



2015 SPAIN PARK YOUTH BASEBALL

Minor League Coaches Clinic (Ages 9-10)

Coach Joe Sottolano

Saturday, February 21, 2015 – 1:00pm

1. Be organized and create an atmosphere for learning, discipline and fun
2. Keep it changing with several drills and incorporate game situations daily
3. Keep it moving
4. Everybody is still an infielder and an outfielder as they all need to learn the skills

Throwing Mechanics:

- Can incorporate throwing drills, but limited time on them
 - o Plan:
 - Always use lines when throwing (when possible)
 - Shoulders parallel to partner, base outside shoulders, no step, throw to partner that is close. (gets their arm moving, but have to keep head still)
 - Start with shoulders lined up to receiver
 - Hands together at chest high in center of body and encourage full arm circle
 - Shuffle feet twice at target and then throw
 - Ensure head stays straight and stays on target
 - When feet are moving hands stay together
 - Start with shoulders square or parallel to partner
 - Have them turn and shuffle feet twice and throw
 - Start close to target and slowly move back
- Have a routine for getting arms lose. Your name drill and they do it.
- Never allow them to throw a ball without moving their feet and gaining ground first
- Teach them how to keep head on target and take two steps towards target after throwing
- Full arm circle at this age (Can always shorten)
- Start to lengthen their throws when they get lose

Hitting:

1. Grip – point fingers and try to line up best as possible (small hands, can't get bat in fingers and control it)
2. Stance – make sure bat is up off back shoulder. Knob pointing to catchers knees, feet lined up in a straight line to the pitcher. Can place bat down from toe to toe to see if pointing at pitcher. Use of line for hitting is a must.
3. Swing:
 - Hit everything through the middle
 - Use a lot of tee work with hitting ball into the bottom of the net and through middle
 - Once stride foot lands, head stays still
 - Keep weight in the middle when hitting
 - Checkpoints at end when holding swing
 1. Weight in middle
 2. Back foot turned, laces at pitcher
 3. Front leg straight, back leg bent
 4. Shoulder parallel to ground at top or just below shoulder



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Fielding:

Ground Balls:

1. Glove side eye when possible
2. Catch bottom and back of ball
3. Move feet to throw
4. Miss high in the infield

Additional information:

- Really stress working through all ground balls
- Make sure feet are just outside of shoulder width with toes facing forward
- Knees to hip angle parallel to ground
- Back parallel to ground (this and knee hip angle allow glove to get out in front of body and catch bottom and back of ball)
- Move feet to field and throw (two shuffle to throw in warm ups and one to two shuffles to throw in infield practice and games)
- Work through balls with body and glove when needed, do not funnel
- Ball to ear when ball is dropped (whole team yells it out)

Covering on steals:

- Left foot on bag or behind, do not straddle
- Wait for ball to get to you, ball travels faster

Double Play turns:

- Second basemen put left foot on bag and move right foot to where ball takes them
- Shortstops – place right foot on bag, step to ball with left, drag, turn and throw gaining ground to first

Feeds:

- o Underhand, overhand, backhand

Fly Balls:

Catch ball in slot:

1. Glove just off glove side eye
2. Glove just in front of face
3. Throwing hand in center of body, glove high and it covers ball on catch
4. Glove side foot forward

Tendencies:

- Catch ball on side of body, especially throwing side - this is a fear factor for getting hit with the ball.
 - o Ensure success by putting up them in proper position and tossing ball underhand into their glove
 - o Slow progression from underhand toss into their glove to higher underhand toss, to them having to move to it, machine toss when possible, to eventual coaches hit, to game.
- Needs to be worked on every day and ensure success



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- Can start moving this group around with errant tosses with having them freeze on contact with ball to glove
- Catch ball with one hand on run (Get them running in drills)

Base running:

- Break tape and run through first base
- $\frac{1}{4}$ turn after hitting bag, while breaking down.
- Soon as you get to first, pick up third base coach. If need to speak with first base coach, always keep eyes on third base coach.
- Once signs are over, look at your defense, then keep eyes on ball

Leads:

- Left, turn (to straddle), together, step, together, step
- Those that struggle, three shuffles
- Back part of bag
- Secondary is just two shuffles after pitch

Practice Organization:

- Rotations for getting loose so you can teach, based on number of coaches
 - o agility drill station
 - o catching station
 - o fly ball station
 - o ground ball station
 - o base running station
 - o hitting station
 - o cut off station
 - o throwing

Breaking kids into smaller groups is always beneficial at this age....

Time allotment:

- 15 minute active warm up
- 20 minute ground ball fly balls (10 minute rotations)
- 15 – 20 minute team concept
- 45 min hitting
- 15 min base running

Cut offs and Relays:

1. Communication starts from the catcher and works out
2. Communicate just before each person touches ball
3. Cut off man starts with shoulders square to player throwing ball, hands up, communicating
4. Listen and line yourself up with base you are throwing to
5. Marry hands
6. Catch ball on glove side of body with shoulders lined up to target whenever possible (get around ball)
7. Always move feet and gain ground in the direction you are throwing when relaying ball



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Suggestions:

- Partner them up and have them toss balls underhand to each other to start and have them work on getting around ball
- Put them into multi person lines to work cut offs
- Progress into putting them into a small field, smaller than an infield and teach them cut off plays and responsibilities
- Progress into coach hitting cut off and relays... No base runners.

Pitching mechanics:

Stretch:

- Take signs on rubber
- Come up to set with feet slightly spread
- Knees comes up to waist high
- Foot lands on a direct line to catcher's glove
- Head stays over buckle at all times
- Back foot comes up and out on follow through (heel to sky)

Wind up:

- Feet start on rubber about shoulder width apart
- Small, no more than 6 inch step back
- Foot slides into rubber
- Same as stretch with potential for higher leg kick



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DRILLS: