

Pre-Hit Drill

By Jim Simms – Assistant coach Annapolis Area Christian School (MD)

My kids call it the Pre-Hit Drill and it involves three plastic golf whiffle balls that are different colors. I truly believe after using this drill I see a marked improvement in the following:

1. Their ability to learn the difference between a broad focus and fine focus.
2. Their ability to track the ball from the release point to the plate.
3. Pitch recognition.
4. Reaction Time.
5. Helping coaches identify players who may have eye problems.
6. Last, but so ever important—instilling confidence.

Procedure

The coach takes three golf whiffle balls of different colors and designates each color as a different type pitch. I usually make white a fastball, green is a curveball and red is a ball. The coach then has the batters face him at a distance of from thirty to sixty feet. I have used the drill with as many as six batters spread out, but it works best with from one to three. The coach then gets into a pitching stance and goes through the motion yelling out broad focus and then fine focus. The coach then completes a throwing motion without throwing the ball. The batters have to respond immediately to the color that is thrown. White is an immediate swing while green is a slight hesitation and then a swing. If the color is red they take the pitch. The coach can vary the color pitch combination any way he chooses and can show different grips on the ball to help with pitch identification. If you see one of your players squinting during the drill, it is a good indication that he may need an eye exam just to be sure his vision is good.

Results

As a coach I absolutely believe this drill has helped our kids to improve their hitting, but more importantly the kids believe in this drill. I know it teaches them how and when to pick up the release point and we get fooled a lot less with curveballs. All I can say is hitting still fascinates me after a lifetime in this sport. My kids know I will try any gadget or drill to help them improve in what has been defined and rightfully so as the most difficult thing to do in any sport. I have been blessed to have coached a multitude of good hitters through the years and hope that some of my drills have helped them reach their potential. Good luck to all my brother coaches and hope this helps.

Coach Jim Simms – this drill is a drill I started using some years ago with our teams. I'm sure that other coaches use this drill and as with most drills I probably stole it from somebody. You would think that after 43 years coaching baseball I would have heard it all, but I'm still learning and having fun. My contact number is (C) 410-303-2359