

# DROP THE HEEL & DRIVE THE BACK KNEE

## NO MORE SQUISH THE BUG FOR ME

After we have Loaded and taken our Stride to the Toe, we will start the swing by simply Dropping the Heel and Driving the Back Knee.

The dropping of the heel should take place after only a slight hesitation after the Stride timing mechanism. This is the start of our swing with the intent on ARRIVING ON TIME. By simply dropping the heel, we should eliminate the urge and frequency of "stepping out" that too often ruins a good swing or hitter's chances to make solid contact.

The idea of "Squishing the Bug" has been around a long time and I have used it frequently with younger players to help them get their hips moving in the swing. A couple years ago I listened to Bucky Jacobsen talk about "Driving the Back Knee" as opposed to squishing the bug and decided to try it with my teams. I saw immediate success from every hitter and found that the players made better and more powerful contact with the ball (better bat speed was generated). The back foot will rotate naturally on the ball of the foot or to the toe - more emphasis on the ball of the foot to stay down into the swing.

Use the visual that there is an arrow or spike starting at the back knee and the player wants to Drive that arrow or spike into the ground just inside the front foot. You can also take a bat and put it by the player's knee and show them this way.

Squish the Bug tends to teach the "sit and spin" move but does not (in my opinion) correspond to an aggressive move against a strong front side that I like to see or teach. I also think the Squish the Bug move tends to get players coming up and out of a swing quicker that corresponds to weakly hit balls the opposite way. For these reasons, I suggest moving away from the Squish the Bug terminology/philosophy as players get older (8 & Up).

When a player Drives the Back Knee, the back hip starts to open and move toward the hitting zone (but does not fly open like the Sit and Spin or Squish the Bug approach) creating torque with the big muscles of the lower body (the hips and legs).

This movement is the cornerstone of the power generated in a baseball swing. Hit with your legs to create bat speed and power.

