

Needham Baseball K - A Practice Plan #3

Time	Drill	Coaching Tips
:00 to :10	Warm ups	Have your team run through its standard warm up protocol.
:10 to :20	<p>Block the Ball. This is the first step to getting kids to learn the prospect of fielding the ball.</p> <p>What you need – Set up two or three lines of players so the kids can get maximum repetition. Have a coach or parent volunteer at each line with several balls.</p> <p>How this drill works – With this drill coaches need to first instruct their players on how to move to get in front of the ball. Start the players off in the ready position (hands on the knees, slightly bent, and with their head up watching the play).</p> <p>The coaches should roll the ball directly at the players at first, but then to either side. The player needs to shuffle to get their body in front of the ball to knock it down. For each ball that the player knocks down they get three points. If the player scoops the ball with their glove, they get five points. The players will get excited about getting points for knocking the ball down.</p>	<p>- To teach players how to use their gloves properly, try using plastic milk jugs with one side cut out to form a “scoop”. Have the kids use the scoop to field the ball. This will help them learn to use their gloves to scoop up the ball, rather than trap it.</p> <p>- Learning to knock the ball down and ultimately to try and scoop the ball is the first part of fielding the ball.</p>
:20 to :30	<p>Slow Mo Throw. At an early age, coaches often combat players that cannot throw the ball without throwing it as hard as they can.</p> <p>What you need – Set up a target (or a series of targets for several stations), that is about 10 to 15 feet away. It shouldn't be too far for the kids, otherwise they feel like they have to throw the ball hard. Line up the kids in single file in each station.</p> <p>How this drill works – In order to get the player to throw the ball normally, you need to help them understand that the ball will go as far as they want with a slow motion throw. This drill works as a method to reinforce the basic throwing skills, but also to learn control.</p>	<p>- Teach the players to learn control by asking them to throw in slow motion with just enough force to get the ball to the target. Once they can get the ball to the target with the slow motion throw, ask them to do the same thing with their normal throw.</p> <p>- Younger players will learn to control their throws. This is important to make sure they have accuracy and that they aren't throwing the ball all over the place.</p>
:30 to :40	<p>Triangle Relay. This throwing and fielding drill might be best for more advanced or older T-ballers.</p> <p>What you need – Match up two players and a coach, and if you have parent volunteers you can have several stations for this drill.</p> <p>How this drill works – This drill works on a players ability to field the ball (in the outfield for example), and then get the ball back to the relay player and then back to the coach or the parent volunteer.</p> <p>Start the players out about 30 feet away from each other, and the coach about another 15 feet from the 'relay' player. This drill begins with the coach rolling a grounder to the player that is furthest away. That player must stop the ball, control it, pick it up and make a good throw to the relay player. The relay player must then grab the ball from the glove and then make a good throw to the coach. Repeat this drill and switch the players.</p>	<p>- This is the first chance kids will get to learn how to use teamwork (relay) to get the ball where they want it to go.</p>
:40 to :60	<p>Invisible Bat. Teaching the kids the proper swing is important to building a foundation for hitting the ball.</p> <p>What you need – Line the kids up on the first and third baselines, and ask them to get into a batters stance.</p> <p>How this drill works – This will be a fun drill for the kids, as they get to show off their swing without the bat as an impediment. When they line up, ask them to assume the batter's stance. They should have their arms up with their hands raised to their ears and their back elbow raised. When you call out 'swing', all of the kids will show you their swing with the invisible bat. At this stage, you (and assistant coaches) can view the swings of each player and you can make small adjustments to the swings.</p>	<p>- Make sure the players don't swing too hard, and that they maintain the same fundamentals throughout.</p> <p>- Watch their swing, better instruction can be given to help the players swing properly. and coordination to make consistent contact with the ball.</p>
	<p>Relay race.</p> <p>- Split the team into two equal groups with ½ team starts at second base other ½ starts at home plate</p>	<p>- Make this a competition and have losing team pick up equipment or run an additional lap around the bases.</p>

Coach's Notes: _____