**How to Organize and Run an Efficient Baseball Practice**

**Practice Philosophy**

* **Where can I practice today – inside/outside/modified**
* **How much space do I have – inside (gym or fieldhouse) / outside (field + cages)**
* **How many coaches do I have available at practice?**
* **What equipment do I have available at practice?**
* **What are you looking to accomplish at practice.**
* **Goals for the Day / Theme for practice**

**Example: We practice to eliminate reasons for losing.**

* **Practice must flow – need to eliminate standing around / lines, etc.**
* **How long do you practice – I would recommend your practice be the same as the length of your games.**
* **Post your Practice in locker room –or some place where the athletes can see it before practice**
* **Practice in uniforms**
* **Practice fast with Pace to simulate game speed.**

**Things I would not do in Practice**

* **Again organize your practice in such a way as to avoid lines – this will keep players active and eliminate discipline issues**
* **Conditioning – Practice is a conditioning process – do not waste 10-15 minutes at the end running**
* **Make you players accountable in practice – for their effort and their execution**

**PRACTICE – THE CREIGHTON WAY**

**We have always believed we could separate ourselves from many teams by How We Practiced. We want quality over quantity. REPS have always been a Big part of our ability to develop players.**

**R – Reaching + Repeating; improvement can only occur when we reach out of our comfort zone.**

**E – Emotional investment, we must be as emotionally involved in our preparation as we can be.**

**P – Purpose + Precision, we will practice our skills that precisely simulate game-like situations**

**S – Strong + Speedy, feedback from coaches will be immediate; pace of practice will be fast**

**We will practice with an extreme level of execution and attention to details. Six things we expect our players and coaches to do during practice.**

1. **Our players (in uniforms) are emotionally invested in the process of getting better.**
2. **Our coaches are prepared and coaching with energy.**
3. **Our standards of execution are very high.**
4. **The practice has a fast pace to it.**
5. **We enjoy what we are doing – after all we are playing baseball correct.**
6. **Every detail matters – we do not pick and choose what is important.**

**Each individual skill that a player possesses falls into one of the four levels of Mastering a Skill.**

**Level 1 – The player doesn’t know what he doesn’t know. We must teach and educate the player.**

**Level 2 – The player understands his weaknesses and is motivated to improve. We will provide instruction.**

**Level 3 – The player possesses the skill, but has to think his way through it. We will provide game-like reps.**

**Level 4 – The player can naturally execute the skill without thinking about it. We will provide game speed practices.**

* **IF WE PRACTICE FAST WE WILL SLOW THE GAME DOWN**
* **WHAT WE ACCEPT IN PRACTICE WE CAN EXPECT IN A GAME**
* **ALL WE WANT IS ALL YOU GOT – CONCENTRATED EFFORT vs. EFFORT**

**Example of a Practice plan**

1. **Dynamic Stretching Routine**

* **Include agility work + form running ( need to spend more time on running technique)**

1. **Base Running – focus on one aspect of base running for that day**
2. **Concentrated Throwing Program**
3. **TEAM DEFENSE**
4. **Individual Defense**
5. **Offensive Workout (Hitting / Bunting / Base Running)**

**Building Blocks for a Championship Defense**

1. **Philosophy**

* **Not going to lose the game / force the other team to beat us!**
* **Need to have a plan(System) – System must be based on accountability**
* **Need to Sell Plan to players**

1. **Defense – What is it Really?**

* **Develop a Throwing Program – Concentrated Throwing Program**
* **70%-75% errors made are throwing errors**
* **Coaches need to oversee throwing program**
* **Throwing program should be timed – stopwatch**
* **Correct Arm Action should be developed – catchers / infielders / outfielders**
* **Master the two foot patterns – incorporate them into your throwing program**
* **Foot Patterns – R/L throw and follow / R-L shuffle throw and follow**

1. **Examples of Different Throwing and catching Drills**

* **Rapid catch / Rapid fire**
* **Switch drill**
* **Relay footwork – short throw vs. long throw foot work**
* **4-corner catch – variations / timed**
* **Use small gloves and paddles when doing drills**

1. **TEAM DEFENSE – Add Accountability and Pressure**

* **Rundowns – between 1B-2B / between 3B-home (2-3x per week)**
* **Bunt Defense – timed (4.1 sec. or less) (4-5x per week)**
* **Cuts and Relays – everyday**
* **1st-3rd defense – (2-3x per week)**
* **Pick-off – (2-3x per week)**
* **Live defense – runners on 1st and 3rd – execute the situation**

1. **Game Day Work**

* **Between innings work – odd innings infielders throw to 1B / even inning infielders turn DP**
* **Catcher throw to 2B – timed**

1. **Game Day – Defensive Goals**

* **5 Free Bases or less – a free base is a BB/HBP/E/SB/WP/PB/Balk/Trail Runner Advancing – win 82% of our games**
* **NO BIG Innings – What is a Big Inning – 3 runs or more**
* **78% of big innings have either a walk or error in them or both**
* **NO bunt base hits**
* **NO triples**
* **No steals of 3B**
* **NO Special Defense Mistakes – Bunt defense / 1st-3rd defense / Pick-off**
* **NO Communication or mental Errors**
* **Make offense get 3 hits per inning to score – 95% innings can not get 3 hits**
* **Shrink the inning – when the other team gives you an out take it**
* **Finish the game**
* **Lead after 6 innings – 363-25 = 93.5%**
* **Lead after 7 innings – 357-14 = 96%**

1. **Scouting reports**

* **Team Tendencies**
* **Individual Tendencies**