

RUNDOWNS (Bronco / Pony)

During a game, rundown plays make the defensive team create their own errors. We take great pride in being prepared for the rundown situation. For rundowns we have four rules to follow:

1. **GET AN OUT!**
2. **Try to make one throw in the situation**
3. **Create a positive throwing lane for the fielders**
4. **To receive the ball in front of the base**

There is absolutely nothing fancy about defending a rundown. If we execute the following guidelines correctly, we will be very successful.

- A. **Setting up runner for rundown** – When the runner is caught between two bases, the fielder with the ball must run at the runner showing the ball. Keep running at him until he commits. Once the runner commits, then throw the ball to the receiver at that base.
- B. **Runner breaks at full speed** – If the runner begins to run at full speed, the fielder with the ball must create a positive throwing lane. The receiver must be in the same lane and not across the runner. Receiver must be ready for throw with hands up and stagger stance. Once runner turns and sprints, the receiver needs to say “NOW” and step to the ball. The thrower will make a dart throw and with the receiver moving to the ball, the runner should be out.
- C. **Responsibility of thrower** – Make runner move to front or back base. If thrower has to tag runner, the preferred method is with two hands and bare hand securing the ball in the glove. Once committed to runner and receiver at front base, create a positive throwing lane. Make sure the throw is a wrist snap (dart throw) at the shoulder height of the receiver (Keep fingers behind the ball).
 - One rule to pay attention to is the length of where the throw is made. If the thrower is more than halfway to the lead base, then follow throw. If the thrower is less than halfway, then the thrower must return back to original base to make sure it is covered. (Trial and Error to determine)
- D. **Responsibility of receiver** – Must catch the ball with two hands and PULL ball out of the glove. Position body in positive throwing lane to receive ball. Have target up with two hands and place feet in a stagger stance. Step to ball when called for to make sure the tag is in front of the base. Know distance of runner in relation to base, make sure not to overrun the base runner. Always anticipate a second play and be ready!
- E. **Notes:**
 - Creating a positive throwing lane means to have the receiver on the same side as the throwing hand of the player with the ball. This will make the ball most visible. This will also eliminate the chance of throwing across the runner.
 - Do not pump fake as it will fool the receiver more than the runner.
 - the player receiving the ball must be in front of the base with his hands ready to receive the ball. We want the receiver moving to the ball upon catching it. This will create momentum for him to make a quick tag and not have the play happen on top of the base.

- After the throw is made move to the base that the receiver was at. This must be done quickly. There is no written rule as to which side to run, but do not interfere with the runner. We teach to run to the side the throw is released to. Example would be for a right handed thrower to peel off to the right side.
- When moving the runner back to the base, make sure you run to the center of his body. This is important so that if the runner stops or drops, the defensive player can still tag him. Make sure to tag with two hands.
- Once the runner turns and goes full speed to the base, the defensive player with the ball must release it and the receiver must be stepping to the ball. This works great when the receiver is moving quickly and the runner tries to stop and change directions.
- Try to throw the ball when the runner is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way to the base or closer to halfway. This makes sure that the runner is not getting too close to the advancing base. We want to tag the runner away from the base so to make sure that he is out.
- On a pick-off or a play begun by the pitcher, the pitcher needs to follow his throw to the corner bases. The attached diagrams will show how we want to move in certain situations.

Special Situation

If two runners end up at the same base, remember that the front runner has priority. Work the front runner back to the base and make sure to tag both runners. The back runner is out, but hopefully the front runner will leave the base and make sure to tag both. If the front runner is tagged before he gets back to the base, then still tag the back runner. Make sure to get an out.

RUNDOWN DRILLS

We work on rundown situations weekly. The drills are great to use as part of the warm-up or during situations. Rundown drills are also great to add to the multi-pick drills.

Rundowns with no runners

- stress the fundamentals of the dart throw, pulling the ball out of the glove, stepping to the ball when receiving the ball
- we also like the players to tag the player they received the ball from
⇒ add a spin move to help with the player having to react to a situation

Rundowns with runners

- have runner flip ball to defensive player; starting in middle is not game like
- to add conditioning, make the same runner run 4-5 times in a row
- add 2 runners on field and make part of multi-pick drill once outside