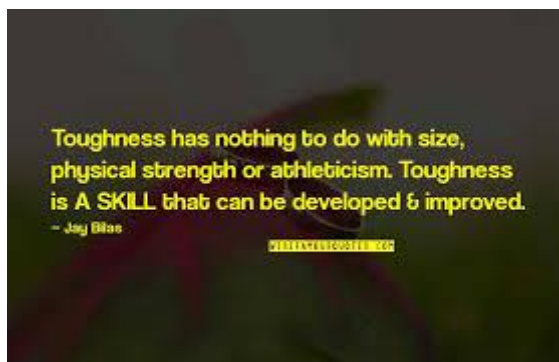


2026 Sluggers Winter Team Practice- Week 6



Mental Approach

Mental Toughness

Mechanical Approach

Hitting: Shoulder Line / Situational Hitting (Hit and Run and Home Runs)

Fielding: Backhand / Footwork / Angles to the Ball- [Video](#) – Palm Up/Down- [Video](#)

Throwing: Release out in front

Pitching: Holding Runners on Base and Pick Off Moves

Team Defense: PFP Situations (if time allows)

Mental Approach- [Mental Toughness](#) - [Video](#) - [Secret to Mental Toughness](#)

“Mental toughness is doing what is right rather than what is comfortable”

Mentally tough athletes teach themselves to want to do (and actually do) what they need to do to win...even if it is not comfortable or easy. Every day is a decision to do the right things to reach your goals, or not. Mentally tough enjoy the daily process that makes them stronger in competition.

- Mental Toughness is a skill that can be trained.
- Mental Toughness comes from embracing adversity in practice, and actively training to adapt and overcome (figure it out before quitting)
- Mental Toughness comes from challenging yourself in practice so that you fail, figure it out, then succeed...over and over again.
- Mentally tough people do not accept failure. They either **win or learn**. When they do not win, they fight their way back with work ethic to win in the future.
- Mentally tough people love digging into the details. They attack drills as a challenge. They compete in every aspect of practice. That is what makes them tougher.
- Mentally tough athletes plan for adversity, and develop plans for how to react to it in competition. They expect and enjoy the adversity, because they are prepared for it, react positively to it and use it as a competitive advantage.

Players must work to be mentally tough in every aspect of practice. Dig in and compete in all drills or against their peers.

Obscure Rule or Game Strategy

1. Catcher's Interference- In the case of catcher's interference, is the play dead? If the hitter happens to hit a double in the gap, can the play continue?
2. Where is the baseball hall of fame?
3. Name 3 players currently in the hall of fame that have hit a home run off of Brad Woodall.

Goals for Week 5:

- a. Toughness



- Find new ways to become tougher when you want to quit.
 - Losing is not an option - You either Win or Learn

DAILY ROUTINES - FIRST 30

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. Partner Ground Balls- Backhand Focus

- Partners throw 20 backhands to each other- Fielders focus on proper backhand mechanics

h. 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

i. 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



- j. **Partner Drop Step Fly Balls**
 - Tennis ball, no glove
- k. **4 Person Gauntlet Drill (Short Hop Pepper)**
 - <https://coachesinsider.com/baseball/infielders-gauntlet-drill-with-tyler-gillum-sa-vannah-bananas/>
- l. **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

Turf Practice

Throwing Instructional

Theme: 1) **Release ball out in front**

- **Focus on releasing the ball at full extension in front of face to the target.**
 - a. Head stays on Center line during throw
 - b. Take nose to the target so that head does not move side to side.
 - c. Release ball in front of body, not behind it.
 - i. Unload Sequence should be -
 - ii. Push with back foot
 - iii. Stay sideways through stride
 - iv. At foot strike, back foot turn to shoelaces down
 - v. Active hip turn, then shoulder turn, then arm whips through
 - vi. Release the ball in front of body, finish with active fingers to the target
- **Catch and Tag-** All players catch and tag, then set feet to make throw
- Depending on numbers, coaches can decide whether to have everyone throw at the same time or do staggered throwing (2 groups) or lines
- Catch out front, Short Shuffle, Shuffle Throw
 - Athletic positioning at all times

Rundown- Chaos Drill (with heavy 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

Throwing Drills

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 Fundamental - **Back Hand Mechanics**

- Fielding Backhands - [Video 1](#)
- Fielding Backhands- [Video 2](#)
- Fielding Backhands- [Video 3](#)
- Backhand Mechanics
 - Line up lead foot with ball
 - Field ball out front
 - Face behind ground ball
 - Drive through the ball- Drive off of back foot into ball if possible
 - Be an athlete- Stay low and close to the ball

Position Specific Daily Drills

- a. Pick a partner and choose 1 or multiple options below
 - Softball Pitchers
 - Daily drill progression
 - Baseball 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
 - Change up grip catch
 - Catcher
 - Partner Blocking and receiving Drill progression
 - 1st Basemen
 - Partner 1st baseman
 - Good throw footwork - Short hop scoops - Off line right and left - High throws
 - Flips to pitcher covering first base off of backhand ground ball
 - Pickoff tags



- Outfield
 - Drop step partner fly balls - Get behind the ball drill
 - 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
 - Throw ball so that outfielder must sprint around the ball to get momentum to where the throw is going.
- Middle Infield
 - Quick feet Short Hops- R/L catch - R/L throw rhythm footwork (gain ground to the target)
 - Backhand focus - one step short hop to feet set to throw
 - Running backhand to jump throw
 - Double Play Feeds and turns

Team Fielding

- **Short Hop Triangle Drill- Backhands**
 - a. 3 player triangle drill for speed
 - 1- Short hop fielder, 2- catch/throw, 3- feeder
 - All Back hand short hops
- **Touch Bucket Fly Ball Drill**
 - a. Two players start in prone position
 - b. Players have to sprint around a bucket and race to a cone then compete to catch a fly ball.
- **Pitcher PFP Hot Seat Drill**
 - a. Set up infield around pitcher
 - b. Each pitcher goes through a rapid fire segment of the following
 - Comebacker to first
 - Bunt - throw to third
 - Comebacker 1-6-3 double play
 - 3-1 cover first
 - Bunt - throw to first
 - 3-6-1 Double play
 - Squeeze play
- **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 of 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 (quick release)**
 - a. 2 Lines at opposite ends of the facility
 - b. One ball - first players tosses ball to the opposite corner of facility
 - c. Player 2 runs to the short hop and plays through it, quick release jump throw toss to the next player at the opposite end of facility



* * Tag focus on all drills when possible

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- Back Side Path- Hit and Run and Home Runs

Theme: 1) Stance/Posture 2) Weight Transfer /Bunting 3) Hitting Extreme Pitches 4) Push Off 5) Bat Speed Training/Hitting High Velocity 6) **Front Shoulder Line to Back Side Path / Hit and Run**

Mechanic Overview- Front Shoulder Line to Back Side Path / Hit and Run / Home Run Angle

- **Mechanics Overview- Shoulder Line/Creating a path to Extension**
 - Hitters must maintain an open path for the back shoulder and hip to get to the ball
 - If a hitter does the following, it limits their ability to drive backside and extend to the target
 - Closes off with feet (closed stance or stepping into home plate rather than pitcher)
 - Turns front shoulder into home plate (blocks back shoulder from getting to the ball and creates “casting” with top hand)
 - Wraps bat behind head creating too much shoulder turn
- **Length through the Ball- Inside Out**
 - Hands work on a line through the inside of the ball
 - Extension is through the path of the ball, fully extended through the target (where you want the ball to go)
 - Back heel up, back hip through the ball to support the hands
 - Bottom Hand Pull -- Top Hand punch – back shoulder past the ball
- **Bat Control (Intro to Situational Hitting)**
 - **Hit and Run (Opposite Field Ground Ball) Mechanics**
 - Front foot down early (stable front side)
 - Quiet body, Quick Hands- If we focus on hands, we have more bat control
 - Attack the top, inside part of the ball (seek it and hit it)
 - Level swing- Front shoulder down, posture up (stay above the ball)
 - Keep hands above the ball to hit
 - **Launch Angle to Pull Side**
 - 20-30 degree Launch Angle
 - Get to ball in front of home plate- Hitting window at front hip to in front of front knee
 - Similar Mechanics to above (hit and run)
 - Level Swing
 - Accelerate through the bottom of the ball
 - Use leg and back knee to create angle to bottom of ball (Not shoulders)



Strategy Overview- Mental Side- Minimize Damage

1. 1 for 3 with a walk
 - a. When you are up against a good pitcher, or not hitting well.
 - b. Goal should be get on base any way you can.
 - Draw a walk
 - bunt base hit
 - use ½ of the field to go to the opposite field

Hitting Drill Set

1. Tee 1- **Open Stance - Wide Stance/No Stride, Balance at Finish**
 - a. Slightly open stance with feet
 - b. Transfer weight into front foot for stability, then push off with back foot and hip through the ball
 - c. Back shoulder extends past the tee
 - d. Hold balance at finish
2. Tee 2- **Out front tee: ¾ slo mo swing over ball → Full swing through ball**
 - a. ¾ swing past ball in slo mo - top hand and back shoulder stays line to pitcher
 - b. Full swing, full extension with back side through the ball
3. Tee 3- **HookEm Crossover Stance Swings** ([Video](#))
 - a. Start in leg kick balance position
 - b. Front foot down, accelerate through the ball
4. Tee 4- **Big Papi Leg Kick Hover to Hit: Tee at stride length**
 - a. Head to the ball, back hip catches up to head in rotation
5. **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!!
6. **Optional - Heavy Ball Launch Angle**
 - a. Low pitch, hit the bottom of the ball for a long line drive to the outfield
7. **Pitchers Pitch to Hitters- (long cage) Pitchers Start in 2-1 Count from Stretch (15 pitches)**
 - i. Hitters- 3 Hit and runs, then compete starting in a 2-1 count
 - ii. Catchers catch if available
7. **Pick off Moves-** After pitchers throw, they must do 15 pickoff moves
8. **Pitcher BP (short cage)- ½ change ups**
 - 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

Pitching Focus- Holding Runners on base (Baseball) / Shoulder Line Concept

- **Mechanics Overview- Holding runners on base**
 - a. Keys to holding runners on base
 - Be quick to home plate- 1.5 seconds or less ([Video](#))
 - Hold ball (2-4 seconds) and vary times holding the ball
 - Practice pickoff moves
 - [Pick off Moves- Right Handed and 2nd Base](#)
 - [Inside Pick off- 2nd base](#)
 - [Left Handed 1st base](#)
 - [Best MLB Pick Offs](#)
- **Mechanics Overview- Shoulder Line/Creating a path to Extension**

- Pitchers must maintain an open path for the back shoulder to get to the target
- If a Pitcher does the following, it limits their ability to drive throwing shoulder and extend to the target
 - Throws across body, blocking the back side from getting to the target
 - Turns front shoulder too far closed in balance or stride phase
 - Front side extension sideways (forearm to the dugout) rather than to the target
- Keys and Corrections
 - Set heel of glove near belly button through stretch position and balance point (do not turn glove too far into back hip)
 - Bring front (stride) knee up into back hip, between elbows to glove in leg kick
 - Set front side action– Forearm to the target
- **Bottom line-** Back shoulder needs a clear path to the target for max velo and extension.
- **Mechanics Overview- Feeling Extension to Target**
 - Full extension with throwing side (Shoulder, hip, knee, foot, and throwing hand at finish)
 - Focus on throwing side shoulder to target
 - Maximize the distance travelled of throwing hand and back shoulder from reach back at load to target at finish.



Strategy Overview- **Minimizing Damage**

- The best pitchers bend but do not break, minimizing damage during innings
- No crooked numbers!!!
- Know what your quality pitch is and continue to make competitive pitches
- Know the situation- When to attack hitters and when to be careful
- Do not put extra runners on base- Walks

Strategy 2- Pitchers should always know who is coming up the next inning!!

- **If you always know who is on deck and in the hole, you can strategize around the inning**
 - **Best hitter up 3rd - Make sure you are aggressive to the first two hitters**
- **Unintentional/Intentional Walks-** Sometimes it is advantageous to throw aggressive pitches outside the strike zone
 - Base open - Good hitter up, average hitter on deck
 - Setting up a force out at home or second
 - Further strategy

Game Speed Finishers: Coaches choose 1 or 2

1. **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!!!
2. **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.

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