

# Getting Started As A Pitcher

By Alissa Kline



## **Beginners:**

All done into a wall or net. Two days a week. One hour sessions.

### **Week 1**

- DAY 1 - **Wrist Snaps** – 2 point position, no arm movement, fingers point to sky.
- DAY 2 - **Follow Through** – Start at 3/4 circle in 2 point position down on throwing side knee, end when elbow points to catcher

### **Week 2** – Include above but also add the following...

- DAY 1 - **K's** – Like pictured above, start in a “K” 2 point position on front heel with ball facing the rear, point glove, glove hand moves in conjunction with throwing hand, end in a 4 point position with follow through to the ear.
- DAY 2 –
  - **Arm Circles** – fast repetitive. Demonstrate against a flat surface or wall.
  - **Stationary Pitch** - (no rocker) into wall or net, need to be FAST and follow through, execute in 4 point position with the feet not moving. No more than 10!

### **Week 3** – Include above but also add the following...

- DAY 1 - **Full Pitch** – instruct how to get on the mound and what is legal/illegal:
  1. Hands Apart
  2. Step On Mound
  3. Hands Together
  4. Once the hands break, motion starts – whether or not with a rocker
  5. Pivot Foot – must remain in contact with ground until release point
- DAY 2 - **Sprinter Drill** – (demonstrates how to start using your legs) Start in a sprinter's position bent over with chest almost touching knee. Place a predetermined mark on the floor (extended leg stride) that they need to try and reach with their stride foot.

### **Week 4** – Include above but also add the following...

- DAY 1 - **“Elvis”** – do a full pitch with 2 arm circles – will need to keep the weight back until the 2<sup>nd</sup> arm circle to keep balance (causes the arm circle to be faster). Everything else is the same!
- DAY 2 – **Speed Pitching** – use ALL the balls you have (up to one full bucket) with a person handing balls to the pitcher to do continuous pitching as FAST as you can until all the balls are gone!

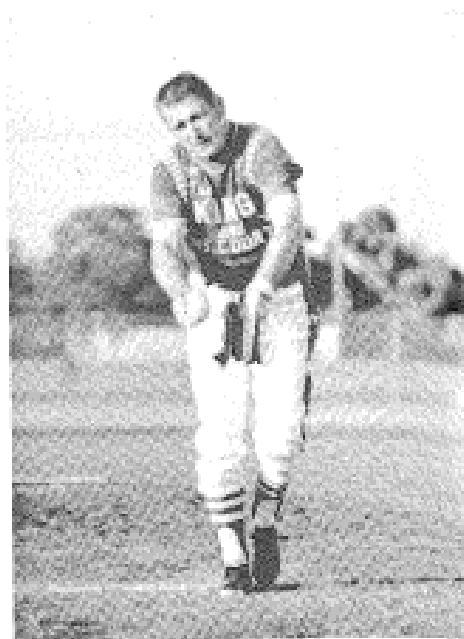
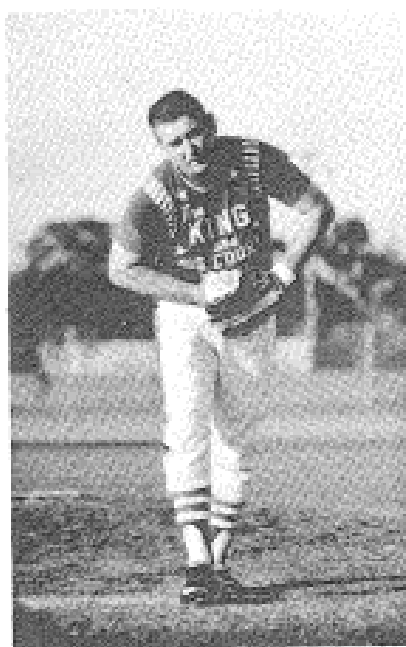
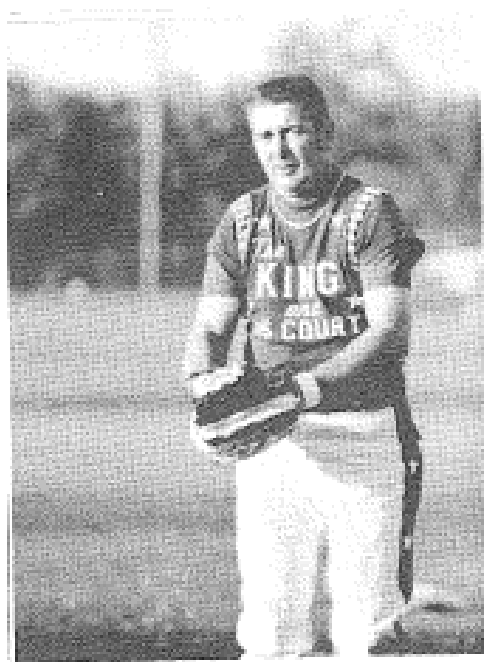
## **Experienced Pitchers:**

MUST have ONE quality pitch!!! Don't try to throw 5-6 different pitches unless they are EFFECTIVE!

### **For Speed**

If a pitcher needs to work on speed, the following drills will help:

1. Arm Circles – fast repetitive
2. Stationary Pitch
3. “Elvis”
4. Long Distance Pitching (From more than 50 feet)
5. Elastic Band Strengthening (3/4 circle to release)
6. Weighted Ball Pitching
7. Speed Pitching

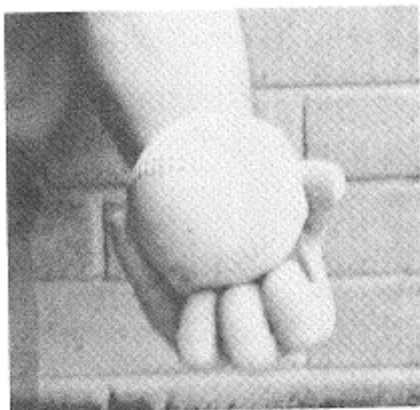


**Pitching Sequence**

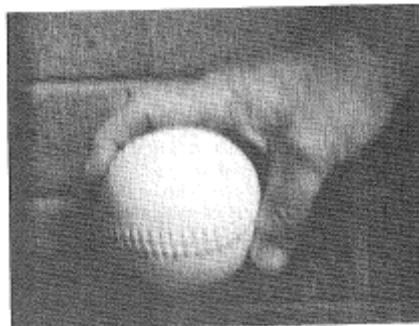
**You need not "crow hop."**



**Try to put power into your wrist  
—not on the back foot digging a hole.**

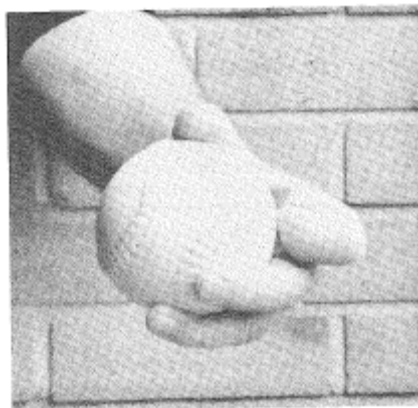


**No Spin, Knuckle,  
Fast or Slow**

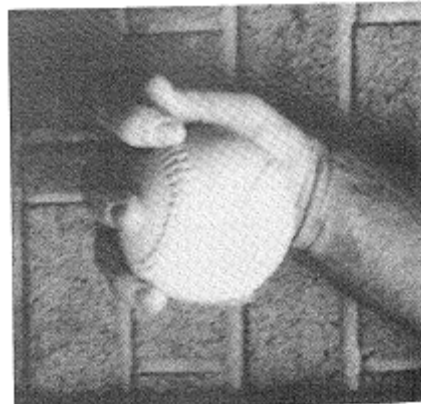


**In or Out Drop  
Held to Look Like a Raise**

Sweep right and throw left. Turn your hand over so that the ball goes off your fingers with the thumb pointing down for a drop or sudden drop. See hand grips on drop and cross fire. Throw ball with fourth finger straight down the back of ball.

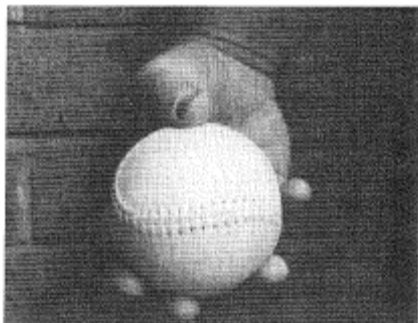


**Left Handed Knuckle Raise**



**Outside View of Raise**

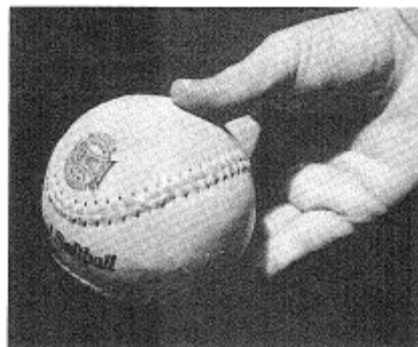
Looking down on the ball in your hand



**Straight Fast Drop**

The ball should be thrown by closing your hand. Do not extend your arm, the ball should be thrown from behind hips with a lifting of the elbow. Snap the ball over right as your hand contacts your hip.

Note placement on back cover and throw 8, 9, 10 and down, 6 to 8 or 7 to 10.



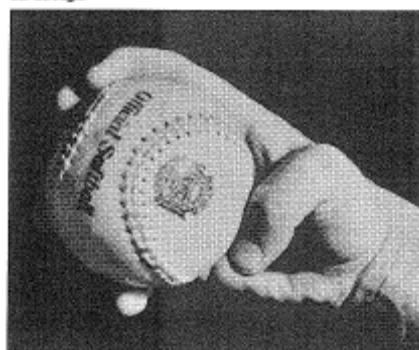
**Slow Drop**

A ball held loosely in finger tips and slipped out smoothly with body follow through, is a good change of pace. Gripped tightly it will turn into a slow drop.

Change of pace is a violent windup to convince the batter that it is a fast ball. Then at release let the ball go by lifting all the fingers and thumb off the ball at the same time as you throw your arm and shoulder through.



**Inside View of Raise**



**Fast Drop**

Hold the ball like you were going to flip a marble while pitching will result in a fast drop. Gripping the ball tightly in this way and flipping the wrist is the way to throw a spiral. With a good sweep and body follow through, a Fast Ball.



### Slip Pitch

Same grip as Raise is a slip pitch or with fingers raised it is a form of knuckle ball. No seams.



### Flat Raise

Raise—  
Proper grip for a woman or anyone who has a small hand or short fingers. Small wrist boys should pitch 11" ball in practice to learn proper grip



### No No

Wrong—  
Lazy finger laying down will cause Raise to be flat curve and easy to hit.



Throwing windmill, a finger or two tucked under like shown will be an out or out raise.

If you deliver a pitch  
where your thumb turns toward the  
ground. Pour on the coal.

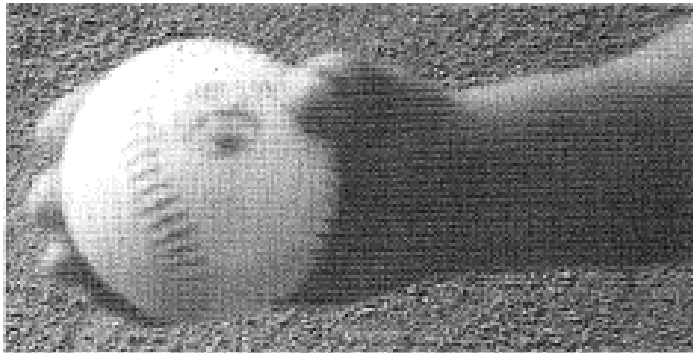
## The Raise Grip



To reach proper grip for Raise— First put horseshoe of seam in hand to match U shape formed by index finger and thumb, then cradle ball before placing finger tip on long part of seam. To be thrown up to 8, 9, 10 or up 7 to 1 or 6 to 3.

(See back cover)

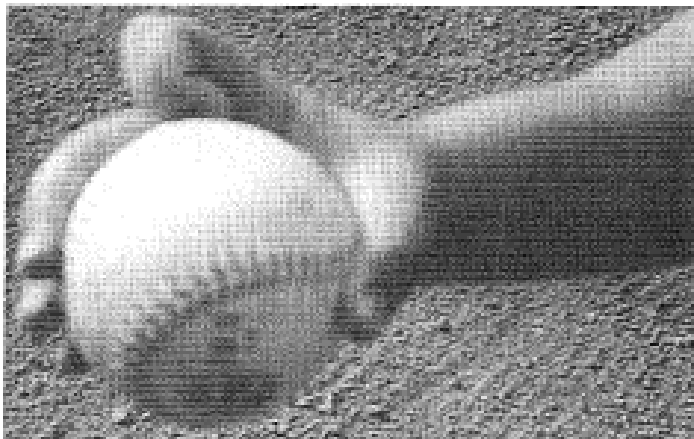
# **New Game in 1995. For Young Boys and Girls 11" Ball**



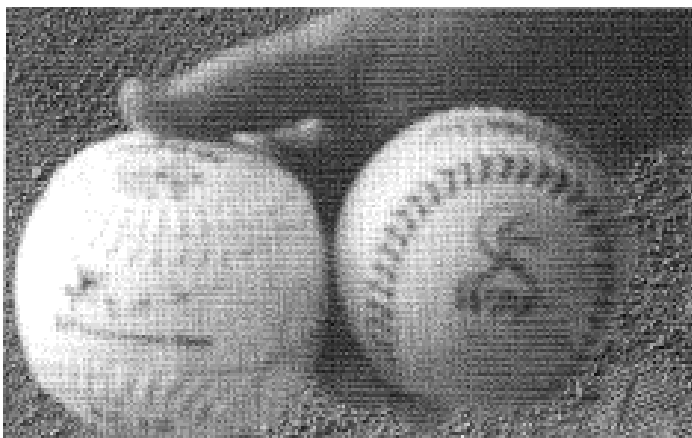
**Proper Grip for  
Drop Pitch.**



**Wrong Way to  
Grip a Drop.**



**Easy for young & small hands to  
grip a curve. No Raise pitch till  
your are 15 years old.**



**12" DeBear Kapok Center Ball. (left)  
11" Dudley "chutruse" colored ball  
to be used in new Womens Profes-  
sional Fastball League. (right)**

*If you are interested, contact:*

Rayla Allison  
510 First Ave North, Suite 302  
Minneapolis, MN. 55403  
612-335-8835  
Fax 612-335-8810

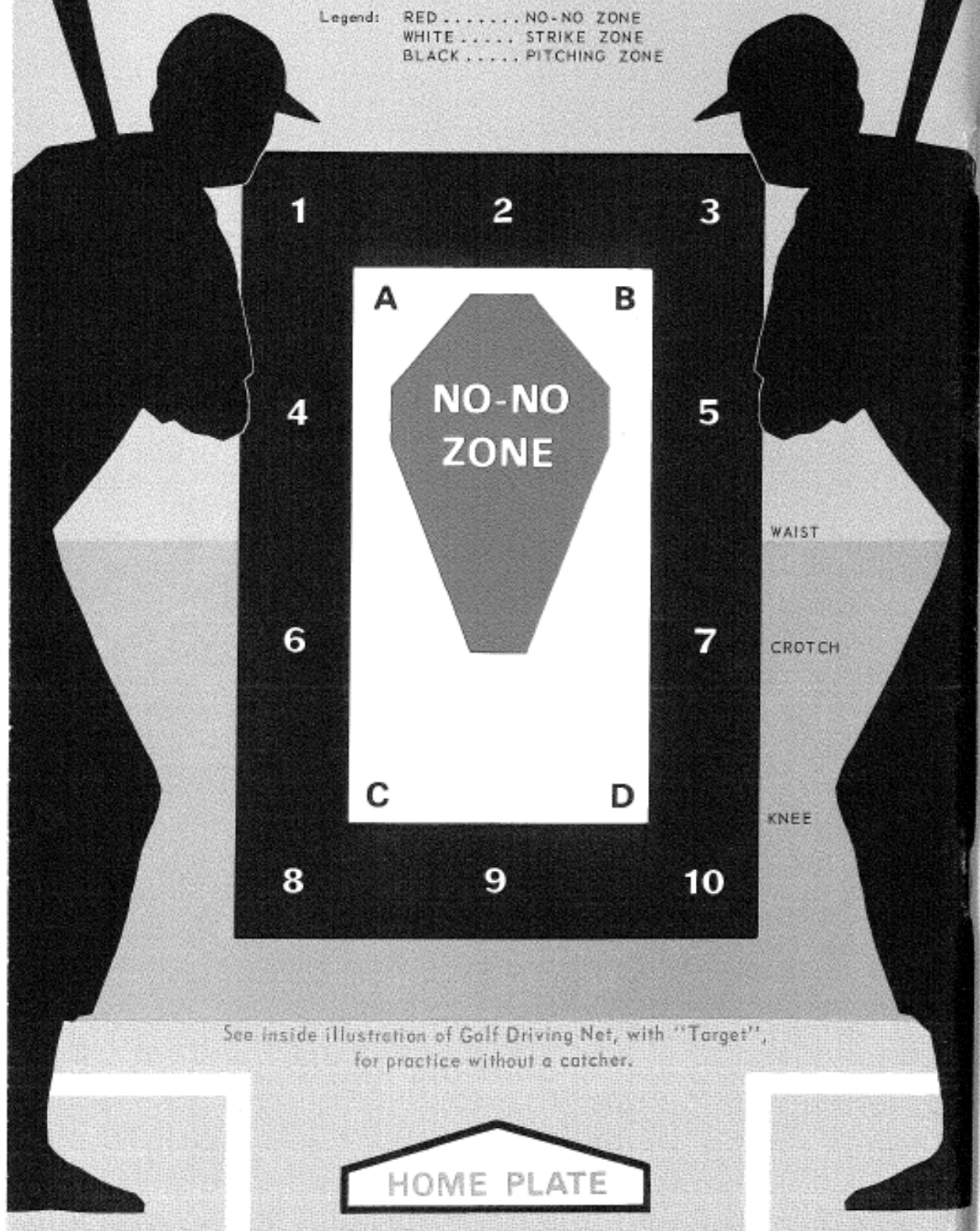
BATTER IN POSITION AS VIEWED FROM THE PITCHER'S PLATE

Draw this diagram on a concrete wall. Stand 30 to 40 feet away and:

PRACTICE THROWING AT THE BLACK ZONE

A tennis ball or a ball of string will work indoors against a plaster or a wood wall. Ball return practice will increase your bunt fielding ability.

Legend: RED ..... NO-NO ZONE  
WHITE ..... STRIKE ZONE  
BLACK ..... PITCHING ZONE





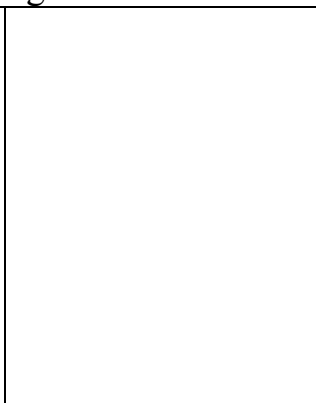


# Fastpitch Softball - Pitching

[www.CanonsburgLadyKnights.com](http://www.CanonsburgLadyKnights.com)

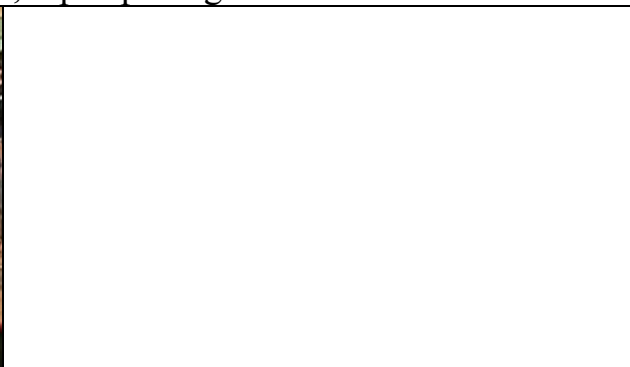
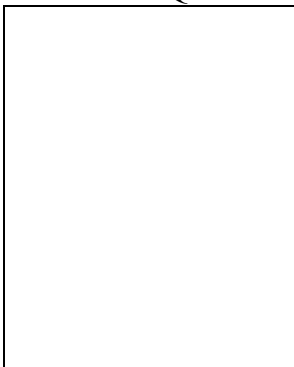
## Closed Position (4 points)

- ☐ Take the mound – feet point to catcher
- ☐ 1 - Pre-Motion – load and forward movement
- ☐ 2- Circle Start – leg drive

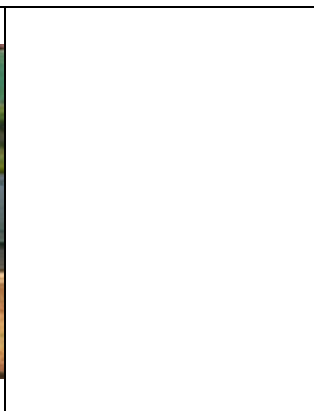
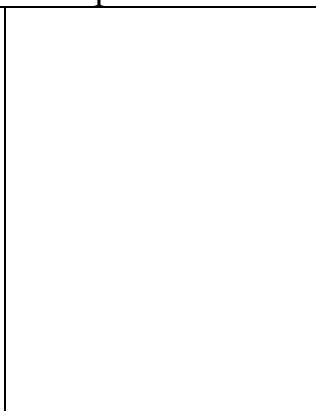


## Arm Circle/Open Position (2 points)

- ☐ 3 - 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Circle – glove extension, hips opening



- ☐ 4 - Circle Peak - slight bend in arm, leg drive/power
- ☐ 5 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Circle - power line



- ☐ Acceleration
- ☐ In Plane and Facing 3<sup>rd</sup>



# Fastpitch Softball - Pitching

## Body Position

- ☐ 6 - Heel/Foot Plant - foot angle, for fastball = hand facing rear.
- ☐ 7 - Pre-Release - even balance/arms down, hips still open.



## 8 - Release

- ☐ Hand First, then hip (close too soon = brings release outward)
- ☐ Strong Wrist Snap (Natural)



- ☐ 9 - Elbow Release - continues past hip after release
- ☐ 10 - Finish – standing tall, firm front side (not a “soft knee”)







## Fastpitch Softball - Pitching

### **Powerline - Front/Rear View**

- ☐ Arm Circle Remains on Plane
- ☐ Glove hand does not flare too far to the side.

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|--|--|
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|--|--|

### **MUST MASTER:**

- ☐ Fastball Location (8 out of 10 pitches hit target)
- ☐ Change Up (Arm Circle = Same Speed as FB up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of circle)

| Characteristics               | Weakness       | Pitch  |
|-------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Stance</b>                 |                |  |
| Up in front of box            | Fast Ball High | Fastest Pitch, rises                           |
| In back of box                | Breaking Balls | Breaking ball (drop or change)                 |
| Closed stance                 | Inside         | Drop or rise, screw                            |
| Open stance                   | Outside        | Out drop or rise, curve or curve drop, or rise |
| Overly erect                  | Low            | Inside Drop, screw                             |
| Wide stance                   | Low            | Drops or curves low and on corners             |
| Crouches over                 | High           | Rise in or out, curve rise, change             |
| Close to plate                | Inside         | Drop, fast ball or rise inside                 |
| Far from plate                | Outside        | Out drop or rise, curve or curve drop or rise  |
| Even with plate               | High-low       | Rises, drops, curves, screw on corners         |
| Tilted Head                   | Inside         | In rise, drop or screw                         |
| Weight over shift             | Low & outside  | Out drop, curve drop, curves to front leg      |
| No weight shift               | Inside         | Drop or rise, screw                            |
| Stride toward plate (closed)  | Inside         | Drop or rise, screw                            |
| Stride away from plate (open) | Outside        | Out drop or rise, curve or curve drop, or rise |
| Long stride                   | High           | Rise in or out, curve rise, change             |

|                      |                        |   |
|----------------------|------------------------|---|
| <b>Hands/Swing</b>   |                        |   |
| Hitch                | High                   | Rise in or out; curve rise; change      |
| High, Mix            | Rise in or out, change |   |
| Hands high           | Low                    | In or out drop, curve drop, screw       |
| Hands low            | High in                | Rise in or out; curve rise, change      |
| Hands away from body | Inside                 | In drop or rise, screw                  |
| Loopy swing          | High                   | Rise in or out; curve rise, change      |
| Choppy swing         | High                   | Rise in or out, curve rise, change      |
| No arm extension     | Low & outside          | Out drop, curve drop, curves, fastball  |
| Parallel bat         | High                   | Rise in or out, curve rise, change      |
| Slow bat/sweeper     | Inside                 | Off speed, in rise, drop, screw, change |
| Quick bat            | Low                    | Change speeds, keep hitter off balance  |
| Inside-out swing     | Low-in                 | In drop, screw, change, low rise        |
| Swings up            | High, low in           | Rise in or out, drop in, screw          |

|                      |                 |   |
|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>Appearance</b>    |                 |   |
| Weak batter          | Low, outside    | Fastball, out drop, curve drop, curves            |
| Strong batter        | Low; extreme    | Change speeds, drops, drop curve, corner fastball |
| Relaxed batter       | Faster delivery | Pitch with quicker rhythm, change speeds          |
| Tense batter         | Slower delivery | Use speed as waste then break ball                |
| Aggressive batter    | Change rhythm   | Off-speed, In rise, drop, screw, change inside    |
| LH Batter with speed | Low out         | Drop, screw, rise, curve, in rise high            |

|  |                           |  |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Batter</b>                            |                           |  |
| Hitter bunts for hit<br>(LH--out & away) | Poor bunt<br>Force to hit | High in or out, change in  |
| Hit and runs                             | Pop up or ground ball     | Low in or jam high in  |
| Ahead in count                           |                           | Pitch to pitchers strike zone, just outside of batters strike zone; make batter swing at a ball. |
| Behind in count                          |                           | Pitch to umpire's & pitcher's strike zone, never pitch to batter's strength                      |

| Game Situation  | Result Wanted                         | Pitch to hit                            |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| On 1st, bunt situation                                  | Poor bunt or pop-up                   | High in or out Very inside and low      |
| On 2nd, RH-less than 2 outs                             | Ground ball left side                 | Low in, change in, high in              |
| On 3rd, RH-less than 2 outs                             | Ground ball corners                   | Very low, in or out                     |
| On 2nd, LH-less than 2 outs                             | Ground ball left side                 | Low out, change out, high out           |
| On 3rd, LH-less than 2 outs                             | Ground ball left side                 | Low out, change out, high out           |
| On 3rd, less than 2 outs,<br>Batter bunting or pick-off | Poor bunt or pop out<br>NO CHANGE-UPS | High in or out, very low in or pitchout |
| Bases Loaded, or on 2nd & 3rd,<br>less than 2 outs      | Ground ball                           | Low in or out                           |

## Defense

|                     |                    |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Left side stronger  | Ball hit to left   | Pitch inside                         |
| Right side stronger | Ball hit to right  | Pitch outside                        |
| Infield stronger    | Ground balls       | Low in or out                        |
| Outfield stronger   | Pop ups, fly balls | High in, rises, change-ups           |
| Pitcher tired       |                    | Stay away from rise or curve         |
| Pitch not working   |                    | Don't use it except as a waste pitch |

## Field

|             |                    |                                      |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Fence Short | Ground balls       | Low in or out                        |
| Fence Long  | Pop ups, fly balls | High in, rises, change-ups           |
| Wet Field   | Ground balls       | Low in or out, stay away from risers |

## Weather

|                             |                    |   |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Humidity high, low altitude | Pop ups, fly balls | High in, rises, changes, breaking balls         |
| Humidity low, high altitude | Ground balls       | Inside, drops, in rise curves, change low in    |
| Wind at your back           | Jam Pitch          | Low, inside (faster ball), high rise inside     |
| Wind in your face           | Vary Speeds        | Use speed as waste then break ball low, outside |

## Miscellaneous thoughts on pitching

- In facing a batter, have 3 or 4 pitch sequences in mind before you throw the first pitch. Hopefully your catcher "understands the show".
- Throwing low to bunters who drop the bat head can generate foul balls.
- Throwing high to slappers can generate easy pop-ups. If they pop the ball up, it does not matter how fast they are.
- Be careful using the change-up with runners on base.
- Pitch change-ups anywhere in the count. Don't save them for the 3rd strike.
- Be careful using the drop with runners on base.
- Be careful using the drop as a 3rd strike. Drop balls are more frequently in the dirt than other pitches.
- Brush back hitters dug in or crowding the plate.
- Know what the batter did the last time at bat.
- Get the first out of the inning yourself.
- Watch hitters practice their swings.
- When in doubt, pitch opposites; high/low, inside/outside, fast/slow.
- Keep the fat part of the ball away from the fat part of the bat.
- Use your best stuff on the weakest hitters. They will hit off-speed every time.
- Trust your catcher's abilities. Don't pitch to her based upon her skills.
- Perception is \*everything\*.
- Know when to walk a batter.
- Be a good batter. A pitcher who hurts the opponent on offense and defense is a formidable player.
- Keep your attitude in check. There's nothing worse than being beaten by a nice, polite person and team.
- Pitch Fearlessly.