

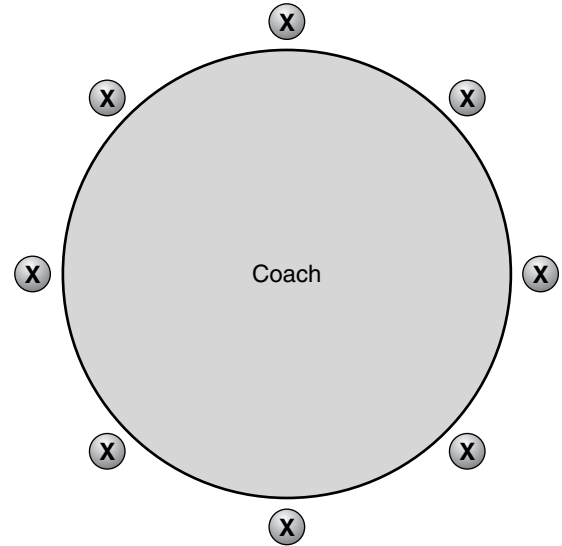
Drills: Whoosh!

Goal:

To teach players proper throwing-arm action

Description:

Players form a large circle on the field, facing the outside of the circle as shown in the diagram. You give commands from inside the circle. Each player holds a two-foot long, three-eighths-inch diameter wooden dowel in his throwing hand, holding it like a baton. Players perform the following stages, executing five or six simulations for each stage.



- Stage 1:** On command (1: “Hands together!”), players stand with their feet shoulder-width apart facing forward holding their hands together in front of their chests; (2: “Throwing position!”) players bring their hands out to the sides of their bodies as in the throwing position, with emphasis on keeping the elbows and wrists bent; (3: “Scratch your back!”) they bring the throwing arm toward the head so that the dowel scratches the back between the upper regions of scapula bones, while synchronously the nonthrowing arm moves to the area in front of the chest; (4: “Throw!”) players move the throwing arm forward as if throwing a ball, trying to make the dowel make a whoosh sound out in front of the body, emphasizing the wrist snap at release and rotating the nonthrowing shoulder. Players should not throw dowels, and feet do not move in this stage.
- Stage 2:** The same commands are used, but players start facing perpendicular to the stance from stage 1. On the second command, players use the lead arm as a sighting arm; on the last command, players step toward an imaginary target while snapping the dowel in imitation of throwing.
- Stage 3:** Players begin in relaxed position with hands together as if receiving a thrown ball. On command (1: “Instep!”), they rotate the throwing-foot instep outward 90 degrees; (2: “Separate!”) as the lead foot steps and the body rotates to the target, the arms move into throwing position; (3: “Scratch!”) the dowel scratches the back; (4: “Step and throw!”) players execute the throwing motion, snapping the dowel in front of the body, emphasizing the follow-through position.

After five to six whooshes, players replace dowels with baseballs and follow the previous stages using the same commands. After 10 mock whooshes with balls, players pair off and move through the stages described earlier, but they throw to a partner. After 10 throws with a partner, players throw and catch on their own.

For this drill, baseballs should have a black line drawn around the center so that players and coaches can see the rotation of the ball and make adjustments to arm action and release point.

