

ACHPER SA
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Session 5.7

Game Sense Approach to Teaching
Striking & Fielding Games

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GAME SENSE APPROACH.....

What do we really want our students to get out of their Physical Education experience?
Each of us will have different goals and expectations, but in a broad sense, it is likely to revolve around:

- ❑ FUN
- ❑ SKILLS
- ❑ KNOWLEDGE
- ❑ FITNESS

There are three main teaching methods in Physical Education:

Technical (traditional – Skill based) ***Tactical*** (Game Sense) ***SEPEP*** (Sport Education)

All 3 should be used in the school setting and there is certainly some overlap between the 3. How much of each will depend on your aims/what you are trying to achieve.

In the last few years, I have begun to ask the question, “Why do I teach sports in a traditional sense, when many of my students will never play them outside of PE/School or perhaps even be remotely interested in them?” Is it necessary to teach kids to play 11 v 11 traditional cricket or 9 v 9 traditional softball in PE classes? In a lot of these cases, many players don’t have any idea of traditional rules and positions or their own role and often have very little influence or involvement in the game.

I found that I was teaching students to play a game as I would expect to see it played by adults with years of skill development & experience under their belts. My focus has changed to trying to get students to understand:

- 1) The aim/purpose of the game they are playing
- 2) What they need to do to be successful in that game (skills & tactics)
- 3) The ways in which many skills & tactics are transferable across different games/sports

This is where I have found the *Game Sense* approach to teaching to be most useful.

Game Sense - also referred to as Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU) – is an approach to teaching/coaching that uses games (modified to exaggerate key points) to develop tactical/strategic thinking. The role of the teacher is that of ‘facilitator’, trying to create situations for players to problem solve. The use of effective questioning is vital.

Three types of questioning should be used within the Game Sense context:

- **STRATEGY GUIDING** – eg. “where should you hit/throw the ball?”
- **SPORT-LINKING** – eg. “how is batting strategy similar in cricket & softball?”
- **SCENARIO** – eg. “what would your defensive strategy be with bases loaded & 1 out?”

Remember – repetitious practice can become boring and often well practised skills/techniques break down under pressure in game situations.....

Technique + Decision-making = SKILL
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STRIKING/FIELDING GAMES.....

Baseball, Softball, Tee Ball, Rounders, Cricket etc.

- ❑ **Unique** – the only games where the ‘Defence’ has the ball!

Progressive Principles of Play for Striking & Fielding Games:

Batting

1. Score Runs
2. Distance & Placement of Hit
3. Avoid Getting Out

Fielding

1. Stop Run Scoring
2. Make Hitting the Ball Difficult
3. Get Batter Out

- ❑ Using the 3 types of Questions mentioned previously (and keeping in mind the progressive principles above), in the small sided-games that we use with a Game Sense approach in our lessons, we want the learners to basically move from a focus on:

STRATEGY (Objective/Outcome) to **TACTICS** (Process) to **SKILLS** (specific ‘Tools’)

- ❑ A Game Sense approach creates opportunities for ‘transferrable learning’ to occur , as in understanding these principles, students can develop an appreciation for and understanding of games that fall in the Striking & Fielding category and can adapt their knowledge accordingly.
- ❑ **Batters & Fielders** – most importantly..... ‘*Watch the Ball*’ and “*Know the Game Situation*’

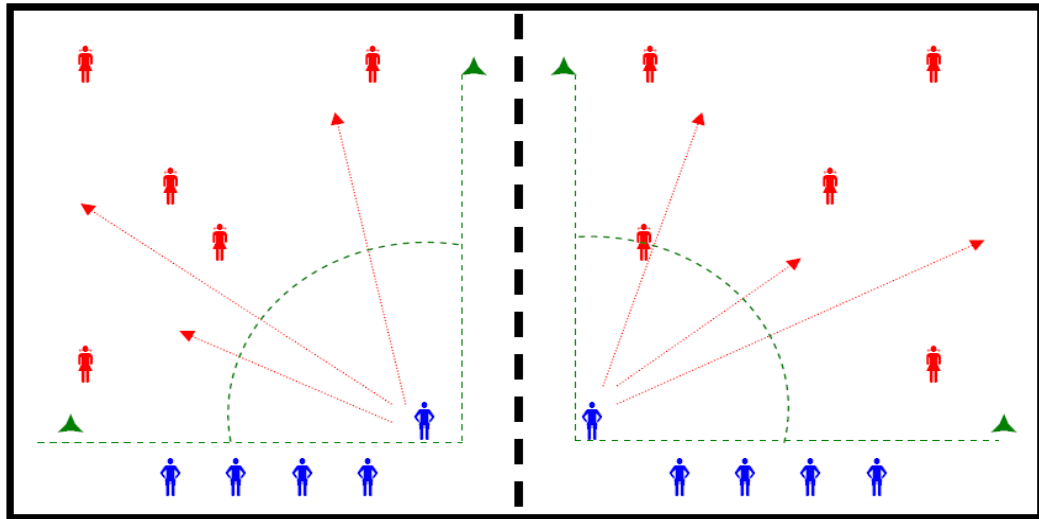
MODIFYING GAMES:

- ❑ Throughout each game, can manipulate game factors to emphasise different strategies eg.

1. *Method of Running (eg. continuous/between stumps/ with a runner/around a diamond)*
2. *Method of Returning Ball (eg. all must touch ball/throw to nearest base or stump/throw or return to a hoop or bowler)*
3. *Method of Striking Ball (ie. off a cone, tee or feeder/type of bat or no. of balls)*
4. *Scoring – How/What & Diff. Values (eg. boundaries, ‘Home’ runs, bonus runs for zones/walls, additional runs for getting batters out etc.)*
5. *Shape/Size of Playing Area/Field as well as Where you can Hit or Field (positioning)*
6. *Methods of Dismissal, No. of Dismissals per team per ‘innings’, Set Batting Time*

- ❑ Always keep in mind **MAXIMISING PARTICIPATION!** (from 4-8 players per side). Max. of 8/side for striking/fielding games. Pref. have multiple small-sided games operating. Smaller numbers, means less standing around & waiting and therefore max. involvement!

The following games are designed for cricket and rounders/tee ball/softball/baseball, but in many cases, the bat/ball can be replaced or interchanged with a different type. This is a good teaching strategy, as it demonstrates the tactical similarities (eg. hit to gaps, hit short if field is deep etc.) for both the fielding and batting teams.



ORGANISATION:

1. Make sure that everyone gets the same number of batting opportunities, where possible.
2. To do this, keep teams in same batting order throughout session.
3. For effective time management (particularly if you have 2-3 games going at once), use a time limit or set no. of “outs”. Eg. 5 minutes or 5 outs for batting team, then swap with fielding team (see below).
4. Rotate fielding positions regularly.

Example of lesson timing for 2 game (4 team) 60 minutes (of activity) lesson:

1. Introduction and explanation of game – Eg. Rapid Fire 1. (5 minutes)
2. Play Games – 1v2, 3v4. (10 minutes – 4.5 mins batting time each)
3. Questioning and rotation. (3 minutes)
4. Play Games – 1v3, 2v4. (10 minutes)
5. Questioning and explanation of game variation – Eg. Rapid Fire 2. (4 minutes)
6. Play Games – 1v4, 2v3. (10 minutes)
7. Questioning and rotation. (3 minutes)
8. Play Games – 1v2, 3v4. (10 minutes)
9. Questioning and closure. (5 minutes)

“RAPID FIRE”

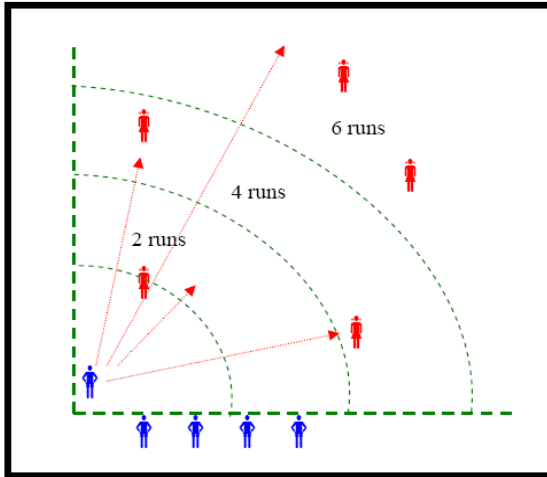
- **Version #1** – see diagram on previous page & photo below
- One batter at a time, hit 3 balls off 3 cricket batting tees. Hit balls forward into the fielding area (must be hit into the ‘V area’ – if not, penalise ie. minus 1 run per ball hit out)
- Once the final ball has been hit, run around cones/between stumps (about 8-10m apart) as many times as possible. Meanwhile, the fielding team picks up the balls and batting tees and replaces them back at the start.
- Count the number of runs made before the balls are replaced.
- Wait until fielders are outside the safety zone before the next batter hits.

Variations:

- (1) Replace ground tees with two baseball tees. Batters play pull shot with cricket bat (horizontal strike) to hit the balls into play.
- (2) Change cricket bat to softball bat and balls.
- (3) If caught, lose 4 runs (or add 4 runs onto fielding team’s score).
- (4) Add a runner (as in cricket). Once balls are hit, batter and runner run between wickets. Run out (ie. not in ‘crease’) = 4 runs to fielding team (or off batting team’s score).



- **Version #2** – Add a hoop for fielders to return the ball to before calling “Stop”. Move the hoop to a different spot in subsequent innings or for each batter (see if shot placement changes!)
- **Version #3** – The fielding area is split up into scoring zones – 2, 4 and 6 bonus runs.
The zone in which the ball is fielded within scores that many bonus runs.
See diagram on next page
- First batter hits all the balls off the tees into the area – can use 3-5 balls/tees
- Fielders cannot move out of their zone until all balls have been hit. Fielders cannot move out of their zone until all balls have been hit
- Once all balls have been hit, batter runs between stumps to score extra runs. Fielders return balls back to tees/hoops. Once all back, call “stop” and tally runs.



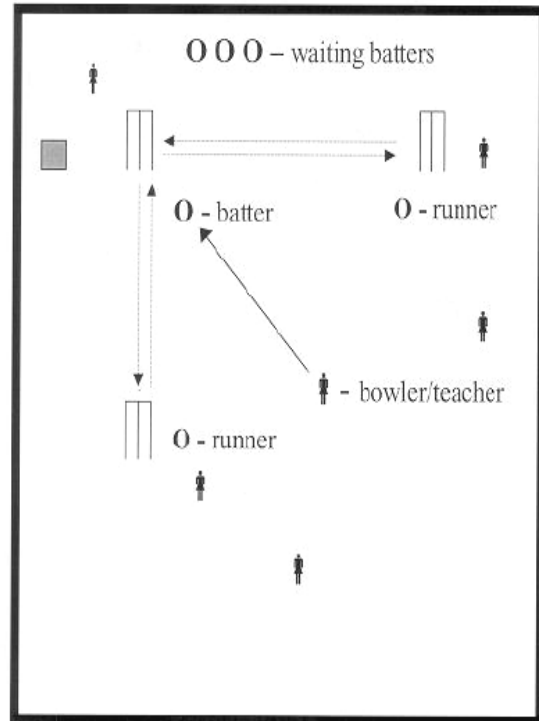
Key questions:

- (1) *Where is the best place to hit/place the balls? (ie. To allow maximal running time!)*
- (2) *What is the advantage of hitting the ball along the ground? How can you keep the ball along the ground?*
- (3) *What is the most effective method of running between the wickets? (ie. Slide bat)*
- (4) *What the quickest way for the fielding team to get the balls and tees back? In hoop? How did you work together?*
- (5) *How can the fielding team work together to return the balls?*
- (6) *How is cricket and softball similar in terms of the batting team (shot placement)?*
- (7) *Did you change your batting tactics/placement, once the hoop was moved to a different spot? Why?*
- (8) *What is the most effective method of running between the wickets?*
- (9) *How can you ensure that you're not run out?*
- (10) *How did the bonus runs affect your hitting and placement?*
- (11) *How did the depth of the fielders affect your hitting tactics?*
- (12) *Was there any advantage to hitting the ball in the air instead of along the ground?*
- (13) *When might you try to hit the ball in the air in a game of cricket?*
- (14) *If it was minus 10 runs when caught, is it worth the risk hitting in the air?*
- (15) *Scenario – if the scores were level & you were the last batter, what would you do?*
- (16) *Scenario – if you were 20 runs behind & you were the last batter, what would you do?*

(with thanks to Ray Breed)

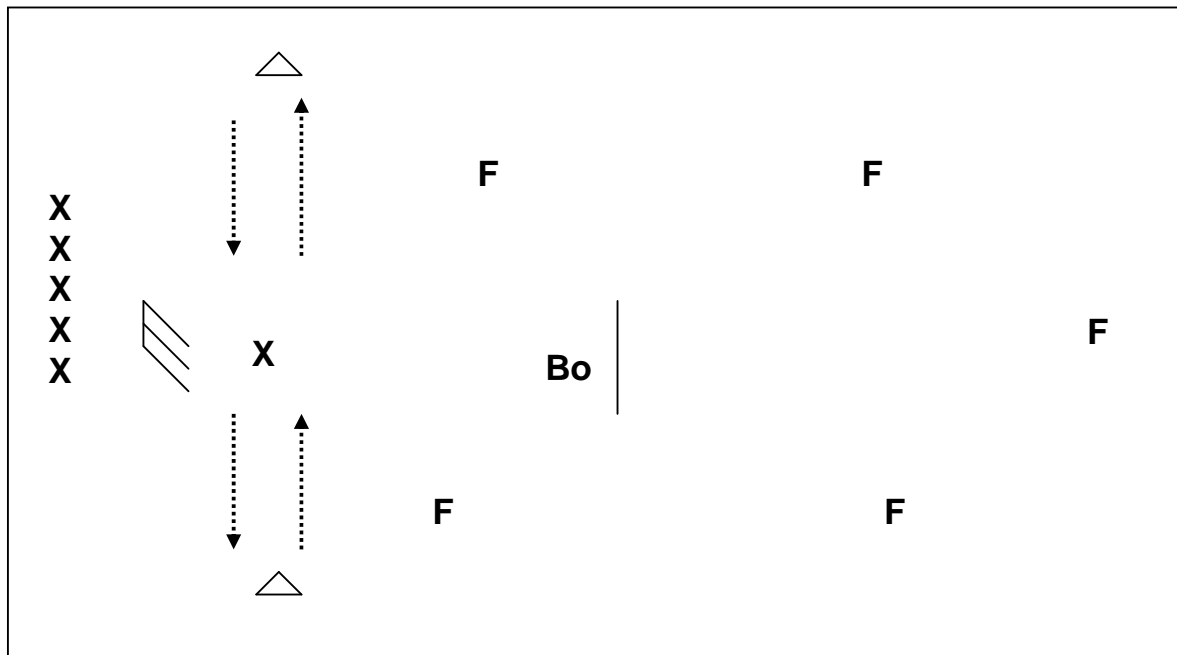
GAME 4: "WHERE TO RUN"

- In teams of 6-8
- One team is batting – begin with one batter and 2 runners
- The ball is fed to the batter, who hits ball into field, then calls one of the runners through (hint: if hit ball to right side, call the runner on the left through!)
- NB: a good idea is to have a batting team member to feed the ball, to make it easier to hit
- Fielders can throw ball to get any runner out at any set of stumps
- If a runner is out, they are quickly replaced by a waiting batter
- Bat for a time limit of 4-5 mins: rotate batters after 2 hits to ensure even turns

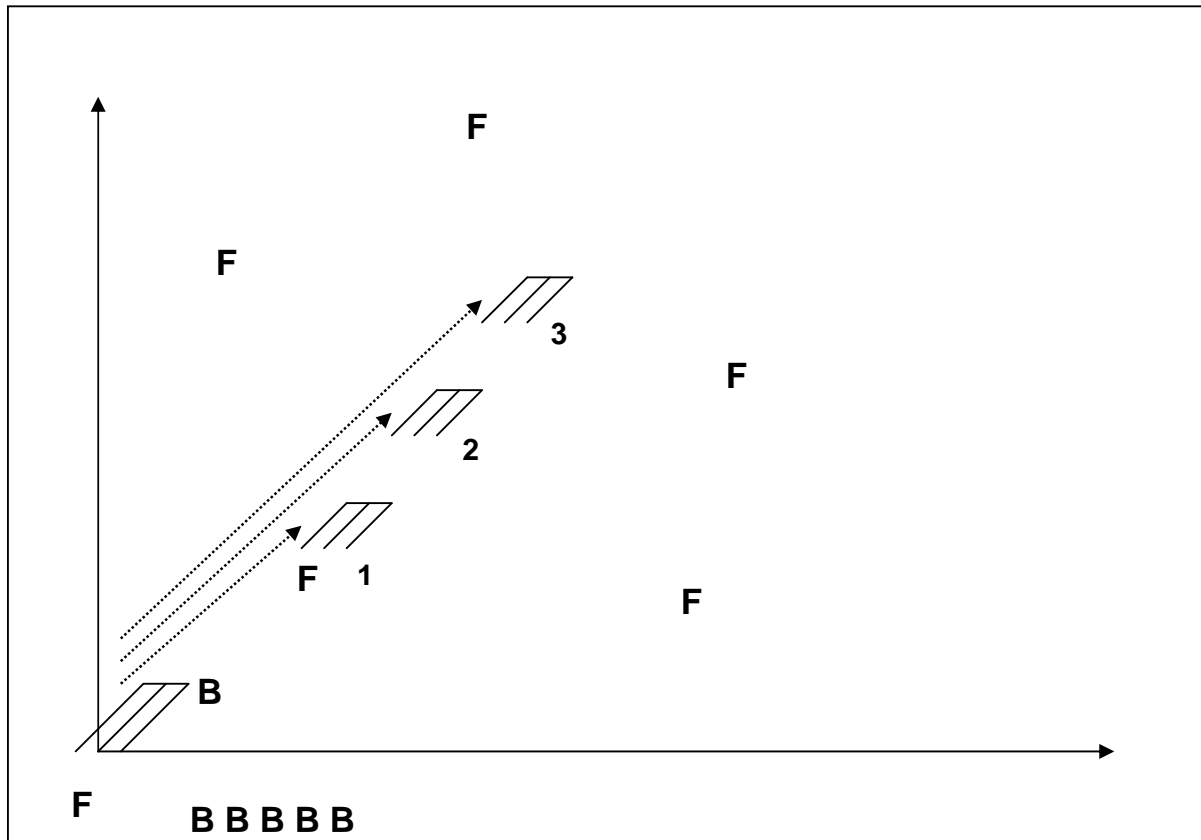


Game 5: "CONTINUOUS CRICKET"

- Every CRT's favourite game! Keep team numbers small. Run 2 games simultaneously if required.



Game 6: “UP & BACK” (judging a run)



Description:

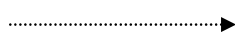
- Teams of 5-8 players.
- Can play 3+ teams in one game or run 2 games simultaneously
- Ball is bowled to batter who hits into play and has to decide how many runs they think they can make safely
- Fielders try to get batters 'run out' by hitting the stumps they are running to
- Runs are scored for 'Up' (1, 2 or 3) and 'Back' (1, 2 or 3 also) when safe
- Innings can be for set no. of batters or 'outs'

B = batters

F = fielders

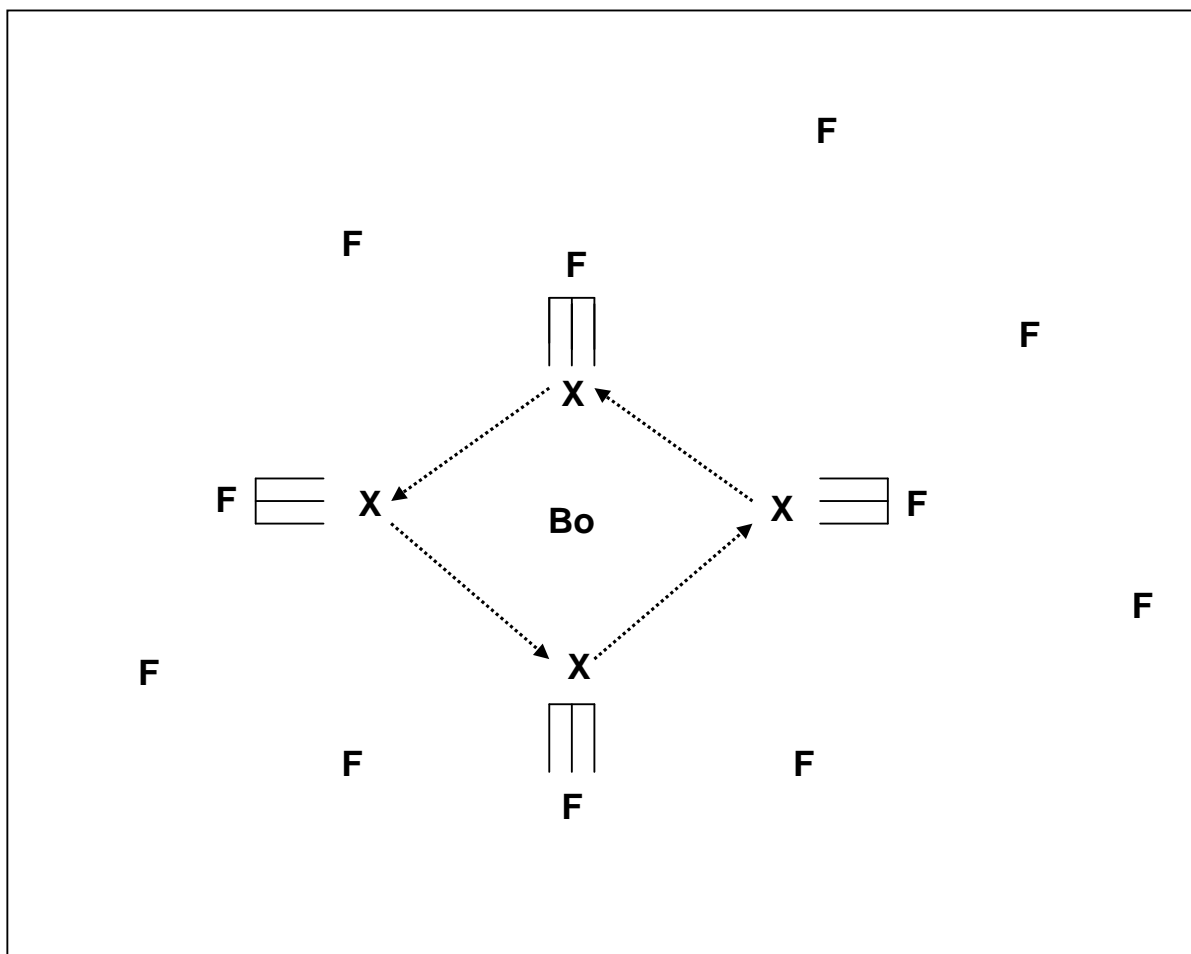


= stumps



= batter running

Game 7: “DIAMOND CRICKET”




Description:

- Divide class/group into teams of 4.
- 1 x team bats at a time. Innings = 4 x “outs”
- Bowler bowls to any of the 4 x batters who are ready to hit.
- Ball is hit & all 4 batters must run anti-clockwise to next set of stumps to score a run
- Fielders aim to get batters out in normal cricket manner
- Keep each team’s score

X = batters

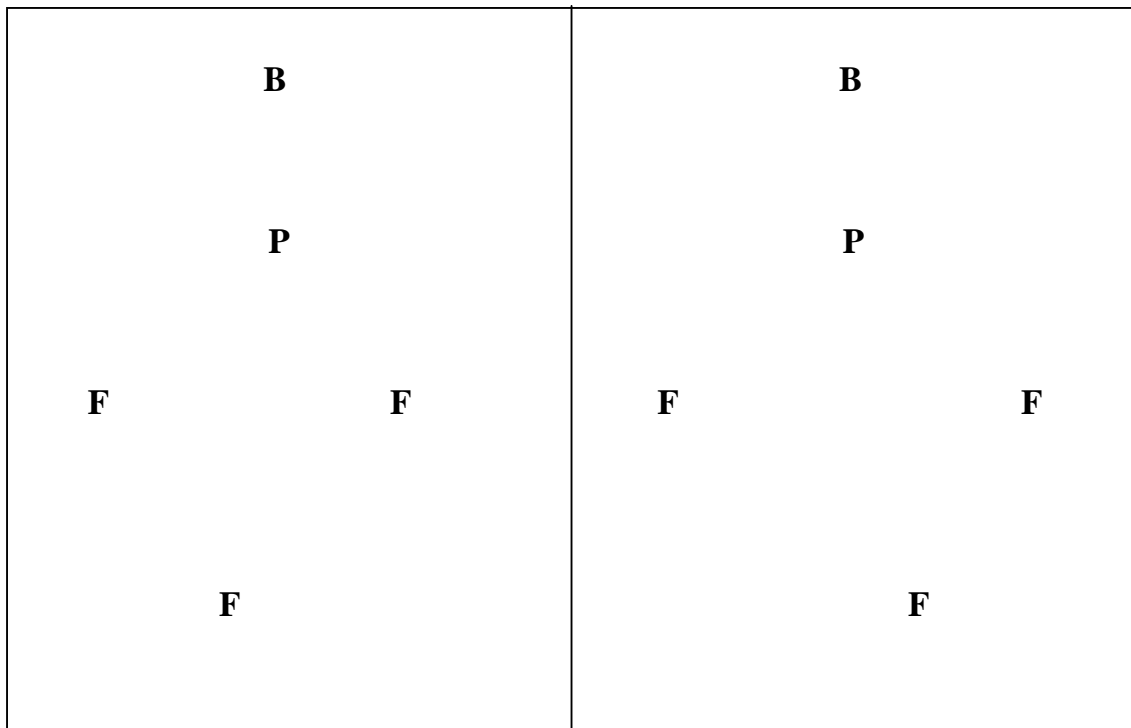
F = fielders

Bo = bowler

 = stumps

.....→ = direction of runners

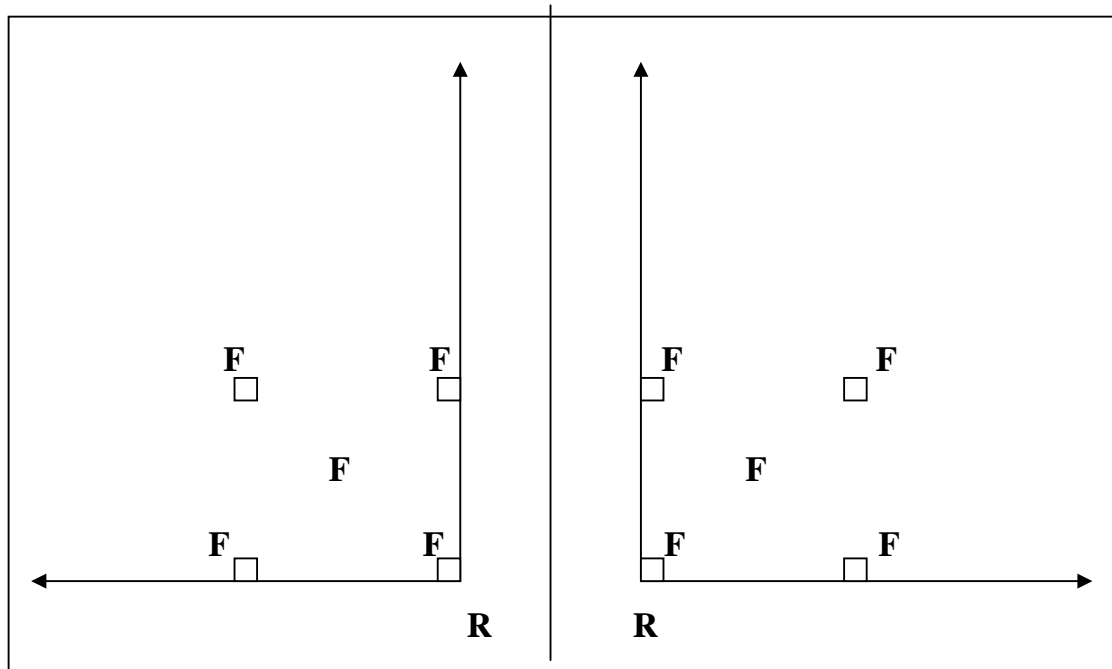
Game 8: “HIT & RUN”



Description:

- In groups of 5, have 1 x Batter, 1 x Pitcher & the rest of the players as Fielders, spread out & covering space.
- Pitcher throws to Batter who hits the ball & runs up & back around the Pitcher's cone as many times as possible before the Fielders return the ball to the Pitcher having first thrown the ball to each fielder
- Rotate players through each position & role.
- Use hoops or cones etc. to mark Batter & Pitcher's spots
- Can use Rounders/Softball bat or even hit off a Tee
- Can be played using Cricket Bat & ball is bowled.
- Use variety of questions to get learners to suggest rule changes/modifications etc.

Game 9: “BEAT THE RUNNER/BALL”



Description:

Beat the Runner

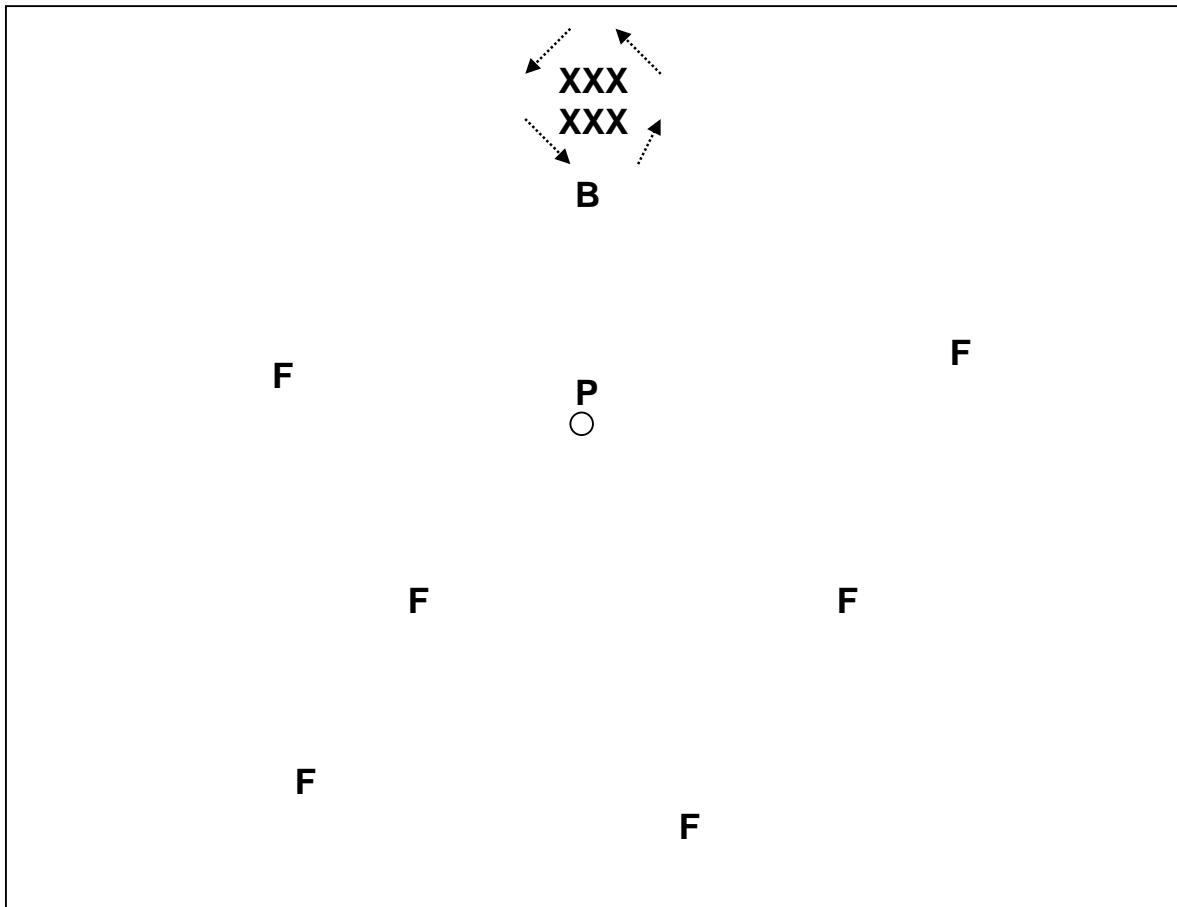
- 4-5 players per team; 2 x games playing at once
- Fielders occupy each of the 4 x bases
- Ball starts at Home plate.
- Runner says 'Go' & takes off, running behind each base.
- **Fielders** throw ball anti-clockwise around bases & **count** the number of throws made before the runner reaches Home. (inc. 'pitcher' if 5 players)
- Team score = total number of throws made for all runners combined

Beat the Ball

- As above, except that this time:
- Fielders throw the ball only once around the diamond
- **Runners count** the number of bases reached 'safely' before the ball returns Home.

□ = bases **F** = Fielders **R** = Runners

Game 10: “CRICTENBALL”



Description:

- Divide class into teams of 6-8. Run 2 games simultaneously if required
- Use tennis racquet & 5 tennis balls.
- 5 balls are pitched underarm (on full or bounce as necessary). Fielders must 'freeze' until final ball is hit.
- Batter hits ball & proceeds to run around the rest of their team, counting one run for each 'lap'.
- Fielders return all 5 balls to the hoop at which time the runner must stop

B = waiting batters

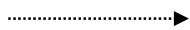
X = batter

F = fielders **P** = pitcher



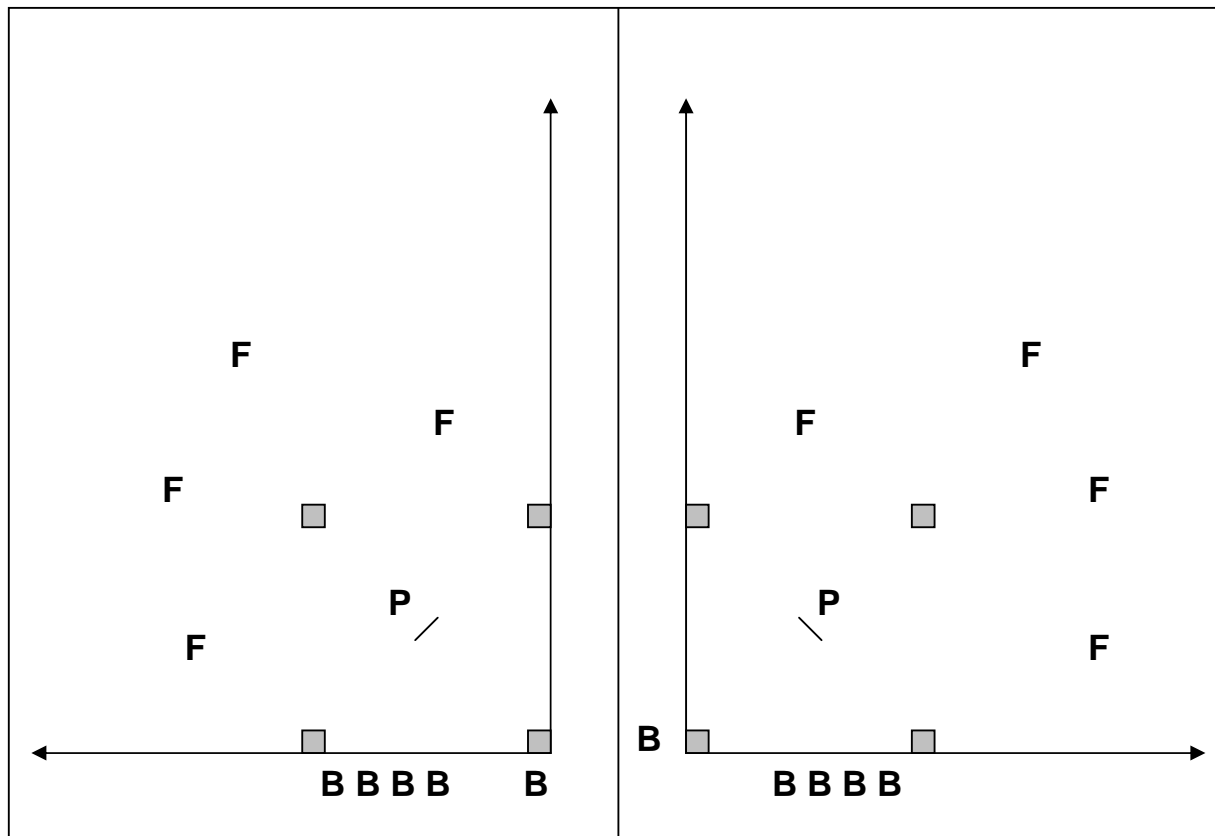
=

hoop



= running

Game 11: “TOTAL BASES”



Description:

- 4-5 players per team; 2 x games playing at once
- Can be played as rounders, tee ball, softball or baseball
- Each batter gets one “out” (ie. a turn at bat to hit the ball in to play)
- Ball is pitched and hit, then runner rounds bases counting the number of bases passed before fielding team can return the ball to a fielder at home plate.
- Team score = total number of bases scored by all team members

■ = bases

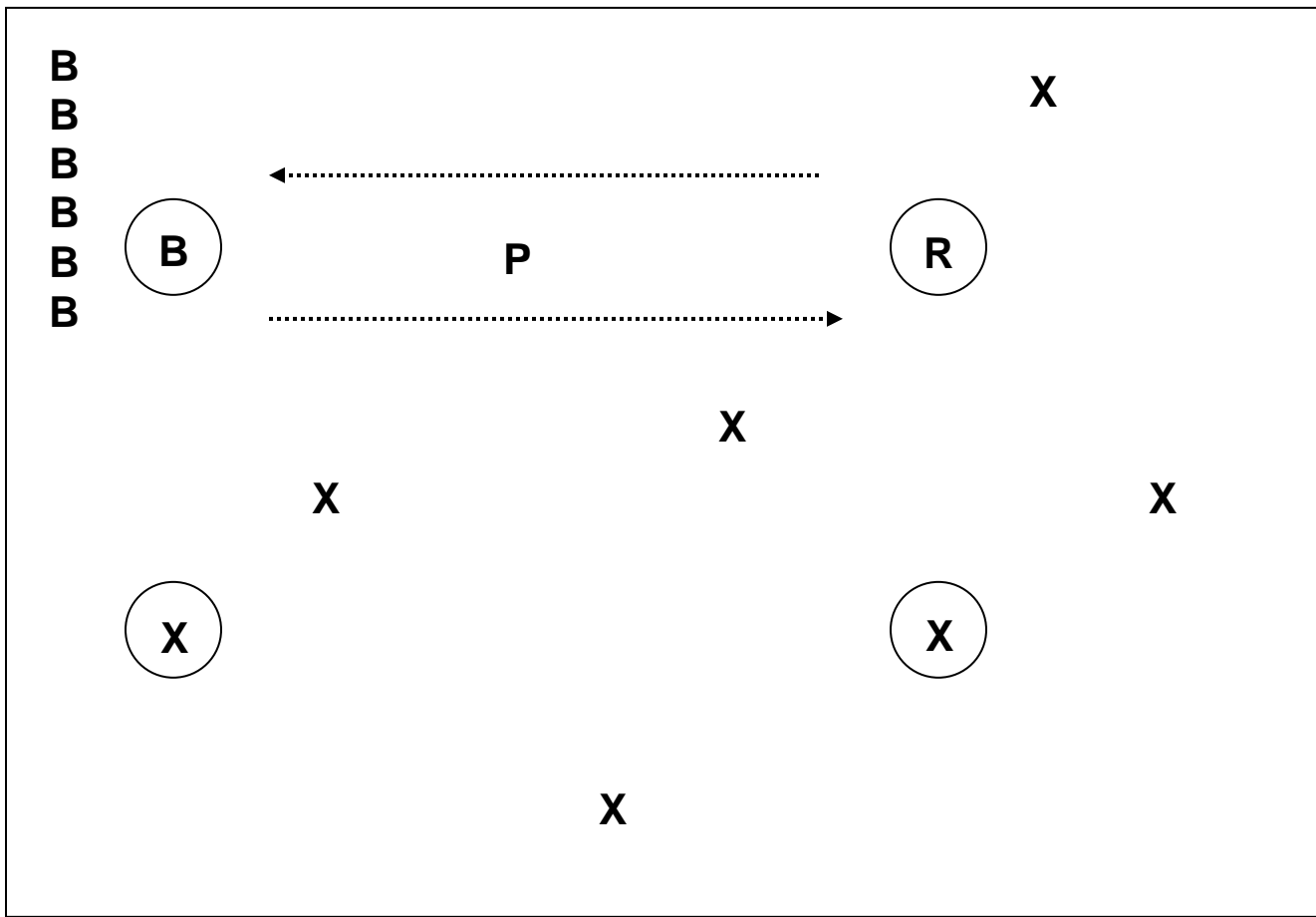
↘ = pitcher's plate

F = Fielders

P = Pitcher

B = Batter/s

Game 12: "LONGBALL"



Description:

- Up to 8 players per team. Run 2 x games simultaneously if required.
- Separate Batting & Fielding hoops (2 each)
- Ball is pitched underarm (on bounce or full)
- Batter hits ball & runs to opposite hoop.
- If safe, can remain in hoop as long required with as many runners as desired
- Runners can run back (attempting to score) on any hit.
- Fielders aim to throw runners out by getting ball to a fielding hoop at the same end as runners are heading to (inc. "double plays")

X = fielders

P = pitcher

B = batter/s

R = runner

○ = hoop

Direction of runners:

