

2026 Sluggers Winter Team Practice- Week 10



Goals - Compete and Lead

- Compete in every aspect of practice
- You are competing every moment against
 - Yourself - Achieving the best Mental approach each rep
 - The drill - every drill is a unique challenge that needs focus and intent
 - Your teammates - beat them at every drill, every pitch, every swing
- Choose one aspect of being a leader and focus on doing that well in practice

Drill Videos

Short Hops- [Ron Washington Short Hops](#)

- a. **Getting Around the ground ball** - <https://youtu.be/R3gra149xjA>
- b. 3rd base leads (baseball)-: https://youtu.be/8T_KoHtTlo0
- c. Situational Defense (holding Runners- Baseball only) - **Situational Defense- Holding Runners on Bases (Pickoffs)**
- d. **Double Play Turn Mechanics**
 - i. [Double Play- Second Base Turn Mechanics](#)
 - ii. [Double Play Flips- Second Base](#)
 - iii. [Shortstop Double Play Turn Footwork](#)
 - iv. [Shortstop Feed Mechanics](#)
 - v. [Double Play Mechanics- San Fran Giants](#)
- e. **Step and Dive Drill**
 - i. <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/outfield-step-and-dive-drill-with-kerrick-jackson-southern-univ/>
- f. **Opposite Field Hitting**
 - i. Video- [Josh Donaldson Oppo Field Hitting](#)
 - ii. **Wide Stance/No Stride-** [Close Tee Drill](#)

Mental Approach- Qualities of a Great Leader

- a. https://youtu.be/0AD_H0w8SOA
 1. What are the characteristics of a good leader. Great Leaders have:
 - a. **Work Ethic-** They work harder than others to lead their teammates to work harder with them.



- b. **Positive Attitude**- Great leaders stay positive when things go negative, leading their team through the tough times. Leaders do not get caught up in drama or negativity within the team.
 - c. **Problem Solving**: Great leaders do not create problems. They solve problems.
 - d. **Communication Skills**: Great leaders have the ability to communicate clearly with their teammates and coaches.
 - e. **Accountability**: Great leaders hold themselves **accountable** for their mistakes. They accept responsibility for their (individual and team) actions and don't place blame on other team members or outside circumstances.
 - f. **Integrity**: Great leaders set an example for the rest of the team. If a leader cuts corners at practice, the team will also cut corners. If everyone cuts corners, practice will be less effective.
 - g. **Courage**: Great leaders have the courage to **take risks and fail** in the spirit of improvement. Great leaders adapt and overcome tough situations, running through adversity rather than away from it.
 - h. **Self Confidence**- Great leaders are confident in themselves. Also, preparation leads to confidence. Confidence is the foundation of leadership, allowing a player to solve problems, stay positive, and communicate well with teammates.
 - i. **Humility** - Great leaders, while confident, are also humble. Characteristics of humility are treating others with respect, seek input from others, are genuine and authentic, admit mistakes and understand self limitations.
 - j. **Trustworthy**- Great leaders earn the trust of their teammates. Being accountable, responsible, and humble earns the trust of teammates.
2. **When do leaders appear** - When the adversity, pressure, and confusion is highest!! Leaders show up when things are tough.

Players: Rank these qualities of a leader from top to bottom (best to worst). What qualities are your strengths, and which qualities do you need to improve upon.

Mental Approach: Qualities of a Great Leader

Mechanical Approach

All players: Come to your practice with one area of improvement for each part of your game (hitting, fielding, pitching)

Baserunning: 3rd Base Leads

Hitting: Opposite Field Power

Fielding: Double Play Flips, Turns, and 1B flips to Pitcher

Throwing: Off Balance, Jump Throws / Follow throw

Pitching: 1-1 Count Execution

Obscure Rule or Game Strategy

1. How much true action is there in a 3 hour baseball game?
 - a. 18 minutes out of 3 hours (or 10%)
 - b. This means that our anticipation and preparation for each pitch is vitally important.
2. Chipper Jones is ranked third all time for home runs by a switch hitter. What players are ahead of him in switch-hitting home runs?
 - a. Mickey Mantle
 - b. Eddie Murray

DAILY ROUTINES - FIRST 30 (Players lead - Everyone Together in open areas) via

- a. **Dynamic Power Warmup - 5 minutes**
 - Over the Fence Hip Openers- Lateral
 - Knee/Hip Circles - 10 each side
 - Under the Fence - Wide Stance



- Lateral Power Shuffles
 - One Leg forward hops
 - Quick High Knees / Form Run
 - One leg side jumps
 - Power High Knee Jumps
 - Power Shuffles to Sprint
- b. **2 (or 3) ball juggling - 120 seconds**
- Switch directions after 60 seconds
- c. **Resistance Band**
- Pull Aparts, Overhead Pull Aparts, Diagonals, External Pulses
- d. **Towel Drills**
- Rocker
 - Quick Shoulder Turn (Head Still)
 - Hop Stride Throw
 - Quick Pivot Pick
- e. **Heavy Ball Throws**
- Flips
 - Shoulder Turn
 - Rocker Drill
- f. **Short Hops- [Ron Washington Short Hops](#)**
- 10-10-10 from knees
 - 10-10-10 on feet
 - 10-10-10 Drop step and drive short hops
 - One left, one middle, one right
 - Work back through every short hop
- g. **Quick Catch (focus on catch and release efficiency and timing)**
- **Always throw lengthwise (not toward windows or drywall)**
 - With Tennis ball on basketball court
 - No feet/stride- Partners at about 25 feet apart
 - 1- Straight Catch, no stride, 20 each (feet stay planted)
 - 2- Short Hop (20 each player) - One player take 20 in a row, switch
 - One foot throws
 - Balance on throwing side foot, catch, throw, finish all on one foot
- h. **Partner Ground Balls- Getting Around Ball**
- **Video- <https://youtu.be/R3gra149xjA>**
 - Partners roll ground balls to each other
 - Fielder works from outside of ball, field and set feet to throw, two low shuffles
 - Work on getting around the ball, Field through the ball, funnel, footwork to throw
- i. **Partner Ground Balls- Backhand Focus**
- Partners throw 20 backhands to each other- Fielders focus on proper backhand mechanics
- j. **4 Person Gauntlet Drill (Short Hop Pepper)**
- <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/infielders-gauntlet-drill-with-tyler-gillum-sa-vannah-bananas/>
- k. **Partner Drop Step Fly Balls**
- Tennis ball, no glove
- l. **Tennis ball run downs**
- 3 groups, play “hot box” (rundowns) on the basketball court
 - No hesitation between plays.
- m. **Two line tag and throw drill**
- Get in two lines...catch, tag, throw as quickly as you can to your partner.
 - Focus on perfect tag mechanics, quick feet and hands
- n. **3 person (short swing) pepper - with tennis balls**
- No gloves



- Hitters choke up, and watch ball hit bat
- Short, easy swing (not much more than a bunt)

Baserunning

- **3rd Base Leads**
 - **Baseball**
 - Short, Safe Walking lead at 3B
 - Runner **walks (not shuffles or hops like 1B or 2B)** in foul territory down the line
 - **Baseball and Softball**-- Secondary lead is aggressive to the max lead line, with shoulders turned toward home (running position toward home plate)
 - When ball crosses home plate: Runner plants lead foot to read ball
 - Runner is **ready to go forward....not anticipating back!!**
 - After ball crosses home plate with no action, runner turns quickly into fair territory to get back.
 - Video: https://youtu.be/8T_KoHtTlo0
 - **Softball**
 - Aggressive 3-4 step lead in foul territory
 - Do not move back until the ball is caught and controlled by catcher
- **Dirt Ball reads from 3rd base**
 - Athletic Walking lead into maximum lead length
 - Land in time for ball to cross home plate
 - React to ball
 - Dirt Ball - Go

Team Feilding and Throwing

Instructional- Holding Runners

Holding Runners on Base/Pickoffs (two large groups)

Read this – [Situational Defense- Holding Runners on Bases \(Pickoffs\)](#)

- **Group 1 - Pitcher first base holds**
 - Runner (taking leads), 1st baseman, pitcher
 - Pitcher and 1B holds runner, and runner takes maximum leads to attempt a steal.
- **Group 2 - Pitcher, Middle Infield Holds**
 - Runner (taking leads), 2B/SS, pitcher
 - Pitcher and 2B/SS hold runner, and runner takes maximum leads to attempt a steal.

Team Fielding- Quick Drills (quickly run through these 3-5 minutes each)

- **Short Hop Triangle Drill- Quick Hands**
 - a. 3 player triangle drill for speed
 - 1- Short hop fielder, 2- catch/throw, 3- feeder
 - All Back hand short hops
- **Throwing and Catching Detail (5 minutes)- Follow Throw Drill**
 - **Players get in groups of 4 or 6**
 - **Set up Bucket or cone 15 feet in front of player**
 - **Player catches ball, athletic shuffle, Fire and follow throw through the cone/bucket**
 - **Next player be ready to catch and throw.**



- **Catch and Tag Option** - All players catch and tag, then set feet to make throw
 - Catch out front, Athletic positioning at all times
- **Sprint around cone to get around ground ball**
 - a. Fielder sprints right, around cone then attacks ground ball to the left
 - b. Set feet or running throw depending on ground ball
- **Touch Bucket Fly Ball Drill**
- **Two fly ball drill**
 - a. Player drop steps to run around cone, then sprints in to catch short ball, then drop step sprint back to catch second fly ball
- **TCU - Quick release (quick hands to release and footwork)**

Position Specific Work

- **1B**
 - a. **First Basemen Feed to Pitcher**
 - Field Ground ball
 - Drive feet and body toward pitcher or 1st base (push toward throw)
 - Push ball underhand (not bowling), leading pitcher to catch the ball on the run
 - Follow throw (keep momentum)
 - b. **Holding Runner on first - Pick off Tags**
 - Focus on feet setup and tag speed
- **2b/SS - Double Play Turns**
 - a. **Videos**
 - [Double Play- Second Base Turn Mechanics](#)
 - [Double Play Flips- Second Base](#)
 - [Shortstop Double Play Turn Footwork](#)
 - [Shortstop Feed Mechanics](#)
 - [Double Play Mechanics- San Fran Giants](#)
 - b. **Keys to Double Plays**
 - Feeds- Field, Firm Flip and Follow
 - Second Base Turns- Left foot on base, take right foot to ball (flip), quick right left throw
 - Shortstop Turns- Come through the base, right foot tap on outside corner of base, athletic throw
 - c. **Holding Runners - Pick off Tags**
 - Focus on footwork and tag speed/mechanics
- **3b- Short ground ball double play decision (2b or 1b)**
 - a. On short ground ball, 3B must make decision to either field through the ball and throw to 1st base, or throw to second base.
 - Must assess time to throw to second and angle/momentum to first base
 - b. **Catcher Back Pick Tags**
 - Focus on footwork and tag speed
- **Catchers**
 - a. Receiving and Blocking drills
 - b. Back picks to 3rd and 1st
- **OF**
 - a. Running through the fly ball (getting behind the ball and sprinting to the short fly ball)
- **PFP Situations with runners-** Quick moving and faster than game speed (let the players make mistakes and correct quickly)
 - a. **Bunt plays**
 - 10-14U Teams review and go through bunt plays
 - 1st base only (baseball)
 - 1st basemen stay at first (read bunt) with runner on first only.



- Pitcher has 1st base line
- 3rd baseman has 3rd base line
- 1st and second
 - 1st baseman charge
 - 3rd basemen stay near 3rd and read bunt
 - Pitcher has 3rd base line
- b. 3-6-1 double play
- c. 1st and third double steal
- d. 1st/3rd Comebacker to pitcher
- e. Run through these plays as quickly as possible, almost like a conditioning drill

Pitching Focus (Baseball)

- **Articulate and Commit to your Pitches**
 - During Bullpens and Live BP all pitchers must describe to the catcher in detail the pitch that they are going to throw.
 - “Fastball Down and away to right handed hitter, 0-2 count”
 - “1st Pitch Curve ball - Called Strike”
 - “Fastball Up , Just above the strike zone”

Mechanics Overview: Arm Stroke

- a. Ball “Falls” out of glove to start arm stroke
- b. Ball continues down and back toward second base along center line extended
- c. Downward movement creates momentum to carry the arm stroke back and up.
- d. Key is to keep momentum through arm stroke to create velocity
- e. Thumb down and fingers on top of ball through arm stroke

Front side (glove and forearm) set the shoulder turn and increase shoulder turn velocity.

- As stride goes out:
 - **Front Side:** Glove and forearm go out to the target, shoulder height
 - **Front Side Pull:** As arm starts to move up into slot, the front side glove and forearm pull down into armpit/belt creating momentum with shoulder turn.
 - **Release:** with momentum created from arm swing, the arm comes up and punches through release to the target.
 - Nose and chin drive to the target.

Strategy Overview- 1-1 and 0-2 Count Strategies

- Even Counts, especially 1-1 is a big “swing” count. 1-1 strike percentage is a great indicator of how well a pitcher pitches in a game.
 - 1-1 should be a called strike, hitter swing at a good pitchers pitch
- 0-2 Counts - Aggressive to a lane outside of strike zone. Show the strike zone and move it out of strike zone.

Team Hitting

- b. **Swing Build Routine**
 - Windshield Wipers- 10 each arm
 - Forward/Backward Bat Raises- 8 each arm
 - Pendulum Swings- 10 each arm
 - Contact Pulses- 20 seconds

- Stride and Separate - 30 reps
 - Contact Position - 5 oppo, 5 middle, 5 pull
 - Donaldson Swings with Balance hold at finish
- c. Bunting Pepper (5 minutes)**
- Groups of 3 players
 - Fast moving and athletic (1 bunt every 2 seconds!!)
 - Off balance throws- catch and release

Hitting Clinic- Opposite Field Power

Theme: 1) Stance/Posture 2) Weight Transfer /Bunting 3) Hitting Extreme Pitches 4) Push Off 5) Bat Speed Training/Hitting High Velocity 6) Back Side Path / Hit and Run 7) Hitting Off Speed Pitches 8) Power and Launch Angle 9) Shoulder Hip Separation **10) Opposite Field Power**

- **Mechanics Overview- Opposite Field Power**
 - Opposite field power starts with a back side connection- top hand/back hip, back knee
 - Hands and back hip work together to create power and extension to opposite field.
 - Hands stay close to body- do not reach to outside pitch with hands away from body
 - Think - Hands in, hip to the ball, attack the inside of the ball
 - Oppo Field Hitting Window - Let the ball get deep into hitting window. Think – Outside pitch needs to be hit off of back hip
 - Video- [Josh Donaldson Oppo Field Hitting](#)



Hitting Drill Set

1. **Tee 1- Wide Stance/No Stride- Close Tee Drill**
 - a. Set up Tee/Ball at belly button
 - b. Stand close to the tee
 - c. Keep hands in and knob past the ball to drive ball to the opposite field
2. **Tee 2: Low/Outside Pitch**
 - a. Set Up tee down and back into stance
 - b. Think of driving back hip and knee through the ball to hit home run to opposite field.
3. **Tee 3- High Outside Pitch**
 - a. Set up Tee back in stance, High - Max Opposite field power using back hip and top hand connection (see pictures above)
4. **Tee 4- Zagrodnik Scissor Swings Tee Drill (oppo field swings)**
 - a. Normal Stance
 - b. Front knee comes back as hands go forward, crossing over each other
 - c. Hands and shoulders go back as you stride into swing
 - d. Feel the sling shot effect of shoulders and hips working separately
5. **Heavy Ball Short Toss**
 - a. Pitchers throw ball into belly button
 - b. Hitter hits ball as hard as possible, driving back hip and top hand through the ball
6. **Short Toss Hit Downs** (wiffle balls, hitting into cement wall)
 - a. No home runs or ground balls. 1 point for hitting wall in the air
 - b. Compete!!
7. **Pitchers Pitch to Hitters- (long cage) Pitchers- Start with 1-1 count. (15 pitches)**



- i. Hitters- Straight Compete - WIN
 - ii. Pitchers - Straight Compete - WIN
 7. **Pick off Moves-** After pitchers throw, they must do 15 pickoff moves
 8. **Pitcher BP (short cage)- Work on what you need for the season**
 - i. After long cage pitching, Pitchers rotate to short cage.
 - ii. Rocker Drill BP- ½ of pitches are off speed
 - iii. Hitters Dig in and compete
 9. **Ground Ball/Fly Ball** (basketball court)
 - i. Coach or player throw tennis ball ground balls or fly balls
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Game Speed Finishers: Coaches choose 1 or 2

2. **Step and Dive Drill**
 - a. <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/outfield-step-and-dive-drill-with-kerrick-jackson-southern-univ/>
3. **Game Speed Cutoff and Relay Drill**
 - a. Set up Defense and baserunning situation
 - b. Run through situational cutoff and relays
 - c. Make it a game or competition of some sort.
4. **Wiffle Ball Game**
 - a. Divide up teams and play!!
5. **2- Ball Drop Step Fly Ball Contest**
 - a. First ball Diagonally across field
 - b. Second ball short, back into the line
6. **Triangle ground ball to throw drill**
 - a. Divide into 3 groups
 - b. Group 1 is first baseman
 - c. Group 2 are shortstops
 - d. Group 3 Catching for coach
 - e. Coach hits (or throws) ground ball to forehand or back hand of shortstop.
 - f. Shortstop makes quick and accurate throw to first baseman.
 - g. Shortstop follows throw to get in line for first base
 - h. First baseman catches throw, quick shuffle to flips ball to player catching for coach
 - i. First baseman rotates to line catching for coach
 - j. HANDLE THE BALL!!!
7. **Diagonal Ground Ball Drill**
 - a. Two lines at opposite sides of facility (diagonal)
 - b. Player one throws ground ball to open end
 - c. Fielder runs to ball, fields and throws to opposite end of facility
 - d. Fielders continue to run/field/throw continuously.
8. **Run Downs with Runners-** [Run Down Rules Document](#)
 - a. Two run down stations- 4 players each if possible
9. **The Gauntlet Fielding Drill**
 - a. Five players spaced about 10 feet apart with ball in hand
 - b. Five players in line as first basemen
 - c. 1 Fielder
 - d. Five cones set up 10 feet away from each of the five players
 - e. Fielder must run around cone toward players with ball.
 - f. Players throw a ground ball to fielder
 - g. Fielder fields ground ball, throws to first basemen, runs around next cone
 - h. Next player throws ground ball to fielder as fielder runs around cone.
 - i. Fielder goes through all five cones and ground balls for time