

February 2020

**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:

www.rcbclub.com

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RCBC Newsletter

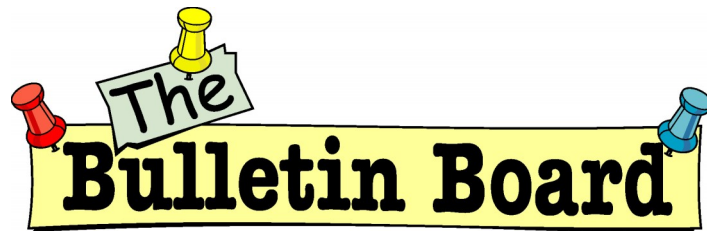
2020 College Showcase Dates Announced



August 11-12, 2020

Richmond County Youth Complex



A graphic of a yellow bulletin board with a black border. The words "The Bulletin Board" are written on it in a bold, black, serif font. "The" is on a small white tag pinned to the top left with a yellow pushpin. "Bulletin Board" is on the main yellow board, pinned to the top left with a red pushpin and to the top right with a blue pushpin.

The Bulletin Board

- For teams 11U-14U on a payment plan schedule for their Tournament Fees, the first installment is due on March 1. You can pay by credit card via your LeagueApps account or by check or cash. Checks should be made out to RCBC and mailed to 98 Tanglewood Drive, Staten Island, NY 10308. Do not mail cash.
- This year's Marucci World Series is scheduled for July 25-29 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. In addition to the traditional festivities and great tournament play, this year's event will also feature a showcase component. Stay tuned for more information.
- This year's College Showcase Camp is scheduled for August 11-12. RCBC players on teams 14U-17U are automatically enrolled at no additional cost.
- RCBC Coaches - With the spring season starting soon, check your email shortly for instructions on booking field time at the Richmond County Complex.

2020 Tournament Update

This year's tournament season is shaping up to be an exciting one.

We continue our partnership with Perfect Game as the PG Affiliate for the Northeast and will again host a number of their National events. These include spring and fall Super Qualifiers as well as the Super25 Northeast Super Qualifier for the 7th year in a row. We will be featuring *DiamondKast* for all of our PG events which will provide detailed game and cumulative player stats and will allow spectators to follow the action live online even if they can't make it out to the ballpark.



This year, we are introducing the RC East Coast Invitational tournament in June for 14U, 15U and 16U which will be sponsored by Marucci and we also have a special 14U event in August that will combine both tournament and showcase formats.

Our high school age teams will again have the opportunity to participate in the invite-only Marucci World Series in Baton Rouge, Louisiana this summer. This is an outstanding event that features a home run derby, fastest man contest, Cajun cookery and competition against other Marucci Founders Club organizations from around the country. There will also be a special showcase component to this year's event, featuring many of the top schools in the Southeast and Southwest.



No other organization offers as much from a tournament standpoint as RCBC, with great competition, great fields and great exposure. Let the games begin!

Marucci Founders Club Summit

Marucci hosted their 3rd annual Founders Club Summit in Baton Rouge, Louisiana this month. Founders Club team representatives and Marucci executives discussed new products in development and features of the new Locker Room online store. Participants got a sneak peek at the new Cat 9 bat scheduled for launch at the Marucci World Series this summer as well as new batting gloves, helmets, bat packs and apparel items. All will be available on the RCBC Locker Room store later this year.



We also got to see the LSU NCAA 2019 National Football Championship Trophy as well as Joe Burrow's Heisman Trophy.



Featured Article - By Coach Nick DeFendis

Here are 7 important points for using indoor batting cages. If you want to use the cage for actual swing development, the following is a breakdown on how to use it to your advantage.

1. Speed Of Machine

When selecting the speed of a machine, a common problem is the speed or velocity is far too advanced for the player. Often times, I will hear kids say “the speed is too slow” or asking “to speed the machine up.” Well let’s first look at what the hitter is trying to accomplish...that is, to refine the swing and the necessary movements associated with the swing. Pitching machines that are set too fast DO NOT promote efficient movement patterns in the swing. In fact, they promote poor swing habits, causing players to rush their timing; or failing to get the body into a good solid hitting position; or if their timing is so bad, they get frustrated with all the swings and misses and lose confidence in their swing. The speed is critical and should be set approximately 60-65 percent of the speed at which they will see in a game. Now, one can argue this percentage does not actually duplicate true game-like speed, but the argument can also be said for those that truly want to work on swing development...it must be done at a speed substantially slower than what they would face in a game (how fast is the ball travelling on a tee?!?!). Case in point...what do you think the average pitch speed of MLB batting practice is? It is certainly not near the speed of what hitters face day to day; it is approximately 60-65 percent of the actual velocity each hitter will face in a game. Furthermore, have you ever watched Home Run Derby? Granted, the concept of the Derby is Home Runs, but I would be surprised if the speed in the Derby comes close to 65 percent! So now why do MLB hitters take batting practice at approximately these types of speeds? Because the primary focus of their cage work is total swing development. It would be very difficult for the MLB player to work on the honing of their swing when facing a machine that is delivering pitches at speeds at or near the actual game-like velocities.

2. Height Of The Pitch

Often times, coaches, parents or players will stand in the cage, with the machine on, and lay their bat out, in the perfect location and ask “can you raise the pitch” or “can you lower the pitch.” Now, look at a game...does the hitter stand in the batter’s box, lay the bat out at mid-thigh height and ask the pitcher to throw the ball in that exact location? I don’t think so! Obviously, the location of the pitch from a machine must be set so that as many pitches as possible cross the strike zone at the expected velocity and height, but, it should be up to the hitter to visually make the decisions as to whether they should swing or not swing based on the pitch. Pitching machines in cages are not perfect, and thus, hitters need to use discretion when swinging. That means, don’t swing at every pitch, but expect to swing at every pitch and learn to develop an eye for the strike zone and develop an eye for what you can drive rather than just swing at.

Featured Article - By Coach Nick DeFendis (cont'd)

3. Don't Set Up In The Same Place

Many hitters have tendencies to stand in the same place all the time and thus get the same velocity and generally the same pitch location (remember, machines are not always perfect) on each pitch. This does very little to help develop the swing. Instead, hitters need to work on hitting pitches in different locations and with different velocities. This is accomplished by simply moving up, back, in and out. As an example, if the hitter were to take 200 swings at the same location in the batter's box, yes, they would work on swing development, but it would certainly not assist in helping the hitter make adjustments in their swings.

Hitters should take some swings in one location, say, at the back of the batter's box, then move up two or three feet. This would then mean the pitch velocity has increased forcing the hitter to make an adjustment. Then, the hitter should move back in the box and now, he is essentially getting an off speed pitch and once again, another adjustment will need to be made. The same type of adjustments can be made on in and out locations. Move in to work on pulling the ball, move away from the plate to work on hitting the ball to the opposite field.

4. Timing The Pitching Machine

When working on the timing of the pitch off a machine, hitters need to try to get away from timing the pitch, but instead, work on seeing the ball out of the arm or out of the wheels. Timing only serves to make hitters guess when the ball is coming out. This can often lead to negative effects when trying to produce efficient movement patterns. When hitting out of the machine, they become much more in tune to the visual elements needed to be an accomplished hitter. Many machines are set up so that the ball will come out at certain timed intervals, say 5 seconds or 6 seconds. Hitters will often try and time their swing relative to the timing of the outbound ball. This is not wise or prudent when it comes to any type of swing development. Don't time the pitch, but instead see the pitch and get the timing off the pitch.

5. Start Opposite Field First

Many hitters jump into the cage and the first thing they try to do is pull the ball. Not wise to say the least. A much better approach would be to train your cage work the same way you would be trained if you were taking batting practice. That would be to begin the swing development process by working on hitting balls the other way (opposite field). This will allow more efficient timing and promote the ball to be tracked deeper into the hitting zone (although it is impossible to watch the ball hit the bat, contrary to popular belief). Once the hitter has been able to get his timing to the velocity and the feel of the swing has begun to ramp up, the hitter can begin the process of moving around in the batter's box to start the process of making adjustments. After all, isn't hitting about making adjustments?

Featured Article - By Coach Nick DeFendis (cont'd)

6. Create Games And Competition

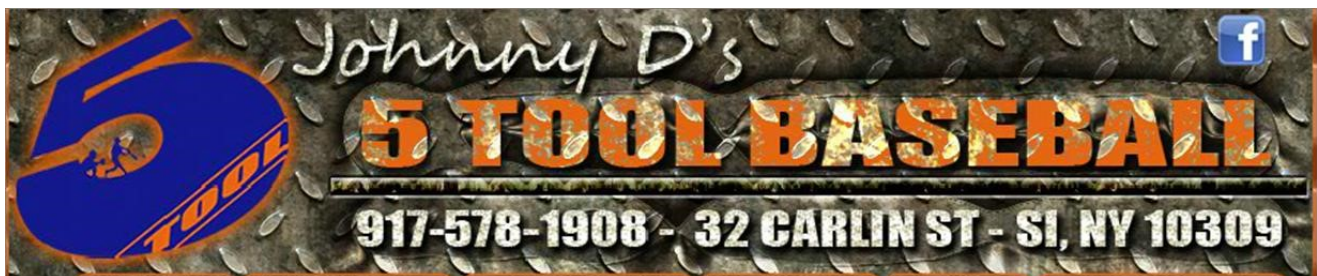
A great way to work on swing development without actually thinking about the swing is to create games within the cage itself. For example, a common game that is played is Home Run Derby, where certain parts or locations of the cage represent certain base hits. Because each cage is different in height and width, each game will be played with different rules. Use a selected number of pitches per at bat as the number that you will use before the at bat is over. So, if a cage is pre-set at say 10 pitches per round, then each hitter would get 10 outs. At the completion of the number of outs, add up your runs and keep a running tally. Your number of innings could be as few as one to an infinite number. Targets can be set up as well as Grand Slams, HR's , etc...to give hitters incentive when trailing late in their match. (Keeping track of results over time is also a great proven practice.)

7. The Fatigue Factor

Probably the biggest issue with players using cages is the pure number of swings they take in a row or over the duration of their cage time. Far too often, they just keep swinging and then the fatigue factor (FF) takes over. When FF comes into play, the body breaks down and swing development has now taken a back seat...now we have begun to create bad habits. So always consider the number of swings in a row and the rest needed between each set of swings. Swing smart rather than just keep swinging.

So next time you make your way into an indoor batting cage, make sure you keep a few of these points at the top of your mind to make better use of your time and ultimately help you become a better hitter!

Need indoor cage time - look no further than Johnny D's 5 Tool Baseball featuring the automated Pro Batter pitching simulator. To schedule time, contact Krista at 718-305-8118.



www.my5toolbaseball.com



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Coach Lope's Baseball Thoughts

In This Issue - The Email

Quote of the Month - *"Good writing can take you to places you never were."*

Certainly we hope a well-written recruiting email will get you to a place you never were.....the college of your choice!!!!!!

Naturally, the email is just one step (though a key one) towards assisting you in reaching your goal. Good talent certainly helps. LOL. Fine coaching never hurts. Academics for baseball money is vital. And....if you play at RCBC, you know our fabulous reputation for getting players to the next level. Pro, and especially college, is a Gold Standard.

The lead sentence can simply say "My name is _____ and I'm interested in your baseball program. Here is some information about myself."

Using Powerpoint format, in the opening paragraph, put your name, grade, date of birth, cell phone number, email address, home address, home phone number, your grade, school, summer organization, and whether you bat right or left, throw right or left, primary and secondary positions, grade point average (GPA) and then SAT-ACT scores (or PSAT if you haven't taken the SAT yet), and finally phone numbers for your high school and summer program coaches.

In the second paragraph, do some 'brown-nosing.' LOL. Say that you heard all nice facts about the college you are writing to....the fine



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Coach Lope's Baseball Thoughts

In This Issue - The Email

(Continued)

academics, the excellent baseball program and the outstanding coaching. Say its a place I'd really want to be at. Mention the beautiful campus if it applies. The paragraph should end by saying "I feel I would be an asset to your college and especially your baseball program."

Next, mention if you're eligible for academic and/or financial aid or outside grants. Highlight what your baseball strongpoints are (speed, velocity, power, gold glove). If you got fine ratings at a Showcase, mention that. Say if you are a captain in high school....class president....MVP, especially on a ranked or championship high school. Do not mention Little League awards; Please.

Finally, say you hope to hear from the coach or recruiter and would love to visit the college. You can ask if the college is having a baseball camp, especially if it is high on your list.

Send the email to both the Head Coach and the Recruiter. Follow up the email with a phone call if you don't get a quick response.

Start writing by your sophomore year.

Good luck. Any questions, email me at mikelope19@aol.com

Marucci Locker Room Featured Item

RCBC Player Package

Order yours now for the upcoming season



Exclusively on the Marucci Online Store at www.rcbclub.com.



Marucci Locker Room Featured Item

Alternate White Jersey

Perfect for practice or games to complement your RC uniform



Available to RCBC members at a special discount price.
Exclusively on the Marucci Online Store at www.rcbclub.com.

