



Thunder Academy - 2014 Coaches Clinic

Start Time	End Time	Speaking Time	Topic
Day #1			
7:30 AM	to 8:00 AM	0:30	Registration
8:00 AM	to 8:15 AM	0:15	Welcome and opening thoughts
8:15 AM	to 8:45 AM	0:30	Working toward better throwing mechanics
8:45 AM	to 9:15 AM	0:30	Teaching throwing in a prgressive team setting
9:15 AM	to 9:45 AM	0:30	Understanding fielding Techniques
9:45 AM	to 10:15 AM	0:30	A system of teaching Infield skills that last
10:15 AM	to 11:15 AM	1:00	What is involved with pitching mechanics and how to develop them
11:15 AM	to 12:15 PM	1:00	Doug Linton - Colorado Rockies - Director of Pitching Development
12:15 PM	to 1:00 PM	0:45	Lunch
1:00 PM	to 1:30 PM	0:30	Playing the middle Infield positions and how to teach them
1:30 PM	to 2:00 PM	0:30	What is involved with being a corner infielder and how to coach them
2:00 PM	to 2:30 PM	0:30	Understanding catching Fundamentals
2:30 PM	to 3:00 PM	0:30	Developing Catchers...How we do it
3:00 PM	to 3:30 PM	0:30	Playing the Outfield Fundamentals
3:30 PM	to 4:00 PM	0:30	Teaching outfielders in a team setting
4:00 PM	to 5:00 PM	1:00	Team Defense and how to practice
Day #2			
12:30 PM	to 1:00 PM	0:30	Doors Open - Gather
1:00 PM	to 2:00 PM	1:00	Hitting Absolutes
2:00 PM	to 2:30 PM	0:30	How to teach young ballplayers how to hit
2:30 PM	to 3:00 PM	0:30	The Bunting Game
3:00 PM	to 3:45 PM	0:45	Teaching knowledgeable and aggressive baseruners
3:45 PM	to 4:30 PM	0:45	Team Offense and how to practice
4:30 PM	to 5:15 PM	0:45	Practice Organization - How to organize your team

Dear Coaches,

Both Darron Cox and I would like to extend a special thank you for taking the time to be with us here today. We are confident that by all of us working together helping the kids in our association, we can make a difference in many young athletes lives. We hope you enjoy the clinic today! - Tom Dedin - Thunder Academy Director of Coaching Development



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Understanding the throwing mechanics

Throwing Mechanics

Introduction

Major flaws in throwing

- Ballplayers use the hand and arm to throw too early in the throwing process
- Ballplayers do not coordinate the entire body to deliver energy to the throwing arm
- Ballplayers are out of balance when throwing

Important items in throwing

- Key Words you will hear
- Gripping the ball
- Stepping to catch the ball
- Moving into the proper "Crow-hop" position
- Keeping the glove in the center of the body

The throwing power sources or power zones of our body

- Drive leg foot
- Drive leg
- Drive leg hip
- Core
- Chest and Scaps
- Throwing shoulder
- Throwing wrist

Two major phases of throwing

- Stride Phase
- Throwing phase

The Stride Phase

- The starting point of the throwing motion
- How we use the ground to help produce energy in the body
 - The Lower body in the Stride Phase
 - The upper body in the Stride Phase

The Throwing Phase

- Using the torque we created in the the body during the stride phase
 - Lower Body Torque,
 - Upper Body Torque
 - Arm action in the throw

Different types of throwing motions with different type of arm actions

- Long toss type
- Outfield type
- Infield type
- Catcher type
- Pitcher type



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Understanding fielding Techniques

Some general thoughts

Everyone says he has "great hands" but in most cases and great fielder have great feet. They always put themselves in position better to field the ball. Their hands are important but their feet are primary.

How do we get the best jump on the ball?

The ready position

Walking in on the pitch - Timing contact

Being on the balls of the feet for the best balance and reaction as the ball reaches the hitters contact zone

Able to be quick on the first step in any direction

Initial Approach to the ball

We want to move out of the path of the ball

We try to get the ball on the right hop

Final approach to ball

Moving to balls in different directions

First step is critical

Ground balls to Right and Left

The backhand reception of the ball

The forehand reception

Throwing on the move

The topped ball

Three techniques

Moving to balls in different directions

First step is critical

Walking in on the pitch

Anticipation of getting the ball

Developing great thoughts in making a great play

Ground balls to Right and Left

Balls hit to right

Balls hit to left

The backhand reception of the ball

Getting low to receive the ball

Getting eyes level and elbow out

Glove out front of foot and fingers spread

Swipe through the ball - helps to turn shoulders to plant and throw

Backhand off either foot

Planting drive leg and foot to throw

The forehand reception

Soft glove with this method

Glove out front in open position

Quick adjustment of feet to throw to target

Throwing on the move

The topped ball

Approach the ball aggressively

Create an angle to throw to target

Keep palm of glove open to the ball

Two techniques

Two handed

Shorter more flexible players

One handed

Taller less flexible players

Receive ball off left foot

Bare handed - Desperation throw

Balls that hug the ground



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What is involved with proper pitching mechanics

General Thoughts

- Everything is linear not rotational
- The ground is our friend and we need to use it
- Regular correct drill work will allow for more consistency
- 80% of velocity is caused by back shoulder and rear hip separation
- Having good pitching mechanics will NOT make a great pitcher.
- Combination of strength, coordinated motor skills and mechanics will make a great pitcher

The Importance of Balance

Allows the body to function correctly

Without balance:

- Tension in body
- Poor coordination
- Poor direction
- Lack of fluidity

Teaching pitching

- Learn out of the stretch delivery
- Progress to the wind-up delivery

What is involved in the Pitching motion

The Stride Phase

- General Position on the rubber
- Center, left, right

Leg Lift

- Young Kids
 - Up, down and out type deliver - more balance
- Older kids
 - Leg lift with momentum, hip tilt, and lead of the hip to the target

Hand and Glove movement during leg lift

- High glove set vs Lower Glove set
- Movement with the hands
- Hand and Glove separation
- How glove works with the Leg drive and the throwing arm reach back
 - Thumb of glove important!!
 - Glove should go to target and lock in
 - Allows for better reach back and more torque in core

Back Leg Drive

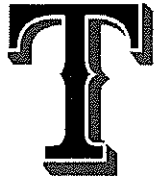
- Drive leg knee needs to get inside the back foot
- Drive leg will get to an angle where we can push to catcher
- Drive to catcher and fully extend leg
- "Push front hip to catcher"
- Goal
 - Establish direction
 - Establish momentum
 - Continue to add power to body and eventually throwing arm
- Drive leg will eventually push back hip open

Upper Body Reach back

- Throwing arm reaches back entire time we push forward
- Equal and opposite = balance
- Reach back is important!! - Creates torque

Throwing Phase

- Drive leg
 - Continues to push back hip to target
- Chest Thrust
 - Shoulders level
 - Push bowed chest to target
 - "Push headlights down the road"
- Shoulder action to plate
 - "Throwing the shoulder to the glove"
 - Loose fast arm action
- Trunk tilt
 - Keeps you on-line to target
- Wrist Action
 - Final point where we can manipulate the ball
 - Last power point



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Playing the middle infield

Where the SS plays

- Type of Hitter
- Game Situation
- Pitcher
- Middle Infielders strength

SS Double Plays - Footwork at the base

Turning the double play

- Get to the base as fast as you can
- On a good feed to my Glove side shoulder
- On a poor feed to my right
- Ball from 1B
 - Read where 1B pick up ball and call inside or outside
- Ball from pitcher
 - Two different moves with ball thrown from pitcher
 - Each are dependant upon time allowed and skill ability
 - Handle in front of bag
 - Handle behind bag
- Unassisted DP
 - Catch and step on bag to throw

Feeds on first half of DP

- Penetration to ball
- Right foot open slightly
- Backhand - Plant and throw
- Balls to left

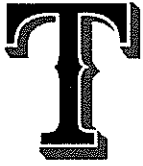
2B Double Plays - Footwork at the bag

Turning the double play

- Get to the base as fas as you can with left foot on bag
- Young Player
- Older Player

Feeds on first half of DP

- Penetration to ball
- Balls to right - underhand
- Balls hard to right on the run - throw with elbwbow down
- Balls in to line - backhand fingers on top
- Balls to left - Inside move
- Balls hard to left - turn to OF plant and throw



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Corner Infield positions and how to play them

Firstbase

Where does the 1B play?

Things to consider

General position

Hitter type

Game situation

Pitcher Throwing

Footwork when receiving the ball

Feet and Body Position on the bag

Stepping to the ball

Scooping the ball

Holding runners on

When do we hold runners on

Footwork on the bag

Double Play Depth

Footwork when coming off the bag

Straight off most of the time

Get into a great fielding reaction position

Playing behind runner with man on 1st and 2nd

Throwing to 2B

Inside throw

Outside throw

Inside move & throw

Reverse spin & throw

Force out and tag play

Thirdbase

Where does the 3B play?

Things to consider

General position

Hitter type

Game situation

Pitcher Throwing

Receiving balls at the bag

Balls thrown from outfield

Balls thrown from catcher

Holding runners on 3B

We do not "hold" them on, we keep them close

3B Double plays

Double Play "Feed" to 2B

Unassisted Double Play to 3B to 1B



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Playing the Outfield Fundamentals

Catching the general fly ball

- Footwork and positioning of body
- Balls in the sun
 - Using glove to block the sun
 - Dropping down to move eyes to another level

Catching the fly ball when going to throw out runner

- Need to develop momentum coming in on ball
- Get behind the ball and moving in to catch
 - Footwork
- Coordinating the throw
 - Crow-hop to coordinate lower and upper body
 - Proper reach back to match crow-hop

Catching the ground ball

- Footwork and positioning the body
- Poor Field conditions
- Fielding when not expected to make a quick throw
- Fielding when expected to make a throw
 - On a good playing surface
 - Field to glove side of body

Throwing to the different bases

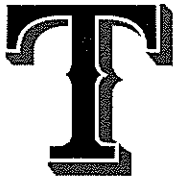
- Knowing the difference between a cut-off man and a relay man
 - Cutoff man - (One Guy)
 - Relay men - (2 Men)
- How we use the cutoff and relay men
 - "Cut-off" Man
 - "Relay Man"

Flyball Communication

- Committing to catching the flyball
 - Someone must call the ball by the time it reaches it's highest point
 - Being very vocal
 - Committing to the ball - take charge
- Communicating with other outfielders
 - Who has priority
 - CF Has priority over most people
 - Sometimes it depends on who in on base and the outfield throwing arm situation
 - Outfielders need to talk and think ahead with each other
- With other infielders
 - Who has priority
 - Outfielders have first priority - They are moving in
 - Someone must be loud and call the ball

How we teach outfielders

- Simple Drills that build confidence
 - Group Drill - Coach tosses balls in the air
 - Works on stepping in on ball
 - Group Drill - Coach tosses balls in the air to different locations
 - Ballplayers work on first step quickness and getting behind balls
 - Two Coach - Inf/OF Fungo Drills
 - Outfielders combine with Infielders
 - Partner Drills
 - Getting behind and moving in on balls
 - Moving in different directions



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Team Defenses

What are some team defenses and how do they work

Cut-offs and relays

Relay game across outfield - Fun game

Work with outfielders in conjunction with other players

While outfielders are throwing to 2nd, and third catchers and 1B are v

Bunt situations

Take time to get timing and rhythm

Regular Situations - getting an out

Man on 1st

Man on 2nd or 1st and 2nd

Un-orthodox situations - need for getting the lead runner

Man on 1st

Man on 2nd or 1st and 2nd

Squeeze Defense

Man on 3rd

Infield depths

1. Regular

2. Double play depth

3. Infield half way

4. Infield in

1st and 3rd Defenses

Throwing through

Fake to second throw to third

Throw to third

Middle inf Cut and relay to home

Hold

Pitcher covering 1st base

Nobody on

Backside of double play

Rundowns

Philosophy Priority

1. get the out between the bases

2. Get the out driving runner to last base

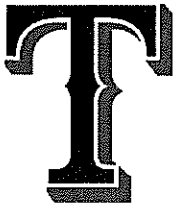
3. Use very few throws to get the out

Technique

Position players squeeze the runner - under control

Position players stay to throwing side of baseline

Do not throw ball across baseline or over top of runners



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Bunting

General thoughts

Having the ability to bunt offers another weapon
Everyone needs to know how to sacrifice bunt
Faster runners need to add the drag bunting game to their game
The short game at times starts rally's

Sacrifice Bunt

We are giving up our at bat to advance a runner

General Bunting set-up

- Spread feet
- Get low
- Get right arm extended
- Get eyes down to level of bat
- Set bat with a slight tilt

Bunting technique

- "Catch" the ball on the bat - be soft
- Both hands/arms give like a shock absorber

Bunting with man on 1B

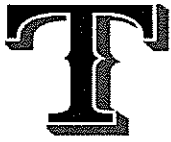
- Angle bat so bunted ball goes to 1B side
- Start on inside half of plate - work to away
- Crowd plate

Bunting with man on 2nd or 1st and 2nd

- Angle bat so bunted ball goes to 3B side
- Start on outside half of plate - work to in
- Crowd plate

Bunting location

- Away from pitcher
- Far enough from catcher
- Bunt to 1B or 3B sides
 - Man on 1B - Bunt to 1B side
 - Man on 2B or 1B and 2B - Bunt to 3B side



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Teaching Knowledgeable and aggressive baserunners

Characteristics of good baserunners

Baserunning fundamentals

Going from Home to First

- While in the batter box
- Breaking out of the box
- Find the ball

Going from First Base to Second Base and Beyond

- Getting the sign from the coach
- Know where outfield is playing
- Taking the initial lead
- Taking the secondary lead
- Stealing
- Advancing to Second on Sacrifice Bunt
- Advancing on Fly Balls
- Advancing on Line Drives
- Rounding second

Going From Second Base to Third Base and Beyond

- Know where outfield is playing
- Taking the initial lead
- Reading Pitchers
- Tagging on Fly Balls
- Advancing on ground balls in the infield

Going from Third Base to Home Plate

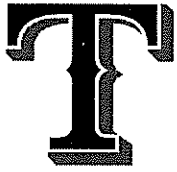
- Know where outfield is playing
- Walking lead
- Advancing to Home
- Suicide Squeeze Play
- Safety Squeeze

How we teach baserunning

General Thoughts

Simple Drills that build confidence

- Home to First - Team/Group Drill
 - Coach in the infield drill
- 1B Baserunning - Team/Group Drill
 - Coach on the mound Drill
- 2B Baserunning - Team/Group Drill
 - Coach on the mound Drill
- 3B Baserunning - Team/Group Drill
 - Coach on the mound Drill
- All the same drills but with a Live Pitcher and Catcher



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Team Offensive strategies

Hitting

- Learning to be an aggressive hitter

- Developing a plan as a hitter

- Evaluating a pitcher

 - Taking away the fastball

 - Knowing the pitchers strength and weaknesses

- Situational hitting

 - Young hitters

 - Be aggressive and put ball in play

 - Older hitters

 - Man on 1st opportunities

 - Man on 2nd opportunities

 - Man on 3rd opportunities

 - Hitting behind stealing runners

Bunting game

- Sacrifice Bunt

 - When should it be used?

- Bunting for the base hit - Drags and push type bunts

 - Who should be able to drag or push bunt?

 - When should it be used?

- Suicide Squeeze

 - When should we look to use it?

- Safety Squeeze

Baserunning and Stealing bases

- Straight Steal off 1B

 - Commons things to look for from pitcher

 - Commons things to look for from catcher

- Straight Steal off 2B

 - Commons things to look for from pitcher

- Delay Steal off 1B

 - When would we delay steal

- Hit and Run

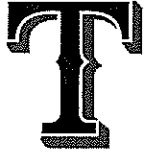
 - When is it used?

1st and 3rd

- Double Steal

 - What is it and how is it executed

- Fake Squeeze



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Practice Organization

General thoughts

The coaches goals of practices are

1. Teach and develop the baseball fundamental skills
Drills that help repeat proper fundamentals
2. Teach how the game is played
Create situations that happen in the game and repeat
3. Prepare for the game
Practice things that happen in the game
4. Develop a players confidence
Encourage, support, drive players
5. Teach players how to compete
Bring out the competitive side in players
6. Offer consequences for good and poor execution
Teach that there are two choices for everything
7. Keep it fun

How do you develop ballplayers

Have a master plan for the year

Master plan for skill development

Master plan for game knowledge

Work throughout the year to accomplish those goals

Create organized practice plans

All activities outlined in a time line for the day

Stay on task

Discuss with the team

Set the tone and the expectation

Practice Ideas

Practice with other teams

More players and more coaches

Can practice longer - 3 Hours!

Can get more accomplished

Do not waste field time to stretch, warm-up and throw

Work with specialty positions outside of practice and field times

Catchers

Pitchers to throw pens!

Other players needed in extra work

Ask other coaches from our organization if you can work in the outfield or corner of the field