

Fly Ball Communication Drills using the JUGS Pitching Machine

Purpose:

Use the two wheel JUGS machine to improve communication on fly balls between three fielders

Reason: Use of the JUGS pitching machines allows for more accurate placement of the ball between fielders.

Execution:

For each of the sets below, place the JUGS machine at home plate. Aim the machine to shoot the set of fly balls between the designated players. Shoot the ball several times, and then change the speed and angle of the JUGS machine in order to change the landing spot of each fly ball.

1. Right fielder, 1st baseman, 2nd baseman
2. Center fielder, 2nd baseman, right fielder
3. Center fielder, shortstop, 2nd baseman
4. Left fielder, center fielder, shortstop
5. Left fielder, shortstop, 3rd baseman

Advanced execution and practice implementation:

Use this series of drills, but move the JUGS machine to an outfield foul line. Then, setup the drills with a throw down base in the outfield. This allows you to create more foul ground to better prepare for fields with more foul territory, or closer to the fence to create less foul territory.

This setup also allows two options for players who are not involved in the drill:

1. Bunt coverage where outfielders who are not involved in the fly ball drill bunt
2. Position specific infield drills where outfielders hit in the cages

Conclusion: Using the JUGS pitching machine to practice fly ball communication will improve your team's performance on difficult fly balls between multiple players. You can also use this drill to better prepare your team for the surroundings they will be playing in by moving the machine to the outfield to create more, or less foul territory. When paired with other drills, this drill will also allow for the best use of your facility for your team.