

# Sluggers Pitching Clinic

## Shoulder Line and Extension to Target

### Mechanics Overview- **Creating Shoulder Line / Extension to Target**

- **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

### Strategy Focus- **Holding Runners on Second Base**

- Pitcher should be able to hold a runner on second base without the help of the infielders
- Inside pick off move
- Spin Move with no throw
- Holding Ball with quick step off
- Quick delivery to home plate
- Read the lead!!



## Videos

[Pedro Martinez- Pitch Mechanics](#)

[Trey Mancini- Tee Hitting Drills](#)

[Adam Eaton- Tee Hitting Drills](#)

[Max Scherzer- Bullpen Routine](#)

[Jacob Degrom - Bullpen](#)

[Shohei Othani- Bullpen](#)

[Max Scherzer- Discusses Pitching Mechanics](#)

[Tom House- NPA Wall Drills](#)

[Max Scherzer Slow Motion Mechanics](#)

[Jacob Degrom Slow Motion Mechanics](#)

[Jacob Degrom Slow Motion Mechanics- 2](#)

[Aroldis Chapman Slow Motion Mechanics](#)

### 1. Warm Up

- I. Resistance Bands
  - i. Pull Aparts (side and rainbows)
  - ii. Diagonals
  - iii. Unilateral Arm Circles
  - iv. External Pulses

### 2. Towel Drills (Everyone)

- l. 2 x Balance Drill - Rocker
- m. Quick Shoulder Turn
- n. One foot balance throws (glove side foot down)
- o. Hop-Hop Stride Throw
- p. Quick Pivot Pick
- q. **Mechanics Build with Towel**
  - i. Slow Stride with hip drive (pocket) to target
  - ii. Quick Stride (challenge to keep body positioning)

### 3. Drill Stations (All Pitching Drills focus on head positioning and athletic balance)

#### I. Players work in pairs

##### 1. Drill 1: [Slow Stride Drill](#)

- i. Start in Balance Position (head, hip, shoulder, glove, knees in line)
- ii. Stride down and out slowly, controlling movement and balance through stride
- iii. Keep head over back hip as long as possible (sit into back leg) through front ½ of stride
- iv. As front foot approaches landing point, push with back foot to generate momentum to target
  1. Feel for the correct timing of push to target

##### 2. Drill 2: **Rocker with Back foot up (full extension)**

- i. Drive back shoulder to target for full extension throws
- ii. Use push from back foot to drive back shoulder over front side and to the target
- iii. Full finish to target (back shoulder to target, throwing hand past front hip)

##### 3. Drill 3: **Lean Back Drill**

- i. Lean into back leg/hip, driving back foot into ground
- ii. Bring stride leg, knee back into opposite hip
- iii. Accelerate stride, momentum to target
- iv. Maximize distance from lean back to finish to the target

#### 4. Pitching Strength 1

##### i. **Med Ball Squat Jump Slams**

1. Wide Stance - Hold med ball on throwing side hip in rocker position
2. Sink down into deep squat with back leg
3. Jump up and out into a med ball slam upon landing



4. End in back foot up balance over front side (challenge is to catch the med ball of the ground in the front foot balance position)
    - ii. **Body Blade - Full rocker drill with body blade**
      1. Start in Rocker Position with arm in back position (shake body blade)
      2. Move over front side to back foot up and shoulder over opposite knee
  5. **Pitching Strength 2**
    - i. **Trampoline Change Ups** (Green or blue ball)
    - ii. **Jump Rope** - 80 reps
  6. **PFPP(options)**
    - i. Squeeze play
      1. Partner roll a bunt to pitcher
      2. Pitcher sprint to the ball, barehand scoop and feed to partner/catcher
    - ii. Pass ball home plate cover
      1. Pitcher sprint to home, covering home.
      2. Partner feed ball to pitcher to make the tag on the run.
  7. **Pickoff- Dry Picks to first (footwork focus)**
    - i. Dry Pickoffs, working on footwork (quick feet, finish with arm up in throwing position.)
  8. **Pulldown Option**
    - i. Double Pro Step / Crossunder Throw with change up
      1. Set frame with glove out and ball back
      2. Crossunder footwork to create momentum
      3. Emphasize long finish to target with back shoulder
  9. **Live Pitching- Option 1**
    - i. Situation = 2-1 count- Fight way back to an out with  $\frac{2}{3}$  quality pitches
      1. No middle strikes!!
      2. Walk = 5 burpees
    - ii. Partner- Curve ball flips
    - iii. Switch after every 3 pitches
  10. **Live Pitching- Option 2 - 1 & 3 sec. holds/ 1.5 sec. Stretch**
    - i. Situation = 2-1 count- Fight way back to an out with  $\frac{2}{3}$  quality pitches
      1. No middle strikes!!
      2. Walk = 5 burpees
    - ii. Hold Runner on second base (come set and look at second base, varying times to home)
    - iii. Partner- Change Up Flips
    - iv. Partners switch after 3 pitches

# Silver Sluggers Hitting Clinic

## Back Shoulder Line- Extension to Target

### Mechanic Overview-

1. Batting Stance-Where to stand
  - a. Create a routine to find a stance position for consistent placement to the strike zone
2. **Mechanics Overview- Shoulder Line/Creating a path to Extension**
  - a. Hitters must maintain an open path for the back shoulder and hip to get to the ball
  - b. 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
3. **Length through the Ball- Inside Out**
  - a. Hands work on a line through the inside of the ball
  - b. Extension is through the path of the ball, fully extended through the target (where you want the ball to go)
  - c. Back heel up, back hip through the ball to support the hands
  - d. Bottom Hand Pull -- Top Hand punch -- back shoulder past the ball

### 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
    - It is amazing what you can do with a specific, simple plan.
    - Use the open space on the field (oppo field ground ball hole)

Head Center with front shoulder down // Use Legs to hit



Back Shoulder and Hip to the Ball



Chin and Shoulder Alignment





## Videos

[Mookie Betts Slow Motion Swing](#)

[Ronald Acuna - Slow Motion Swing](#)

[DJ Lemahieu - Movement and Rhythm](#)

[Juan Soto - Movement and Rhythm](#)

[Anthony Rendon - Stride and Separate / Hands Back](#)

[Nelson Cruz- Tee Hitting Routine](#)

[Albert Pujols- Tee Routine](#)

[Freddie Freeman- Keys to Hitting off of Tee](#)

[Juan Soto- Slow Motion Swing](#)

[Austin Riley- Slow Motion Swing](#)

[Josh Donaldson Slow Motion Swing](#)

[Josh Donaldson Weight Transfer/Separation Drill](#)

[Jim Thome Discusses How to Elevate Ball in Swing](#)

[Austin Riley Talking about Hitting Adjustments](#)

## 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- **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- **Back Foot Push through swing - Bat Speed / Exit Velo**
  - a. Partner recording exit velo
4. Tee 4- Mini Bat full swings
  - a. Full swing with mini bat (18"-24")
  - b. Letting Hands get out front without casting
5. **Short Toss Hit Downs (wiffle balls into bownet)**
  - a. No stride, hands above ball, hit the top of the ball
  - b. Have hitters experiment with pre-loading into front leg with hands back
6. **Strength Station 1**
  - a. Top Hand Resistance Band Punches (hand stays in line to target)
  - b. Top Hand Scap Load Rows
  - c. Bottom Hand Punches (straight line, full extension to pitcher, band should not touch body)
7. **Bunting Pepper**
  - a. Active Fielding (quick to 10 reps, then rest)
  - b. Firm, overhand throws
8. **Heavy Ball Short Toss**
  - a. 5 into back hip
  - b. 5 in front of stride (out front of hitter)
9. **Wiffle Balls (Light bat)**
  - a. 5 into back hip
  - b. 5 in front of stride (out front of hitter)
10. **Live Hitting - Pitching Machine Swings**
  - a. **2 Bunts - 2 Slash Hit (Fake Bunt and Hit) - 10 swings max bat speed**
11. **Tracking Station-**
  - a. Check head positioning at foot strike)
  - b. Move into pitch- find front foot down timing with movement
12. **Dry Swing Station**
  - a. Walking Kareoke, holding scap load and shoulders still while hips move with steps
  - b. 30 reps- Quick swings over tee



## THROWING RUNNERS OUT AND BACK-PICKS



A person who is encouraged to “just do your best” usually doesn’t. They don’t clarify what their best might be; they don’t extend themselves to find out.

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

#### Warm-Up(Hands)

- Heavy ball drop and catch
- Wiffle ball bWarm-Up(Legs)are-hand with partner

#### Warm-Up(Throwing)

- Bands
- Towel Drill
- Flips
- Shoulder turn
- Rocker
- Heal clicks
- 1 Knee transfers
- Right foot step
- Left foot step
- Catch-right-left
- (2) footwork to each base-no throw

#### MECHANICAL OVERVIEW-Throwing to Bases

- Don't get overextended going to the ball
- Croc arms/Changes if ball is taking you to base-1B or 3RD
- Redirect the ball
- Finding seams while shoulders are rotating
- Hands break in the middle of the body/right foot forward/arm up



- Left foot toe-to-toe or toe to instep of right foot
- Front knee, hip, shoulder, elbow pointed at second
- Nose and chin to target
- If you miss, miss low
- Throwing from knees
- Same transfer principles
- Rotation
- Left knee as jab toward base
- Knowing your ability
- Throw from knees to get outs not to try to show off your arm
- Pitch location dictates standing up or throwing from your knees

#### **STRATEGY OVERVIEW- Expanding the Zone for your Pitcher**

- Rapport with umpire
- Starting target in to out and expanding
- Make strikes look good first
- Get calls on the black to get calls off the edge
- You might not get every pitch but be consistent so you might get the next one
- Showing up the ump or holding the glove doesn't help you get that pitch the next time
- The easier you make things for the ump, the more calls you'll get
- Don't give up on pitches, work for every pitch
- Not forcing things

#### **DRILLS**

##### **Round 1**

- As a group-Single knee transfer-glove action(all)
- Receiving-bare hand heavy balls-low pitches(2)
- Receiving-bare hand wiffle balls-low pitches(2)
- Back picks to 1<sup>st</sup> base(3)
- Ladder/transfer-med ball, heavy oversized ball, heavy ball(2)
- Cage-Machine feed-Catch, Right, Left(2)



- Cage-Ball in glove-Catch, Right, Left, Throw(2)

### Challenge Round

- (3) Live pops in the cage

### Round 2

- Block and recover(2)
- Cheat drill(2)
- Plyo ball-Driving ball down and jump rope(1)
- Circle blocking drill(LATERAL MOVEMENT)
- Perfect blocking position (5) then recover-work on blocking ball to base you are going to throw to. 5 to first, 5 to second, 5 to third(2)
- Glove on-Receiving heavy ball-working under the ball(2)

# THROWING PROGRESSIONS FOR CATCHERS

- Bands
- Towels
- Double knee-bare handed transfers
- Arm side knee down-shoulder turn w/o a transfer-glove positioning
- Arm side knee down-shoulder turn with transfer
- Standing-stationary feet-going to get the ball with alligator arms-transfer
- Same as above but with heavy ball
- Modified stance with left foot stationary-catch with right foot moving forward-quick and short stride getting to transfer position
  - Modified stance right and left feet getting body into power position-be as explosive and dynamic as you can be while keeping head back
  - Ball in glove-front side lined up to partner-heal click or right left-throw-dynamic movement forward
  - Extend back into pulldowns with right/left forward footwork then work back in for next progression
  - Ball on ground in front of player-secondary stance right/left pick up ball (bare handed) and throw to partner-important for ball to be in front of player but not too far in front of player
  - Ball in glove-secondary stance-transfer and throw to partner



## Sluggers Fielding Clinic - Week 6

### Building on Greatness-Trust the Process

- 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

- Alternating Foot Zone Drill
  - Player starts with throwing foot in a “box”
  - Fields a short hop with throwing foot in the “box”
  - Shuffles to switch feet to glove hand foot in the “box”
  - Fields a short hop with glove foot in the “box”
  - Switches back and forth with pace until the player fields 5 on each foot
- 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**

**7. Slalom**

**JUGGLE-Break down Juggle -Two ball-Up and under**

**Start with two balls in the dominate hand**

**Up and Under-Two balls**

**COMBINE BOTH Juggle and Ladders.**

### **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**



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**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 Speed rollers Rollers-Attack the ball-receive through the ball.**

**Cage-OZZIE Drill Ball One Hop to Power with LyteFlight**

**One hop in front-throw to partner**

**2 Ball Short Hop to Power - Forehand-Hop side to side**

**2 Ball Short Hop to Power - Forehand side into V slot**

**Bounce Back - Short Hop to Power Backhand**

**Work into V Slot**

**Soft Hands Drill-See through the ball-three positions (fore/center/back) Tennis ball. Move feet to the proper fielding position.**

**TCU-Know the hop-**

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