

## On-field Teaching Outline for Fastpitch Coaching Hitting Video #3

### *Teaching the Team*

**Line up** your team members -- with helmets and bats, in three rows, staggered. Call out instructions as you demonstrate the movements. Use the words in bold print very often, usually by themselves.

### *The Handshake Grip*

Put your left hand (for righties) **a finger width from the knob, angled** across the palm. Set your **top hand snug up against your bottom hand, angled** like your bottom hand. **Lift your bat** to your shoulder. **Press your wrists down to almost line up your door-knocking knuckles.** **Keep your hands closed** on your bat -- fingers and **palms closed** -- until you have swung.

### *The Long Punch Drill*

The Long Punch drill starts with **a full hip turn drill** while holding your bat and starting your swing. **Keep** your front heel up and your knee and foot **closed** until your hip turn forces them open. This causes your front foot to automatically turn about halfway toward the pitcher.

**Your shoulders** should feel like they are being **pulled around by the** turn of your **hips.** **Make your elbows and bat come around with your hips.** **Keep your elbows connected with your back hip. Keep your elbows bent.** **Move mechanically with relaxed shoulders and arms.** **Keep your body level** so your eyes don't move up or down. **Remove any extra motions** with your shoulders, hands and arms. For example, **the Lift should cause your hips to turn an inch or two while you hold your shoulders perfectly still and relaxed.**

**Connected** means your shoulders, elbows and hips turn at exactly the same speed, feeling like they are locked together, **beginning after** your hips get a slight head start with **the Lift** of your back heel.

**Stay level** with your whole body **throughout the long punch drill**. Look through a fence to **see if your eyes bounce**. If so, you might be collapsing your back knee a bit. Just **keep the muscles of your back leg firm** and steady as you turn.

### **Fire**

**Stay relaxed** and **keep your elbows in the upside-down “V” position during Setup, Load, Step, Lift and Fire**.

**At Fire, slide your back elbow forward while holding it in the “V” position**.

Feel your back elbow staying behind the hands and bat, pushing them forward.

Hold your back elbow out away from your stomach as the elbow comes forward.

Keep your front elbow down until your elbows have slid forward an inch or two.

Imagine a ball coming down the middle of the strike zone.

**Your elbows should move your hands straight to the pitcher** and slightly downward, until the bat reaches **the point of contact** with the ball.

**Your elbows should keep your hands above where you expect the ball to be at contact**.

Your bat should start to turn down only after your elbows have started to slide forward.

**Think about your elbows** rather than your hands as the bat starts to turn down. **Keep your elbows bent**. The front shoulder will start to come up but do not let it pull the front elbow straight.

The spot where your bat hits the ball is called **“the contact point.”** When doing a Long Punch Drill, stop your bat at the contact point, which is at your front toe for a pitch down the middle. Stop all body parts at the contact point, too. Your shoulders should be turned to face the pitcher, meaning almost straight ahead. **Both elbows should be bent at contact** and the back of your right hand (for righties) is facing the ground. Be sure your left hand is pressing toward the pitcher just as hard as the right hand, rather than starting to pull away from the pitcher.

Notes to the coach:

- a) You might find it helpful to tell somewhat experienced players that we do not extend through the pitch or finish the swing as part of the Long Punch Drill.
- b) When your players are familiar with the Long Punch Drill, gradually add speed and intensity, up to game speed for Load, Step, and Lift, but Fire at only half of game speed while doing this drill.

- c) Have your players continue to say “**Load, Step, Lift, Fire**” as they execute this drill.