

# 5

# FIELDING



The game of cricket requires players to spend up to 80% of their time fielding and whilst attention is paid to fielding activities it is often as an "afterthought" or simply to fill in time at the end of training. Every player's aim should be to become as competent at fielding as they are at batting or bowling.

That has always been the best advice any coach can give a budding cricketer, but it is even more the case these days now that limited-overs cricket plays such a big part in a cricketer's career. There is nowhere to hide when batsmen are chasing runs in the one-day game.

## KEY POINTS

- **Maintain low body height – bend the knees**
- **Watch the ball into the hands**
- **Return to the 'keeper on the full**
- **Communicate with your team-mates**



# Ground Fielding and

## MOVING TO THE BALL

Fielders away from the bat, i.e. not in the slips/close catching positions, move in with the bowler. They should maintain a low body weight, and the weight should be on the inside of the balls of the feet. Adjust body position for clean pick-up, watch ball into hands and keep head and eyes steady.

The fielder can maximise anticipation by watching the batter's stance, his footwork and blade of the bat angles.

### KEY POINTS

- Attack the ball
- Soft hands
- Flat throw on the full or with a clear bounce to 'keeper

## ATTACKING FIELDING

- Back foot right angles to line of the ball
- Low body weight
- Flexed knees
- Head in line
- Watch ball into hands
- Soft hands
- Elbows shock absorbers



## DEFENSIVE FIELDING

- Body is the second line of defence
- Never be late for the ball
- Bend hips and knees as low as practicable
- Keep your eyes on the ball
- Let your hands give with the ball

## UNDERARM THROWING



### KEY POINTS

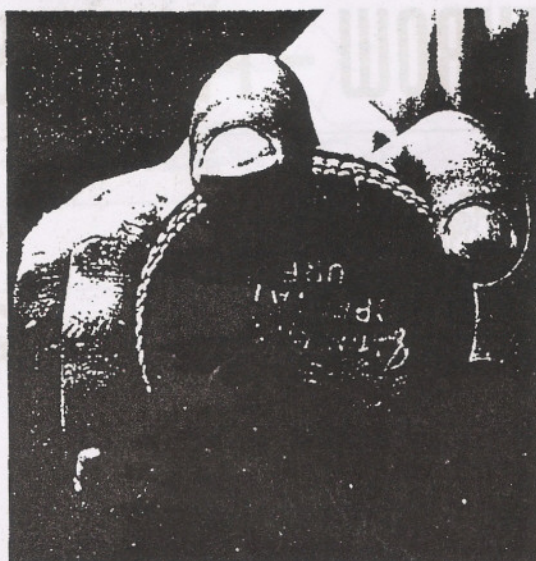
- Stay front on
- Fingers point down, not at ball
- Throwing arm straight back, straight through at target
- Arm close to body
- Maintain low body crouch



# d Throwing

## GRIPPING THE BALL

- Grip across seam
- Wrist loose for overarm throws
- Wrist firm for underarm throws



Underarm throws are used in close-to-the-wicket run out situations. The return can go either to the wicketkeeper or the fielder/bowler at the bowler's end, depending at which end the run

out is to be effected. Feet point in direction of throw, hips and shoulders face the target. Pick up ball level with foot on throwing arm side, step onto opposite foot to release.



# *Learning to Throw*

## OVERARM THROW – PROGRESSIONS



### Wrist and Finger Flick

- Partners three metres apart (sitting)
- Hold wrist with non-throwing hand
- Bounce ball to partner with a flicking action

### Elbow Flick

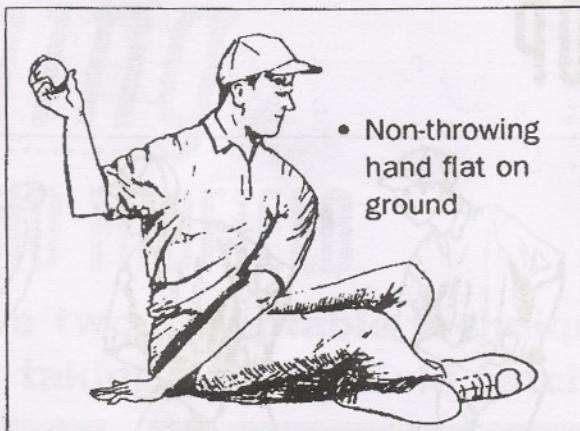
- Partners five metres apart (sitting)
- Hold throwing arm triiceps with non-throwing hand
- Bounce ball to partner using elbow, wrist and fingers





## Rotation

Partners eight metres apart (sitting)  
Non-throwing arm flat on ground  
Beside power hip  
Bounce ball to partner using shoulder, elbow, wrist and fingers

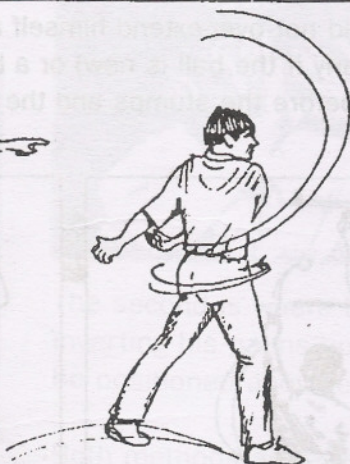


## Remember the Grip!



## Shoulder Rotation

- Partners ten metres apart (kneeling on back knee)
- Finish with throwing shoulder pointing to target
- Focus on technique rather than power



## Hip Rotation

- Partners stand 15 metres apart
- Front shoulder, hip and foot point to target
- Bounce ball to partner stepping through to finish with throwing

shoulder, hip and foot pointing at target

- Hip rotation mastered, concentrate on front arm digging in beside front hip to generate power



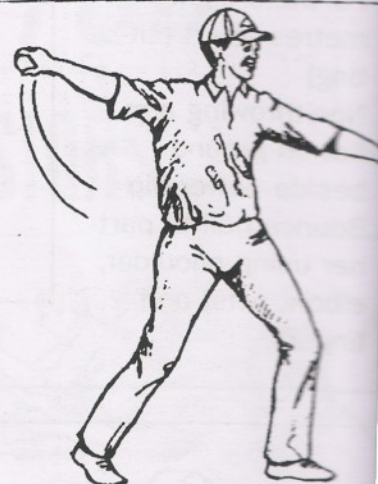
# THE CROW HOP



Body and Feet in attacking fielding position



Jump Over the bat or rope with back leg



Guide leg points to target, fingers on top of ball

For long throw preparation, The Crow Hop is recommended, since it:

- Regains the body's balance and sets up a side-on position, and
- Adds forward momentum in the direction of the target through a quick weight transfer

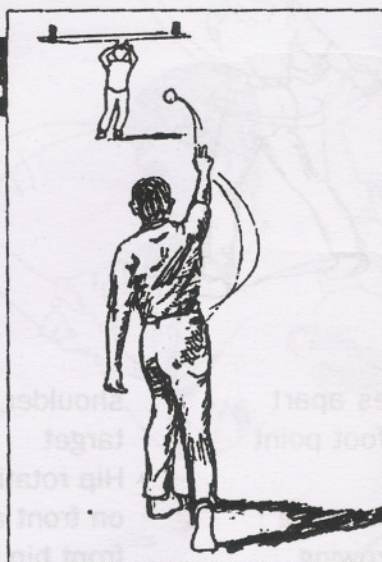
## USING THE CUT-OFF MAN

With long returns from the outfield a player should not over-extend himself and may use a relay throw to a player mid way to the wicket (particularly if the ball is new) or a bounce throw where ball is skimmed low so that it lands 3-5 metres before the stumps and the bounce can be easily gathered to allow for an easy run out.

### THROWING DRILL

#### Relay throw practice

Concentrate on throwing accurately to the relay thrower's throwing shoulder (e.g. receiver throws right or left arm)

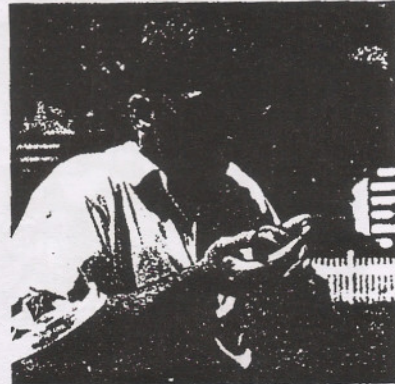




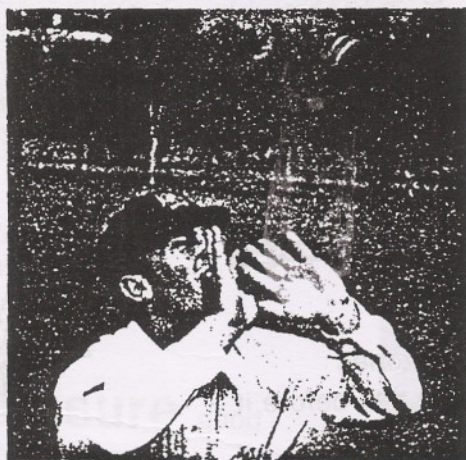
# Catching

## OUTFIELD AND MIDFIELD

**There are two acceptable techniques used for taking high outfield catches.**



The first is where the fielder "cups" his hands under the ball with elbows tucked into his sides. Hands are usually positioned around chin or eye level.



The second is where the fielder pushes his elbows away from his body inverting his palms upwards, often linking his fingers together. Hands must be positioned above eye level or the ball is likely to ricochet off the palms.

Both methods are effective and like all skills of cricket must be practised often. Players will vary on which technique they feel is the better.

"Outfield" positions are generally close to, or on the boundary. Fielding positions referred to a

"midfield" include those up to approximately 30-40 metres from the batter e.g. cover, point, mid off, square leg, mid on, mid wicket. They demand quick reflexes and the ability to change direction and to catch hard hit, flat balls, as well as routine high and ground balls.

### KEY POINTS

Move quickly to the line of the ball

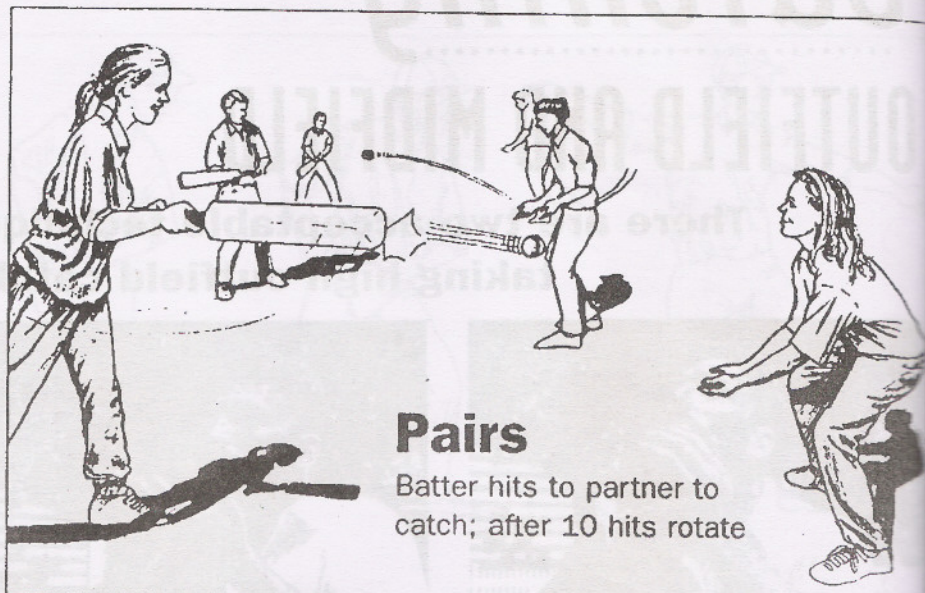
Position hands in high, comfortable position

Watch ball into hands

Elbows as shock absorbers

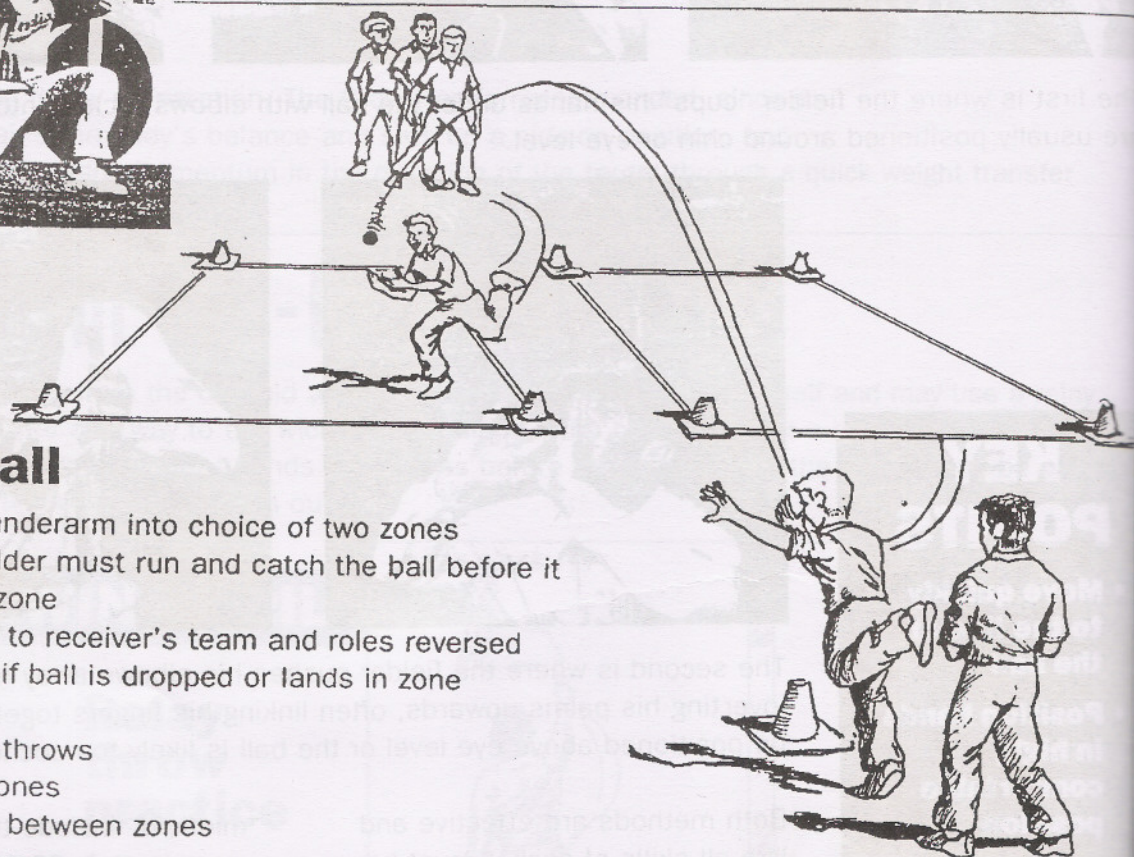


## OUTFIELD / MIDFIELD CATCHES



### Pairs

Batter hits to partner to catch; after 10 hits rotate



### Land Ball

Ball lobbed underarm into choice of two zones  
Receiving fielder must run and catch the ball before it lands in the zone

Ball returned to receiver's team and roles reversed  
Point scored if ball is dropped or lands in zone

#### Variations

- Overarm throws
- Size of zones
- Distance between zones

### Goal Throwing

- Suitable for Midfield or Slips drills
- Pairs stand three to four metres apart between goal stumps or markers
- Flick catches underarm below waist height – vary pace, height, direction, distance between pairs
- Score point for opponent's dropped catch or ball passing between goals below waist height. Extend goals to include two partners



# Slips Catching

Slip fielders are real "specialists", they rarely field in other positions and have the ability to control their concentration for long periods, turning off/on at will. They will have excellent

reflexes and an anticipatory sixth sense to "read" a batsman so they are in the best position to take a catch. Their hands will be quick and soft, enabling them to catch instinctively.

**To develop confident and competent slip fielders coaches should:**



**Motivate** players by:

- Stressing enjoyment
- Being enthusiastic
- Providing encouragement



**Ensure** good technique by:

- Demonstration
- Clarifying and emphasising key points
- Providing quality feedback



**Encourage** a concentration plan for consistent focusing



Slip catching can be subdivided into correct:

**Position** – Depth, Spacing, Stance, Balance

**Movement** – Crouched, low body weight, bend knees

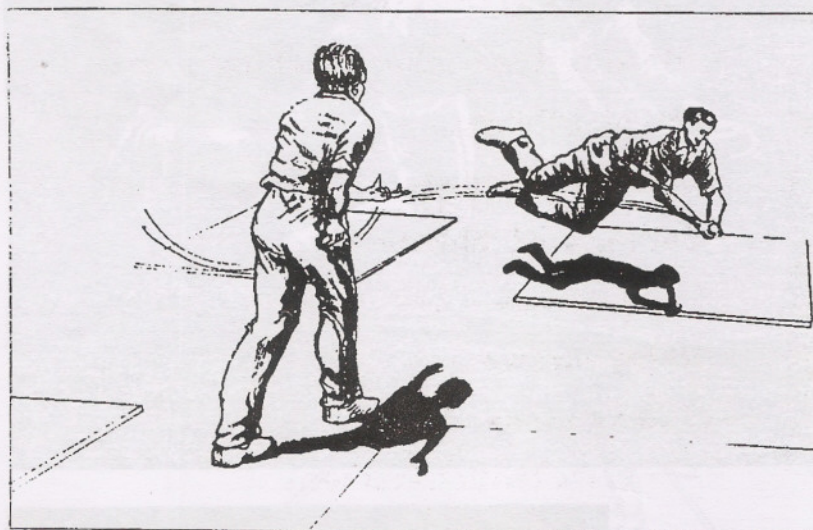
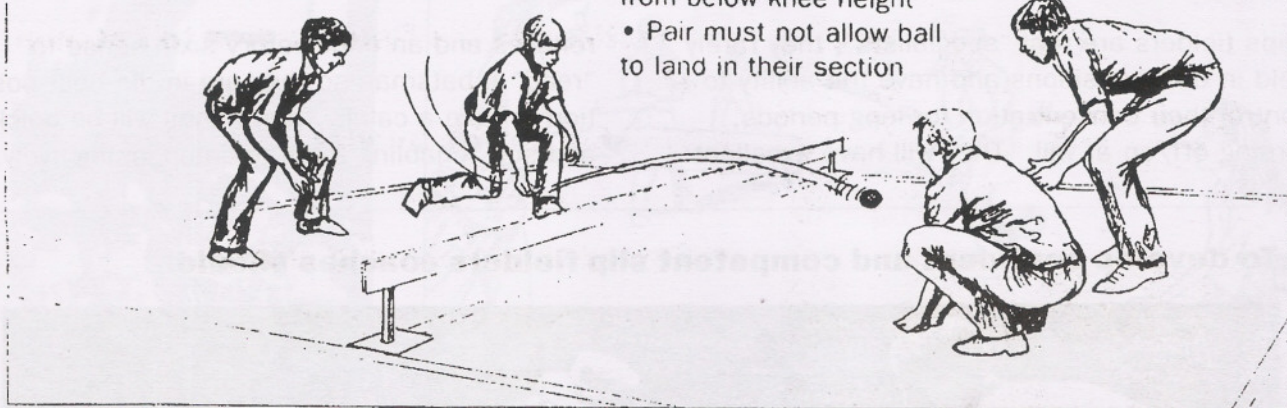
**Focus** – Turn on / Turn off



# DIVING IN THE SLIPS

## Slips Catching

- Ball can only be lobbed from below knee height
- Pair must not allow ball to land in their section



## Diving Pairs

- Mats positioned both sides of catchers
- Catch thrown over mat (particular side initially); extend dive distance and then throw either side
- When advanced, score points for dropped catch or ball landing on opponent's mat



## Blind Catching

- One partner faces opposite direction and spins on call to take catch
- Alternate catcher; vary distance, catch difficulty/pace; catcher crouches, kneels/lies

## Pair Lines

- Partners stand opposite each other
- One ball per pair
- Take as many catches as possible in a given time (e.g. one minute)

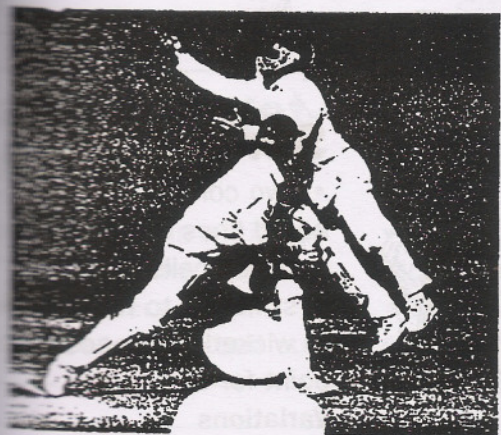
## KEY POINTS

- Safety-rolls
- Blocking impact
- Shoulder roll to cushion impact
- Arm roll to cushion impact
- Use gym mats or sand in training



# FIELDING STRATEGIES

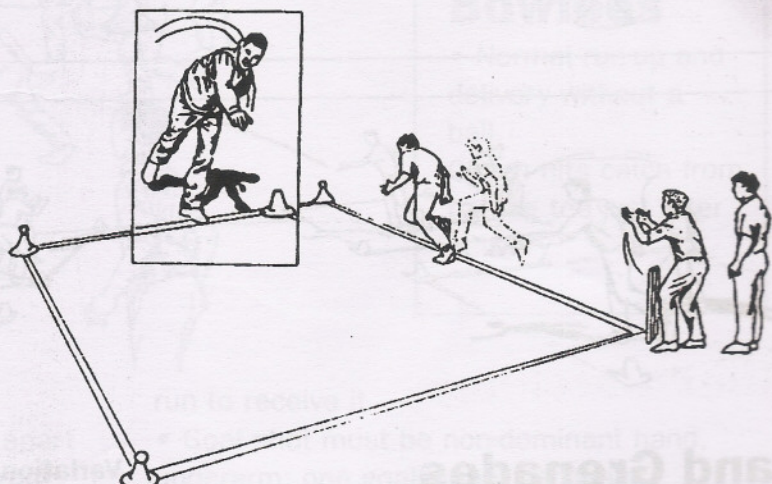
Tactical simulations to improve fielding could include:



- Positions in the field, angles to batsmen etc.
- Walking in with bowler
- Diving in the field
- Saving singles/giving singles
- Throwing to bowler's end
- Backing up
- Throwing at the stumps
- Close to the wicket catching
- Bat-pad fielding
- Outfield catches
- Coping with the sun
- Long throws
- Relay throws
- Sliding stops
- Run outs (with batsmen)

## Multiple-ball Throws

- Balls inside markers placed in diamond pattern
- Target stump placed in front of wicketkeeper
- Fielder runs out from stump and throws balls, in order, at the stump
- Score one point for each hit



### Variations

- Number of balls
- Order of retrieval

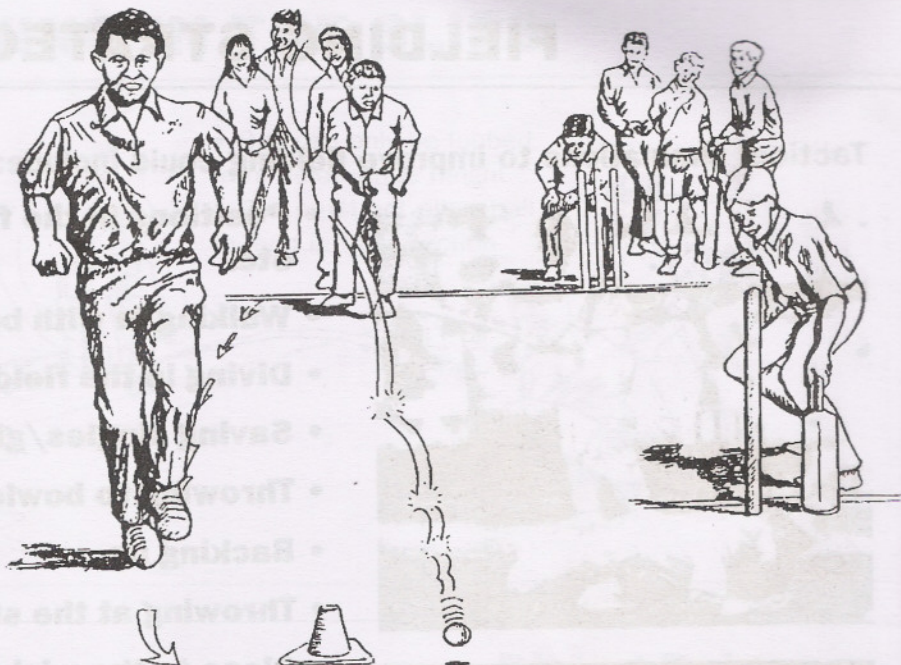
- Starting point/distances
- Overarm/underarm throws

- Vary marker positions
- Vary number of stumps to be hit



## Run-a-Two Run-outs

- One team of runners, one team of fielders
- On calling "yes" first runner sets off for a two – first fielder runs to ball and throws to receiver
- Players move onto opposite groups to attempt other skill
- Score point for run-out/safe run

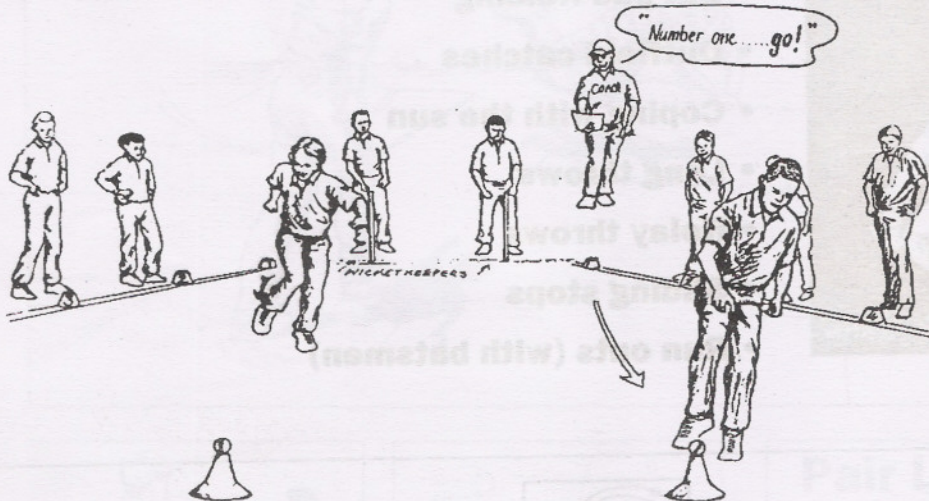


## Sprint Off

- Two competing numbered lines of fielders
- Coach calls number. First fielder to return ball to wicketkeeper scores point for that team

### Variations

- Fielders standing/sitting/lying

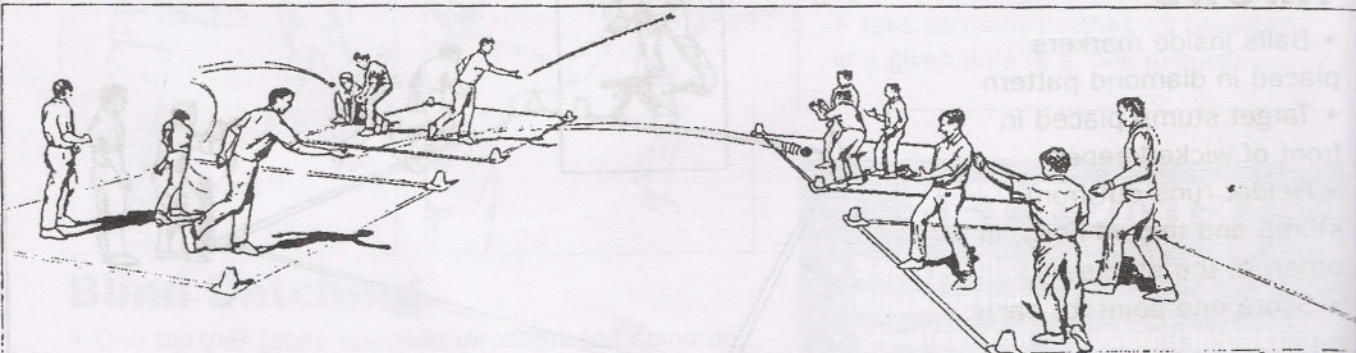


## Hand Grenades

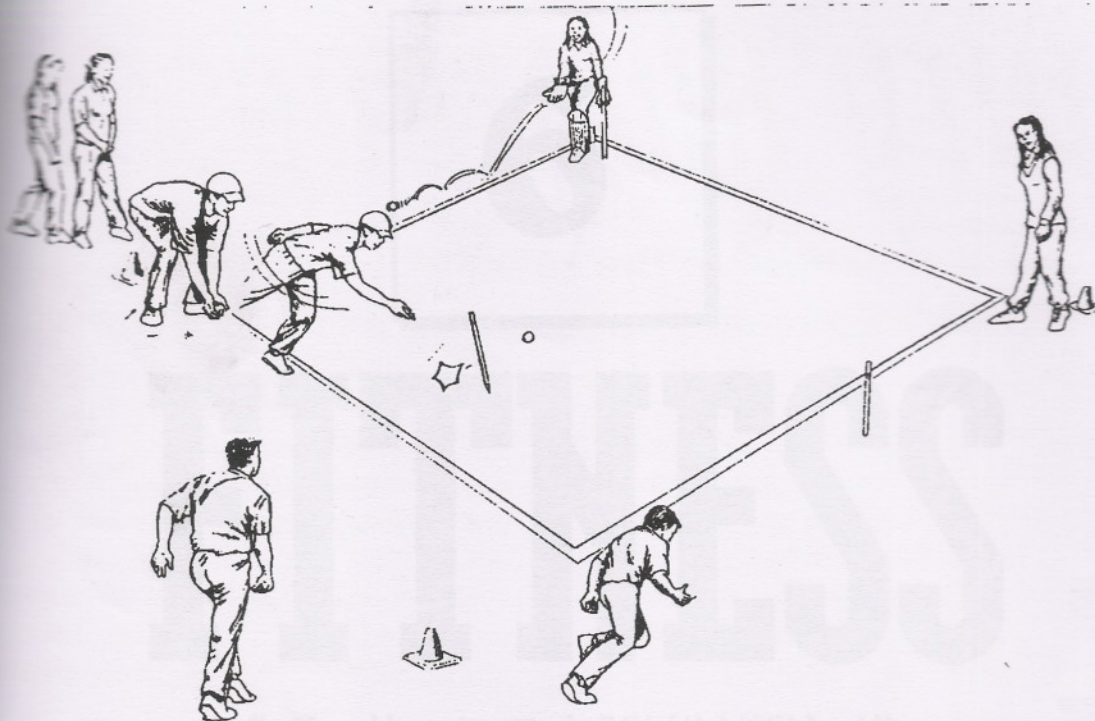
- Fielders try to land ball on full in another team's zone
- Score one point for each landing

### Variations

- Use multiple balls
- Number in each team
- Size of zones
- Distance between zones







## Triangle Target-Setting

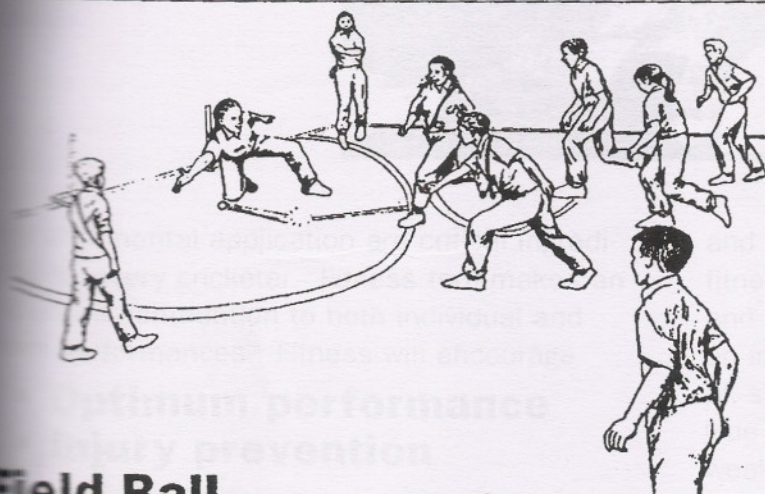
- Stumps placed in a triangle with "run in" markers positioned for fielders
- Wicketkeeper rolls ball out

- to (1) – fielder aims at stumps, backed up by (2) who aims at next stump
- Back up returns ball to wicketkeeper
- Each fielder rotates to next position after throwing

- Hit scores one point

### Variations

- Hit to (1) rather than roll
- Vary distance between stumps for overarm/underarm throws.



## Caught and Bowled

- Normal run-up and delivery without a ball.
- Coach hits catch from batting tee just after delivery

## Field Ball

- Two sets of goals – 30 to 40 metres apart
- Aim is to score a goal by rolling ball from outside goal zone through the goal
- Players may roll ball to team mates – no offside
- Players cannot run with the ball but can

run to receive it

- Goal shot must be non-dominant hand, underarm; one goalkeeper per team

### Variations

- Catches rather than roll – one/both hands
- One bounce throws
- Underarm/overarm throws