torque), ball is thrown, power comes from backside following through having player end up in good fielding position

Supporting Pitching Videos

Pitching Instruction and Drills

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FosmItYKDU&feature=relmfu>





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Teaching Correct Pitching Mechanics

Coaches Dave Rosene and Andy Pohl explain the correct pitching mechanics including pivoting (not pushing off) the rubber, producing power from the back side, not opening up early, hiding the ball, striding, pivoting, and landing on the ball of the foot (not the heel).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VioadrSgyYg&feature=relmfu>

Teaching the Change-Up

Three grips pitchers can use to throw a change-up: palm ball grip, three finger Tom Seaver grip, and circle grip. Pitchers must first establish a fast ball before throwing the change-up.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaIT9HUCHgM&feature=relmfu>

Teaching the Wind-Up

The wind-up can be used to deceive the hitter by hiding the ball. Motion is started with a pivot to square up on the rubber. Pitcher lifts the front leg and holds it there; toe is pointed down to land on the ball of the foot. The front foot lands and his whole body is in-line. Hips open up. Pitcher extends as far as he can get to home plate and finishes over the throwing side with full shoulder rotation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgCue5wPfUs&feature=relmfu>





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Coaching Best Practices

PNHLL Philosophy - Being disciplined in how we prepare for practices and games while balancing the **FUN** for all involved.

- Responsibility as a coach
- Team Meeting
- Practice plans-(stations)
- Playing Positions
- Use parent helpers
- Team Communication
- Parent Code of conduct
- Coaches Code of conduct
- UMP/Coach communication
- Remember what this is all about

