

The 20 Most Wasted Minutes in a Catcher's Life

by Dave Weaver

It seems that many players and coaches recognize how little time is allocated during practices for catchers to work on their catching skills, like blocking, exchange drills, pickoff throws, and proper handling of passed balls with a throw to the pitcher covering home plate, just to name a few.

Often times it has been said to me that there just isn't enough time to fit it in a practice. I would like to challenge that idea by pointing out the most wasted 20 minutes in a catcher's life.

The time is called "Infield Practice." I've lost count of how many practices I have observed where a coach is hitting infield practice with often times the starting catcher standing beside them taking the throw from the fielders and then handing the ball back to the coach. WHAT A WASTE!!!

Now I know that some of the items covered during infield practice do require the catcher's involvement in a true game situation play. However I have seen at least 20 minutes go by when all they do is catch the ball and hand it to the coach.

I suggest that at the beginning of infield practice another player fill that role, and even maybe rotate with other infielders. During that time the catchers, all of the catchers if possible, are off to the side working on blocking, throwing, etc.

When it is time to do the plays that involve the catcher, call them back over and run them all at one time.

I saw this next quote on the a Baseball Catchers web site about how much we depend on catchers to get it right, but how little time we provide for them to practice the skills they will need to get it right in a game.

"It will take a dozen outstanding plays by the catcher to make teammates forget a single disastrous E-2 that could have been prevented by practicing catcher skills."

I know that scheduling a meaningful practice is always a challenge. But the solution outlined above is an easy fix that will provide at least 20 minutes every practice for your catchers to work on their skills.