



JR. SEAWOLVES ACADEMY PITCHING DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

Building Confident, Resilient and Savage Pitchers
-Chris Godel (Professional Coach)
-Chris Erickson (George Mason)



PRACTICE WITH PURPOSE AND PLAY WITH PASSION.



MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

As a pitcher we step onto a hill that has broken some and made champions of others. As a SeaWolves pitcher we practice with purpose so we can take that hill with confidence and be able to throw any pitch, in any count, in any situation for a strike.

We build pitchers that are mentally resilient and don't show their emotions to the other team. This builds leaders on and off the diamond that will become great men.

Pitching is an art. It is not simply throwing velo. Any high-level athlete can throw. However, placement, movement, composure and strategy allow pitchers to take command of the hill and let their defense work.

WE ARE THE 7%! WE ARE NOT NORMAL! EMBRACE IT!

CORE PITCHING BELIEFS

PITCHING = PLACEMENT + VELOCITY + COMPOSURE

What are you playing for? Find your meaning and take your effort to another level.

- We bring the focus to every pitch.
- We develop our pitches to be able to place them, control the speed and confuse batters and opposing teams.
- We are able to maintain composure and know the situation while focusing on the task at hand.
- We don't let the situation get to us. We focus on what we can control and control the controllables including our breath, mechanics and grip.
- We can "clear the mechanism" when all "noise" is against us.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8x-o1V1OYI>
- We take have good "arm care". This includes exercise, stretching, diet, rest, sleep and mental management.
- We trust our defense.
- We move on from mistakes and do the best with each moment.
- We are more than 5 Tool Athletes! **WE ARE 7 TOOL ATHLETES!** 5 of these tools directly affect fielding ability.

EVERYDAY WE WORK ON:

1. **QUALITY AT BATS.** We work the batter and we stay ahead in the count.
2. **PITCHING FOR POWER.** Did you get stronger today! What is your plan to throw harder, get flexible and maintain arm care?
3. **TRAINING FOR SPEED.** Be explosive and fast! This increases velo.
4. **THROWING ABILITY.** Hit your target! Be able to place any pitch.



5. **FIELDING ABILITY.** Make the routine catches.
6. **MENTAL ABILITY.** Learn to calm your mind. Breathe. Be easy. What is your pregame plan?
7. **SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP.** Learn that there are bigger things in life. We take our craft serious but our higher power has a purpose for us and will use anything that is thrown against us for glory. Maintain good values. Work hard and leave everything you got out there to succeed but also keep life in perspective.

Matthew 7:13-14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it" **BE THE BEST VERSION OF yourself this day!**

AGE-BASED DEVELOPMENT & GOALS

9&10U	11&12U	13&14U
Sound form and mechanics	Sound form and mechanics	Sound form and mechanics
Develop back leg stability	Back leg stability	Back leg stability
Slide step	Slide step	Slide step
	Wind up	Wind up
Basic signs from catcher	Advanced signs. Use 2nd Sign.	Balks, pickoffs and holding runners
Basic balks and how to hold runners.	Balks, pickoffs and holding runners	Advanced signs. Use additional signs
Be confident to throw:	Be confident to throw:	Be confident to throw:
• 4 seam fast ball • 2 seam fast ball • Change up	• 4 seam fast ball • 2 seam fast ball • Change up • Karate chop (Trevor Bauer) curve ball	• 4 seam fast ball • 2 seam fast ball • Change up • Karate chop (Trevor Bauer) curve ball • Slider
75%/25% balls to strikes in cage	75%/25% balls to strikes in cage	75%/25% balls to strikes in cage
Increase velocity 3 to 5 mph	Increase velocity 3 to 5 mph	Increase velocity 3 to 5 mph
Increase flexibility in hips	Placing pitches	Placing pitches
Scapula and core strength	Having command of pitches	Having command of pitches
Learn composure and how to "clear the mechanism"	Have confidence to throw any pitch, in any count, in any situation for a strike.	Have confidence to throw any pitch, in any count, in any situation for a strike.
	Pitch outs	Pitch outs
	Increase flexibility in hips	Increase flexibility in hips
	Scapula and core strength	Scapula and core strength

NOTE: Not all pitchers being developed will pitch in season. Coaches use their discretion to pitch athletes where they will achieve success and gain confidence. Pitching is a mental game that requires as much mental development as physical. Some athletes that throw hard may never develop into a pitcher because of their mental game.



PITCHING GRIPS

FOUR-SEAM FASTBALL:



To grip the four-seam fastball, place your index and middle fingertips directly on the perpendicular seam of the baseball. The "horseshoe seam" should face into your ring finger of your throwing hand (as shown in the picture on the left).

Next, place your thumb directly beneath the baseball, resting on the smooth leather (as shown in the picture on the right).

Grip this pitch softly, like an egg, in your fingertips. There should be a "gap" or space between the ball and your palm (as shown in the middle picture). This is the key to throwing a good, hard four-seam fastball with maximum backspin and velocity: A loose grip minimizes "friction" between your hand and the baseball. The less friction, the quicker the baseball can leave your hand.

TWO-SEAM FASTBALL:



When throwing a two-seam fastball, your index and middle fingers are placed directly on top of the narrow seams of the baseball (as shown in the picture on the left).

Next, place your thumb directly on the bottom side of the baseball and on the smooth leather in between the narrow seams (as shown in the picture on the right).

A two seamer is gripped a little firmer than the four seamer. A firm grip causes friction, which causes the baseball to change direction and slightly reduces the speed of the pitch.

Some pitchers will throw two-seam fastball to the throwing-hand side of the plate and four seam fastball to the glove-hand side of the plate.



CHANGE UP [BASIC "C" GRIP]



Front view of a "C" changeup grip.



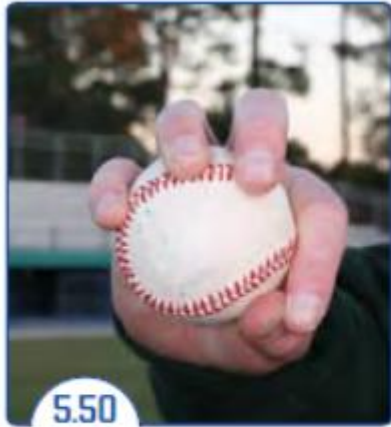
Side view of a "C" changeup grip.

Changeups vary based on the player. Coach Godel and Coach Erickson will develop a specific change-up for the athlete. Some use a circle change and others use a kick change.

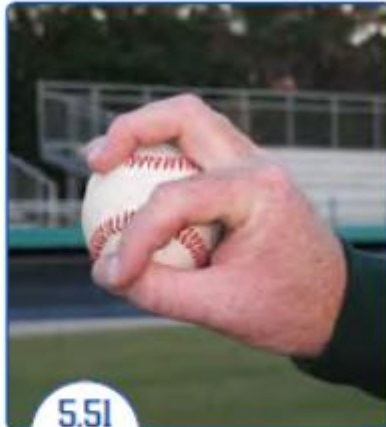
- The "C" changeup can be a good option for players who have smaller hands or have trouble with their feel for the circle changeup.
- To create the grip for a "C" changeup, a pitcher should attempt to hold the baseball like a football, where all four fingers line up opposite the thumb to make the letter "C."
- To add movement, the ball can be gripped off-center (where a portion of the ball protrudes out of the side of the hand between the thumb and index finger).
- This pitch is simply delivered with a four-seam or two-seam grip like the pitcher would throw his fastball.
- As the player's hands grow or he gains more comfort with the feel of the pitch, he can gradually slide his index finger off the ball to the thumb side, and lift the pinky to create his circle change.



CHANGE UP (CIRCLE OR OK GRIP)



Front view of a circle or O.K. changeup grip.



Side view of a circle or O.K. changeup grip.

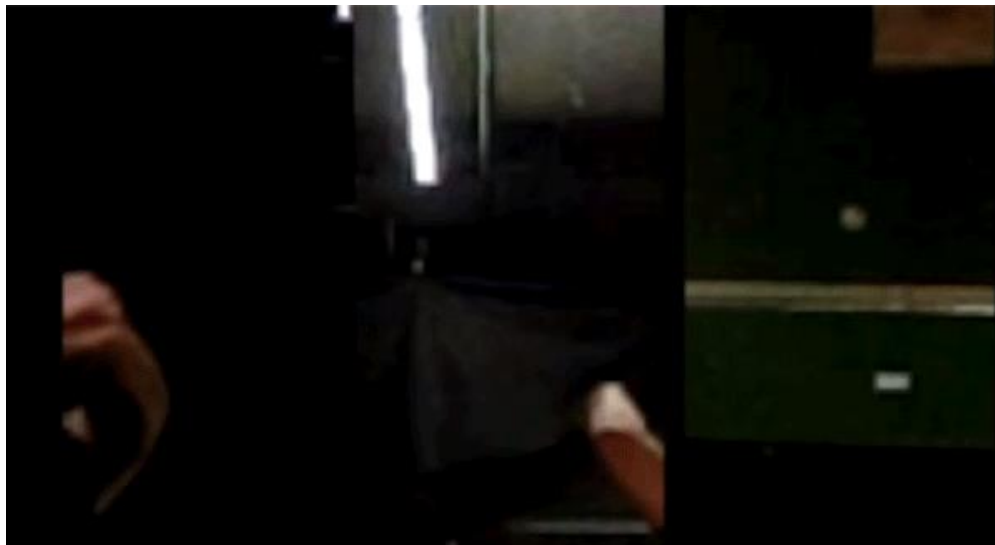
- A changeup is meant to deceive the hitter by appearing to be a fastball on release. However, it is just 8 to 12 miles per hour slower.
- The fastball action of the pitcher's delivery will convince the hitter he is seeing a fastball; however, by the time he realizes it is a changeup, he will either swing early and miss, or the batter will hit the ball softly to the defense.
- For a circle changeup grip, the ball is held deeper in the hand or the palm than a fastball.
- The index finger slides off to the thumb side of the ball, and the pinky raises up on the opposite side of the ball.
- The changeup is a feel (touch) pitch, and it can be difficult for some players to throw a consistent strike using this grip.
- Don't try to over pronate the hand. Let the grip and the natural pronation of the hand (where thumb turns down) take care of the pitch.

KICK CHANGE: https://www.tiktok.com/@tread_athletics/video/7402251034896272686





KARATE CHOP (TREVOR BAUER) CURVE BALL:



We use this breaking ball because it puts less stress on the elbow of the pitcher. PARENTS SHOULD NOT PRACTICE UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY COACH GODEL OR COACHE ERICKSON.



SLIDER

SAME ARM MOTION AS KARATE CHOP CURVE BALL. PARENTS SHOULD NOT PRACTICE UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY COACH GODEL OR COACHE ERICKSON.



COACH & PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

Coaches Will	Players Will
Teach in consistent language	Take every rep with intent
Give positive, corrective feedback	Learn strengths and weaknesses
Reinforce routines	Be coachable, hungry, accountable
Put the team first	Play for each other and be selfless
Push players in situations that develop gritty players. We do not care about flash players and "bling". BE A SAVAGE! WE WANT GRINDERS!	Become a gritty player. This is a simple formula Meaning x effort = GRIT. What are you playing for? Find your meaning and take your effort to another level.
Develop the mental game with the players. Players need to play free and not in fear. Encourage them to find their own voice	WHAT IS YOUR PREGAME PROGRAM? GET MENTAL!

PRACTICE STRUCTURE & DRILL BANK

INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS (ACADEMY SESSIONS): THIS IS WHERE PLAYERS GET BETTER AND DEVELOP!!! Directors will change trainings weekly and focus will be on small group drills that go over the following. Players will rotate through each station. Focus on fundamentals is critical! Doing these in fun game like competitions brings out competitive fire in the teams:

- Infield
- Outfield
- Pitching/catching
- Hitting

Drills are listed on the following pages and will be updated throughout the season. Directors will pick and choose drills that maximize reps and help develop players where they are at based on testing results

TEAM SESSION (TEAM PRACTICES): This brings the team together and is lead by the team coach to work on team defense or other team drills. Following are a few examples. Coaches will get the teams talking during these sessions and let them get loud and have fun.

- I/O
- Base running
- Star drill
- Directional hitting
- 4 corners drill
- Bunt defense

BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR YOURSELF, OTHERS AND YOUR TIME!



PITCHER EVALUATION & TRACKING

- Velocity
- Spin rate
- % of Strikes to Balls
- Stability and balance tests

PARENT EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION

- Training is built for the long game, your stats at 12U have no bearing on if you play in college.
- Support finding a process, not just outcomes.
- Baseball is fun, help them enjoy the game so they stay in it.
- Help them get comfortable being uncomfortable. It takes 63 days to develop a habit. Support them and keep them working.
- Enjoy your time with your son. These are moments you will never get back. Do not lose perspective that these times are fun and your son will be stepping into an arena that most men never will. Trophies and accolades come and go, but watching your son grow into a good man through hard work is our life's greatest work as parents.
- Let your athlete **BE FREE OF FEAR AND BE DANGEROUS.**

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanks, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard you.

WE>ME. WHATS YOUR ACT OF SERVICE? THIS GAME REWARDS YOUTM WHEN YOUR PLAYING FOR EACH OTHER.

ROMANS 12:10

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."



PITCHING DRILLS:

- Figure 8
- Bucket Drill
- Balance Drill
- Rocker Drill
- Catch and throw drill: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/570595395297176>
- PVC Towel Drill
- Wall Drill
- PVC Partner Hip Drill: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DAL9fSYuzJd/>
- PVC stride, rotation and forward drill:
<https://www.facebook.com/reel/2073440529720967>

KNOWLEGE IS POTENTIAL POWER.
TAKE ACTION AND MAKE THAT KNOWLEDGE REAL POWER!

PREPARATION + OPPORTUNITY = LUCK.
MAKE YOUR OWN LUCK. KNOCK THAT DOOR DOWN.



RESOURCES & CONTINUED LEARNING

Coaches:

- Driveline
- X/Instagram/Youtube Follows
 - (1) Tread Athletics
 - (2) Brandon Guyer MLM
- Books: The Mental Game of Baseball, Heads-Up Baseball

Players:

- Performance journal – 85% of MLB players keep a journal that includes drills, daily metrics, words of affirmation and gratitude. This provides positive feedback through progression.
- Video feedback – This should be taken weekly during the year to see the development.
- Homework drills – see weekly curriculum and copy weeks lesson
- Private instruction – Academy classes provide group training. If athletes are behind then they will need a tutor to catch up or learn specific higher-level techniques in detail.

CHANGE YOUR NARRATIVE TODAY.

WHAT ARE YOU TELLING YOURSELF? BE AWARE! CARRY THE WARRIOR MENTALITY.

DONT BE A VICTIM AND DEFAULT TO MEDIOCRITY.

Seawolves™