

## **Fielding Tip #9 - Bill's Favorite Throwing Drill**

One of the toughest skills to teach in baseball is throwing. One thing that really can help young players is to get them to understand the importance of generating momentum toward their target and then following their throw. This will allow for a stronger, more accurate throw and more carry. A big league player to watch who does this well is **Derek Jeter**. After he fields a groundball and makes a throw to first, by the time the ball is thrown back to him, he is on the grass. Remember, he started from deep shortstop, so he really generated momentum toward the first baseman.

There is a drill we use at camp to help emphasize this concept. Players line up single file (giving the person in front plenty of room) at third base. Each player has a ball. One cone is set up for the starting point. Another cone is set up three or four feet to the left of the original and still another is set up three or four feet to the left of the second cone. All three are set up in a straight line from the starting point to second base. Players go one at a time, with each one simulating that he or she has fielded a ground ball. They shuffle their feet toward the second cone, release the ball and then follow the throw past the third cone. If they throw to a coach at second, they can jog back to the end of the line. If they throw to a teammate at second, they can jog to the end of the receiving line and the receiver can jog to the end of the throwing line. This can be turned into a game by setting up a target at second base and eliminating those players who either don't hit the target or don't follow their throws correctly.

Another variation is to roll the balls to the players and actually have them field the balls before throwing. A trick to get them to move their feet is to roll balls to their backhands, making them shuffle their feet back toward the intended target.

By Bill Ripken