

**Every year Clarence Varsity Coach Dave Smith has held a coaches clinic for the TCBA coaches. This year, he asked the coaches if they had any specific questions about coaching, and he has put together a list of some of the questions that were asked at the clinic.**

**What is the maximum pitches a 12 year old should throw?**

*As taken from the TCBA By Laws, these rules are exactly as defined in the Little League Rule Book. I think these are good rules to follow.*

*A player is allowed to pitch a maximum of 75 pitches.*

*The following schedule of rest must be adhered to for all pitchers:*

| <i># of pitches</i> | <i># of days rest</i> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 65-75               | 3 calendar days       |
| 41-64               | 2 calendar days       |
| 21-40               | 1 calendar day        |
| 1-20                | 0 calendar days       |

**In the minor division, what are a few fundamentals each kid should come away with?**

*I think each kid should have the basics of swing mechanics – small front step and pivoting with their back foot, the basics of throwing mechanics – point your non throwing shoulder to target, step, and throw, along with basic knowledge of where to throw the ball on defense.*

**Do you give different instruction to kids with different skill levels?**

*You should absolutely give different instruction to different skill levels. Baseball is a very individual sport and each kid should get instruction at his or her level. Challenge the more skilled kids and keep things basic for the less skilled kids.*

**How do you keep kids engaged, focused, and motivated?**

*There are numerous strategies to keep kids engaged, focused, and motivated. If you instruct up or down to the kids skill level and challenge each kid to improve his or her skill level, they become more interested in learning and improving. Break practice into little contests and reward the kids with gum or something for winning the contests or improving. Challenge the kids to win each inning in the game and that will keep them focused on each inning. Smile and have fun with them no matter what is happening in the practice or game. This will keep the kids loose and excited to be at the ball park.*

**Is there a system to rotate positions evenly for younger teams?**

*I have coached in the Minor League the past three years and have always used this rotation. Basically I divide the kids into two groups. There are six infield positions – P,C,1B,2B,3B,SS and that usually leaves six kids for the outfield. I take the kids that were in the outfield and put them in the infield the next inning. I continue that rotation for six innings giving everyone 3 in the infield and 3 in the outfield. Each time the kids come into the infield, I put them into a different infield position – giving them 3 different infield positions per inning. This gets more complicated at the higher levels when kids are required to sit out. In the Major league when I coached, I would take the outfielders and bring them to the bench the next inning and work the kids from the bench into the infield, sending the kids they replace into the outfield.*

**How often should practice be and how long?**

*One to two times per week. One hour to 75 minutes long for each practice.*

**What percentage of time would you recommend spending on fielding vs. hitting in practice?**

*I would split it evenly, while allowing a little time for base running. Remember though, that some kids can be fielding while others are hitting. The entire team does not have to be doing the same thing at the same time.*

**What is the best way to pair up stronger and weaker players in practice?**

*I don't know that I would pair them up. I think each kids should get instruction at their own level. So pairing two good kids together can often encourage them to feed off each other and get better. Two weaker kids paired together could enable you to work on skills with both of them at the same time.*

*One thing that should be avoided is having strong throwers throw to weak catching kids. This is where the kids could get hurt.*