

Practice Priority #1 - Tornado Warm-Up Routine

Jog

Never start until all players are ready. Jog down line, along warning track to opposite foul pole and then back in a tight group (no one is way ahead or way behind).

Stretch

Sit in a circle with captains leading the stretches.

- 1) Elbow across front of body (both arms)



- 2) Pull elbow down behind head (both arms)



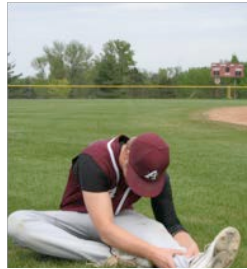
- 3) Bear hugs (palm up across front of body)



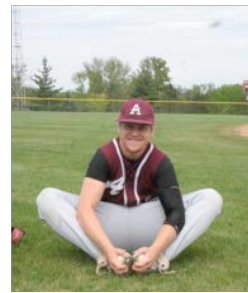
- 4) Arm circles (both directions)



- 5) Sitting toe touches (both legs)



- 6) Butterfly (groin stretch)



- 7) Back Twists (both legs)



- 8) Calf stretch (both legs)



Other warmups:

- 9) Standing calf stretch
- 10) Trunk twisters
- 11) Crunches
- 12) Push ups
- 13) Squat Jumps

Practice Priority #2 - Playing Catch

Teaching kids how to throw and catch must be your second priority after a proper warm-up. Learning how to throw will allow the kids to throw many times during a week without injury AND MOST IMPORTANTLY allow them to play at a competitive level in high school and beyond. Proper technique will also help them to throw more accurately, throw further, throw faster and will allow pitchers to throw different types of pitches.

The following progression of drills will help all kids learn how to throw.

I) Elbow Isolation

- This drill is done at the beginning to emphasize releasing the ball correctly.
- Kneeling – 15-25' apart
- Glove under throwing elbow
- Four seam grip
- Ball is thrown with elbow and wrist only
- Make sure the ball spins backwards.

It is ideal to do all throwing drills with a taped ball to show the spin. If players grip with a 4 seam grip and the ball spins backwards, then the black line will spin in a vertical circle.

II) Power T (kneeling on one knee, 20-30' apart)

- ✓ 2-3 fingers on top (looks like snake fangs so “fangs on top” works for most kid.
- ✓ Ball away
- ✓ Glove elbow pointing towards target
- ✓ Shoulders aligned with front elbow
- ✓ Throwing elbow at or above the should
- ✓ Throwing hand above throwing elbow
- ✓ Look back to check position

III) Double knee throws

(20'-30' apart, emphasize torso twist)

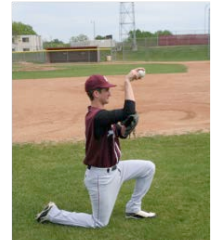
IV) Power T to stand up

Same as power T on knee, except on follow through rise up on glove side leg and get throwing foot up to buttocks level.

Elbow Isolation – Front



Elbow Isolation – Side



Power T – Side View



Anoka Varsity Team Warming up



Double Knee Throws



- V) Perpendicular feet – Point both feet at your partner with feet at shoulder width. This emphasizes torso twist.

Perpendicular Feet



- VI) No-step drill >> Just as the name says, doing the power T drill standing, facing partner with an exaggerated follow-through.

VII) Perpendicular throwing drill

- ✓ With your glove side shoulder towards your partner (Highlight the trunk turn, staying on top and follow through)
- ✓ With your throwing shoulder toward your partner (Highlight the trunk twist and reaching up to stay on top)

VIII) Regular catch – Throw to a specific spot, emphasis on proper mechanics.

- IX) 21 = catch from 30-46' >>2 points for hitting the glove, 1 point for catch but glove moves up to 2', 0 points for other catches and -2 points if partner doesn't catch the throw.

- X) Long toss – Throw the distance from 1st to 3rd to learn how to increase the distance the players can throw. Early in the year be sure to build up to your maximum distance to avoid sore arms.

