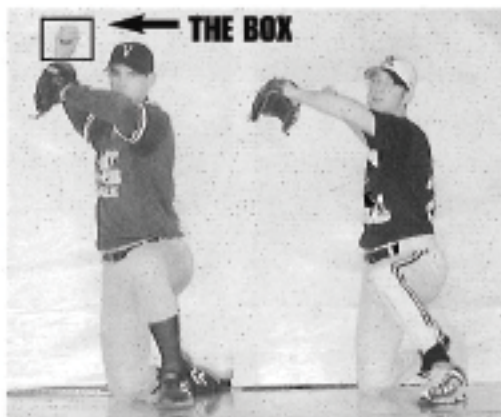


15. COVER THE BOX — KNEE DRILL

Isolates most essential component of covering the box



Kneel down with the knee of your throwing side set on the ground. Bring the hand and ball up to launch phase. Close the front shoulder and bring up your glove, palm down, so that it obscures the would-be batter's view of the ball and your wrist position. Throw the ball to a kneeling partner who evaluates your success at covering the box.



IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD HABITS THAT CAN GIVE YOU AN EDGE.

Covering the box will add sneaky quickness to your pitch.

This is not so much a drill, but rather a practice to apply to all your drills. When the pitching arm is in the launch position, the batter gets a good view of the pitcher's hand.

Good hitters focus on an imaginary seven-inch box in which the ball is centered. Therefore, when the pitcher raises his lead arm — palm down — he can obscure the batter's view with his glove. This takes a fraction of a second off the batter's decision and reaction time, making the pitch seem a shade quicker.

Getting the right position with the right timing requires continual practice. You should experiment with this from the mound while having someone stand in the batter's box to help fine-tune your glove position for maximum covertness. Once you achieve the optimum positioning, practice it whenever the opportunity arises in your other drills.