

# Sluggers Pitching Clinic

## Athletic Balance and Head Still Mechanics

### Mechanics Overview- Athletic Balance

- Similar to loading up to jump, or starting blocks in a race, the balance position is a powerful and athletic position to launch from.
- Think small and compact in balance position (knee, glove, head in line and close together)
- As pitcher arrives at balance position -
  - Weight into inside of drive foot to push down the mound

### Mechanics Overview- Head Still

- During leg kick and stride, head stays on the center line and travels to the target with throw.
- The big challenge in pitching is to create a big rotational movement with a still head

### Location > Velocity

- Every great pitcher has command of the strike zone
- Not every great pitcher has velocity
- If we control our mechanics, we control the ball
- To win games for your team, a pitcher must throw strikes first, then figure out how to get outs from there.
- Create angles down and away, to the top of the strike zone, inside and out.
- Understand your movement to set your sights on where to start the pitch to end up in the location you want to get outs.



### 1. Warm Up

- Resistance Bands
  - Pull Aparts (side and rainbows)
  - Diagonals
  - Unilateral Arm Circles
  - External Pulses

### 2. Towel Drills (Everyone)

- 2 x Balance Drill - Rocker
- Quick Shoulder Turn
- Hop-Hop Stride Throw
- Quick Pivot Pick
- Mechanics Build with Towel**
  - Slow Stride with hip drive (pocket) to target
  - Quick Stride (challenge to keep body positioning)



### 3. Drill Stations

1. Drill 1
  - i. Balance and Tap Drill (Balance - Drive Leg down behind rubber, then back up to stride)
2. Drill 2
  - i. Rocker with Back Foot Up (focus on face to the target and release out front)
3. Drill 3
  - i. Johnny Cueto Turns (slow) with face to target finish

### 4. PFP Drill

- I. Partner 1-6-3 DP and Bunt Reads
  - i. 1-6-3 DP
    1. Partner bounce a ground ball to pitcher
    2. Pitcher turns, sets feet and throws into net as if throwing to second base to start a double play Rebound Net Pickups with Tennis ball
  - ii. Bunt Reads
    1. Partner rolls a bunt to pitcher
    2. As the pitcher fields the ball, partner yells 1-1-1, 2-2-2, or 3-3-3
    3. Pitcher has to set his feet quickly to throw to that base

### 5. Pickoffs

- l. Inside move to second
- m. Normal leg kick
- n. Drive glove and shoulders to second to help turn
- o. Front foot lands, and pitcher shuffle sets feet to throw to second

### 6. Pitching Strength

- l. Skater Balance with Med Ball - 20
- m. Iso Lunge - Switch at 10
- n. 30 Trampoline on one foot (balance leg) and
- o. Front Leg Pickups (RDL) with Heavy Ball

### 7. Live Pitching

- l. Lane 1
  - i. 1 & 3 sec. holds/ 1.5 sec. Stretch
  - ii. Situation =  $\frac{1}{4}$  strike zone Location (pick a quadrant, and create the angle to get the ball there)
  - iii. Flip to Pitcher in Pitching Lane- Curve Ball Flips
- m. Lane 2
  - i. First Batter of First Inning ( $\frac{2}{3}$  Strikes - Breath/Set/pitch every 6 seconds)
  - ii. First pitch is 80% strike percentage (choose pitch and location to get 80%)
  - iii. Flips to Pitcher- Change Up Flips

### 8. Pulldown Variation

- l. Back step to Spin to Pull Downs
  - i. Pitcher starts facing the opposite direction
  - ii. Run backward and Spin to create max momentum to the target
  - iii. Finish and follow to the target

### 9. Warm Down (Optional)

- l. Heavy Ball External Jacks- 30 seconds
- m. Mountain Climbers- 30 seconds



# Silver Sluggers Hitting Clinic

## Head Positioning

### **Mechanic Overview-** Head Positioning during swing

- Face to the Pitcher- (nose goes from home plate to shortstop to pitcher)
- Eyes/vision goes from logo of pitcher cap to release point
- Good posture in athletic stance (head over hips and knees)
- Head Stays level and on track to the target
- Head moves forward on track into stride to center between feet
- During Swing, back hip drives forward catching up to head (Hip forward to line up with head and shoulder)
- During Swing, head stays completely still with body rotating around head (axis)

### **Strategy Overview-** Guessing pitches

- If you are watching the pitcher before your at bat, you will be able to guess pitches
- Every pitcher falls into a trend and can be predicted
- If a pitcher is pitching to one location 80% of the time, we can look for that pitch

### **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- (Partners)**

1. Tee 1: Number Flash
  - a. Partner 1 is hitting while partner 2 is standing on the other side of the tee
  - b. Partner two places his hand a SAFE but close distance from the tee opposite of Player 1's eyes.
  - c. When partner 1 swings partner 2 flashes a number with his fingers that partner 1 then has to relay back to partner 2
2. Tee 2: Ichiro (Hover to Hit)
  - a. Pick up front foot and hover
  - b. Swing 1 - Normal front foot down to swing
  - c. Swing 2 - Push through the swing with back foot, moving past the ball to hit, like a slap hit in softball
3. Tee 3: Hook'Em
  - a. Start with front foot crossed over back foot (extreme closed)
  - b. Hands in front of stance
  - c. Uncoil stride while bringing hands back
  - d. Swing 1 - When front foot lands, hold into (Josh Donaldson) athletic position
  - e. Swing 2 - Let it eat
4. Tee 4- Wide Stance Back hip, shoulder and hands connection drill
  - a. No stride, bat stays touching outside of back shoulder at turn
  - b. Hands and hips stay connected and catch up to head during swing
  - c. Balance at end of swing
5. Tee 5- George Brett Drill
  - a. Head starts back over back leg, then moves forward to hit

- b. Create momentum to for back hip to catch up to head whiplash effect
6. Tee 6- 45 degree open - Head/Hip/Hands Connection
  - a. Head, Hip and Hands work together to drive bat through the ball
7. Bunting Pepper
8. Short Toss
  - a. Heavy Ball (Manny Machado head forward drill)
  - b. Light Ball (Paul Molitor- No movement/Quick Hands)
9. Live Hitting
  - a. 2 bunts (1 - Runners on 1st only, 1 - Runners on 1st and 2nd)
  - b. 1 Slash, 1 Hit and Run
  - c. 8 swings (if coach is pitching, mix up locations and pitches into a pattern and have the hitter start to guess pitches)
10. Tracking Station
  - a. Tracking Station (hands back and foot down at release)
  - b. Juan soto shuffle if you want to have fun with it
11. Strength Station
  - a. Rip Trainer Punches - 20
  - b. Sand bell Skaters

## SLUGGERS CATCHING CLINIC

### WEEK 4

#### **BLOCKING-LATERAL MOVEMENT**



“An attitude can change-or be changed. We are never stuck for life with an attitude we don’t want. But we-not the situation, not other people-must control the change, so that it’s a change for the better.”

- Walking lunges
- High knees
- Calf raises from toes
- Duck walk
- Dry blocks (5-5-5)



- Rectangle-Warm up
- Agility line drill

#### Warm-Up(Hands)

- Heavy ball drop and catch
- Wiffle ball Warm-Up(Legs)bare-hand with partner

#### Warm-Up(Throwing)

- Bands
- Towel Drill
  - Flips
  - Shoulder turn
  - Rocker
  - Heal clicks
- 1 Knee transfers
- Right foot step
- Left foot step(close)
- Catch-right-left standing
- (2) footwork to each base-no throw
- Ball in glove-secondary stance
- Kickstand slide dry blocks

### **MECHANICAL OVERVIEW-BLOCKING LATERALLY**

- Anticipate the ball in the dirt
- Take care of the area around the plate
- Understanding spin with pitch that is called
- Leading with the glove
- Keeping glove down-once glove goes down it stays down
- Pushing off the inside of you opposite foot
- Glove gets down first and helps body follow
- Creating body angle to keep ball in front
  - Advanced-creating body angle to base that you will potentially throw to
- Recovery-Job isn't done yet

### **STRATEGY OVERVIEW-BUNTS**

- Anticipate bunt situations before they happen
- Take an out when they give it to you
- Don't be a hero
- Know where every infielder should be
- If we call or throw to the lead base/has to be a for sure out
- As a catcher, we have more time than we think to make the throw on a bunt



## **DRILLS**

### **Round 1- Lateral Blocking**

- Perfect block/glove down laterally and body follows - Station 1
- Tennis balls/no glove - Station 2
- Lateral rollers - ½ cage
- Machine blocks - ½ cage
- Tennis ball-bare hand 1 hops
- Baseball-glove on 1 hops

### **Round 2- Lateral Blocking**

- Standing lateral turns - ½ cage
- 1 hop lateral blocks with baseball - ½ cage
- Live pitch - block and recover with a throw - full cage
- Wall drill
- Block and recover without blocking baseball-ball placed in front of player in stationary position
- Strength Station
  - Sandbag Skaters
  - Bosu Ball Balance
  - Jump Rope (30)

## **CHALLENGE ROUND**

**BREAKING BALL BLOCKING OFF MACHINE IF TIME ALLOWS**



## Sluggers Fielding Clinic - Week 5

### Building on Greatness-Trust the Process

## 10 Tips To #SUAVE

- Be an *athlete*, not a robot - learn to *dance* with the ball (literally)
- Create angles and maintain *momentum* to your *target* (when possible)
- *Follow* throws whenever possible
- Choose to field the *long hop* or *short hop* (avoid the in-between hop)
- Play *low to high* with flex gloved wrist
- Know when to use *one hand* vs. *two-handed* catch
- Know when to *get in front* of the ball or to *declare* backhand/forehand
- Know when to come and get it...*really come and get it*..and throw on the run
- Know when to execute *minimum footwork* (extra steps are a choice).
- WANT the BALL and EXPECT the ball on *every single* pitch

## Simple to Complex-Our progression

## Drill List to Becoming a Smooth

### Infielder

- Ball Dribble walks
- V-Slot Drills
- V-Slot Catch Play Routine - 1/2 of the Play is the Throw
- Fielding Posture Drills
- Footwork Drills
- Hands Drills
- Feet and Hands Combo Drills
- Purposeful Infield Drills..."Big 5"
- Quality Repetitions - Game Speed
  - Mechanic Overview-Building a Good foundation-First Week... Explain... and Slow down
    - Body position



- Footwork
- Arm strength
- Strategy Overview-Eyes through the ball  
    **PASS the EYES TEST**
- Over Emphasize seeing the ball
- Smooth
- Move your head to see through your hand

#### **:10 Dynamic Warm-Up**

- Pre-Throwing Shoulder Conditioning-Why we do this
- Shoulder Stabilization (with bands/towels)-Quick to wake up muscle

#### **V-Slot Activation-10 to 20 reps-Every Days**

- 1. Clap V's – No Feet
- 2. Clap V Into L Footwork
- 3. Clap V into Step Through Footwork
- 4. Dribble into V-Slot-With tennis ball
- 5. Dribble into L Box-Go around box-tennis
- 6. Self-Toss Picks into V-Slot
- 7. Backhand Self-Toss Picks
- 8. Self-toss forehand into V-Slot
- 9. ½ Bounce Throw Hand V-Slot

#### **Solid Front Side mechanics**

**Nose/Chin to target (on centerline) Quiet Head**

#### **Instructional Points: V Slot**

- Once the ball separates from the glove, the glove turns the thumb down to the target and leads the way to the target, with the front forearm positioned so that if you had a watch on, you could tell the time as you look to the target
  - After the front foot is down, the shoulders turn by the front elbow, returning to the body, moving past the glove side hip, with glove setting (palm up), somewhere between the glove side hip and armpit.
  - Nose/Chin to Target
  - As the shoulders start to turn and the glove comes into the body, the nose and chin go to the target.



- Taking the nose and chin to target creates drive and momentum to target (velocity) and keeps the body on the centerline to maximize power through body alignment.

### **Advance from the Simple to the Complex - LADDERS**

- A. Forward**
- B. Backward**
- C. Eyes closed – Trust your feet – Believe!**

#### **Variations -Forward and Back**

- 1.1 In the hole**
- 2. 2 in the hole**
- 3. Side shuffle each way**
- 4. In/in/out/out**
- 5. Double touch on the outside**
- 6. Hopscotch**

### **JUGGLE-Break down Juggle -Two ball-Up and under Start with two balls in the dominate hand Up and Under-Two balls**

### **Wall Ball Routine**

- 1. Two Ball Quick Exchange**
- 2. Two Ball Forehand Toss - Bounce**
- 3. One Ball Backhand Hinge - Pick**
- 4. Two Ball Standing Forehand Speed Exchange**
- 7. Kneeling – Zone 1 - Receive**
- 8. Kneeling – DP – Flip Feeds**
- 9. Kneeling – DP – Toss Feeds**
- 12. 3 ball partners juggle**

### **Hip Flexibility/Posture Holds**

- Hip Henge Drops**
- Posture Holds x 30 Sec**
- Fore/Center/Back**

### **Jump Rope Routine Advance from simple to complex**

- 1. Everything forward**



## **2. Everything backward**

### **3. Eyes close**

- 1. Standard**
- 2. High Knees**
- 3. Butt Kicks**
- 5. Side to side**

**Cage Slow Rollers-Attack the ball-receive through the ball.**

**Working on what we've learned.**

**Cage-Slow 2 Ball Hop to Power-Centre**

**Bounce Back - Short Hop to Power**

**Work into V Slot**

**Frisbee Routine-Throw right - Catch left**

### **Throwing Progression-**

- **Drill Set- Throwing Program (All Players Perform Drills Together)-Find a net**
  - **Flip Drill (15 throws into the net)**
  - **Fingers stay behind the ball with a four-seam grip, glove tucked to the glove side**
  - **Active fingers through the ball, through the target**
  - **The thrower looks for perfect backspin on each throw**
- **Shoulder Turns-15 into net**
  - **Thrower turns front shoulder to target, then turns into throw with shoulders**
  - **Head stays still on the centerline from start to finish.**
  - **Throwing shoulder ending position is to the target**
  - **The goal is for shoulders to turn 180 degrees during the throw**
- **Pivot Pick Off-15 into net**
  - **Shoulder Turn Standing Sideways (opposite of the rocker) to the target**
- **Rocker Drill**
  - **Thrower sets in stride position (as if front foot is down after stride)**
  - **Glove is out to target (proper front side position)**



- **Weight is back against the back foot**
- **The thrower makes a turn (with no stride) to throw**
- **Back foot rotates to heel turn and shoelaces down (toe still maintains contact with the ground)**
- **Nose and Chin to the target**
- **Finish Position Checklist: SOFTBALL FOCUS**
  - **Glove tucked at glove side**
  - **Nose/Chin to Target**
  - **Back foot still in contact with the ground, with shoelaces down**
  - **Front knee, slightly bent but firm**
  - **Chest over front knee**

**Slow ground balls in the cage, working on V Slot-Backhands**

**YES, you can indeed work on this at home.**