



TOP 10 TIPS Coaching Youth Fastpitch Softball

By R. E. Martin

#1 "Be Quick But Don't Hurry" - John Robert Wooden

If you practice slow, that's how it will go... when your girls try to speed it up in the game, they'll be in a big hurry to fail. Use competitive timed drills/games and up-tempo music to ingrain quick execution in practice.

#2 All Shapes & Sizes – Build Practice Confidence To Achieve Game Success

Different bodies, different efficiencies. Small and quick, blink, wink and gone, speed prevails. Strong and stout... pound it out! Distance hitting game for bruisers and spurt and scoot games for jitter bugs.

#3 Think Ping Pong Versus Tennis

A smaller playing field and gaps in the outfield in fastpitch softball. Use your aggressive center fielder to cover the gaps and crowd the lines with your left and right outfielders. Short Throws – Moving Targets Are Hardest - Do basketball practice moving weave toss drill with a softball.

#4 "If You're Thinkin', Your Stinkin'" - Jessica Ofelia Mendoza

Advise your pitchers' parent(s) to "zip it" BEFORE the season starts when their kid is in the circle ... applies to you and your coaches too. NO OFF FIELD DISTRACTIONS. Same advice when at bat. Relaxed in the circle, instinctive reactions in the box.

#5 Big Inning Versus Advancing Runners

Moving runners is really important for a team that struggles to score and when going up against a dominant pitcher or defense. If you have a better team, you will sometimes be playing into your opponents' hands by automatically sacrificing outs – particularly, early in seven inning games.

#6 Freeze the Kicker, Not Your Own Pitcher – The Coach Didn't Know

Pitchers pitch in rhythms (usually, the same as their practice rhythm). In crucial situations, coaches like to call time out to discuss the situation – but if your pitcher is on a roll, realize you are interrupting her rhythm. She may have to reestablish her zone after you depart the circle.

#7 "Practice As Close To Game-Like As Possible" - John Gagliardi

You hit fly balls straight to a single player... do opposing teams intentionally hit fly balls directly to your players? Always hit fly balls between multiple outfielders (with rotated designated centerfielder). Call fly balls until they are in the glove.

#8 Patterns... They Matter

Knowin' what's going to happen before it happens tips the risk scale. Watch for opponents' patterns (taking first pitches, throwing the same pitch patterns to batters, etc.) and avoid inadvertently falling into patterns.

#9 HEY, YOU!

Introduce yourself by first name to officials and opposing coaches before the competition begins... and NEVER yell demonstratively from the dugout or coaching box at game officials! AFTER time out is granted, respectfully approach and address your concern(s) with the umpire(s).

#10 Not Wasted Waste Pitches – Great Hitters Can Hit With Upside Down Bats

Throw EVERY PITCH with a purpose. Great hitters can, and will, drive even well located pitches anywhere near the zone. Set-up pitches thrown out of the zone are okay – they're not wasted - you are moving their eyes. Put them in the dirt, over their hands, way out or in – nothing too close!

EMERGENCY

In a crisis call "911" immediately

● If considering self-harm, call "988"

The National Suicide Intervention Lifeline

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

To speak to a counselor,

Call (800) 656-4673

RAINN

BULLYING/HAZING, VIOLENCE, ADDICTIONS & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For helpful resources,

thebmsproject.org/Safety

CHILD ABUSE

To report suspected child abuse,

Call (800) 422-4453

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline

It is recommended that incident(s) of serious misconduct be reported to law enforcement. Minors should report incidents of misconduct to their parent(s) or guardian(s).