

2011 Coaches Skills Training Instruction

Purpose: The purpose of the Coaches Skills Training Instruction Clinic is to prepare WAA Girls Softball coaches with some basic skill and fundamental techniques which can be used at practices and taught during the season. These drills stress a fundamental philosophy which is consistent not only across WAA Girls Softball but also both Webster High Schools.

Coach Preparation: Coaches are expected to study this packet and organize practices consistent with these teachings. In preparation, today coaches will be trained on the specific skill fundamentals which will emphasize basic drills to instruct players. During season practices coaches are encouraged to organize and teach based upon these training sets. Fundamentals should be primarily function of all practices with strategy play worked in. An example practice format is attached.

Agility/Warm-UP:

- Before every practice 10 minutes of agility/warm-up should be performed
- Static stretching has been de-emphasized by most athletic trainers
- New philosophy is dynamic warm-up
- **Drills:**
 - Arm circles
 - Jumping jacks
 - Slow knee's (High Knees)
 - Forward Lunges
 - Side Lunges
 - Frankenstein
 - Quick Knees
 - Shuffles
 - Cross Over's
 - Cherry Pickers (explosions)
 - Sprints (heels up proper base running stance)
 - Game – set up relays, obstacle course

Throwing:

- Throwing (and Catching) is probably the most important fundamental and mostly is performed incorrectly.
- You can never spend too much time teaching throwing

Drills:

- **Knee Wrist Snaps:** (Partner up girls, glove knee up, brace elbow with glove, snap throw)
- **Knee Throws:** (Same as above except full follow thru with hands touching ankle)
- **Long Throws** (Same as above – bounce ball in from with arc)
- **Standing Statue Throw:** Standing, girls start with high elbow throwing at once
- **Standing Statue Throw with quick return throw**
- **Full throw:** Regular position
- **Speed Throwing** (Partner up girls, throw to one another practice rotation and quickness of throw – getting ball out of glove fast)

Games:

- **Open Bucket Throw** (From distance have girls throw into bucket flat on ground using snap and follow thru from above – LS/MM could use hula hoop)
- **Star Drill:** (Have girls in IF positions except for pitcher – throw around the bases calling base or perform star drill demo – LS,MM ok to perform with girls on each base)

Catching:

- Second most important fundamental of the game
- Catching also is a stress and safety concern that needs to be addressed to build each girl's confidence.
- Hand eye coordination is very important and needs to be implemented in drills

Drills:

- **Partner (coach) Tennis Ball Toss:** (Partner up girls, without gloves have girls bounce 1 tennis ball to partner)
- **2 Tennis Ball Toss:** (Same as above except each girl has a tennis ball and bounce pass to one another – as they get comfortable go faster)
- **Overhead Standing Catch:** (Toss ball over head having girls emphasize straight arms while catching – can use large balls with LS/MM)
- **Catching Reaction Drill** (Break girls up into a couple groups. One at a time throw softballs to the left and right and have them react with a catch).
- **Shoulder Throws** (Facing coach – balls are thrown over right and left should emphasizing proper rotation and position)

Games:

- **Running Catch** (Line up girls on 3rd base foul line – player sprints to LF while coach throws leading line drive, continue to CF with fly ball, continue to RF with short pop up).
- **Line Drill:** (Break girls up into groups of 3 – 2 at end mark one in the middle. Girls throw ball to each girls down and back – first team to 10 wins)

Fielding:

- Focus on primary fundamentals of proper fielding position
- Take time to explain responsibilities of each position and where to stand
- Work in situational strategy after proper teaching of fundamentals

Drills:

- **Side to Side Toss** (Set up parameters and quickly roll softball to players without gloves. Time each girl for 20-30 seconds)
- **Run-Through** (Have girls line up in a straight line and coach bounce tennis balls to players without gloves. Players first step is forward and challenge them with left to right)
- **2 coach fielding drill** (2 coaches at home plate one hitting to girls positioned at 3rd base the other hitting to girls positioned at 1st base. Girls field and drop in bucket)

Games/Advance Drills:

- **Hot Box Hitting** (Line up girls on 2nd base with 2 retrievers located with 2 coaches hitting. Left coach hits ground ball players throws to left retriever – 2nd coach immediately hits another ground ball and player throws to right retriever. Everyone rotate clockwise)
- **Five Ball Fungo:** (Position players in every position except for catcher and pitcher. Each position gets 5 ground balls hit by coach and girls throw to 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st).

Baserunning:

- As girls begin to play at higher levels baserunning becomes increasingly important
- Girls softball has a short game strategy which usually results in low scoring 1 run games
- Generating runs becomes the main objective

Drills:

- **Run through 1st** (Line up girls at home plate run through 1st base)
- **Feet Position on Base** (Show proper stance with front foot on right corner of base and right leg back)
- **Base Rounding** (Position girls on 1st or 2nd, have them run 2 bases focusing on rounding corner of base- can use cones or object to stress straight line attack)
- **Sliding:** (Teach proper fundamentals of sliding – even having the younger girls sit down. Sliding –especially at home – become a major safety factor and rule).

Games/Advance Drills:

- **Relay Race:** (Break up girls into 2 groups with one group on 2nd base and other group at home. Groups run full bases and team to get back to original base first wins – good to perform after games vs. other team)
- **Indian Run:** Have girls start at home. 1st leg is to run to 1st (come back to home), 2nd leg run to 2nd(come back to home) 3rd leg run to 3rd (come back to home) last leg all the way around the bases.

Pitching:

- Girls softball pitching is one of the most mechanical techniques in all of sports
- All teams should have general pitching instruction for all players
- Focus on fundamentals not accuracy or speed
- Teach them the right way every time so bad habits are not formed
- All pitching drills should be done in small groups with coach or adult as catcher

Drills:

- **Wrist Snaps:** (From close distance, girls will only snap wrist to simulate finish).
- **T's** (From a "T" position, player rotates and finishes with a snap)
- **X's** (Same as above except from a "X" position)
- **Arm Isolation:** To isolate arm motion only (no legs), a good drill is getting on one knee and throwing T formation and also with complete arm circle. Instructor can focus on whether circle is correct and make sure the pitcher is not bending at the waist
- **Full Motion:** (Emphasis both feet on rubber, show of ball, and stride outs)

Games/Advance Drills:

- **Spots:** (Catcher places glove in positions where pitcher needs to throw)
- Bucket on bucket and have girls try to hit top bucket out of the "T" formation at about 20 feet then doing full arm circle three times, releasing on the third circle. Can change top bucket to a 2 liter bottle to make it more challenging, depending on age and ability

Hitting:

- The main part of the game most girls look forward to participating
- Also can be stressful as only time girls are really individualized
- May have some anxiety with ball hitting them
- Teaching philosophy centers around torsion hitting

Hitting Position and Safety

- Knocking knuckles
- Stance – position at home plate
- Bat position
- Bent knee back foot pivot
- Dropping bat (can use circle to illustrate)

Drills:

- Soft Toss
- Tennis Ball Bounce (From 45 degree angle, coach bounces in front of batter)
- Live Coach Pitching

Tee:

- Straight Tee hitting
- Top/Bottom (Place large waffle balls on top of one another have player hit bottom ball. Goal is to have top ball drop straight down)

Bunting:

- Illustrate bat placement at 45 degree angle
- Pitch ball to players for bunt practice
- 1st/3rd ball placement

Hitting Games:

- **Soft Toss/ Fielding Line:** (Coach soft tosses to batter (split up into even teams) who hits into 2 lines of fielders. Score 1 pt pass first line and 2 points pass second line).
- **Suicide/Pressure Hitting:** (Splint into 2 teams – coach’s pitches to batters. Provide situation and ask them to either get base hit, bunt, hit to right side – one pitch)

Practice Plan Example:

6:30 – 6:40: - Agility/Warm-up (All)

6:45 – 7:30 – Station Training

Split girls into 3 groups

Organize 3 stations: Throwing, Catching, Hitting

Each station 15 minutes which groups rotate until all is complete

Station 1: - Throwing/Catching

Station 2: - Fielding

Station 3: - Hitting

(Use drill suggestions above, start slowly first week then implement advance drills 2nd week Also fit in pitching during 2nd week replacing baserunning– LS: Use same format except play game vs. opponent after station training then have game with other team at the end).

7:35 – 7:45 – Baserunning (All)

7:45 – 8:00 - Game (All)