

INTRODUCTION

COACHES

As we all know, the catcher is an integral part of any softball team. Unfortunately they are sometimes the forgotten players when it comes to skill development. So we have developed this series of hand outs to supplement the manuals being provided to all catchers under the Long Term Athlete Development program.

They will cover a wide range of skills and knowledge which, if practised and implemented, will guarantee improved catching performance and enhanced contribution to the team. For a complete instruction manual on catching, see; "***GOLD MEDAL CATCHING FOR BASEBALL & SOFTBALL***", available in hard copy or digital format.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

Quite often players can learn best from other players, so it's important for every catcher to discuss their position with as many other catchers as they can, to gain the widest possible view of how others play the position.

There are also some basic principles which underlie the catching game and which, once learned and applied, will produce immediate improvement in your catcher's effectiveness. These principles apply to every level of play but should be introduced gradually according to the age and skill level of the player.

CATCHER PRINCIPLES

1. **ALWAYS CATCH THE BALL AS CLOSE TO THE FRONT OF THE PLATE AS POSSIBLE.**
2. **WHENEVER THERE ARE RUNNERS ON BASE, BE READY TO THROW ON EVERY PITCH.**
3. **ESTABLISH A GOOD THROWING POSITION BEFORE RECEIVING THE BALL.**
4. **WORK WITH THE PITCHER TO DECIDE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO PITCH EACH BATTER.**
5. **CONTINUALLY STUDY THE BATTERS, THEIR HABITS AND THEIR SWING.**
6. **LEARN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT PROPER PITCHING MECHANICS**

There are also a number of good video presentations on catching which can be helpful in coaching your catchers.