

2017 T-Ball – Session 3

May 6, 2017

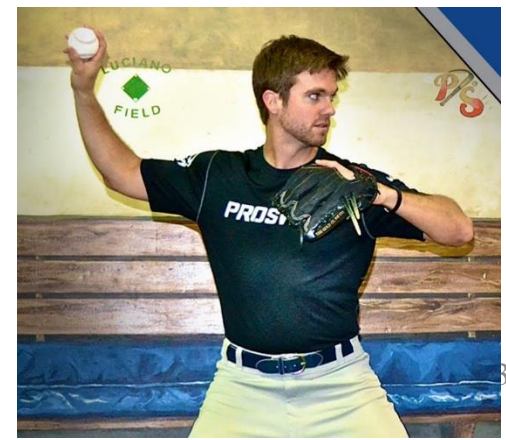
Overview

- Teams will practice as a unit with Head Coaches
 - Each team will have an area of the field they stay on (no rotating)
- First 30 minutes skills drills together as a team
 - Three skills: hitting, catching and throwing
 - First 15 minutes will be throwing, second 15 minutes will be catching
 - One coach/parent will manage the hitting station, peeling kids off the main practice two at a time and returning them when done
 - Tees and nets will be set up in each area for hitting
- Second 30 minutes BlastBall! Games vs. other teams

Skill/Drills – Throwing Coach Review

Coach Review

- Review proper throwing, starting from knees, sweeping ball from ground (see diagram at right)
- This sweeping motion is critical – we don't want kids learning to throw “from their ears”
- Take time to focus on grip (see lower diagram at right), the ball should be facing out and fingers on the inside, not fingers behind the ball. This is very important long term to a proper throw.
- Point the elbow of the glove hand to the target (“gun sight”)
- Finish by pointing towards your target, arm should sweep down across front leg



Skill Drills – Throwing Drills & Games

- Drill:
 - Three or four lines, have kids throw balls to some target (bucket) or coach/parent (short throws)
- Game 1 - Accuracy:
 - Two lines.
 - Kids throw to the coach (only one coach, not one per line).
 - Amount of throws caught by the coach without moving their feet wins. You can make this fun by falling over trying to catch balls without moving your feet, etc. A lot of coach chatter makes this really fun.
 - After they throw they go to the back of the line and sit until the next round starts (have a parent manage this)
 - Try not to chase bad throws (wastes throwing time), assign a parent to stand behind you and collect balls.
- Game 2 – Long Throw:
 - Two lines.
 - Kids throw to one coach per line
 - On a successful catch by the coach (can't move his feet), he/she takes one step backward. The game is to see which team (line) can push their coach the furthest back.
 - You can add in a twist that on a bad throw the coach has to take a step forward

Skills/Drills: Catching

Coach Review

- Review the coaching points from Session #2
- **AVOID BASKET CATCHING!!!!!!**
- This week you will only have T-balls.
- Start with the hitting the balls out of the air with no glove (very short). Move quickly to catching with one hand (glove hand).
- Get gloves on and start working hands up catching.

Game # 1

- Three lines
- One point for a catch, two points for a hands up catch (coach must throw above the waist)

Game # 2

- All kids along a line facing the coach, one or two coaches throwing balls
- Every successful catch they get to take a step back
- See what kid can get the furthest back (or set a goal line/cone to get to)
- Don't chase balls! Have a parent/coach do that so you can keep rapidly throwing

Skills/Drills – Hitting

BAT SAFETY FIRST

- Review coach reviews from Session #2
- Remind them about BAT SAFETY, every kid holds by the barrel of the bat (hand it to them that way)

FOCUS OF THE DAY - DROPPING THE HANDS

- A big problem with Tee training is dropping the hands because kids love to hit the ball in the air. We want to emphasize to kids to take their hand from their shoulders DIRECTLY TO THE BALL, not drop the hands low and then come back up to the ball (youtube dropping the hands and you'll get a ton of examples)
- We don't have this tool, but watch this video on Bat Path:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ck4SihVp2IA>
 - Our drill will use two tees for one hitter:
 - One directly behind the first tee, no ball and a bit lower than the tee with the ball
 - The hitter has to swing over the back tee to hit the ball. This prevents them from dropping their hands.
 - Without this nearly every kid will be dropping their back half and swinging up at every ball. When they get to real pitching, they can't catch up and strike out or hit weak grounders all the time.



BlastBall!

- We'll have three fields set up for BlastBall!
 - Nationals vs. Cubs
 - Red Sox vs. Yankees
 - Blue Jays vs. Pirates
- Batting team
 - Sit players in number order, several feet behind base line
 - First four in helmets, one parent to manage batters (keep it moving, no waiting for the next batter, should be ready to go)
 - Once they hit they sit back in their line. Just to first base for the squeak, we aren't going to 2nd and 3rd yet
- Fielding team
 - Cones at 3B area, 2B area and 1B area. One cone for the fielders in the infield and one for the line in the outfield (this keeps kids off of each other)
 - **KIDS ONLY FIELD THE BALL IN THEIR AREA!** No running into the other fielder's zone to steal the ball. They field the ball and run it to their coach (no throws).
 - Fielding coach throws to batting coach
 - All three fielders rotate out after every hit and go to the back of the next line. If they don't get a hit, that's baseball sorry Mom and Dad.