



“Bubba Throwing” – A Fantastic Way to Teach Players 5-8 Years Old How to Throw!

by Al Herback and Al Price

Throwing is by far the most important skill to develop in baseball or softball. We need to find a fun and effective way to teach throwing at this age level.

- Before we move right into the throwing technique, it is important to recognize the special attributes players this age bring to the ball diamond. These impact how we introduce and practice the skill.
- Players this age learn by doing, not by listening. This means that you should not have them sit down or stand around while you attempt to teach them something. Instead, get them going and use verbal cues while they are doing the activity.
- Players this age don't like to wait their turn. If you organize them into lines and they have to wait around before they finally get to throw, or catch, hit or run they become bored and lose interest.
- Remember, in most cases they have not yet developed the most basic skills. So some of the more traditional approaches, drills and activities that we use with players that are 9 to 12 just don't work very well.

How do you get players 5 to 8 years old to throw the ball 40 to 50 times in 15 minutes with decent technique without having to wait their turn? The activity needs to be fun and we need to organize the activity so there is no fear for players to hit a little buddy in the face with a thrown ball.

Most coaches fall into the trap of getting players to partner up and play catch. Al and Al call this the “pitch-duck-and run” drill because that is what happens. Playing catch is a great way to practice throwing and catching once players actually know how to throw and catch.

Why not create a fun throwing activity that looks similar to the way golfers are organized at a golf driving range. Give each player an ice cream bucket full of balls. Place five or six old tennis balls, a couple of whiffle balls and 1-2 regulation balls in each bucket.

Then take the lids to the buckets and print the first name of each of your players on it. Line up the buckets and matching lids down the right field line.

On your cue, direct the players to pick up a ball from their bucket and practice throwing to the open field. When all the buckets are empty, the coach has the players hustle out to gather up a bucket full of balls and return to their lid for another round of Bubba Throwing.

It's lots of fun; players have their own station so there is no standing around waiting their turn. Coaches, this is a great way to have your players practice the correct arm action and the second step of a two-step throw.

Break tradition and give “Bubba Throwing” a try, you will be amazed at the results.