

Clockwise and Counterclockwise: Throwing, Fielding, and Hitting

The purpose of this document is to define clockwise and counterclockwise in relation to throwing, fielding, and hitting. First, I want to introduce the idea of practicing our pitching by throwing the ball around the diamond both clockwise and counterclockwise. This drill will demonstrate the relationship between rhythm and accuracy. Very few throws in the game are back and forth. Most of the throws in the game can be simulated by throwing the ball around the horn clockwise and counterclockwise. The longer throws are simulated by throwing the ball across the diamond then clockwise or across the diamond then counterclockwise. What we learn by doing this is: Rhythm and Accuracy; Natural Ball Movement; and Apparent Movement.

Rhythm and Accuracy

For rhythm and accuracy, clockwise and counterclockwise practice will also teach players to make sure the ball is released close to their eyes. Plus, depending on the situation we will learn to either sling or spin the ball close to the eyes. Slinging the ball, we start on the toes and whip the ball by the eyes from the waist. Spinning the ball we start on the heel and whip the ball by the eyes with the hips, a twisting motion using the big muscles in our core. What we learn throwing will be applied when we will learn to spin or sling the bat close to the eyes.

Natural Ball Movement

With clockwise and counterclockwise practice around the horn, players will subconsciously learn that clockwise the ball will naturally break clockwise and counterclockwise the ball will naturally break counterclockwise. For rhythm and accuracy players will naturally throw off the back foot one way and off the front foot the other way. When throwing off the back foot the ball will break one way and throwing off the front foot the ball will move the other way. Fielding, players will learn to put their head close to the ball on the inside of the curve. Same for hitters, they will also learn to put their head on the inside of the curve close to the ball.

Apparent Movement

In previous documents apparent movement has been defined. This clockwise counterclockwise drill will subconsciously demonstrate apparent movement. We will sling the ball to targets above the belt and spin the ball to targets below the belt. When we sling the ball, it appears to break late on high pitches. When we spin the ball, it appears to break late on the low pitches. So, this clockwise counterclockwise practice will teach players to subconsciously recognize pitches by watching the pitcher release the ball. Upon release the player will know which way the ball will move based practice fielding around the horn. They will not be surprised by the apparent movement.