

WBA Core Practice Routine

Each team should apportion 45 minutes of each practice to these specific drills and skills

Monitored Throwing and Catching Routine (15 Minutes)

This should be done as a team with the coaches observing and giving feedback

Catching Drill - kids stand in line 12 feet back and run towards coach one at a time catching a ball properly. Start without gloves using tennis balls, advance to gloves and baseballs. 10 reps each. Great warmup drill.

Flips - stand facing partner 10 feet away with throwing arm extended in front of you in L shape. Rest throwing elbow on glove at shoulder height and flip ball towards partner with forearm and wrist.

*Emphasize proper grip across seams, snapping wrist, 12 to 6 rotation of the ball. Do 10-15 of these.

1-2-3s - Line players up in pairs and take them through each step. Monitor each player and make adjustments as needed.

Catching Technique:

Catch with Elbows down and fingers up near chin level, Move towards the ball. Watch the ball into the hands. Cover up ball in glove with throwing hand.

Throwing Technique 1-2-3:

Start with arms hanging at side, ball should be in throwing hand with proper grip

** Emphasize proper grip: fingers across seams and on top of ball with thumb underneath*

1- Stand sideways feet shoulder width apart with front shoulder facing partner about 30 feet away to start. Throwing hand should be on top of ball in glove at waist level.

2- Extend glove hand and throwing hand simultaneously. Feet do not move. Glove pointed towards partner's waist, Throwing arm up and back, elbow at shoulder level with fingers on top of ball

**Check to see that body is still square, have player look back to make sure they see their fingers on top of the ball, throwing arm should be at 30-45 degree angle.*

3- Look at partner, step towards partner while throwing the ball and bringing your chest to your glove.

**Elbow should pass near ear level during throw, look for glove to come to chest on glove side of body.*

Key words: Fingers on top of ball, Elbow up, Chest to the Glove, Catch with Elbows down, Move towards ball

Hitting (20 Minutes)

Focus on correct starting position for Hands and Feet - Emphasize Quality Repetitions

Hitting Drills

Dry Swings - line up players to demonstrate 1-2-3 technique - can do this without bats

Batting Tee - have small groups rotate on tee every 5 swings

Wiffle Ball Front Toss - pitch to groups from short distance , emphasize proper swings

*Try to get each player 30-50 quality swings

*Position 1 is crucial to have any success in hitting - coaches should monitor this closely before each rep

*Add/Subtract stations based on number of coaches

Hitting Technique 1-2-3

1- *Stance - Athletic Stance, Feet and Hands right(in correct position), Proper Bat Grip*

~Feet about shoulder width apart, Toes pointing straight ahead and each foot even with the other

~Athletic - Knees slightly bent with weight on balls of feet. Bend at the knees, then bend at the waist

~Bat should initially rest horizontally on back shoulder with hands near your back shoulder

~Line up knocker knuckles, hold bat in fingers firmly but do not squeeze

~Lift bat off shoulder to 45 degree angle, keep hands near back shoulder

2- *Backside Loaded-*

~Short Stride and Move Hands back slightly to load on backside, still balanced

3- *Swing Attack*

~ Swing Hard and Rotate Hips

Pitching (10 Minutes)

All players should practice pitching and learn to pitch from the stretch

Pitching Drills

Balance Drill - Line up in a group and get to the KNEE position and hold it for 5 seconds or longer. Repeat 10 times

Pitch to Partners - Line up in two lines and go through progression: 1- KNEE- 2- 3. Each player should throw 20-25 throws

Pitching from Stretch Technique 1-KNEE-2-3

Start with arms hanging at side, ball should be in throwing hand with proper grip

1- Stand sideways with front shoulder facing partner about 30 feet away to start. Throwing hand on top of ball in glove near waist level

KNEE- Lift front leg and hold with upper leg horizontal - leg should form 90 degree angle, hands should stay together

2- Extend glove hand and throwing hand simultaneously. Glove pointed towards partner's waist, Throwing arm up and back, elbow at shoulder level with fingers on top of ball

3: Look at partner, step and fall towards partner while throwing the ball and bringing your chest to your glove.

**This technique is similar to the throwing technique above. One step (KNEE) is inserted to adapt this to pitching from the stretch.*

**Emphasize proper technique and safety when throwing. Partner (catcher) should remain standing unless wearing a mask*

A 10 minute warmup is suggested before this routine - baserunning, conditioning, catching drill, hit wiffles. These can also be done as kids arrive early.

Remainder of Practice plan to cover others things such as:

IF/OF

Catchers

Baserunning

Competitions/Situations

Live Hitting/Individual Pitching work