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Greetings! Todd Williams here with another edition of Baseball's Best - Drills, Tips, and Strategies Newsletter.

This newsletter will focus on having a well-defined practice. Creating and executing a well-defined practice plan will help your players improve their skills, will help your team play together more effectively, and will just plain be more fun. (Not to mention, it'll make you look like a better coach!)

See below for the article.

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RULE QUIZ

How well do you know the rules?

What is the penalty for hitting a fair ball with a thrown glove, cap or other part of the uniform detached from it's proper place?

See below for the answer.

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INFIELDER'S "V" THROWING DRILL

<http://www.baseballbestdrills.com/v2/v-throwing-drill.html>

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A WELL-DEFINED PRACTICE PLAN

Creating and executing a well-defined practice plan will help your players improve their skills, will help your team play together more effectively, and will just plain be more fun. (Not to mention, it'll make you look like a better coach!)

Here are some tips on how to accomplish just that!

A well-defined practice plan, including goals and objectives, will help you be prepared to deal with a large group of kids. Your plan should preferably be in written form, so that assistant coaches can continue in your absence. Your plan should include the following elements:

- a) objectives to be accomplished this practice.
- b) about four basic activities and the time you'd like to spend on each.
- c) a list of any required equipment.
- d) blank space where you can take notes about what went well, what didn't, and any ideas you have for improvement.

Below is an example of a typical practice. The length of your practice can vary from about an hour for younger players to about two hours for older players. Each practice should consist of the following elements:

WARM UP - Greatly reduces the risk of injury, and is especially important for developing long-term physical fitness awareness.

TEAM TALK - Let your players know what you expect from them, and what you want to accomplish in that practice session.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT - Focus on skill development drills and exercises. The first half of the time should be spent reviewing and improving skills previously taught. The second half of the time should be spent introducing a new skill. It's good to introduce one new skill (or some variation of a skill already learned) at every practice. First explain the skill and then demonstrate the skill, using proper technique. Then have the players perform the drill with close supervision to ensure they're using the proper technique.

WATER BREAK - If it's hot, take a 3 to 5 minute water break and cool-down. Use the opportunity to reinforce the skill just practiced. Note: Don't rely on your players to bring their own water. Most will, but one or two may not. Always have some extra water on hand for those who don't bring their own. It's easy to get dehydrated, and that can be dangerous.

SCRIMMAGE - Modified the scrimmage to ensure the skills you introduced have game-time implications. Here are a few tips to ensure a successful scrimmage:

- a) rotate positions so each player has a chance to understand the requirements of each position.

- b) use some of the players as coaches and officials, to get better understanding of the rules.
- c) play for a set amount of time, not until a scrimmage team reaches a certain score.

TEAM TALK - Take the time reinforce what was learned and to start preparing your players mentally for the upcoming game.

There are countless ways to conduct a successful practice, and you'll have to find the way that works best for you and your situation. If you keep the pace moving and keep the atmosphere fun, you'll do just fine.

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ANSWER TO RULE QUIZ

The answer to this week's rule quiz is: THREE bases.

It's one of the worst penalties in baseball. So before one of your players decides to chuck their mitt or their cap at a hit ball, tell them that it's not such a good idea!

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