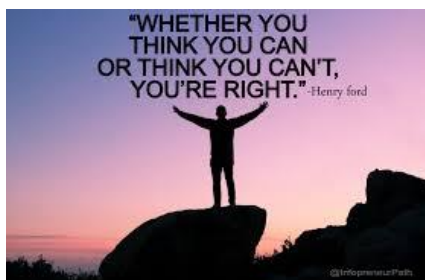


# 2026 Sluggers Winter Team Practice- Week 13

## Mental Approach



### **Mental Approach- Positive Self Talk**

I heard a great coach once say, "Every great play, pitch, or hit, starts with a simple positive thought". If you can visualize it, you will more likely be able to do it. Players should practice positive self talk often to help us through the adversity that will hit us in games and in practice.

**Example 1:** Pitcher has bases loaded, no outs -- "I am 3 good pitches away from getting three outs and ending the inning. Low and away pitch, ground ball back to me. Inside fastball pop up to third base (out 2), and a change up ground ball to short (out 3).

**Example 2:** Hitter has 0-2 count in the last inning, 2 outs and we are down by 2. "All I have to do is get to 1-2, then 2-2 count. I can fight my way back into a walk or hit, then get on base. If I get on, we can start a rally to win this game.

**Example 3:** Game winning situation: Hitter - I am looking for a pitch out over the plate, put a good swing on the pitch, and drive the ball over the 2nd baseman. Simple thought - My Pitch, My swing, game winner.

Simplifying your thought process is the key to staying positive. In a big situation in a game, a shortstop can get caught up in the moment and move away from the "how to" of fielding a ground ball. Instead, the great shortstop will think "quick feet, play through the ball" which will get him/her into the right position to make the play.

### **Obscure Rule or Game Strategy**

1. If a base runner is hit by a batted ball while on base, are you safe or out.
2. If a base runner runs into a fielder while the fielder is attempting to make a play on a batted ball, are you safe or out.
3. If a fielder makes contact with a runner without trying to make a play on a batted ball, is it fielder interference?

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

### **a. Dynamic Warmup**

- 20 foot wakeup (20 feet up and back- 5 times for each movement)
  - Forward/backward run
  - Side Shuffle
  - Karaoke (big steps forward and back)
- Knee/Hip Circles - 10 each side - [Video](#)
- Over/Under the Fence - [Video](#)
- Single Leg RDL Airplane - [Video](#)
- Walking Lunge with Reach and Rotation - [Video](#) (add reach up to sky on lunge with back foot side)
- Lateral Power Shuffles- [Video](#)
- A-Skips - [Video](#)
- Single Leg Diagonal Hops - [Video](#)
- 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. **2 (or 3) ball juggling - 120 seconds**
  - Switch directions after 60 seconds
- g. **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
- h. **Quick Catch (focus on catch and release efficiency and timing)**
  - **Always throw lengthwise (not toward windows or drywall)**
  - 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
- i. **Partner Ground Balls- Getting Around Ball**
  - **Video- <https://youtu.be/R3qra149xjA>**
  - 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
- j. **Partner Ground Balls- Backhand Focus**
  - Partners throw 20 backhands to each other- Fielders focus on proper backhand mechanics
- k. **4 Person Gauntlet Drill (Short Hop Pepper)**
  - <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/infielders-gauntlet-drill-with-tyler-qillum-sa-vannah-bananas/>
- l. **Partner Drop Step Fly Balls**
  - Tennis ball, no glove
- m. **Tennis ball run downs**
  - 3 groups, play “hot box” (rundowns) on the basketball court
  - No hesitation between plays.
- n. **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
- o. **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)
- a. **Fielding- Turn Drill**
  - Two Lines
    - Player 1 has ball, player 2 about 30 feet away, facing away from Player 1
    - Player 1 throws a short hop at Player 2
    - When player 1 is about to release the ball, the next person in line behind player 2 yells “Turn”.



- Player 2 has to turn quickly and react to catch the short hop

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## Players Choice Practice Day

Players choice - Players get together and tell the coaches what they want to work on.

Players prepare by choosing drills and fundamentals to work on at practice. All players must come to practice with -

- A team practice plan prepared
- Specific items to train for individually in the following areas (what have you struggled with so far in our practices)
  - Fielding
  - Throwing
  - Hitting
  - Pitching

## Fundamental List

- Baserunning
- Run Downs
- Fielding and Throwing Drills
- Position Specific Work
- Team Defense
- Pitching and Hitting
  - Pitching Focus - Live Pitching Situation
  - Hitting Focus - Drills and Live Hitting
- Competition
  - Pick a team competition or game that can increase our ability and skill to compete.

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## Rundown- Chaos Drill (with heavy ball / regular ball)

[Run Down Rules Document](#)

- Use a heavy ball to throw during rundowns – Players must make appropriate adjustments to get outs with the heavy ball
- 3 groups of players (2 groups of fielders, 1 group of runners)
- Run down starts on one side and players compete through run down to finish
- Immediately on finish on one run down, ball is thrown to the next fielder and run drops into baseline for the next rundown.
- No hesitation / constant movement and communication

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## Team Fielding 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. **Back Pick from Catcher - Tags**
    - Focus on feet setup and tag speed
- **2b/SS - Double Play Turns**
  - a. 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
  - b. Holding Runners - Pick off Tags
    - Focus on footwork and tag speed/mechanics



- **3b-**
  - a. Double play feeds to second
  - b. Slow Roller / Bunt Field to Throw
    - 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
  - c. Catcher Back Pick Tags
    - Focus on footwork and tag speed
- **Catchers**
  - a. Receiving and Blocking drills
  - b. Footwork throwing to second
- **OF**
  - a. Running through the fly ball (getting behind the ball and sprinting to the short fly ball)
- **PFPSituations 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)**

### **Mechanics Overview- Stride Speed**

- a. How we use our feet and the ground together creates athletic speed to the target
- b. It is a combination of using the ground to drive off of the back foot, with foot speed and head positioning for momentum to the target.
- c. Every pitcher is different in how they can manage this, but all pitchers can train to be faster and more athletic through their balance and stride.
- d. Athletic Balance → Back Leg Drive → Stride Speed → Head Positioning → Arm speed

### **Own ½ of the strike zone**

- Every great pitcher owns part of the strike zone and challenges hitters consistently with their strength. Mariano Rivera (1st base side), Tom Glavine (outside), Maddux, Scherzer (bottom), Pedro (inside)
- Our pitchers need to understand what their strength (location) is and train to own it!!



## Team Hitting

### Hitting Clinic- Extreme Pitches

Theme: 1) Stance/Posture 2) Weight Transfer /Bunting 3) Front Foot and Hands Mechanics 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) Pull Side Power 10) Opposite Field Power 11) Hitting Coordination (Feet, Hips, Hands) **12)**

### Hitting Extreme Pitches

#### Mechanic Overview- Key to Hitting Extreme Pitches (High, Low, In, Out)

- Simple Answer - Good balance, and Good Hands
- High Pitch- Hands above the ball
- Low Pitch- Back knee goes down to the low pitch (Hip should be at level of ball)
- Outside Pitch- Back hip to the outside pitch gets hands and bat into correct slot. Hit ball off of back hip
- Inside Pitch- Barrel to the ball early, hands in, back hip turn, top hand inside the ball
- All pitches- Good Posture, athletic positioning, front foot down, quick hands

#### Strategy Overview- Own 2/3 of the strike zone (Middle In, Middle Away, Up, Down)

- Know what you hit well - Hunt it and Hammer It
- The best hitters know what they hit well, and swing at pitches in their hot zones most often.
- Next level- Know what you hit for power and hunt that in plus counts

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## Hitting and Live Competition

### Warm Up

- Windshield Wiper
- Strides x 30
- Shoulder Rotations
- Contact Position
- One Handed Pendulums/Swings
- Hand Activation-Pulses
- Shoulder Hip Separation
- Full Swing-Balance

### Tee Stations

1. Tee 1- High Tee
  - a. Hands above the ball, hit the ball down
2. Tee 2- Extreme Down and Away
  - a. Tee is front outside corner and down
  - b. Head up, hip to the ball.
3. Tee 3- Extreme In
  - a. Tee is mid height, at front inside corner of plate
  - b. Hands in, back hip through the ball, top hand punch through the inside of ball
4. Short Toss Hit Downs
  - a. No stride, hands above ball, hit the top of the ball
  - b. Thrower delivers ball to the top of the zone
5. Bunting Pepper
6. Live Pitcher Hitter Competition
  - a. Count starts at 0-0
  - b. Pitcher must choose and announce  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the strike zone to pitch to... except for one pitch per batter can deviate from that side of the zone



- c. Pitcher can throw all pitches
- 7. Front Toss
  - a. Pitcher throws pitches 3-4 inches inside, outside, high/low
  - b. Hitter must barrel all pitches
- 8. Pitching Machine
  - a. Above average velocity- Up in the zone
- 9. Tracking Station - Juan Soto knob down drill
- 10. Dry Swing Station
  - a. Walking Karaoke, holding scap load and shoulders still while hips move with steps
  - b. 30 reps- Quick swings over tee

## Game Speed Finishers: Coaches choose 1 or 2

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1. **Step and Dive Drill**
  - a. <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/outfield-step-and-dive-drill-with-kerrick-jackson-southern-univ/>
2. **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.
3. **Wiffle Ball Game**
  - a. Divide up teams and play!!
4. **2- Ball Drop Step Fly Ball Contest**
  - a. First ball Diagonally across field
  - b. Second ball short, back into the line
5. **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 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!!!
6. **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.
7. **Run Downs with Runners- [Run Down Rules Document](#)**
  - a. Two run down stations- 4 players each if possible
8. **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.
9. **PFP Situations with runners-** Quick moving and faster than game speed (let the players make mistakes and correct quickly)
- a. 1-6-3 double play
  - b. Bunt plays
  - c. 3-6-1 double play
  - d. 1st and third double steal
  - e. 1st/3rd Comebacker to pitcher