

6x WEEK OFFENSIVE & DEFENSIVE PROGRAMME



WEEK 5

Honouring the Game:

Page 2 - Pathways &
Opportunities Around the World

Position Focus: Catcher

Page 7 - Transitioning to Throw
Page 13 - Bunts, Passed Balls & Tags

Defence:

Page 17- Rundowns

INTRODUCTION & HONOURING THE GAME

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome the players• To provide an overview of national and international pathways and playing opportunities around the world. | |
| Coaches Notes: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present the information below. | |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 mins | 00:00 – 00:05 |

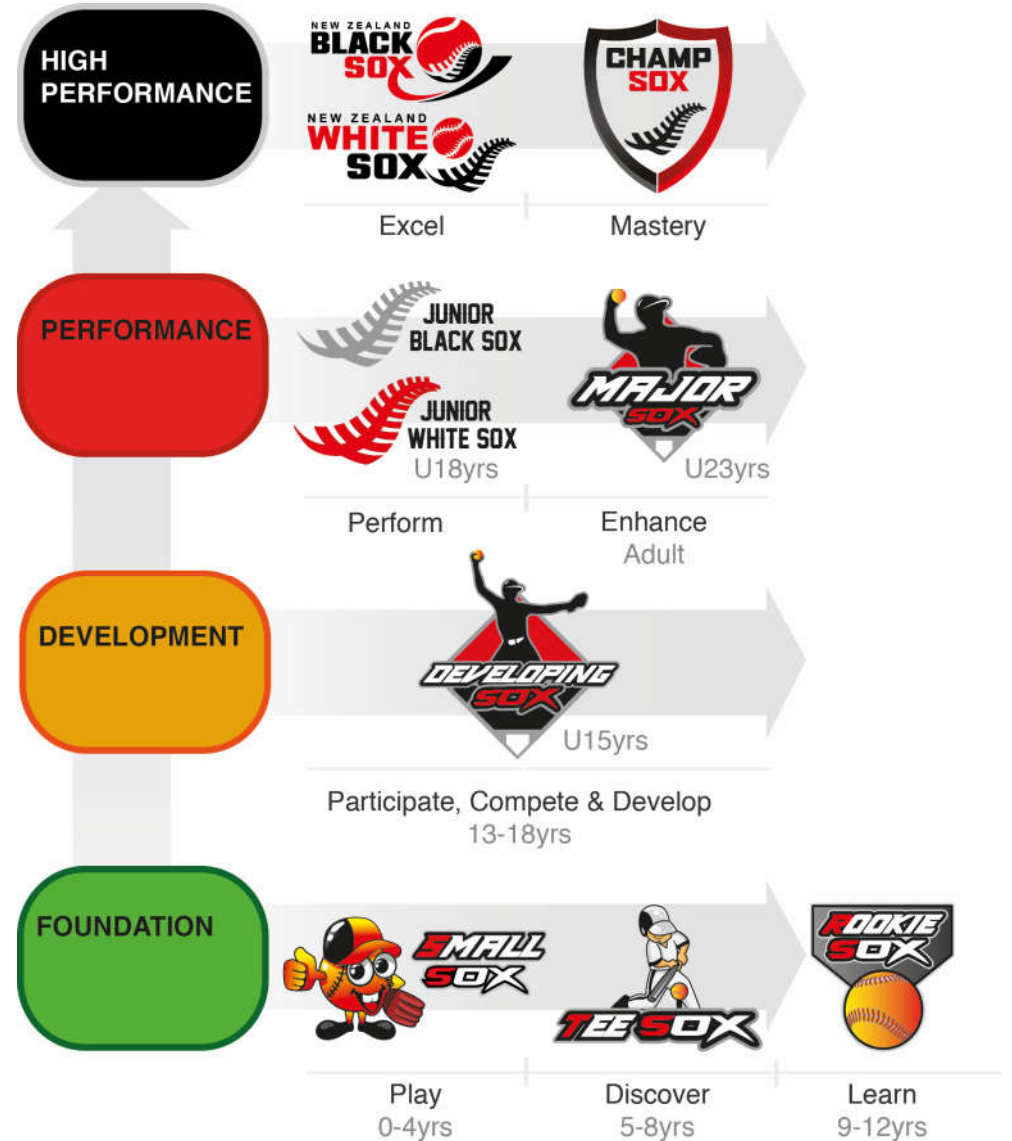
PATHWAYS

National Player & Coach Development Pathway (to the right)

- The National Player & Coach Development Pathway includes 4 levels; Foundation, Development, Performance and High Performance.
- The pathway is aligned with Sport NZ and the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC).
- New Zealand national tournaments are also aligned to WBSC in that they offer U15, U18 and U23 World Cups.
- Being linked to WBSC allows New Zealand teams to compete at senior and junior World Cups. WBSC offers the following world championships.



| Pathway | Male World Cups | Female World Cups |
|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Senior | New Zealand, 2021 | TBC, 2021 |
| Under 23's | Argentina, 2021 | N/A |
| Under 18's | New Zealand, 2020 | Peru, 2020 |
| Under 15's | N/A | TBC, 2020 |



OPPORTUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD

US College Scholarships and Softball (Female)

The US college system have provided around 35 scholarships to New Zealand female softballers and an opportunity to play the game at an extremely high level, while receiving an education at the same time. For more information on the US college system, or to view player profiles including our scholarship ambassadors who have undertaken degrees through the US college education system go to the Softball NZ website www.softball.org.nz

Europe (Male & Female)

There are 33 National Softball Federations in the European continents. Each year there are numerous tournaments and leagues played between the months of April and October. The European Cup is the ultimate title for those clubs wanting to call themselves European Champions. Each season male and female players from New Zealand attend the championship through various clubs throughout Europe.

North America (Male)

For decades New Zealanders have travelled to North America to compete in local leagues and the ISC tournament, the strongest club tournament in the world. New Zealand has a long relationship with North American clubs and has allowed many Black Sox players the opportunity to develop and showcase their game.

Kingsley Avery – US College Ambassador


"Playing Softball overseas for Ave Maria University gave me four of the most exciting, diverse and challenging years of my life. Not only did I get the opportunity to grow in the game I love but I also gained a community of lifelong friends, a top notch education, and many enriching experiences.




As an aspiring writer, there was nothing better for me than to grow in knowledge of the liberal arts, be put out of my comfort zone, and gain a different appreciation for the world, life and the game of softball.

I was so proud to be an ambassador of my country but also to be divulged in another way of life. I committed to Ave Maria within two weeks of looking at it, and that leap, a risk and intuition, was one of the best decisions I have ever made."

WARM UP – DYNAMIC STRETCHING

| | | | |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamic stretching means you are moving as you stretch and is important as it activates muscles during your workout, improves range of motion, improves body awareness and enhances muscular performance and power. | | |
| Coaches Notes: | <p> Example of dynamic warm up exercises Refer to the “Coach Support Notes”, page 4</p> | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lateral Shuffle High Knees Butt Kicks Trunk Rotation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Lunges Arm Circles Leg Swings Shuttles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretch Shoulders & Back Squats Add additional dynamic stretches if needed |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 mins | 00:05 – 00:15 | |

WARM UP – THROWING MECHANICS & LONG TOSS

| | | | |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce the importance of using this time to develop and embed good throwing mechanics versus just throwing the ball around to warm up. As a coach utilising this time to check and address good throwing mechanics will save you time during the drills. | | |
| Coaches Notes: | <p> Refer to the “Coach Support Notes” under the catcher section for detail on the “catchers” throwing mechanics.</p> | | |

| | | | |
|------------|--|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grip • Arm Action • Underhand Toss | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step/Stride • Release / Wrist Action • Overhand Toss | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hip / Shoulder Rotation • Follow Through / Glove Arm Movement • Long Toss |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 mins | 00:15 – 00:25 | |



CATCHER

FOCUS: TRANSITIONING TO THROW

WATER BREAK & SET UP

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quick water break• Setup stations and ensure those leading those stations are clear on what is happening. |
| Coaches Notes: | <p>📖 Refer to the “Coach Support Notes” under the catcher section to support the following drills.</p> |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 mins <p>00:25 – 00:30</p> |

STATION 1: ROLE AND PHYSICAL QUALITIES (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| Equipment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whiteboard (ideal but not necessary) | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 5 mins | 00:30 – 00:35 |

STATION 2: QUICK THROW DRILL (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|---|---------------|
| Equipment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fence, plates and balls | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 5 mins | 00:35 – 00:40 |

STATION 3: QUICK POP DRILL (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| Equipment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plates and balls | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 10 mins | 00:40 – 00:50 |

STATION 4: QUICK FEET DRILL (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| Equipment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balls, bases and cones | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 7 mins | 00:50 – 00:57 |

STATION 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| Equipment: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plates and balls | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 10 mins | 00:57 – 01:07 |

STATION 1: ROLE AND PHYSICAL QUALITIES (ALL) (5 mins)

DRILL:

Role of the Catcher:

Over the last 4 weeks the coach has outlined the roles of; First Base, Second Base, Short Stop, Third Base and Outfield.

In your view what is the role of the catcher?

Answers

Positioned behind home plate, the catcher can see the whole field, and is therefore able to:

- Direct and lead other players in a defensive play.

Catchers are responsible for:

- Calling pitches, keeping up the pace of the game, reacting to all situations.
- Foul tips, bouncing balls in the dirt, and contact with runners during plays at the plate.
- Catchers are asked to throw to second base and third base in order to prevent runners from stealing bases.
- Additionally, catchers block pitches pitched into the dirt and "frame" pitches close to the strike zone by slightly moving their catcher's mitts back toward the strike zone after catching pitches.

Physical Qualities of Catchers:

In your view what are some Physical Qualities a catcher will need?

Answers

- Leadership, communication and mental toughness

STATION 2: QUICK THROW DRILL (ALL) (5 mins)

DRILL:

Objective:

To focus on developing a quick release with a throwdown to First base.

Task:

- Players are side-on to the fence.
- Players will be in a squat position.
- Toss/pitch ball to player and they are to catch and release ball throwing it into fence as fast as they can, 10-15 x each player.
- Stress proper pop time mechanics to accomplish this.



STATION 3: QUICK POP DRILL (ALL) (10 mins)

DRILL:

Objective:

To focus on the transition from catching prior to the throw.

Task:

- Toss/pitch ball to player as they are in their squat position.
- They are to quickly turn (quick feet) meanwhile moving their glove straight towards their ear.
- Their free hand will grab the ball out of the glove and extend their arm outwards in the ready-to-throw position. Make sure they keep elbows up for this, so they are in a strong throwing position.
- Once they are in their ready-to-throw position, they are to release the ball behind them and repeat as fast as they can for 10-15 balls each.



STATION 4: QUICK FEET DRILL (ALL) (7 mins)

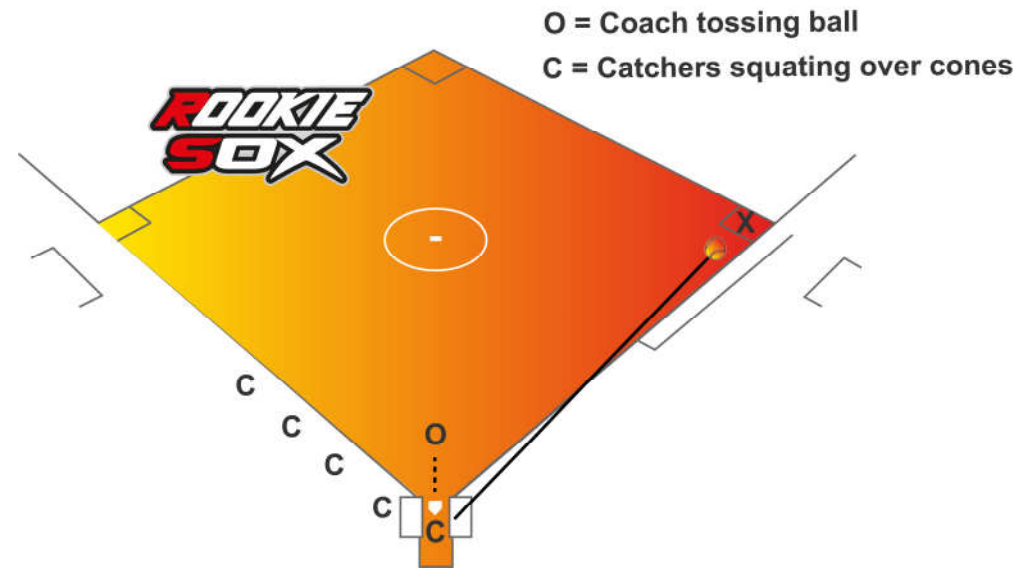
DRILL:

Objective:

Focus on a quick feet transition

Task:

- Set up 4 cones 1 metre apart along the 3rd base line.
- Players are to start in a squat over the cones and perform quick feet transition in between the cones, dropping back into their squat at the next cone and so on.
- Once they pass the last cone, they will receive a ball from the squat position at home plate where they will make a throw to 1st base.
- Catchers return to the end of line and repeat until each player has completed 10 throws.



STATION 5: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (ALL) (10 mins)

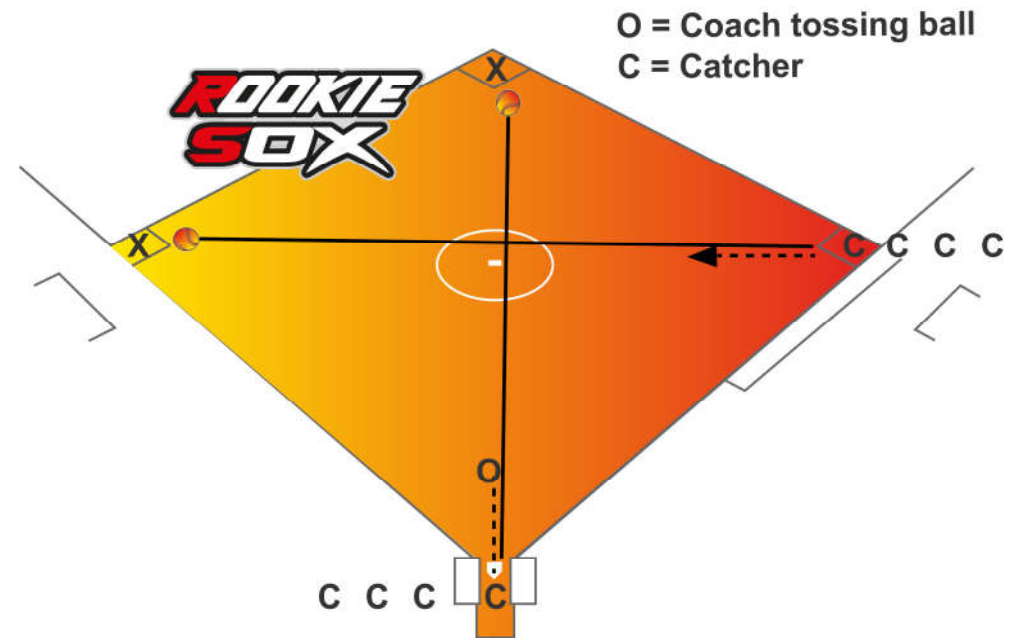
DRILL:

Objective:

Putting all the previous drills together with a throwdown to second base.

Task:

- Have half of your catchers at home plate while the other half are at first base.
- Have a helper toss/pitch ball to catcher as they throw down to second (catchers at first base will be throwing to third performing the same drill)
- Spend some time talking to each catcher while they are doing this, outlining points they are doing well and critiquing if necessary.






CATCHER

FOCUS: BUNTS, PASSED BALLS & TAGS

WATER BREAK & SET UP

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Objective: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quick water break• Setup stations and ensure those leading those stations are clear on what is happening. |
| Coaches Notes: | <p> Refer to pages 30, 31 and 32 of the “Coach Support Notes” for an overview of fielding, passed balls & tagging mechanics.</p> |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 mins <p>01:07 – 01:12</p> |

STATION 1: BUNTS (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Equipment: | • Plate, bases and balls | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 10 mins | 01:07 – 01:17 |

STATION 2: PASSED BALLS & TAGS (ALL)

| | | |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Equipment: | • Plate and balls | |
| Coaches Notes: | | |
| Timeframe: | 10 mins | 01:17 – 01:27 |

STATION 1: BUNTS (ALL) (10 mins)

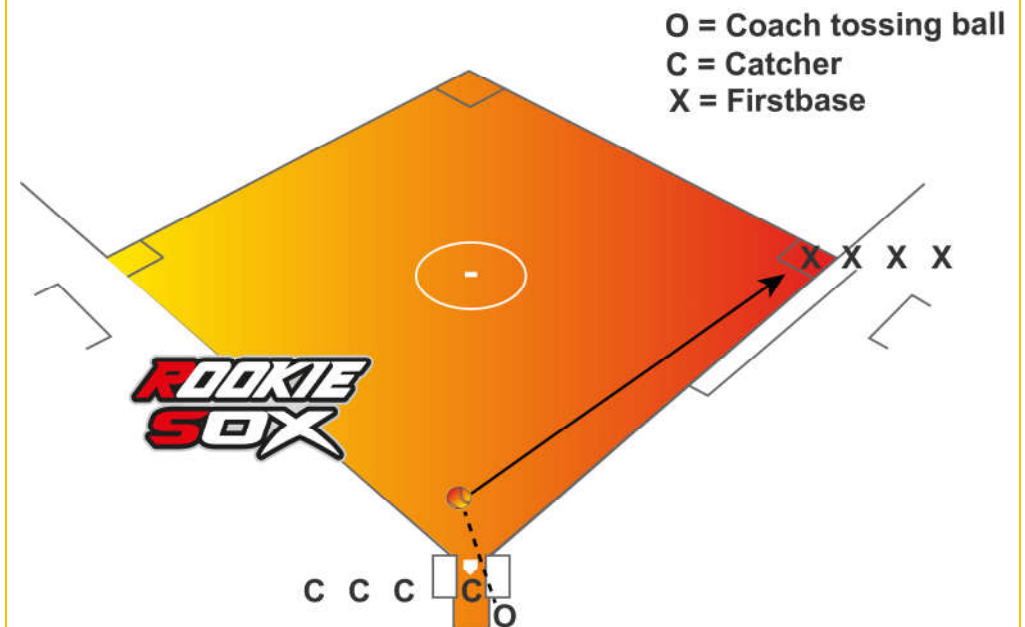
DRILL:

Objective:

To react to a bunt from a squat position, field and throw to first base.

Task:

- Create one line at first and one line squatting at home while sitting behind catcher, toss a bunt out in front of the catcher so they can field and throw to first.
- Catchers will follow the throw and rotate lines.



STATION 2: PASSED BALLS & TAGS (10 mins)

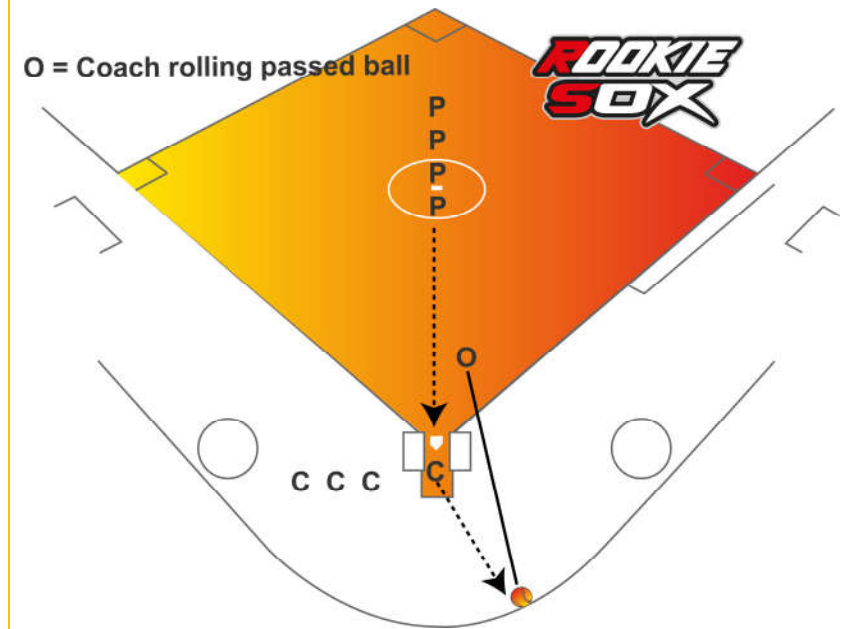
DRILL:

Objective:

Aim for the knee and lay a tag down.

Task:

- Set up two lines; one line catching at home plate and the other just in front of the pitcher's circle.
- Coach rolls a passed ball to the back of the screen.
- The catcher retrieves the ball while the pitcher (at the pitcher's circle) runs to home plate and straddles in anticipation for the throw from the catcher.
- The catcher returns the ball to the pitcher (at home plate) to make the play.
- Rotate lines and repeat.





DEFENCE

FOCUS: RUNDOWNS

STATION: RUNDOWNS (15 mins)

DRILL:

Objective:

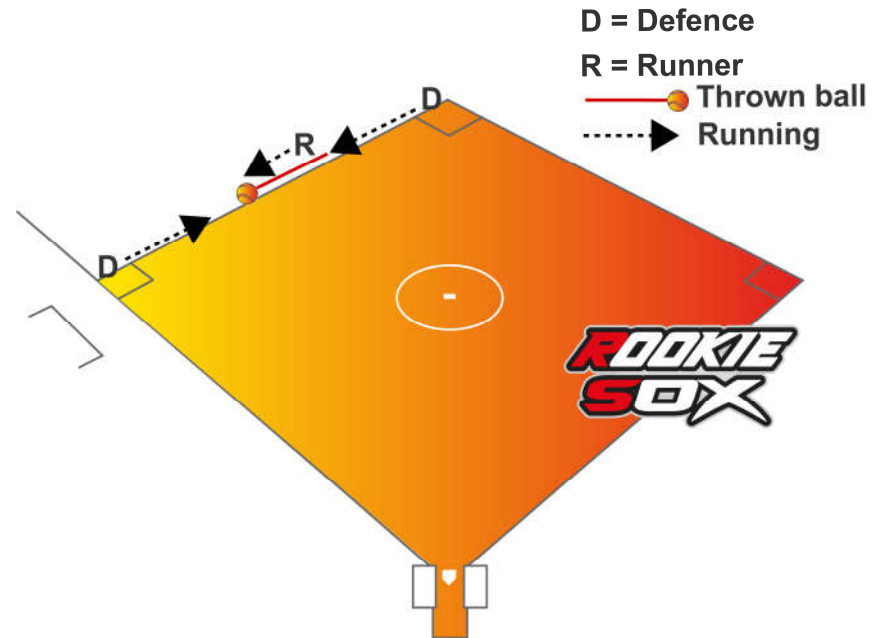
How to execute a rundown so even the fastest base runner can't escape.

Task:


- Infielders set up at second and third base.
- Runner is in between them.
- Coach says "go."
- Player at second runs toward runner with ball in their throwing hand.
- Fielder at third runs toward runner and calls "yes" when they have good momentum toward the runner and feels it is time to make the throw.
- Fielder from third catches the ball and tags the runner.

Observation Notes:

- Fielders should run full speed and make the runner go full speed, so it is difficult for them to stop and change direction. Fielder with ball should hold it in bare hand not the glove.
- Receiver calls for ball when they have good momentum going forward and feels it is time to make the throw. No fake throws.
-



WARM DOWN

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Cool Down | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooling down after a workout is as important as warming up. After physical activity, your heart is still beating faster than normal, your body temperature is higher, and your blood vessels are dilated. This means if you stop too fast, you could pass out or feel sick. A cool-down after physical activity allows a gradual decrease at the end of the episode. It's good to stretch when you're cooling down because your limbs, muscles and joints are still warm. Stretching can help reduce the build-up of lactic acid, which can lead to muscles cramping and stiffness. | |
| Coaches Notes: | <p> Refer to the “Coach Support Notes” for the detail relating to warm down</p> | |
| | <p>Stretching:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold each stretch 10 to 30 seconds. If you feel you need more, stretch the other side and return for another set of stretching The stretch should be strong, but not painful. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not bounce. Breathe while you're stretching. Exhale as you stretch, inhale while holding the stretch |
| Timeframe: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 mins | 1:42 – 1:52 |

REVIEW OF WEEK 5:

How successful was Week 5? Areas to consider; your delivery, preparation, feedback from players and coaches.

What areas would you change to ensure future sessions are a greater success?
