



Chuckers

"Coaching Consistency"

At every level in the game, there is huge value to being a reliable player. As much as we love the guy who can make the highlight-reel web-gem or hit the ball a country mile, more times than not, we would prefer to have a roster full of dependable players who we know what we are getting day in and day out, rather than a club made up of those who play like a prospect one night, and a suspect the next.

Your job as a volunteer coach is to put our athletes in the best position to be consistent day in and day out, and a great way to breed that consistency out of them is by developing individual routines that will not only improve their overall abilities, but also help them prepare for games.



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Generally for a good part of the first month of the season in April, a coaching staff should be far more concerned with getting the players in that comfortable routine than winning and losing games.

Set a foundation for their season/year. It's of vital importance to get our Chucker athletes into an individual routine so they know how to get ready every day.

Coaches should make every effort to facilitate that consistency out of our players by being consistent ourselves with how we set up our days and the approach we take to make each one productive. In doing so, we give our collective team a pretty good idea of what to expect every time they arrive at the ballpark. That will bring a comfort to our daily work, and it's that comfort- we hope- that will enable our players to just go out and play, trusting their consistent routine by the time the lights go on.



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Here are five types of routines that should be a staple of a Chuckers team:

Cage Routine

Hitters hone their craft on frequently in the batting cage or on-field. Using the tee, then doing different variations of soft toss, players can put together a handful of hitting drills that enable them to get their swings exactly where they need to be, while also giving them the opportunity to focus on weaknesses they are looking to improve upon.

Defensive Routine

Infielders, outfielders, and catchers can all create individual routines that help them both prepare and develop with the glove in the same way their cage work does for their bat. For example, hand roll baseballs to infielders can be done to reinforce good habits and proper ground ball fundamentals in literally five minutes, while outfielders can perfect their drop step to go back on the ball with short distance thrown pop-ups. The drills are simple, non-taxing physically, and isolate one or two things at a time that, when put together, help develop a complete defensive player.



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Throwing Routine

Playing catch is the most important fundamental skill of the game. It is not a warm up, nor something we do just to get loose. It's a drill that translates in every game ever played. Regimented on times and distances, throwing some days longer and further to gain arm strength, while others shorter to save their arms. Infielders can finish their throwing program with a quick exchange (quick-hands), outfielders working on relay throws, and catchers with their transfers on stolen bases.

Bullpen Routine

In the same way that every hitter is different, every pitcher on a staff has their own strengths and weaknesses. With that in mind, whenever each arm gets on the mound in the bullpen in between outings, their “20/30/40-pitch script” should reflect their own individuality rather than each guy doing the same thing. For instance, a pitcher who struggles to throw strikes consistently can have a focus on his command, while another who is looking to develop an off-speed pitch can work that one as much if not more than the one he already throws well.



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Pre-Game Routine

Go to any Major League stadium 15 or 20 minutes prior to the first pitch of a game, and you’ll notice players “randomly” appear from the dugout, head down the outfield foul line and run some sprints, stretch their bodies, take a few dry swings, before a quick game of catch.

Truth be told, there is nothing random about those pre-game routines for the game’s best. Instead, every guy knows exactly what they need to do in order to get themselves ready to play the game, as some may need more time/sprints/stretching/throws for 7:05, just as others can seemingly roll right out of bed good to go.

Routines offer players a base they can always go, one from which they can always build. When things are going great or when things go awry, they can always fall back to their routine to get right and keep moving forward. Consistent preparation often leads to consistent play. That’s what the routine can provide.

This is property as developed of Richmond City Baseball (1963)