

Club Hardball



Baseball Manual

"He Is Just a Little Boy"

He stands at the plate
with his heart pounding fast.

The bases are loaded,
the die has been cast.

Mom and Dad cannot help him,
he stands all alone.

A hit at this moment
would send his team home.

The ball meets the plate,
he swings, and he misses.



There's a groan from the crowd,
with some boos and some hisses.

A thoughtless voice cries,
"Strike out the bum."

Tears fill his eyes,
the game's no longer fun.

So open up your heart
and give him a break,
for its moments like this,
a man you can make.

Please keep this in mind
when you hear someone forget,
He is just a little boy, and not a man yet.

I: Introduction

Our Club manual contains instruction and information about the way our Club will play baseball. In practices, we emphasize **fundamentals**. Learning proper technique is critical. The other is **situational** baseball. What happens when the ball is hit directly to you? What happens when the ball is not hit to you?

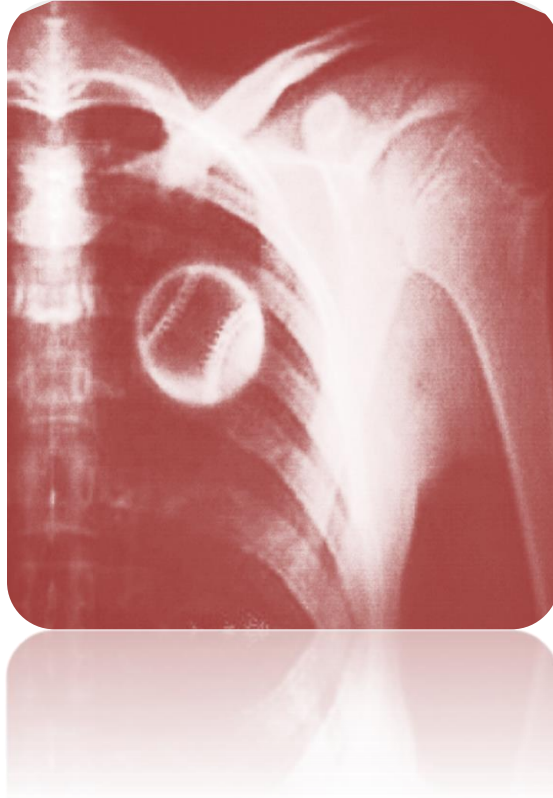
On every pitch and every batted ball, each offensive and defensive player has an individual assignment to perform. To play **Bulldog Baseball**, players must learn their assignments, and then execute them against the situation on the field.

In this manual, the basic strategic assignments for both offense and defense are explained. As a Club member, it is your responsibility to learn your assignments. The manual is divided into four sections:

- I. **Bulldog Baseball**
- II. **Offensive Strategy**
- III. **Defensive Strategy**
- IV. **Ballplayer | Parent Expectations**

To improve your play on the field, you will need to be a **Complete Bulldog Player**.

Memorize the strategic assignments and you will take some big steps towards increasing the excellence of your play and the Clubs play on the field.



I: Bulldog Baseball

1. Make Routine Plays.
 - Quality baseball teams make routine defensive plays, hit routinely for average, and pitch strikes. Focus on the basics of Offense and Defense and you will be successful.
2. Effort Always.
 - You cannot give a 110%... it is not possible. Focus on 100%.
3. Walking is Prohibited.
 - We will out hustle every Club we play!
2. Develop Loyalty.
 - Put the Club first. Be a Club player. Help your Club members achieve Club goals.
3. Support your Club Teammates.
 - Baseball is a Club game.
4. Think Baseball and Focus.
 - Concentrate and keep your mind focused.
5. Master the Fundamentals.
 - Learn the basic skills, start by being a good practice player.

6. Learn from your Mistakes.
 - Mistakes are common in baseball. Errors are part of the game. When a mistake is made, forgive yourself, and make a commitment to learn from the experience.
7. Anticipate each Pitch and Fielding situation.
 - Know your assignments.
8. Value Sportsmanship.
 - Be a good sport in support of you Club Teammates.
9. Be a Good communicator.
 - There is a time to talk and a time to listen. Listen well to your coaches

Playing Bulldog Baseball

Playing the Bulldog way requires dedication. Working when you are tired, taking extra practices when you would rather be hanging out or playing Xbox or Play Station, etc. If you play the Bulldog way, you will become the best baseball player, and best person, you can be.

II: Bulldog Offensive Strategy

In a game, each Club will be able to use a total of 18 outs (3 per inning for six innings) to score as many runs as possible. Outs supply opportunity on defense, our Club will play aggressively to take other Club's outs away. In doing so, our defense limits the opponent's opportunities to score runs. On offense, **we are stingy with our outs**. We play aggressively on offense to preserve every out we can. We protect our outs! The two basic elements of batting and base running. The best indicator of productivity is **on base percentage (OBP)**, and the most important offensive statistic is **runs scored**. The primary goal of our offense is for hitters to become base runners and base runners to advance around the bases to score. Each player contributes by producing **quality-at-bats and smart base running**. Every player, regardless of ability, can learn to produce a quality-at-bat and to run the bases aggressively. We work very hard at these two qualities.

Quality-At-Bats

A quality-at-bat begins when a batter is **selective at the plate**. Swing at strikes and let balls pass by. Bulldog coaches emphasize for our hitters to concentrate on seeing the ball. Seeing the ball is a priority! When you step into the batter's box, make a commitment to see the ball well. With this type of concentration, you expect to see the ball **EARLY, see it BIG, and see it as LONG AS POSSIBLE.**

The strike zone is the hitter's zone. This is the area where the hitter wants the pitcher to throw the ball. Bulldog hitters will control the hitting zone. At the plate, we refuse to swing

at a pitch outside the zone. We will force the pitcher to throw the ball into our zone. Being selective and controlling the zone is the best way for us to get the quality pitches that we want to hit.

When you receive a pitch to hit, respond by making **a good swing** of the bat. Such a swing is the result of more than technique or mechanics; it requires a hitting attitude of focus. All Bulldog hitters will have a very simple attitude or focus every time they step into the batter's box. **"See the ball, hit the ball"** is a common attitude we will use.

Quality-At-Bats are measured by how well a batter controls the strike zone. When a hitter does these two things, he has produced a quality-at-bat. **He may strike out, ground out, walk, or fly out, and still produce a quality-at –bat.**

Bulldog Hitting Attitude

With careful attention and regular practice, players can develop a fluid and powerful hitting stroke. A good swing without a good hitting attitude will produce poor results. Hitters must learn to combine a proper batting stroke with a positive mental strategy. Before the game, during the game, each turn at bat, and with every pitch that is thrown, Bulldog hitters should seek to develop this edge at the plate.

Strong Hitting Attitude

1. Eliminate Distractions:
 - Keep your attention tightly focused on the game.
2. Study the Pitcher:
 - The opposing pitcher is an open book filled with valuable information.
3. Defeat Fear:
 - Fear of failure and the fear of being hurt are negative thoughts.
4. Be Confident:
 - Confidence is a decision you make and is the ability to believe in yourself. Consistently doing it right in practice builds confidence.
5. Get Comfortable at the Plate:
 - A batting stance that is uncomfortable will diminish your ability to concentrate.
6. Relax:
 - Breathe deep.
7. Concentrate on the Pitch:
 - Create tunnel-vision toward the pitch and omit all other thoughts.
8. Attack the Ball:
 - Anticipate that each pitch will be in the strike zone.
9. Build on Success and Stay Positive:
 - Focus on what is going well. Be willing to make **small** adjustments.

10. We use the **Trigger -> Load -> Stride -> Swing** philosophy to hitting.

Bulldog Base Running

There are some basic rules of base running that are automatic on our Club. Make them a regular habit of your base running.

- Run as hard as you can on every ball that is hit. We will go hard to put pressure on the other Club. Think "I will be safe" and "I want the next base."
- Get a quick jump out of the box. As soon as you make contact, turn your eyes towards first base and concentrate on getting down the line at full speed.
- Run full-speed through the bag at 1b on ground balls hit to the infield. We will break down after three steps and look to our right for over throws and advance when it is safe to do so. Listen to your base coach.
- Don't walk, run to 1b on ball four!
- On a ball hit through the infield you are thinking double or triple... make the coach pull you back. Be aggressive.
- Round the bases correctly and touch the inside corner of each bag.
- Take a two – step lead or bounce as each pitch reaches the batter's box, make sure your momentum is going towards the next base. We will move up a base on all past balls and wild pitches. Bulldog will be dangerous on the base paths!
- If you are in doubt, slide! Always slide at home on past balls.
- On extra base hits, never make the first or third out of an inning at third base! Unless it's safe, trying to stretch a double into a triple is often a foolish decision.

Bulldog base runners will ask and answer the four essential base running questions before each pitch is thrown. We will know the situation and ask ourselves these four questions.

- **How many outs are there?**
- **When a ground ball is hit, what do I do?**
- **When a fly ball is hit, what do I do?**
- **When a line drive is hit, what do I do?**

One of the great mistakes made by many players is to believe that baser running is simply about speed. Bulldogs will force the defender to make a perfect throw by hustling every time. Do not take your eyes off the ball when the ball is in play... **EVER!**

Bulldog base running starts with a plan. Listen to your base coach and make sure you have one. **Know what to do!**

Signals for Offense

Before and after each pitch, batter's and runners check with the third base coach for signs that indicate our offensive strategy. The third base coach will flash a series of signs to communicate instructions to both the batter and any runners that are on base. If you miss the sign or don't understand it, signal the coach to repeat the sign. If you are still not sure of the sign, motion for the coach to ask for "Time". When "Time" is called, the coach can talk with you about the play that is being signaled.

III: Bulldog Defense Strategy

To play solid defense, a Club must have defensive standards. Bulldog defensive strategy is:

- On every batted ball, each fielder moves to the ball, a base, or a backup position.
- Throw every ball with a purpose to a target.
- Outfielders are in the base-take-away business. From the outfield, always throw the ball one base ahead of the runner. Never throw the ball behind a runner.
- After fielding balls hit deep, throw the ball to the relay man.
- An outfielder must make every effort to keep a ball that is hit to him from bouncing past him. Get in front of the ball and use your body to block it from skipping by you.
- Whenever there is a runner on base, the SS backs up every return throw from the catcher to the pitcher. The 2B man will cover his bag in case the base runner attempts to move up on a mishandled ball.
- On any ball hit between fielders, the fielder in the best position must "Call for the Ball."
- Don't catch it unless you call, and don't call unless you can catch it!
- On every outfield throw to a relay or cutoff man, the throw should be low, hard, and shoulder high on the fielder.
- After the pitcher releases the pitch, he becomes an infielder. He must be ready to move to the ball, a base, or a backup position on every batted ball.
- On any ball hit to the first base side, the pitcher must run towards first base and be ready to cover the base.
- On any throw from the outfield to third base, or home base, the pitcher must be able to back up the play.
- In a bunt situation, make sure you take at least one of the other Club's outs away.
- Prevent the big inning. Every hitter is a dangerous hitter. Stay focused.

Bulldog Defensive Attitude

Much of the Bulldog success on defense will come from a player's concentration and anticipation. It is also a place where attitudes are critical. If a defender approaches a play with negative thoughts, it diminishes his aggressiveness and preparation.

- An alert, dedicated defensive player approaches every pitch with the desire to make the play. Bulldog attitudes for playing defense include:
 - I am aggressive. I will take charge, be loud, and use my voice to call plays.
 - I will anticipate every possible play before every pitch.
 - I will help my teammates, making sure they are ready for every pitch.
 - I will have total concentration on every pitch and every batted ball.
- I will get a great jump on every pitch because that extra inch might be the difference in making the play. I will go after every ball that is hit my way.
- Hit the ball to me. I want it. I want to make the play. There are no easy plays.
- I will be moving on every batted ball, even if it is on the other side of the field.
- When I make an error, I will learn from it and get ready for the next pitch.
- I will never hang my head and let one error cause me to make more mistakes.

Just like our base running strategy, a Bulldog defender will ask and answer the four essential questions before every pitch is thrown. We will know the situation and what to do by asking ourselves these questions.

- **How many outs are there?**
- **When a ground ball is hit, what do I do?**
- **When a fly ball is hit, what do I do?**
- **When a line drive is hit, what do I do?**

Ready Position

The ready position is the most important first step to good defensive play. The quickest way for a player to improve his defensive play is to develop the habit of being in a good ready position every pitch. We call this "creeping." When our pitcher is at the top of his release position, we take two steps forward and land on the balls of our feet as the pitch is crossing home plate. In doing so, you will be ready to move in any direction to play solid defense.

Ask yourself the 3 essential defensive questions before each pitch:

- 1. How many outs are there?**
- 2. When a ground ball is hit, what do I do?**
- 3. When a fly ball is hit, what do I do?**
- 4. When a line drive is hit, what do I do?**

Your eyes should be focused intently on the strike zone. Be sure to avoid the mistake of trying to follow the ball from the pitcher's hand to the batter. Watch the strike zone only! That is the place where the ball will be struck and hit towards you.

Outfielders have some thinking to do also. The ready position is as important for you as for the infielders. Before the pitch is delivered, pre-plan your strategy. Execute your "creep!" You must know the situation and where you are going to throw the ball if it's hit to you. Be alert for any instructions provided by the coaching staff on positioning.

By watching the batter, you will see how he strides and the type of swing he takes. It is important for outfielders to watch the hitter's bat as it comes through the strike zone. This will help you in your initial break towards the ball. You must get a good "read" off the bat. Just like your infield teammates, in your ready position you are prepared to explode your muscles forward, backwards, up, down, left, or right, depending on where the ball is hit.

Relay Throws

When a ball is batted deep into the outfield, one of the middle fielders must sprint out towards the outfielder who is retrieving the ball. The middle infielder who does this is called the relay man. After retrieving the ball, the outfielder immediately throws the ball to the relay. It is the relay's responsibility to make a throw to the correct base or to sprint towards the base runner, returning the ball to the infield.

The usual situation that requires a middle fielder to become a relay is the extra base hit. This can occur on hits that are driven into the gaps between outfielders, batted over an outfielder's head, or bounce past an outfielder after he is unable to stop the ball. Middle fielders are alert to react to any of these extra-base situations and quickly move into a relay position. A ball batted to normal or shallow depth does not require a relay for the outfield throw.

On balls that are batted to the right field side of 2B, the second baseman will become the relay. On balls batted to the left field side of 2B, the SS will become the relay. Balls that are hit to straight away centerfield, the SS will be the relay. In this instance, the SS must call out to the second baseman that he is the relay man. When one of the middle fielders becomes the relay, the other middle fielder runs to cover the base.

Cutoffs

The cutoff man is an infielder that moves into the path of a ball that is thrown from the outfield to the catcher. We will keep it simple. The first baseman will be our only home base cutoff man. With runners in scoring position, or when there is a runner on first base and the batter gets an extra-base hit, the first baseman should react by moving into the cutoff position. The cutoff position for home base is approximately 40 feet in front of home plate in a direct line between the point of the outfield throw and the catcher. The first baseman

should wave his arms and holler, "Hit me! Hit me! Hit me!" to give the outfielder or relay man an obvious target. The throw should be directed at the cutoff's chest.

The first priority on this play is to nail the runner at home base. If the throw from the outfielder is strong and accurate and will reach the catcher in time to make the tag on the runner, the cutoff man will let the throw go through. If the throw is off line, short, or soft, the cutoff man automatically cuts the throw, and then makes a snap relay throw to the catcher. If the catcher thinks the throw will be too late for him to slap a tag on the runner at home base, he will direct the first baseman to cutoff the throw.

If a tag play can be made on a trailing runner at another base, the catcher shouts the base number at which a play can be made. For example, if the lead runner is already scoring and the batter is attempting to advance to second base on the throw from the outfield to home plate, the catcher shouts "2" to indicate that a play can be made on the batter at 2nd base. Clear communication between the catcher and the first baseman is essential on all home base cutoff plays.

In addition to the cutoff play at home base, we will also use the cutoff play to defend against runners advancing from first base to third base on a normal base hit to right field of center field. In this situation, the SS will be the cutoff man. When the ball is batted for a single into right, or center field, there can be runners at first and third base, or a lead runner at first base only.

Because the second baseman can see that the ball is hit to normal depth in right field, no relay man is needed. He sprints to cover 2nd base. The SS moves into position in direct alignment between the right fielder and the third baseman. He waves his arms at the right fielder to signal that he is the target for the throw. The right fielder throws through to third base by hitting the SS chest high with a strong accurate throw.

With the play in front of him, the SS can let the throw go through, cut off an errant throw and relay it to third base, or cut the throw and make a play on the batter seeking to advance to second base on the throw from the outfield. The cutoff play is the same for a single that is hit into center field, except the SS will make a different alignment. With the SS as an alert cutoff, there will be opportunities to put a runner out at third, second. Or even first base. Keys to getting an out with this play are alertness and effective communication between the middle fielders and the catcher.

Rundowns

When a runner is trapped between bases, a rundown occurs. To successfully execute a rundown, defensive players must use a plan to control the runner's movements and apply a tag before the runner returns safely to the base.

A rundown occurs in one of three different rundown zones. The first zone is between first base and second base. The second is between second and third base. The third zone is between third base and home base. To initiate the rundown plan, the infielders within each zone become the first primary defenders. Primary defenders are called the *chaser* and the *receiver*. Other fielders, including the pitcher and outfielders, move quickly to secondary or backup positions. For example, in the situation where a runner is trapped between first and second base, the second baseman is typically the chaser and the first baseman the receiver. The pitcher and right fielder are backup fielders at first base, and the SS and center fielder are backup fielders at second base.

The Bulldog Rundown Plan

1. After the rundown is started, the goal is to tag the runner with one throw or less.
2. Get the ball in front of the runner and run him back to the bag he came from.
3. Nearest infielders move to chaser and receiver positions.
4. Close the gap.
 - Both the chaser and the receiver move away from their bases towards the runner and narrow the length of the rundown zone. Both players remain on the inside of the base path (the side closest to infield grass).
5. Chaser charges the runner aggressively at full-speed.
 - With the ball held head high, the chaser runs (not jogs) directly at the runner, forcing the runner to retreat at full-speed toward the receiver.
6. Chaser runs on the glove-hand side of the tagger.
 - To avoid throwing the ball over the head of the runner, the chaser should be positioned on the glove-hand side of the receiver.
7. Receiver calls for the ball.
 - When the chaser has forced the runner to retreat far enough to be tagged, the receiver shouts "ball" to indicate the chaser to throw the ball now! With the mitt pocket held toward the chaser, the receiver provides a good chest high target for the throw.
8. Toss the ball.
 - This is a short snap-throw or toss.

9. Chaser peels back.
 - As soon as the toss is made, the chaser peels back away into the infield grass and circles back towards the base where the chase began. The first secondary fielder moves away from the base and up the base line into primary position. If the rundown continues, the secondary fielder will become the receiver at this base.
10. Tag the runner firmly at the waist.
 - Make the tag with the ball held firmly in the bare hand. To prevent the runner from ducking the tag, apply the tag at the runner's waist. Avoid tagging the runner's chest, shoulders, or head.
11. Backup players are alert and ready to participate.
 - In the event the receivers signal is too early or too late, and the rundown continues, the backup players are ready to move into the primary chaser and receiver positions.

Catching Shallow Fly Balls

Communication and Club work between infielders and outfielders is essential. To make this play successfully, fielders are guided by a set of rules. Using the rules will help infielders and outfielders react quickly, safely, and confidently.

The Bulldog rules are:

1. Whenever a fly ball is hit into the shallow outfield area, it is the nearest infielder's responsibility to field the ball. The infielder must react immediately making the catch is his job.
2. The nearest outfielder always has priority over the infielder. Because of his sight line, and his forward movement toward the ball, the outfielder is in a priority position.
3. Both fielders must wait until the ball has reached its highest point before making a call.
4. When calling for the ball, the fielder must yell loudly 3 times, "MINE, MINE, and MINE."
5. If nobody calls the ball, it is the infielder's catch. The infielder retains responsibility.
6. If both players call the ball, the outfielders have priority.
7. Always run to a backup position when called off the ball.

Both infielders and outfielders must learn to develop trust in one another. These rules allow them to patrol common territory and react to one another in a consistent pattern.

Bunt Defense

There are two basic types of bunt plays, the sacrifice bunt and the bunt hit. We will defend both. In the case of a sacrifice bunt, the batter typically squares around early to indicate his commitment to bunt. The offensive Club is willing to sacrifice an out to advance any runner that is already on base. When improperly defended, the sacrifice bunt can easily produce a safe hit for the batter. In the case of the bunt hit, the batter typically delays squaring around to give the defense less time to react and to increase the chances for a hit.

In bunt situations, the coach will call a *bunt defense play*. As soon as the batter squares to commit himself to bunt the pitch, the fielders should immediately run to their assigned positions. Fielders that are charging should make a quick controlled charge. Infielders that have base coverage responsibilities should move to the base. In every instance, when an opposing batter squares to bunt, the pitcher should throw a high strike, preferably around the arm pits.

Our bunt defenses are primarily designed to provide help for the pitcher as we want our pitcher to be our primary bunt fielder. Catchers are the main fielders for bunts on the dirt arc in front of home plate. When the ball is bunted too far from home plate for the catcher to field it, his job is to quarterback the play. The basic rule of bunt defense is to always get an out! Only throw to a base where a sure out can be made.

Your head coach will give you the bunt defense signals and calls.

Player Position	Bunt Defense 1	Bunt Defense 2	Bunt Defense 3
<u>1B</u>			
<u>2B</u>			
<u>3B</u>			
<u>SS</u>			
<u>Keyword</u>			

Normally we will give our pitcher extra fielding help on the third base side by charging the third baseman only. Our pitcher's primary bunt fielding responsibility is in front of the mound and towards the first base line.

Double Steal Defense

The double-steal is an offensive strategy that is commonly used by Clubs in baseball. With runners on 1B and 3B, both runners attempt to advance by stealing 2B and home. The goal is to score a run by advancing one or both runners. Often, the strategy is successful because the defensive Club is unprepared to properly defend the play.

When this situation occurs in our games, we will always set up a specific defensive play to attack the offensive Club's double steal strategy. **We will never concede the stolen base** and will pressure the offensive Club to make a mistake.

There are 3 double-steal defenses that we execute. Each defense is identified by number and name. The coach will call the play from the dugout. Every player is responsible to memorize these plays, knowing the name and number of each double-steal defense. All Bulldog defensive players have a specific position of responsibility on all double-steal defenses. Do not get caught out of position.

1. Normal Throw Through – The catcher throws down to 2b. Faking to cut off the throw, the pitcher slaps his hand into his glove attempting to freeze the runner on third base. If the runner breaks for the plate the infielder relays the throwback to home. If the runner on third base stays put, the infielder tags the runner sliding into second base. The short stop will have coverage at second base. The second baseman will go behind the second base bag to back the play up. First baseman and third basemen cover their bases and be alert for throws. The pitcher will back up at home plate in case of a run down or bad throw. Outfielders must back up and be alert for over throws. LF moves to a backup position behind 3b. CF moves to a backup position behind 2b. RF moves into a backup position behind 1b.
2. Short Stop Charge – As soon as the pitcher delivers the pitch, the short stop will charge directly to a spot halfway between the mound and his position. The catcher will throw the ball to the short stop who either returns a throw to the catcher or to 3b. The catcher must make a good strong throw to the short stop, and the short stop must react quickly to the actions of the runner at 3b for this play to
3. work correctly. All infielders have coverage of their bases. Outfielders will move into back up positions as follows on the charge play. LF backs up 3b, CF will back up the throw from the catcher to the short stop. It is important that you sprint to a position that is directly behind the short stop and in line with the throw from the catcher in case of a bad throw or error by the infielder. RF will move to a backup position behind 1b. Pitcher will loop around and back up home plate.
4. Catcher Fake and Eat it -The catcher will simply fake a throw to 2b and hold the ball. EAT IT! Infielders should cover their bases and be ready in case we catch the other Club not paying attention. Outfielders should move into their back up positions. We do not want to make a throw on this play unless the runner on 3b is caught trying to steal home after the catcher fakes the throw to second base. Most likely this will result in a run-down play with the runner caught between 3b and home plate. In

double-steal situations, every player on the field should look and listen for the defensive signal. Outfielders must be alert to move quickly to back up positions. When the runner on first

5. breaks for second base, the first baseman will alert the catcher with a loud shout, "going", "going", "going".

Catcher Pick - Off Plays

There are two catcher pick off plays we will use. We will use a specific word to call these plays. All catcher pick – offs will be called from the dugout by the coaches. It is the responsibility of each player to know what your job is on each play. All players must be alert and look and listen for the call from the dugout.

1. The first play we will use is our 1b pick – off play. The coach will call the play and the keyword will be "Zing". As soon as the pitch crosses the plate the catcher will immediately make a snap throw to the first baseman who attempts to make a tag on the runner trying to return to 1b. All infielders should cover their bases on this play as we may have a chance to get the base runner if he decides to try to advance instead of returning to the base. All outfielders should move to their back up positions and be ready for a bad throw or missed signal. We must also be alert for a rundown in this situation. Some players are taught to try to get in a rundown if they find themselves picked off a base.
2. The second play we will use is our 3b pick – off play. The coach will call the play and the keyword will be "Jag". As soon as the pitch crosses the plate the catcher will immediately make a snap throw to the third baseman who attempts to make a tag on the runner trying to return to 3b. All infielders and outfielders should move to cover their bases and into back up positions. Be ready for a bad throw or a rundown situation.

We will prepare and practice these plays. All players should know their responsibilities regardless of which position they are playing.

Pitching Goals

1. All Bulldog pitchers will possess the Pitchers Three C's on the mound: Concentration, Confidence, and Courage.
2. The pitcher's goal is to make the batter swing the bat. Strikeouts may seem cool, but striking out each hitter is never a priority on our staff.
3. Pitch the ball down the funnel into the catcher's mitt.
4. Throw the first pitch for a strike! Be fearless and get ahead in the count.

5. Throw the second pitch for a strike! Pitch to the catcher's target. Pitch aggressively in the strike zone.
6. Throw the fastball with maximum exertion.
7. It's harder for the hitter to hit than for a pitcher to pitch!
8. Throw strikes, change speeds, work as fast as you comfortably can.
9. BREATHE!!! Proper breathing aids relaxation, concentration, strength and control.
10. Be in command on the mound. Stay focused and control emotions. Pitch with a purpose.
11. Control is developed by frequent and deliberate practice. To become a control pitcher, pitch regularly.
12. Develop one pitch that can be consistently thrown for a strike.
13. Develop a second pitch that can be thrown to upset the hitter's timing. All Bulldog pitchers will be developing a "change up" to go with their fastballs.

Pitching Attitude and Concentration

With confidence and composure, you can get into an efficient rhythm by approaching each pitch the same way. Only place your foot on the rubber when you are focused and are ready to throw the pitch.

Composure is critical. If the other team sees you are nervous, frustrated, angry, etc. they have the upper hand. Always maintain composure and that will drive confidence.

IV: Ballplayer | Parent Expectations

1. Practices/Games
 - Our Club will practice regularly and often throughout the season. This will include pre-season, in-season, and post-season work outs. Please be early. We have a tradition of taking ground balls 15 minutes prior to each practice. Always be at practice 15 minutes before practice and 75 minutes before game time.
 - Attendance at practice and games is mandatory. If you are unable to attend practice or games, phone the head coach to notify the Club of the reason for your absence.
 - If you are injured and unable to practice or play in games, you are expected to attend all practices and games. In our practices, we will be practicing our offensive and defensive strategies on a regular basis. This means adding, changing, and eliminating many different aspects of that strategy. Players may have the opportunity to play different positions, but they must know their

responsibilities and coverage for each position. Baseball requires repetitions. If you miss practice you don't get those repetitions. All injured players will dress in uniform and sit on the bench in the dugout with the Club during games. The head coach is the only one who can excuse you from practice or a game. Sickness would be a viable excuse.

2. Uniforms

- All players must wear a cup. Protect yourself and be safe.
- All players must wear their practice jersey and hat to all practices. They must also wear baseball pants unless notified differently by the head coach.
- Wear your uniform properly. Show class. Look like a baseball player. Flat hats are discouraged. Jerseys are tucked inside the pants always. Belts and socks are part of our uniform and are required to be worn every game.

3. Practice gear

- Always have gloves, bats, helmets, catchers gear, batting gloves, cold weather gear, fluids, bat bag etc... Be prepared for practice!

4. Dugout Behavior

- Stay in the dugout. Stay alert and involved in the game. No horse play or verbal abuse of teammates or opposing Clubs and players.
- Please do not leave the dugout unless you ask a coach.
- No dugout visitations with friends or siblings.
- No food in the dugout. Eat before you come to the field, or after the game. Water and sports drinks, along with seeds are allowed in the dugout.

5. Physical Conditioning

- All players will be in good physical condition and we will do conditioning in every practice.

6. Post-Game

- After shaking hands with the opposing team, sprint to the outfield line of our dugout. Run six (6) "steals" aggressively and then run back to the dugout.
- All trash will be cleaned up from our dugout. Then get your personal gear into your bag and leave the dugout in a respectful manner. Show class and act like a baseball player.

7. There will be a **brief post-game meeting** at the end of every game. Your presence is required. Important information is given out during our post game meeting. The head coach is the only one that can excuse you from a post-game meeting.