Coaching Clinic

“Coach with Class”

Rich Coletta & Bob McCreary
What to expect from your players every practice...

Coaches LOVE Players That:
• Practice & Play Hard
• Work On Their Game
• Do The “Little Things”
• Drop Their Ego
• Do Things The Right Way
• Buy Into The Team Mission
• Give It Their All Every Day
• Never Take Possessions Off
• Do Whatever the Team Needs
• Accept & Excel At Their Role
• LOVE Winning & HATE Losing

What to expect from yourself every DAY...

Your child’s success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are.

But having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient and tries their best IS a direct reflection of your parenting.
Things to remember when scheduling your practice...

1. **Try to make sure you know the number of coaches/parents you have on hand.**
   a. will affect stations and reps for the kids.

2. **Space available/cages will determine your practice format.**
   a. Low flight balls are a great way to use limited space.

3. **Early in season, most if not all of focus should be on reps. Gradually, introduce situations and scrimmages.**

4. **Early ages (5-8) need more practice time and less game time. Again, focus needs to be on proper reps, and as many “touches” as possible.**
   a. Ex: players may have 1 ball hit to him the entire game.

5. **Try to build on the prior week’s practice and skills.**
   a. Progression drills to build on a skill or technique

6. **Explain the goal/purpose of each drill or session to the kids and use verbal cues to reinforce this.**
   Once each drill is completed, review strengths and weaknesses of their performance.
   a. even better, ask them what they felt were strengths and weaknesses.

7. **Try to eliminate players standing around. Keep them moving and on task.**

8. **Keep practices under 2 hrs max. (2hrs max for 11-12, 1.5hrs for 8-10, 1hr for 5-7)**

9. **Skills and Drills can be taught in a competitive fun environment.**
   a. ex: relay race on cuts from the OF

10. **Do not introduce new material at the end of practice.**

11. **When criticizing/critiquing, be sure to end with positive words.**

12. **Holding accountable does not mean punishing them.**
   a. you can incorporate conditioning into drills and games

13. **Read your team. If losing focus, regroup.**
   a. water break
   b. conditioning/skill drill
   c. Q/A

14. **Have plan typed out, share with coaches prior to practice if possible.**

15. **MAKE SURE THEY FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES BEFORE THEY LEAVE.**
To hold the line we must ask our COACHES to:

Keep being positive role models and mentors for our athletes.

Respect and encourage your athletes.

Value and serve the person first, and athlete second.

Earn the trust of both athletes and parents.

Keep asking more of your athletes than they ask of themselves.

Be clear and consistent in your communication.

Have standards, not rules.

Be the coach you always wished you had.
Non-Negotiables

- Go over agenda/purpose with kids.
  - Q/A to hold accountable

- Functional Warm-ups (with coach evaluating)
  - no more “RUN TO THE FENCE AND BACK”

- Throwing Drills for warm-ups
  - NO CATCH, but “PURPOSE CATCH”

- 2-3 Staple drills
  - ex: Two knee hands drills

- LIVE hitting
  - Can use Low flights, Whiffle balls if needed due to space.

- Some drills need to be game speed.
  - Practice like game

- End with Baserunning
  - “HIT THE CORNERS”

- HUDDLE UP-coaches review practice
  - Give purpose to the practice
5-6 Tee-Ball Practice (1 hr)

2-3 Minutes: Pre-Start Meeting - Today’s Points to Emphasize:

_________________________  __________________________
_________________________  __________________________
_________________________  __________________________

8-10 minutes: Functional Warm-Ups, Throwing, and/or Base Running

Warm-Up activity #1: ________________________________
Warm-Up activity #2: ________________________________
Warm-Up activity #3: ________________________________
Warm-Up activity #4: ________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Explain Throwing and Hitting Stations and divide players

10 Minutes: Throwing / Hitting Stations

Throwing Station

Throwing Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________
Throwing Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

Hitting Station

Hitting Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________
Hitting Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Review previous stations and explain Fielding and Hitting Stations

Fielding Station

Fielding Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________
Fielding Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

Hitting Station

Hitting Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________
Hitting Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

Tip of the Day: _________________________________________

Info to pass on before dismissal: ___________________________
6-7 yr old Practice (1.5 hrs)

2-3 Minutes: Pre-Start Meeting - Today’s Points to Emphasize:

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8-10 minutes: Functional Warm-Ups, Throwing, and/or Base Running

Warm-Up activity #1: ________________________________
Warm-Up activity #2: ________________________________
Warm-Up activity #3: ________________________________

5 Minutes: Base running Drill: __________________________

8-10 Minutes – Throwing/Receiving Drills:

Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________
Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Explain Hitting & Fielding Rotations and divide players into groups

25-30 Minutes – Hitting Rotations

Hitting station #1: ________________________________
Hitting station #2: ________________________________
Hitting station #3: ________________________________
Hitting station #4: ________________________________

25-30 Minutes - Fielding Rotations

Fielding station #1: ________________________________
Fielding station #2: ________________________________
Fielding station #3: ________________________________
Fielding station #4: ________________________________
10-15 Minutes: Team Defense – Situations – Competitions

Activity #1: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #2: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #3: _________________________________________________________________

Tip of the Day: ____________________________________________________________

Info to pass on before dismissal:

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Coaching Notes:

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Areas of Strength this practice

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7-8 yr old Practice (1.5 hrs)

2-3 Minutes: Pre-Start Meeting - Today’s Points to Emphasize:

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8-10 minutes: Functional Warm-Ups, Throwing, and/or Base Running

Warm-Up activity #1: ______________________________________________________
Warm-Up activity #2: ______________________________________________________
Warm-Up activity #3: ______________________________________________________

5 Minutes: Base running Drill: ________________________________________________

8-10 Minutes – Throwing/Receiving Drills:

Drill / Activity #1: __________________________________________________________
Drill / Activity #2: __________________________________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Explain Hitting & Fielding Rotations and divide players into groups

25-30 Minutes – Hitting Rotations

Hitting station #1: __________________________________________________________
Hitting station #2: __________________________________________________________
Hitting station #3: __________________________________________________________
Hitting station #4: __________________________________________________________
25-30 Minutes - Fielding Rotations

Fielding station #1: __________________________________________________________

Fielding station #2: __________________________________________________________

Fielding station #3: __________________________________________________________

Fielding station #4: __________________________________________________________

10-15 Minutes : Team Defense – Situations – Competitions – **Bullpen Sessions for pitchers**

Activity #1: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #2: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #3: _________________________________________________________________

Tip of the Day: _______________________________________________________________

Info to pass on before dismissal:

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Coaching Notes:

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9-10yr old League Practice (1.5 hrs)

2-3 Minutes: Pre-Start Meeting - Today’s Points to Emphasize:

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_________________________________________  _______________________________________

8-10 minutes: Functional Warm-Ups, Throwing, and/or Base Running

Warm-Up activity #1: __________________________________________________________

Warm-Up activity #2: __________________________________________________________

Warm-Up activity #3: __________________________________________________________

5 Minutes: Base running Drill: ____________________________________________________

8-10 Minutes – Throwing/Receiving Drills:

Drill / Activity #1: _____________________________________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Explain Hitting & Fielding Rotations and divide players into groups

25-30 Minutes - Fielding Rotations (Make DEFENSE a priority by working on it first!)

Fielding station #1: _____________________________________________________________

Fielding station #2: _____________________________________________________________

Fielding station #3: _____________________________________________________________

Fielding station #4: _____________________________________________________________

25-30 Minutes – Hitting Rotations

Hitting station #1: _____________________________________________________________

Hitting station #2: _____________________________________________________________

Hitting station #3: _____________________________________________________________

Hitting station #4: _____________________________________________________________

10-15 Minutes: Team Defense – Situations – Competitions – Bullpen Sessions for pitchers
Activity #1: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #2: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #3: _________________________________________________________________

Tip of the Day: _________________________________________________________________

Info to pass on before dismissal:

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Coaching Notes:

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Practice tips for Minor level Coaches:

● Have hitters (no bat in hand) stand in at times while pitchers throw a bull pen.
● Have hitters face kid pitch.
● Prior to games focus on the basic situations.
● Use live runners at times for situations (work on both aspects of the game)

● Make small portions of the practice competitive

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11-12 yr old Practice (1 ½ -2 hrs)

2-3 Minutes: Pre-Start Meeting - Today’s Points to Emphasize:

_________________________  ________________________
_________________________  ________________________
_________________________  ________________________

8-10 minutes: Functional Warm-Ups, Throwing, and/or Base Running

Warm-Up activity #1: ________________________________

Warm-Up activity #2: ________________________________

Warm-Up activity #3: ________________________________

5 Minutes: Base running Drill: ________________________________

8-10 Minutes – Throwing/Receiving Drills:

Drill / Activity #1: ________________________________

Drill / Activity #2: ________________________________

3-4 Minutes: Group meet – Explain Hitting & Fielding Rotations and divide players into groups

25-30 Minutes - Fielding Rotations (Make DEFENSE a priority by working on it first!)

Fielding station #1: ________________________________

Fielding station #2: ________________________________

Fielding station #3: ________________________________

Fielding station #4: ________________________________

25-30 Minutes – Hitting Rotations

Hitting station #1: ________________________________

Hitting station #2: ________________________________

Hitting station #3: ________________________________

Hitting station #4: ________________________________
10-15 Minutes: Team Defense – Situations – Competitions – Bullpen Sessions for pitchers

Activity #1: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #2: _________________________________________________________________

Activity #3: _________________________________________________________________

Tip of the Day: ____________________________________________________________________

Info to pass on before dismissal:
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Coaching Notes:
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Practice tips for Minor level Coaches:

● Have hitters (no bat in hand) stand in at times while pitchers throw a bull pen.
● Have hitters face kid pitch.
● Prior to games focus on the basic situations.
● Use live runners at times for situations (work on both aspects of the game)
● Make small portions of the practice competitive
● At this level practices should be designed around areas of situational improvement
  o ex: Covering bunts, pick offs, run downs, 1st and 3rd

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DATE: ________________________ FIELD: ________________________
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Basic Drill’s Guide

Receiving drills

Focus on the following...

- Ready position - Triple threat
- *Relaxed-tension kills quickness*
- Hand position in response to ball (*High five, Low five*)
- Receiving at chest with hand out in front.
- Shuffle to Left or Right to align ball to chest.

Drills

- No glove/Small ball (*At, Right, Left*)
- With glove/Normal ball (*At, Right, Left*)

Throwing Drills

Focus on the following...

- Throwing eyes (*eyes, front shoulder/elbow, Hip, Knee and instep of back foot*)
- Grip (2-3 fingers-4 seam)
- Separation of hands
  - Hands break between belly button and chest
  - *Thumbs to the thigh, fingers to the sky!*
- Throwing hand-Fangs out, ear height

Drills

- Wrist Flip
- One knee toss
  - Throwing hand knee is on the ground. Front shoulder is pointing to your target.
    1-Set (*focus on elbows relaxed, hands at chest*)
    2-Separate (*Focus on Fangs, elbows near shoulder height and in straight line to target*)
    3-Throw (*Focus on chest to knee for extension*)
    HOLD FINISH (throwing arm (elbow) finishes over lead leg (knee))
- Standing 3-Step progression
  1-Set (both legs in ring standing with front hip/shoulder to target)
  2-Separate and lead leg steps out of ring (look for “Fangs” out)
  3-Throw (Look for back leg out of ring)

- **Have them play catch** (have kids retrieve their own bad throws)
- **Knock-out** (Egg toss style)
- **Figure 8**
  - start square to the target. Start with both hands at right hip, then move them to left shoulder, then down to left hip, then to right shoulder--throw (this motion creates a sideways “8” and works on arm path and rhythm.
- **Relay race** *(focuses on throwing, receiving, footwork)*
  - Lines of 3-4 players 15 yards apart. Players throw the ball up the line and then back down the line. Go through it slow 3x’s.
**Groundballs**

- **Flat Roll GB** – At, Left, Right (*focus on holding hands at top of triangle when catching, nose in glove*). Roll ball so that it stays as flush to the ground as possible. This forces the defender to squat down low to ground.
  - No Glove/Small ball
  - Glove/Regular ball

- **Short Hop** - At, Left, Right (*Focus on catching ball with both hand out in front of body*) one hop ball out in front of player. Make sure they catch ball with both hands in center of body and out in front.
  - No Glove/Incrediball
  - Glove/Regular ball

- **GB Catch and Throw progression** (Tom Emanski Drill)
  - Hit/Roll ground ball (try not to make it bounce to much)
  - 1-Catch and hold, 2-Throwing eyes position (hold), 3-Throw and Finish
  - All together (no holding of position)

- **GB shuffle**
  - Roll ball to glove side/player tosses back, roll ball to arm side/player tosses back.

- **Small Ball Ground balls**
  - Option: Tennis balls and or no glove

- **Flash Drill** (*focus on proper footwork/alignment to target while gathering momentum*)
  - Coach hits regular ball to player. Once player catches the ball, they shuffle (heel click) with throwing eyes at target until the coach “Flashes” the glove. Once the coach Flashes the glove the player throws.

- **Two knee**
  - Players get on both knees and coaches will roll, bounce or hit ground balls. Drill focuses on hands. May use glove or not. Can use small balls as well. Backhands can be thrown into the mix

**Fly balls**

*focus on catching above head and in front of body. (not on heels)*

- **Two hands Straight up High Toss** (no glove/big ball)
- **One hand Straight up High Toss** (no glove / low flight ball)
  - add in use of glove after the above.
- **10-15 yard Fly Balls** (Glove/Regular Ball)
- **Run and Catch**
  - players line up next to coach and run 5-10yds.
  - Coach throws the ball to glove side so players catch ball on the run.
  - can vary by throwing to other side.

- **Groundballs**
  - 1. nobody on base. Keep in front.
  - 2. Charge with crow hop
  - 3. work on angles

- **Fly ball Communication** (*focus on knowing territory and calling off*)
  - 4 lines (LF, LFC, CF, RF)
  - LF and LCF lines are a station and CF and RF lines are a station
  - Coach throws ball between lines.
Hitting

Tee (8 Swings)
Make sure label of ball is facing hitter. They should focus on hitting the label of the ball. This will keep hands inside the ball (creating proper “V” of arms) and provides the proper swing path.

1. Tee Progression with verbals.
   Set - There are many different “set-ups”, but there are some constants...
   - knees inside feet
   - knees bent and feet outside shoulders
   - chin at/near front shoulder (“Mike”)
   - knob of bat is pointing to back foot
   - hand’s at/near ear height

Separate - notice NO differences here
   - chin on front shoulder “Mike”
   - hands load back to catcher/at or outside back knee and at/near shoulder height.
   - front foot closed

Swing - notice NO differences here
   - Chin on back shoulder “Ike” - Keeps swing “To and Through” the ball
   - HOLD Finish - front foot slightly closed, back foot laces point to pitcher/heel off ground
   - Head at or behind belly button. (Vertical line from head to back leg)

Free Swing (8 Swings)
   - All together
   - Focus on hitting line drive up the middle.
   - HOLD Finish for 2 seconds.

Front Toss/Broom Stick Drill (low flight balls) - 8-10 swings
Focuses on proper swing path and preventing “casting” of the hands
**Tee or Front Toss** (all Tee-drills should focus on Mike-n-Ike)

- **High Tee** (prevents chopping down)
  - Set Tee to just below or at chest height.
- **Oppo Tee** (keeps eye on ball and pulling head off)
  - Set ball on outside part of plate near back hip.
- **No stride Drill:**
  - Players start with front foot already in landing position. When player swings they DO NOT stride.
- **Stride Drill**
  - player starts with feet together in ring, front foot steps out of ring, then swings.
- **Step Overs** (focus on stride and separation)
  - Place small bat/stick in front of stride foot.
  - Player steps/strides over getting into hitting position
  - Player swings at Tee or pitched ball

**Bunting** - focus on NOT stabbing at the ball but rather directing it.

- Front foot opens up, back leg slightly moves to plate.
- Bat out in front.
- Barrel above knob

**Team Games**

- **Outs**
  - Coaches sets up teams of 4 hitters and they “hit”, rest take the field to play defense, until the defense records a certain number of outs.
  - Once that team has recorded the given amount of outs, the next team comes to the plate.
  - Team that scored the most runs, wins.
- **Hard Hit Elimination** (if time)
  - Break up into two teams of 5
  - Each player gets 1 AB.
  - If ball is hit hard, player stays in and hits again
  - Batter eliminated when any of the following occur: called strike, foul tip, swing miss, weak hit.
  - Count up total hard hits after each team hits.
- **Pro style BP rounds:** Groups of 4
  - Rd 1: 8 free swings
  - Rd 2: 2 strike count help kids to expand strike zone
  - Rd 3: 3 -0 count (1 pitch, 1 spot) Help kids find their best pitch to hit in the zone.
Baserunning

- **Run to 1st**
  Focus on hitting front part of bag, breaking down and looking back into field of play.

- **1st to 3rd** (place marker to dictate turn)
  Focus on hitting corners of bag, and keeping turns tight.

- **Tag ups, Freeze**
  3-4 runners, others in field. Coach throws/hits LD, Fly balls, GB.
  Rotate groups of 3-4 from OF to run, INF go to OF, runners go to INF

Pitching

Focus on creating and maintaining center balance.

- **Full stride with follow through**
  - Start in full stride position, lean back and separate hands, lean forward (out over front Leg (hands still separated, throw (make sure chest lands on front knee)

- **Balance hold**
  - Get to balance spot, hold for 3sec, then throw.
  - Concentrate on breaking hands as leg drops.

- **Oakland Pump**
  - Get into balance position, separate hands/lower half 3x’s, then throw.

- **Towel Drill** *(focus on extension)*

- **Bucket Drill**
  - Place toes of lead leg on bucket.
  - Throw pitch
  - Make sure back leg follows through over the bucket.

Catching:

- **Around The World Receiving Drill** - Tennis ball, no glove.
  Have players in squatting position. Focus on wide base and balance.
  Imagine a square and throw 1 ball at each of the 4 quadrants (high in/High away/Low-away/Low-in)

- **Blocking drill/Tennis balls**
  Have players in squatting position.
  Players have arms behind back.
  Throw ball into dirt. (FOCUS: using keeping chest square to ball and pushing ball into ground.
  If kids are having trouble, have the use their hands and chest to block, BUT NOT CATCH

- **Pop Ups**
  Stand behind the catcher who is in the squat position. Throw ball up over head. Teach them to run to mound and turn around to face the backstop. Make sure they throw their mask far away as to avoid tripping over it.
For more tips, instruction, blog posts, eBooks, and videos, go to ...

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