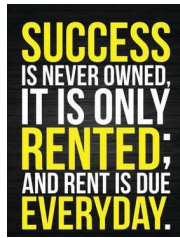


2026 Sluggers Winter Team Practice- Week 4



Mental Approach- Managing Fear of Failure (Failing Forward)

1. If we embrace our fear of potential failure as motivation to practice harder and smarter, we are winning in failure rather than losing (failing forward)
2. Every player (every season) will strike out, make an error, give up a hit, and our teams will not go undefeated.
3. Great players all have a manageable level of anxiety or fear of failure. Great players respond to this by working harder, getting stronger, and mentally tougher rather than running away from the anxiety.
4. Great players take risks in practice with the possibility of failure, so that they can learn in practice and win in games.
5. Great players respond to losing by understanding why they lost (an at bat, fielding play, game) but reviewing, assessing, fixing, and figuring it out so that they can win the next time.
6. If your response to failure is to become more prepared for the next drill, rep, practice, game, you are winning.
7. Players must train themselves to respond to the thought of failure by digging into the process, failing first then working to succeed.
8. Are you the player who fails, then asks for "One More!!" or are you embarrassed, and want to go hide in the corner?
9. Mentally tough players know that great competition comes with failure, but some failure comes with a better feeling when you work hard to succeed.
10. When you take a test in school and do not do well – Do you go back through the test and find out which questions you missed, then figure out how you could have studied better for the next test....or do you feel like a failure and "forget about it". Which response will make you a better student in the long run?
11. We can train our response to failure over time. It is not comfortable to go into a practice or game with an unknown outcome, but competition (in school and sports) can make us better, more prepared, and more likely to succeed in the long run.
12. Next time you fail in practice, work to program yourself to understand why you may have failed and make a correction for the next rep....and do not quit at any point in practice.

Obscure Rule or Game Strategy

1. If there is a dropped third strike with the bases loaded, what are the catchers options to force the hitter out to confirm the strike out? What should the infielders be telling the pitcher and catcher in advance of this happening?
2. What hitter had exactly 3,000 hits in the major leagues? What current MLB award is named after this player and why?

Goals for Week 4:

- a. **Attention to Details**
 - Do not let your routines be easy. Increase your standard and attention to detail.
- b. **Practice Faster than Game Speed**
 - When appropriate, play faster in practice than a game situation. If we speed up in practice, the game slows down for us.
- c. **Adapt and Overcome**



- Our drills are meant to challenge you mentally and physically. Players must think fast, move fast, and improvise well...just like in a game.

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

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. Resistance Band

- Pull Aparts, Overhead Pull Aparts, Diagonals, External Pulses

c. Towel Drills

- Rocker
- Quick Shoulder Turn (Head Still)
- Hop Stride Throw
- Quick Pivot Pick
- Shuffle/Quarterback Throw Pull Downs- 10

d. Heavy Ball Throws

- Flips
- Shoulder Turn
- Rocker Drill
- One Foot Throws

e. 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

f. 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

g. Two Line Quick Catch

- Split up into two teams
- Run quick catch from a line
- Catch - Quick Release throw - follow throw to the opposite line

h. Two Line Quick Catch- Short Hop Version

- Split up into two teams
- Run quick catch from a line
- Drive through short hop- Quick Release throw - follow throw to the opposite line

i. Partner Drop Step Fly Balls

- Tennis ball, no glove



Rundown- Chaos Drill

- 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

Throwing Focus - Momentum to Target (Drive off of back foot)

- a. Focused effort on getting back foot into ground and pushing in the direction of your throw.
- b. Get sideways to rotate into throw when possible.
- c. Velocity and accuracy is generated from alignment (front shoulder to target) and momentum, starting with power shuffle into throw

Partner Throwing and Catching Detail (10 minutes)

- **Power Shoulder Turn**
 - a. Players 60 feet apart - Generate as much shoulder rotational velocity as possible
- **Power Position Long Toss**
 - a. Stay 60 feet apart - Generate as much momentum as possible from a still power position
 - b. Throwers allowed to release back foot to follow through
- **Catch - Shuffle - Throw**
 - a. Full distance throwing to partner
 - b. Catch - One drive shuffle - throw and follow throw
 - c. Thrower must get back to original position quickly to catch next throw
- **Catching Focus**
 - a. Step into catch - Face behind catch
 - b. Catch out front, Short Shuffle, Shuffle Throw
 - c. Athletic positioning at all times
- **Sprint through Short Hop Pull Downs**
 - a. Drill moves very quickly - Keep players moving fast.
 - b. Player 1 is 30 feet from player 2 with ball basket
 - c. Player 1 tosses a ball to hit ground about 10 feet from player 2
 - d. Player 2 sprints through the short hop, and throws on the run (pull down). Week 1 is easy throws, working on footwork and momentum to target
 - e. Player 2 follows throw to ball basket, quickly get ball and tosses the ball to next player in line
 - f. Option 1 - Create angles so that fielder must sprint around the ball to get in position to throw
 - g. Option 2 - Thrower is closer, throwing true short hop to fielder
 - Fielder steps into ball with left (glove side foot) to "catch in rhythm)
 - Explode to target with right/left footwork to throw

Fielding Segment

Optional - Short Hop Triangle Drill

- 3 player triangle drill for speed
 - a. 1- Short hop fielder, 2- catch/throw, 3- feeder

Position Specific Drills

- b. Pick a partner and choose 1 or multiple options below
 - Pitchers Shadow Work - Focus on holding runners
 - Vary hold times
 - Quick step, reducing time to home plate
 - Pitcher Pick Off Practice
 - Variations to first base and second base
 - Catcher



- Partner Blocking and receiving Drills
- 1st Basemen
 - Wall Ball scoops or partner 1st baseman short hop scoops
 - Flips to pitcher covering first base
- Outfield
 - Do or Die field to throw footwork (sprint through the ball)
 - Getting around the ball to get momentum to the base you are throwing to
- Middle Infield - Double Play Feeds and turns

Team Fielding

- **Fielding Machine- Runner on Second 3rd/1st option**
 - a. Fielding machine is placed on mat in cage 1 or 2
 - Players get in 4 lines (behind machine, front corner of cage %, back corner of cage 5 or 6, and top of cage 1)
 - On every ground ball
 - Player 1 (at machine) calls out 1-1-1 or 3-3-3 right before fielder fields ball
 - Fielder must quickly set feet and throw to the base called out
 - 3rd baseman tags and quickly throws to 1st
 - If throw goes to 1-1-1, 1st basemen comes off base and throws to 3rd for a tag.
 - Final throw to player at machine area for a tag
- **Fielding Machine - Sprint to catch**
 - a. Configure 2 lines so that players can sprint to a short pop up/line drive
 - b. This should be an almost dive and reach to catch play
 - c. After catch, set feet and throw to the next line
- **Fielding Machine - Step and Dive Drill**
 - a. 2 lines - player dives for ground ball then hops up and throws to next line near fielding machine
- **Diagonal TCU Short Hop Drill**
 - a. 2 Lines at opposite ends of the facility
 - b. One ball - first player tosses ball to the opposite corner of facility
 - c. Player 2 runs to the short hop and plays through it, quick release toss to the next player at the opposite end of facility

Hitting Clinic- Push Off and Momentum into Ball

Theme: 1) Stance/Posture 2) Weight Transfer /Bunting 3) Hitting Extreme Pitches 4) **Push Off**

Mechanic Overview- Use Ground to hit (Push from back to front foot)

- Back foot cannot be passive- Purposeful push from back foot to front
- Use head positing to transfer weight
- Head moves into stride to center between feet
- Front foot must be firmly into ground during swing for stability.
- Generate momentum into the pitch
- Use momentum to help hands and back hip drive through the ball

Strategy Overview- Eliminating pitches before and during at bat

- Use warmups and previous at bats (to other hitters) as information to look for pitches and locations.
- If a pitcher is pitching to one location 80% of the time, we can look for that pitch.

Bunting Pepper (5 minutes)

- Groups of 3 players
- Fast moving and athletic (1 bunt every 2 seconds!!)
- Off balance throws- catch and release



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

Hitting Drill Set

1. Tee 1- **Wide Stance Rocker Hitting Drill**
 - a. Wide stance- Start into front foot, rock back then into front foot to hit
2. Tee 2- **Narrow Stance Stride Drill**
 - a. Start with feet together and hands back, push from back foot into stride
3. Tee 3- **Crossover Stance Drill**
 - a. Start with front foot crossed over back (toe pointed to catcher)
 - b. Stride fast, unwinding into slightly open stance position
 - c. Front foot lands and drives into ground for stability to hit
4. **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!!
5. **Optional - Heavy Ball Launch Angle** (Do not hit into wall, hit into a net if possible)
 - a. Low pitch, hit the bottom of the ball for a long line drive to the outfield
6. **Pitchers Competitive BP (Pitch to Hitters) 60% max, all strikes from Stretch (15 pitches)**
 - i. Hitters- 3 takes, 3 hit and runs (must swing)
 - ii. Catchers catch if available
7. **Pick off Moves**- After pitchers throw, they must do 15 pickoff moves each to 1st and 2nd

Game Speed Finishers

2- Ball Drop Step Fly Ball Contest

1. First ball Diagonally across field
2. Second ball short, back into the line

Body Control Running throws

1. Start in one line
2. First player runs to the cone about 40 feet away
3. At about 20-30 feet, the player turns and throws to the next person in line
4. As fielder 2 catches the ball, he/she throws the ball back to fielder one, then fielder 2 runs toward the cone.
5. At about 20-30 feet, fielder 1 throws the ball back to fielder 2
6. Fielder 2 catches and immediately turns and throws to fielder 3 in line.
7. Create 2 teams and compete against each other

Drop Step Fly Ball Contest

1. Player starts in corner of facility
2. Coach throws fly ball to other corner
3. Player sprints to catch it
4. Last man standing wins

Rapid Fire - Two Goal Fireball Contest

1. Set up 2 smaller goals about 15 feet apart on each end of facility
2. One team player throws ball to try to score goal in one of the goal



3. 1 player from opposing team has to cover both goals to make diving or running stops
4. Goalie catches and quickly tries to throw ball into goal of opposing team
5. Players switch to new goalie after each throw

Last Drill: Player Name Game

Coaches test players to learn names of teammates. Every missed name is 5 burpees.