

February 2013

**Richmond County  
Baseball Club**

1400 Travis Ave.  
Staten Island, NY 10314

If you have any  
interesting info or news  
you would like included  
in a future newsletter,  
please email to  
jim@rcbclub.com.

Visit our website at:



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# RCBC Newsletter

## Welcome To Our New Newsletter

Welcome to the first edition of the Richmond County Baseball Club Newsletter. Each month, the Newsletter will be emailed to all RCBC members and will highlight current and future activities in the program and at our complex.

Now that 2013 registration is completed, we can all focus on the subject of practice and getting ready for the upcoming season. Our coaches are hard at work preparing and they're looking forward to replicating the success that RCBC has had in the past.

Read on to learn about some of the exciting activities we have planned for this year.

Coach DeFendis  
Coach Quinn

### Richmond County Youth Complex

This winter, we installed a new grass infield on field 2 and made repairs to the 3rd base dugout on field 1 and outfield fences on fields 2 and 4 that were damaged during Hurricane Sandy. We will also be installing additional spectator accommodations prior to the season.



**The new Infield on Field 2**



**Richmond County  
Patriot League**

*“Every day is a  
new way for you  
to make a  
difference”*

**Coach DeFendis**



**Coming Soon  
Online Apparel  
Store**

## **Patriot League**

Richmond County will be hosting a new league for 13U and 17U teams. All games will be played at the complex and RCBC teams will be participating. The 13U division will begin April 1 and run through the end of June. The 17U division will begin mid-June and run through August. Talk to your team manager for more details.

## **Richmond County Tournaments**

After last year's success, Richmond County will be hosting 20 tournaments at the complex this year, for ages 11 through 18. RCBC teams will be participating in all tournaments. Go to our new tournament website at [www.rctournaments.com](http://www.rctournaments.com) to see the schedule and the teams registered.

## **Online Apparel Store**

We will soon be launching an online store for RCBC apparel. Here you can purchase items such as tee shirts, sweatshirts and hoodies, hats, pullovers and jackets directly. Once live, the store will appear as a new link on the RCBC Main Menu.

## **High School Showcase**

We will be hosting a showcase on August 28 for rising 7th/8th graders to display their talents in front of the top local high school baseball program coaches. Spots are limited so go to our website at [www.rcbclub.com](http://www.rcbclub.com) to register now.

## **Advertising at Richmond County Youth Complex**

This year, we are aggressively looking to market our prime location to local businesses for advertising. This includes signs both outside and inside the complex as well as on our websites. Revenues derived from this effort will be used to continually upgrade our facilities. If you know of any merchants who may be interested in this opportunity, contact [pete@rcbclub.com](mailto:pete@rcbclub.com) or [frap@rcbclub.com](mailto:frap@rcbclub.com).



**Coach Mike Lopiparo**  
College Placement Coordinator  
Quality Control Coach

**This month's baseball quote:**

Former Yankee outfielder Tommy Henrich once said *"Catching a fly ball is fun and games. Knowing where to throw it afterwards is serious business."*

If you want to voice a comment on anything I write, email me at [mikelope19@aol.com](mailto:mikelope19@aol.com)



## **Coach Lope's Baseball Thoughts**

### **MEMO TO PARENTS: AVOID THE POST-GAME ARGUMENTS**

Your son goes hitless...or has a bad day in the field...or pitches poorly. No sooner do you start the car when you're on his case for the bad day. By the time you've hit the highway, you're yelling at each other. By the time you reach your house your son says "the hell with this, I don't want to play anymore." That doesn't help things, does it??

How about this scenario. Your son has a great day, perhaps going 3-for-4. Does he get a compliment?? Nope!!! Instead you say "How could you strike out or pop up on a pitch like that?" Now another testy exchange occurs and suddenly your son isn't happy anymore. The solution is simple. AVOID THE POST-GAME ARGUMENT!!!!!!!!!!!!

If your son has the bad day (after all, he is human), it is best NOT to discuss the poor performance immediately. He doesn't need you to recap what went wrong, especially since the coach probably critiqued him and the team after the game. A parent should leave his son alone that day and what usually happens is the next day your son will talk to you about what went wrong. But following a bad game, let him dictate the post-game discussion. You don't want to make him feel worse than he already feels.

As for that 3-for-4 game, instead of immediately bringing up the one poor at-bat, start with a positive comment. Let him know what a great game he had and how good he looked. Then you can ease in the comment "just remember to stay off that high pitch; you would have had a perfect game," or "if you were a little more aggressive, you won't get behind on the count, etc., etc." But at least you complimented him first.

Just remember...leave your son alone right after a bad game. Don't make it worse. He'll come to you.

Coach DeFendis also suggests a 24 hour rule for parents if they are unhappy with the coach or any issue with RCBC. Parents get angry at their son's playing time or lack of it, or may want to complain about his game strategy (which you should NEVER do). DO NOT angrily approach the coach when the game ends. Coach DeFendis says go home and wait for the next day to discuss the situation. Let your feelings cool down, otherwise you might say things you might regret. You don't want an argument that puts your son in an uncomfortable position. He is here to enjoy himself. Nick feels the next day you and the coach will be in a more relaxed mood to have a meaningful talk about your son's situation. Also wait until the next day if you want to meet with Coach DeFendis on an issue.

### Featured Article – The Proper Swing Path (Helicopter vs. Ferris Wheel) - By Coach DeFendis



When teaching a young player how to hit a baseball, you can never leave out the importance of controlled balance throughout the swing. Young players today have the tendency to jump out at the ball, not allowing the ball to come to them. When you're hitting a moving object (a ball), you have to be still and your body has to be quiet. This will allow your instincts to take over and react to the speed, location and type of pitch that you choose to swing at. Now, when I say still, I don't mean you have to look like the guy on the top of a trophy. I mean less movement throughout the swing path. I will explain....

Set up in the batters box where you have the best chance of hitting all the types of pitches the pitcher has to offer. This is called pre-stance ~ Your belly button is even with the center of home plate, your left arm, if righty, or your right arm, if lefty, should have a comfortable arms reach to the black part on the outside part of home plate. Your knees should have a slight bend or what I like to say break in them. Your weight should be on the pads of your feet, not on your heels. When you hit a baseball, you hit from your feet up. Having your feet balanced from the start will help you maintain balance throughout your swing.

Pin your kneecaps - This is a movement that allows you to shift your weight between your knees when you swing to create a center of balance to hit the ball solid on contact. What I call squaring up the ball.

Next – Hips loose and ready to fire, hands back and ready to fire. When the pitcher is getting ready to deliver the ball to the plate, the hitter has to get ready to deliver the ball to the field. The hitter's timing has to be in rhythm with the pitcher's mechanics.!!!!!! Now you need to use your imaginary skills and visualize what I'm saying. The pitcher begins to break his hands off the set position. At this time, your hands need to start moving into the loaded position. As the pitcher continues to go through his delivery, his arm comes around and he begins his stride to home plate. Once his front foot hits the ground, your front foot needs to be on the ground. This is called the launch or seated position. As the ball is coming to the plate, you now have a limited amount of time to determine if you want to swing at the pitch or take it for a ball. Once you decide, this is when the pinning of our knees comes into play. You're now squared up the ball and can make solid contact.

Next thing to accomplish ...your swing path. This is when your hands fire to hit the ball. Do you cast them away from your body or do you keep them close to your body on the swing? The single most important act to hitting is creating a short swing path to the ball. Here's where you need to have control of the barrel of the bat. The term "stay inside the ball" is used every day when instructing, but does anyone ever take the time to really explain how to perform that act?

Once again we need your imagination.

The very first movement when your hands are getting ready to hit has to be a straight line to the ball. Imagine this..... you're in your launch or seated position and you identify the pitch that you want to swing at. Now your hands have to be between the ball and your body throughout the entire swing. Once your hands cast out away from your body, the barrel leaves the proper swing path and creates a circle effect around the ball. What I call a *helicopter* blade swing... Now imagine what a *ferris wheel* looks like...I like to use this term with my students because it allows them to really imagine hitting the flat side of the ball or the inside part of the ball. A *ferris wheel* has a different movement than a *helicopter* blade. To swing like a blade, your hands have to go away from the ball and then come back to the ball. To swing like a *ferris wheel*, your hands go directly to the ball and never leave the proper swing path. Pretty cool!!!!

Next act .... imagine again

You're squared up the ball and you're at perfect point of contact. This is when staying inside the ball is crucial, because now you have to hit through the ball and extend your arms on contact. I call this hitting to and through. Imagine three balls coming at you at the same time, one behind the other, 3 inches apart. Now imagine hitting all three balls to the same spot on the field with the same swing at the same time. If you hit the balls to three different areas of the field then you did not stay true to the proper swing path; you cut off your swing and you left the correct swing path. *Helicopter* !!!!! If you hit all three balls to the same area, then you completed the proper swing path and created the correct path to and through the ball. *Ferris Wheel* !!!!!

Next and final act .. The finish !!!!! Imagine for the last time now.

Where your bat finishes will determine the right path. Finishing high through the swing will keep the bat in the correct path: *Ferris Wheel*. Finishing low or below your waist will take the bat out of the proper hitting path and will cause you to cut off your swing: *Helicopter*.