



Softball Coaching Basics 2008 -2009

Guy Kawe ECB

Introduction

Guy Kawe

Been with ECB 10 years as a parent, scorer, umpire, Secretary, President, NHSA Representative coach, NHSA Games committee and chairman

Coached U10 – U17

Certified Level 1 and 2 – old system

Essential skills

Hitting and the Short game

Competitive Pitcher

NHSA Winter clinic's last two winters

Where to begin?

- Make a commitment to yourself about the type of coach you want to be. Think about it?
 - A good coach?
 - A, I am here because I have to? There was no one else? Welcome to the real world.
 - Set some personal goals. – need to be realistic
 - Set some team goals – Need to be realistic
 - Be prepared to learn, make a commitment
- Find resources to help you
 - Within the Club – Brydon Wells, Callum McAlpine, Neal Higgins, Paul Goodall
 - Within North Harbour – (JT) John Hunter Coach Coordinator
 - Softball NZ – Graeme Gollam (Regional Co-ordinator) Debbie Myngold (Pitching Director)
 - Internet (www.northharboursoftball.co.nz, www.softball.org.nz,
- Plan your first meeting with the team. How this goes will determine how the season will go.
 - Training timings – They must suit you is the first priority
 - Your expectations of the players for the season.
 - Your expectations of the parents, Kawe ECB
 - Any Team rules that you want to have.

Coaching is a commitment to yourself, players and parents. It can be rewarding or an extreme pain in the butt. Up to you. It is all about how you start off the season and maintain it through the season.

Here are a few things , idea's to assist you.

The Parents expectations

- Parents want happy kids
- Parents want their kids to have a fair go
- Parents want to be able to brag about their kid's
- Parents want their kids to stand out
- Parents want the coach to be like them in thoughts, actions and deeds
- Parents sometimes want the impossible.
- Their kid's are the best at everything.

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Parents expect a lot in most cases for new players their expectations are simple. Talk with them at the beginning of the season, explain what you want to do and how. Get them onside.

You will need a scorers, a manager, and an umpire plus people to assist with trainings. Get them to take ownership of their children's sport.

Most parents are like most people they are afraid of something new, they do not want to screw up, are afraid of criticism. Remember it is a volunteer role a little help is better than none, support them.

U6 –U11 – skill development, enjoyment of the game, can get competitive usually it's the parents.

U13 – 19 This is where the kids need to become competitive as individuals and as players, they also need to learn to deal with failure. A good batting average can be 0350 this means 65% of the time they fail to hit.

The Players expectations?

- Younger players (6- 11) – want to please Mum and Dad.
 - Want to have fun.
 - Need the basics
- Ages 12 – 15 – want to impress Mum and Dad and their Mates
 - Need the more advanced strategies and additional basics
 - Want to be challenged, more interesting training
- Ages 16 -19 – want to impress mates and girlfriends (Mum and dad are OK)
 - Hard and interesting trainings
 - More games the better
 - Time is precious don't want to feel like it is wasted

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Find out what they want and expect. What are their motivators – Mum? they want to play, their mates playing etc.

Trying an understand what they expect, in the younger players (T-Ball) they have no idea.

Find the player whom in your opinion is the hopeless case. He is your yard stick. Write down something about each player, your perceptions , attitude, skills. Re-evaluate after 6 games. Be honest.

Have the players set up goals – the goals need to be measurable and achievable. Incorporate these into your training plan.

Coach the parents in what is required so they can work with them.

Coaches Expectations

- Need to know what you are expecting?
 - Trouble free season?
 - Top players?
 - Win championship?
 - Recognition from Club, North harbour?
 - Great trainings, heaps of parent help?
 - All the resources a coach could ever dream of?
- Or
 - I don't know how I am going to achieve this?
 - We will probably come last as I know squat, might win a game?
 - Yeah a couple of good players, rest are hopeless, might win some?
 - Yep on my own again! Roll up the sleeves hopefully wont make to much of a mess but no one else is stepping up.

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These are some of the thoughts going through various peoples heads, I know I done it, started the season with hell I am doing them a favour?

If these are the thoughts, you need to change them. Develop some positive expectations.

Understand what coaching is? He is a Teacher who can WIN or Lose depending on his expectations.

Set some personal goals

Set some team goals, based on players feedback

Attend some coaching courses

Coaching Certifications SNZ

- Coaching T-Ball (1 Hour)
- Induction Unit (1.5 Hours)
- Essential Skills (6 Hours) *can be split into two modules*
- Competitive Athlete Unit (CAU)
 - The competitive Pitcher (4 hours)
 - Hitting & the short game (3 Hours)

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Coaching T-Ball – JT runs on Saturday Morning a coaches clinic after the T-ball games for all NHSA association coaches

Induction, Essential skills and CAU are all done by SNZ (Regional coordinators)

If you envision becoming a representative coach for North Harbour you will need to have become certified.

If you wish to attend one of these Clinics discuss with JT (coach@northharboursoftball.co.nz) or Club secretary as to when the next clinic's are to be held.

Athlete & Coach Development Pathways

Athlete Development Pathways



Coach Development Pathways



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SNZ Certified Coaches

- Kevin Martin – Level 1
- Douglas Blair – Level 1
- Callum Ryan – Level 1 (Premier Player)
- Tame Kawe – Level 1 (NH Rep Player)
- Callum McAlpine – Level 2 (NH Rep)
- Neal Higgins – Level 2 (NH Rep)
- Guy Kawe – Level 2 (NH Rep)
- Brydon Wells – Level 2 (NH Rep)

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Experienced Coaches

- Richard Lancaster – Softball diehard (Pitcher)
- Ben Lancaster- Another softball Diehard (Catcher)
- Paul Goodall – Evergreens (ex Premier)
- Faille Curry – (ex-premier) diehard
- John Haenga – ex premier coach

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The Game

- Softball is a game of failing, get used to it.
- Boring with explosive moment's.
- Individual's game, but to win must be a team effort.
- Work with the umpire.
- Complex, with multiple rules. Start with the basics

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Failure – a player can do everything right but can still be struck out. A pitcher can pitch perfectly as trained and still be hit.

The down times are the times that players need to be trained on how to cope with.

Having a star individual does not mean you will win, it means he has a good game the others don't. Do not focus solely on this player, develop the others it is a team game. Star players usually drop out when they move to the top grades as they have never had to work, and those at the top do.

The umpire can be your friend or worst nightmare. Talk with him before the game understand how he is going to run the game, understand his expectations. Do not be afraid to ask for clarifications, do not get confrontational. There is a process to lodge a protest. The umpire can teach you a lot, use it.

At first the rules are daunting, was for me. But it is best to learn a few at a time, teach your players as you learn. Ask the umpires for interpretations. If in a game a rule is invoked that you do not know, call time and ask what the rule is, explain it to your players whilst it is fresh in their mind I suggest you follow it up with your own checks

The Rules

- All games come under **Softball NZ** rules.
- **NHSA** has some variations which are local rules.
- **NHSA** has a code of conduct.
- Tournaments – Rules need to be checked as they vary depending on who is running the tournament.

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SNZ rules are the ISA Rules – International Softball Association – check with your club for a copy.

NHSA has local rules particular to our association which are sometimes different to SNZ. If it is not in the NHSA rules it will be covered under SNZ.

NHSA code of conduct – outlines what the association expects from it's members.

Tournaments – all tournaments have there own rules - find out they may or will be different to NHSA. Generally they follow SNZ.

REMEMBER: in T-ball / Mini Ball sometimes common sense needs to be taken. For example if you have 11 players and the other team does as well, play with 11 extra players in the out field not infield

If a team has 7 players talk with the opposition coach, especially if you have additional players. Don't let 16+ players leave without a game.

Rules Cont'd

- NHSA – T-Ball U8 – All batters bat, then teams switch
- NHSA T-Ball U10 – 10 runs or 3 outs
- NHSA Junior Softball U11-U15 no metal Cleats
- NHSA Transfers internal and External
- NHSA Protests
- Club Rules
- Team rules

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NHSA are documented rules which will be distributed by your club
Club rules the same.

Team rules – make your own, it is better to document and distribute at the beginning – sets the correct expectations.

Incorporate rules into each training.

During the game if unsure of a rule, get it clarified by the umpire or opposition coach, validate it with coaches within your own club or the NHSA games advisory

The Practices

- Goals for coach
 - Team strategy for the season
 - Need a plan for each practice
 - Interesting and varied
 - No one standing around (involve parents)
 - Positive vibes
- Warm up – Practice & pre-game
- Individual drills
- Team drills
- Fun
- Stretches
- Finish

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Practices – These can be fun or a disaster. You need to have a plan, you can not teach everything in 1 training.

Use other coaches to assist if you are unsure of how to coach a particular skill, be there and learn as well. Other coaches will assist you, but expect you to take it on board and develop.

Use parents to assist, even if it is running the bases. Ensuring the skills taught are being properly done.

Have a variety of drills even if for the same skill, variation adds to enjoyment.

Watch other team practices for idea's

Take you team to watch a Seniors game, select a team that performs well

Ask players who have good skills to demonstrate the skill if you have not mastered it.

Contacts

- JT - coach@northharboursoftball.co.nz
- Graeme Gollam (SNZ)– golly@ihug.co.nz
- NHSA Games advisory Board – guy.kawe@eds.com
- NHSA Website www.northharboursoftball.co.nz
- SNZ Website www.softball.org.nz
- SNZ Umpires
<http://www.softball.org.nz/content/thegame/snzumpires/anding.aspx>
- ECB Website <http://www.ecbsoftball.org.nz/index.html>

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Remember the two Golden Rules for Successful Fast pitch Softball Play:

- 1. The way you practice is exactly the way you will play.
- 2. If the ball is hit and you're not moving, something's wrong.

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1. Practice sessions are tricky. Since there is no opposing team present, the atmosphere is more relaxed and the tendency is not to play as hard as in a real game. This attitude can be disastrous for you and your team.

Fast pitch softball is 98% eye-to-muscle memory. Just as you jerk your hand away from a flame without a second thought, the plays you make and the "at bats" you take require that same automatic response. Making offensive and defensive reactions automatic requires practicing the skill over and over until it becomes a part of you -- until you have taught you body, your eyes, your muscles and your mind how to react without thinking.

To accomplish this level of skill requires repeated practice at the same intensity level you encounter in real games. So when you practice with your players, imagine every play is real and it's always the bottom of the 7th inning. Practice hard and you won't be surprised during the real game.

2. Every defensive player moves on every defensive play. Your coach will not be bashful about explaining exactly where you should move on each play. Listen carefully and learn the right move. When someone doesn't move to the correct spot, that means there is a fielding weakness somewhere that could result in extra bases or even a run scoring. Make your plans to move in advance.

7 Ways to Think Like a Coach!

By Judy Worrell and Brian Ward (Principals in Affinity Consulting)

- **1. Surrender control**
- **2. Guide without steering**
- **3. Promote self awareness and responsibility**
- **4. Don't try to be the expert**
- **5. Encourage relentless inquiry**
- **6. Challenge assumptions**
- **7. Encourage open-mindedness**

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7 Ways to Think Like a Coach!

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1. Surrender control

Control is an illusion...especially when it involves people. At the end of the day, coaching or educating is about giving up your own agenda to explore the other person's agenda.

2. Guide without steering

People very often know where they want to end up...your challenge is to help them create a map to get there. Remember that '7 Roads Lead to Rome' and although some roads may not suit you personally, the person you are coaching may have a real and compelling need to explore them...even without you.

3. Promote self awareness and responsibility

Our personal beliefs and values impinge on every decision, every interpretation, every action we take. Exploring these beliefs and values is a critical part of the learning process. Taking personal responsibility for these beliefs and values liberates us to be more accepting of others, and unlock our true potential for learning. When we accept others, we become masters of our learning, and therefore more effective coaches of others.

4. Don't try to be the expert

Many educators, coaches, trainers, and leaders have a need to be seen and valued as an 'expert'...we need to avoid this temptation. In the knowledge economy, no one person can be the oracle. Instead, be the channel by which the person being coached taps into the knowledge of others. By using this approach, you will help the person being coached to avoid falling into the trap of viewing themselves or others as 'all knowledgeable'.

5. Encourage relentless inquiry

Guide the person being coached in how to challenge the 'experts'...help them develop a straight forward line of inquiry that suits their personality and respects others. Provide feedback to them on the degree to which they show they can balance advocacy with inquiry.

6. Challenge assumptions

We all hold assumptions about life. We form new assumptions every day. There is nothing wrong about having or making assumptions...they promote learning. The problem is when we hold untested assumptions, and proclaim them as the truth...this introduces our own personal biases into the discussion. When working as a coach, we need to hold our assumptions up to the harsh light of reality...we need to challenge our own assumptions. Only then can we challenge the assumptions of others, including those we coach.

7. Encourage open-mindedness

'The greater the ignorance, the greater the dogmatism'. (Sir William Osler, 1849-1919).

When you feel the need to be dogmatic about something, then perhaps it's time to open up your mind to other fields of knowledge. Expanding your mind in this way creates new horizons, and with it, new possibilities. When we help others to do likewise, we accompany them on this journey...and in the process create multiple streams of open-minded consciousness. This is where the secret, and joy, of lifetime learning resides, where wisdom begins.

Coaching is a tricky business. We all want to see results quickly. But those being coached will learn at their own pace...be patient with them. The rewards and joys of coaching are that you have the opportunity to simultaneously expand your own thinking while contributing to the expanded thinking of those you are coaching.

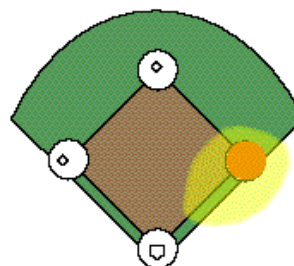
'Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought' Albert von Szent-Gyorgyi (1893-1986).

1st Base

First base is a pivotal position for any team. Since this is the position that has the first opportunity to make an out on a runner, much of the game's action will take place here. The throw of all other fielding positions is probably practiced more than any other fielding play. Certainly, other bases will have the opportunity to "tag out" a runner; but it all starts at first base.

A coach's dream first base player would be:

- One of the team's tallest players (so he can stretch to make the catch from other fielders while remaining in contact with first base)
- extremely mobile: able to react and reach balls that are hit down the first base foul line and quick enough to catch foul balls that are hit outside the first base foul line
- able to field bunts and throw to first (or tag the runner) quickly
- able to catch extremely well using both hands



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1st Base Responsibilities:

- Just like any other defensive player you have an area on the field that belongs to you. Within this space you are in charge. The drawing below gives you a look at the area you must control.

The area of the field shaded in yellow is the home turf for the 1st base player. Notice that this includes a large area in foul territory. The first base player must be able to catch or retrieve balls hit into this area and make a quick play to first.

As you can see, some of this yellow area takes you away from first base. In these cases, you rely on the person who moves over to cover first to catch your throw and make the out at first. The person covering first base for you is usually the second base player.

- The first base player rarely stands next to first base. More than likely your coach will have you stand closer to home plate for the first two strikes and then ask you to back up towards first base on the last strike. Because the bunt is a powerful and often used batting tool, your coach wants to be closer to home plate on the first two strikes to cover the bunt. Don't worry your second baseman will cover 1st for you. Your coach determines how close you stand to cover the bunt. He/She will practice this play routinely and you'll get a good idea of exactly where you are to stand. You move back (and closer to 1st) after the second strike since the likelihood of a bunt on a third strike pitch is slim.

- Be alert at all times. Get into your fielding position with your glove on the ground as soon as the pitcher starts her motion. When you have an extremely fast pitcher, right-handed batters are most likely to hit the ball towards the first and second base players. This is because many batters will not be able to swing the bat fast enough to hit the ball toward left field. So you'll be very busy on your side of the field. Of course, just the opposite is true when your pitcher is not as fast. Many of the hits off these pitchers will go towards third, short, and left field.

In the case of left-handed batters, the ball will enter your position when the batter is very quick and accurate. These hits will also be faster, so stay alert.

Don't forget you are responsible for fly balls that are hit just behind first base. You probably have a better chance of catching the ball than the more distant right fielder. However, be attentive as you back up to make the catch. If your right fielder calls, "I got it" then let her catch the ball, and you move back to cover 1st -- just in case.

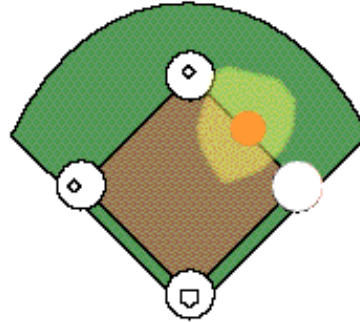
- When the ball is hit away from you, immediately return to 1st base and place your left foot on the base with your body on the second base side of first base. If the ball is fielded well, the throw will be to you. Be ready for anything. Because your team-mate who fields the ball senses the urgency of the play the throw will be fast (and hopefully accurate). (Practice catching fast one-hoppers.) Whenever possible, keep your foot on the base and stretch to make the catch. If the throw is wide, move to catch the ball and return to first base quickly. You may still be able to make the play. The right fielder will back you up in case the throw is wild or you miss the catch. If this happens, stay at first to protect the base and ready to catch any throw from your right fielder.

- Even if the runner makes it safely to first, the play isn't over yet. If you have the ball, watch all base runner to make certain they stay at their base, and quickly return the ball to the pitcher to end the play and hold the runners. If you don't have the ball when the runner makes it to first, stay close to the base. If the runner decides to try for second you need to be in a position to make a play at first or run down the player as he attempts to make it to second base.

- Most importantly, as you are getting ready for each pitch by your pitcher, run the possibilities through your head. What will I do if the ball is hit? How many outs are there? What is the count? Where are the other runners, and what do I do if there is an attempt to steal from 1st to 2nd? Answer each of these questions during the period between pitches, because there won't be time once the ball is hit. The team that reacts the fastest wins.

Second Base

- The second base player along with the short stop player require the quickest fielding reactions, most accurate throws and good decision making.
- A coach's dream second base player would be:
 - Quick from side to side (not only to make the play on a hit ball, but also to cover 1st and 2nd base as the situation dictates) a 2nd baseman's speed is more important than height.
 - Has the ability to move to the ball (not waiting for the ball to come to her)
 - Able to keep the ball in front of her and "dig out" the hard hit balls at her feet
 - Exceptionally accurate and fast thrower (able to make accurate throws to any base including home plate)
 - Good decision maker (know when to throw the ball, hold the ball, and how to check the runner)
 - Alert enough to back up the pitcher



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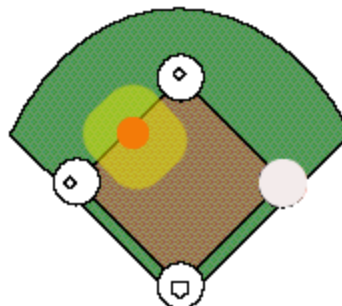
2nd Baseman's Responsibilities:

The picture below shows the approximate area that the 2nd base player calls home. The good second base player is always evaluating the situation to know where to make her stand for each pitch. Probably the last place you'll see a second baseman standing is on 2nd base. Her primary job is to cover the large gap (or hitting area) between 1st and 2nd while her short stop team-mate covers the similar hole between 2nd and 3rd. that's a lot of territory.

- Know that your coaches are watching the habits of each batter. Keep an eye on your coaches they will help guide you to the right spot for each batter. Eventually you will start to learn how each batter hits and you'll naturally go to the right spot and anticipate the hit.
- You must make plays at two bases: 2nd and 1st. Whenever the first base player is drawn off her base to catch a hit ball you must take her place at first and be ready for the throw. Most coaches want to make certain the can at least get an out at first regardless of what other runners are on base. You are often the player that makes the out at first. When there is a play at second and the ball is hit to the left side of the in-field or out-field you must cover second base. When the ball is hit to your side of the field, the short stop runs to cover 2nd base.
- You are the cut off player. When a ball is hit over your head and into right or right-centre field, you are the person who receives the throw from the right or centre fielder. This is called the cut off person because you have moved to a spot on the field that is half way between the outfield and the infield to make the outfielder's throw easier. You then make the decision where the ball is thrown next. It may be that there is no place to throw the ball because all runners are on base. You hold the runners in place by throwing or running the ball into the pitcher.
- You must back up the pitcher. It is not unusual for the pitcher will miss a throw to the pitcher by the catcher or another player. You must remain alert throughout the game to retrieve any ball missed by the pitcher. If a ball passes the pitcher and you, it is certain that any base runner will steal the next base or run home to score.
- Usually a throw from the catcher to 2nd base to catch a steal from 1st to 2nd is covered by the short stop. Your job is to get into position behind second base to stop the ball should the short stop miss the ball. The centre fielder comes in to back you up in this play.
- You are usually the first player to make an out in a double play (2nd and 1st). Typically, the short stop or third baseman will catch a quick grounder make a throw to you at 2nd (to force out the runner from 1st to 2nd) and you will throw quickly to 1st base to throw out the batter who is running to first. You may also be the one who catches the ball in a double play. A ball hit quickly to you allows you to either tag the runner as he passes you or step on second base for the forced out and then throw the runner out at first. Both situations require your speed, concentration, and accuracy to make this important play.

Shortstop

- A coach's dream short stop player would be:
- - Quick from side to side (not only to make the play on a hit ball, but also to cover 2nd and 3rd bases as the situation dictates)
- Moves to the ball to save time (not waiting for the ball to come to her)
- Able to keep the ball in front of her and "dig out" the hard hit balls at her feet
- Exceptionally accurate and fast thrower (able to make accurate throws to any base including home plate)
- Good decision maker (know when to throw the ball, hold the ball, and how to check the runner)
- Not afraid to talk loud enough for other fielders to hear her
- Coaches consider the short stop to be one of their key defensive positions.
- The short stops area of direct responsibility is shown in the picture. This is a large area that causes coaches to look for a player who has quick side-to-side as well as front to back reactions.
- On pitches before strike two, 1st and 3rd base players are positioned closer to home to cover a possible bunt. When 1st and 3rd base players are in this position, the short stop drops back because he is responsible for the entire area from 2nd to 3rd and wants to be able to get to any balls hit in this area while making certain the ball stays in front of him. Since most batters are right-handed and because most of the balls they hit are to the left side of the field, the short stop player controls a very busy portion of the field.



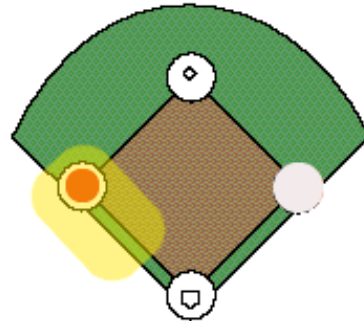
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Short Stop Responsibilities:

- Know the situation at all times (this includes where the base runners are located, how many outs, and what the count is on the current batter -- the possible combinations of all these elements is what makes softball so much like chess. There are literally hundreds of possible moves while you only have a second or two to make the right decision.)
- Be in a ready position as soon as the pitcher begins each pitch
- cover 2nd base for the throw from home to 2nd on a steal attempt
- cover 3rd on throws from catcher to throw out a runner stealing 3rd from second (usually on all pitches before strike two is called)
- back up throws to pitcher
- be a communicator with the rest of the team

Third Base

- Since third base is closest to home, much of the action takes place along the third base foul line. Cooperation and communication between the third base player and the shortstop is important to stop steals from 2nd. The same close understanding and communication is necessary between the 3rd base player and the catcher.
- This picture shows the area the 3rd base player is generally responsible for covering. Like the 1st base player your area requires being able to move forward and backward along the base line quickly.
- Third base fielding is a busy is frequent during each game. This means the 3rd base player frequently throws the ball to first base to catch the hitter/runner. This is one of the longest common fielding plays. Accuracy and speed is critical.
- Successful third base players realize they don't have time to wait for the ball to come to them. When a ball is hit in the direction of third base, the 3rd base player moves to the ball. The quicker he can retrieve the ball, the better his chances of throwing the runner out at first. In addition, if he has more time to throw, his throw will probably be more accurate. Overthrowing 1st base is a coach's nightmare.



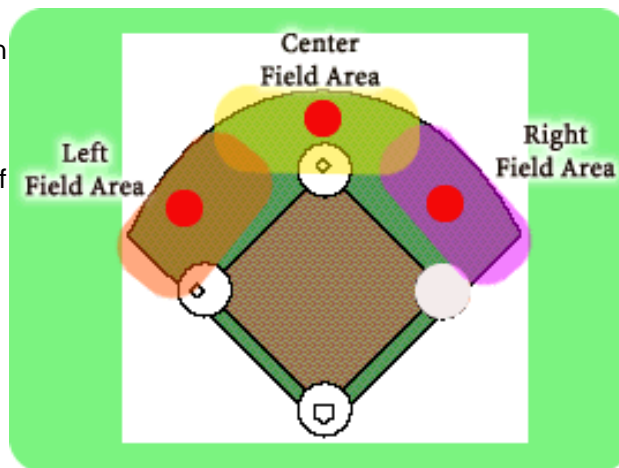
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3rd Baseman's Responsibilities:

- cover bunt- cover bunts along the 3rd base line
- cover foul pop ups outside the 3rd base line
- cover 3rd base on most forced out plays
- back up return throws to the pitcher
- decide when to let a ball go foul and when to field a ball that could go foul along the 3rd base line
- catch shallow fly balls that are falling just behind third base (depending on where the 3rd base player is positioned when the ball is hit, this responsibility is shared with the short stop)

The Outfield

- The outfielders are the team's last line of defence.
- If the ball gets past an outfielder, a single could turn into a double, a triple or a run. Remember, fast pitch teams select Boys for their skills and to fill portions the coach wants to strengthen. If you were chosen to play an outfield position, you are quick to the ball, have a good throwing arm, and are able to understand the situation to throw the ball to the correct infield position. That's quite a compliment.



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Right Field (behind first base):

- back up 1st and 2nd base players when balls are hit to them
- back up 1st base on throws made to the first base player (this is critical more singles have turned into doubles and triples by the ball escaping the first baseman and no one is behind her to retrieve the ball)
- fly balls that are just over the 1st or 2nd base players' heads, you make the call to determine if you or the base player will catch the ball.
- your [cut off player](#) is usually the second base player

Centre Field:

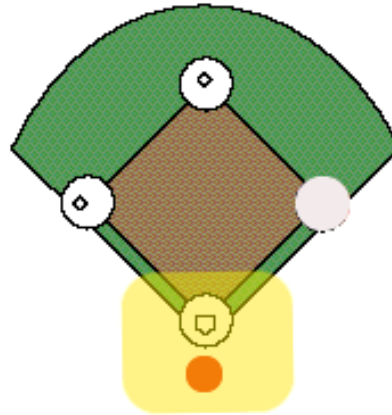
- back up plays at 2nd (If a throw is made to stop a steal at second and the infielder on second base misses the ball, you are the only player able to stop the runner from continuing on to third base or home.)
- the centerfielder takes charge of balls that are hit between fielders. You call out who should take charge of the play.
- your [cut off player](#) could be the 2nd or shortstop player depending on which side of second base the ball is hit

Left Field (behind the shortstop)

- in many ways left field is the mirror image of right field
- you are the back up for all infield plays at third
- your [cut off player](#) is usually the shortstop
- you should understand the run down play in case you, the third baseman and the catcher are trying to run down a player attempting to score from third

Catcher

- The fast pitch catcher is the team's field general. The catcher is the only player who can see the entire field and the fielding situations that develop. Because of his unique position on the field, the catcher oversees the team's defensive activities.
- The catcher's specific field area of responsibility is shown in yellow on this graphic. Since he starts each play from a crouching position with about 15 pounds of hot, protective gear wrapped around his /her legs, chest and head, the catcher must be quick to react to cover the bunts, steals, and foul tips that are in his /her area of responsibility.
- Specifically the catcher must:
 - call out the plays
 - communicate pitches with the pitcher (The catcher must not only know the signals for all pitches, he must also understand which pitch is best for each situation and each batter.)
 - dig out even the worst pitch from the dirt
 - recover from a dropped 3rd strike to catch the runner at first
 - rise quickly to catch foul ball tips
 - be able to throw accurately to any base to catch runners off base or in the process of stealing a base
 - back up throws from the outfield to 1st and 3rd.
 - be continually on the alert for instructions from the coaches



Guy Kawe ECB

Pitcher

- Dedicated specialist
- Motivated to train outside of practice
- Can make or break your team.
- Work's with catcher
- Mentally tough
- Understands batters and can identify weaknesses.
- Strategic thinker
- Good batter a bonus.
- Fit with quick reactions, good glove work.

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Teach the mechanic's as taught in the various courses. Have pitchers work with other pitchers. Need to practice, and watch senior pitchers to learn.

Your Cachter can make you look good or really bad, work with him.

Batting

- Learn and teach the proper batting mechanics
 - Rotational
 - Linear
- Start with the Basic's at T-Ball
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- If the player can hit a pitched ball, don't change his style, tweak it.
- Don't fix what is not broken

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Softball Information Sites

- <http://winningsoftballonline.com>
- <http://www.softballperformance.com>
- <http://www.softballperformance.com/blog>
- <http://www.discussfastpitch.com> - online discussion forum
- <http://www.championshipproductions.com/cgi-bin/champ/index.html>
- <http://www.softball.org.nz/content/coachescentre/playbook/landing.aspx>

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Winning Softball Online – Video clips on line from Top American coaches

WWW.SoftballPerformance.com – Marc Dagenias – High performance coach, with Canadian Women's team

Discuss fast pitch - on line discussion forum

Championship productions – Video's, DVD's Books

SNZ Playbook – animated plays, and positional requirements

Questions??

Guy Kawe ECB