

GLENCOE YOUTH BASEBALL
PLAYER COACH DEVELOPMENTAL SERIES



Dynamic Warm-ups: (Tony Bastinelli) 10-15 minutes

-Start with a light jog, maybe two / three gym laps, w/ gloves on. Single file, no passing and no walking.

-Split into groups (no gloves) of four to five (will depend on attendance numbers) spaced out along one baseline, facing center court.

Once grouped, emphasize this is NOT a race, this is not a competition, this is meant to get your bodies and fast twitch muscles properly warm. Also, as we do this we go in a straight line with our heads/eyes up, not worrying about the player(s) next to us.

Exercises:

-High knees to the far line. Good form, good posture, light on your toes, not a race!

-Butt kicks back to starting line. Again, good form and not a race!

- Lunges to opposite baseline, twisting your torso towards your forward leg. Torso should be straight and not bent over.

- Karaoke down to other baseline then return karaoke to starting baseline facing the same direction. The players' toes should be very quiet and they should be light on their feet, no stopping.

- Frankenstein's to other baseline. Straight right leg kicks upward to the opposite side hand extended in front. Repeat with left leg kick to right hand extended. Repeat to far line.

-Sprint to opposite line. When there the player will do five air squats. The player will then sprint back to starting line and proceed to complete five Burpee's. This is repeated one time for a total of two repetitions

- Skip-Stomps, really bring the lead foot down aggressively.

- Skip-Jumps, again, not a race and the player should extend their jump and reach as high as they can vertically.

-Sprint to opposite line then backpedal to the middle, then dynamically change back to forward sprint to opposite line then backpedal the full length of the court to starting line.

-Leap Frog jumps, the player should start flat footed swing their arms and bend their knees then jump as far forward as they can. The player will come to a resting position, flat-footed then press their squat up and repeat.

-High Knees to the middle then dynamically change to a sprint and finish at opposite line.

-Butt Kicks to the middle then dynamically change to a sprint and finish at opposite line

HITTING

“Never let the fear of striking out keep you from playing the game.” Babe Ruth

This quote from Babe Ruth is one of my all-time favorites. It falls right in line with the quote from Yogi Berra, “Baseball is 90% mental, and the other half physical”. The toughest part in teaching young ball players to be successful batters is teaching them how to get past the Mental side of hitting. The biggest two fears for most young hitters is striking out and getting hit by a pitch. Your job as a coach is to prepare your ball players, get them thousands of quality swings of the bat, so when they step up the plate they never think about their swing, getting hit, striking out, they just see the ball and hit it HARD!

Key Elements

Stance: The Batters feet should be slightly more than shoulder width apart. The knees should be slightly bent with their body weight on the balls of their feet and evenly distributed on both feet.



Grip: The player's dominant hand should be on top with both hands stacked and touching. Their wrists should be slightly pushed together aligning the second knuckles of their hands (This allows the hands to smoothly roll over during the swing).



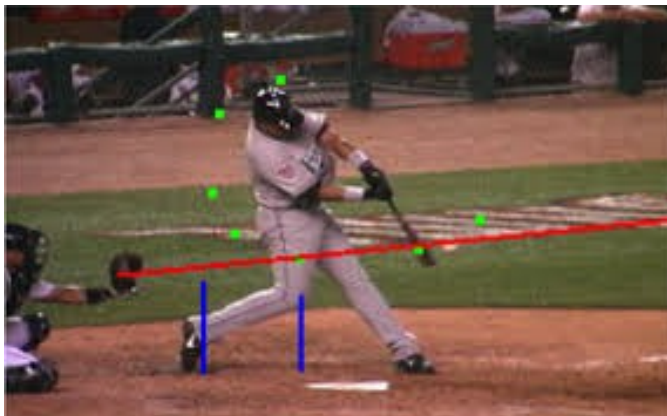
Position of Hands: The batter's hands need to start back in front of the back shoulder and about a fist's distance off of the shoulder. The bat should not be straight up in the air or laying on the shoulder, but held at about a 45-degree angle.



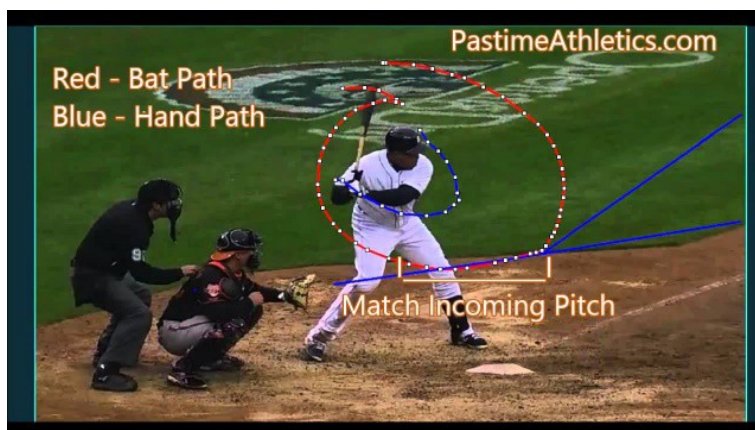
Load: The load is the process that initiates the swing. The batter shifts his body weight from balanced equally on both feet, to 80-100% of the body weight now on the back foot. Now the body weight is ready to transfer forward and into the swing.



Weight Transfer: Weight transfer is an explosive shift of the batters body weight from the “Loaded” back foot onto a strait front leg while incorporating a violent hip rotation. The batter should finish with the back foot up on the toe, and his belly button facing toward the pitcher.



Path of Hands: Upon “Loading”, the hands shift back as well. The bottom hand directs the bat to the pitch. The hands should start forward staying close to the batters chest. The top hand is the “Power” hand. It will perform an underhand punch motion at the point of contact with the ball.





GOOD SWING

- HEAR THE PRECISE “SWISH”
- BETTER BAT CONTROL
- MAXIMUM POWER TRANSFER
- MORE CONFIDENCE



BAD SWING

- A LONG “SWOOOOOSH”
- INABILITY TO REACT TO PITCH
- LOSS OF POWER
- SLOW BAT AND LESS CONTACT

Extension: After contact with the ball, the hands should extend or push through the contact.



EXTENSION OR POWER “V” IS WHERE YOU GET YOUR ARMS FULLY EXTENDED JUST BEFORE YOU FINISH YOUR SWING IN AN UPWARD PLANE TO YOUR SHOULDER

Follow-Through: After the batter has extended through contact, the force allows for a long follow through. This is also the point where the back shoulder will catch the chin to bring the batters eyes around to see where they hit the ball.



DRILLS

"Practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect." Cal Ripkin Sr.

It doesn't matter how good of a batting practice pitcher you are, you cannot provide consistent quality pitches for your players to swing at, and your arm will feel like rubber after pitching batting practice to 12 kids. Utilize batting tees as much as possible early in the season. Batting tees allow us to take the focus off of hitting a moving target, and focus on the Key Elements of the swing. Once your ball players

stop thinking about their hands, weight transfer, stance, grip, etc. then they can focus on hitting a thrown pitch without worrying about all the other moving parts.

Hip Poppers: Have the player get into their stance with the bat behind their back gripping either end of the bat with palms facing forward. Have the player load, and explode their weight forward using the bat to emphasize the hip rotation.



Tee Work: Players can hit wiffle balls, tennis balls, or real baseballs. Make sure the player sets up to the tee with the ball positioned out in front across from their front foot. We want to make contact out in front and not over the middle of the plate. Utilize the tee to focus on individual elements of the swing, and tell the player what the focus will be for each session. Hitting into a net or backstop will keep the balls corralled for more reps.



Fence Drill: Utilizing a tee, set the tee about 6-8 inches away from a net (do NOT use an actual fence as the name of the drill references due to damage to bats or the fence). If you don't have a net to use, using a second tee will provide the same feedback. The batter sets his distance from the fence by placing the knob of the bat against his belly, and the barrel end touching the net or tee. The drill is designed to give feedback for "Long" swings or "Casting" of the hands. If the player leads with their hands and rotates their hips, they should not hit the net or tee. As the player gets comfortable with the drill, encourage them to swing hard as they would to a live pitched ball.



Soft Toss: Have the batter get into their hitting stance. You will set up in the opposite batter's box. Hold the ball out in front of you, and let your hand drop down signaling the batter to load, then toss the ball up and out in front of the batter to be hit. Try not to make your toss peak within the strike zone, not too high or have too much arch. Encourage the hitter to make contact with the ball toward the top of the arch, this encourages quick hands.



Soft Toss (2 Ball): Same drill as mentioned above, but this time hold two balls in your hand. When you toss, you will only toss one of the two making the batter read the ball and react accordingly. Or, you can toss both balls at the same time and tell the hitter as the balls are going up which ball (Top or Bottom) you want them to hit. During either soft toss drills, give feedback after each swing if any of the swing elements are not done correctly.

Live Hitting: During live batting practice, encourage your batters to only swing at strikes. I see too many kids swinging at everything the coach throws. Use this as a time to train your batters eye to recognize a Ball or Strike as well as learning swing timing. To get the most out of live hitting practice, have another coach stand near the batter to give feedback on each swing (If your staffing levels allow).