

Maine State Coach's Association
Understanding the Pitching Motion
50 min

Introduction

What are we trying to achieve in the pitching motion?

- Velocity
- Accuracy
- Movement
- Consistency

Each of these things alone can make for a decent pitcher, but you will never be dominant until you begin assembling all four together

How does the pitching motion generate Velocity, Accuracy, Movement, and Consistency?

(Video samples for each bullet)

- Velocity
 - Arm Speed- immediately out of the load, as well as acceleration to release point
 - Leg drive- to propel pitcher towards the plate, and to generate force behind the ball
 - Leg drive is key in correct timing, if the pitcher is trying to snap on the landing of the front foot to generate velocity
 - Leg drive is also key if the pitcher snaps behind the landing- the leg drive is what allows the pitcher to generate such power on the very end of the pitch
 - Timing
 - This is important in all types of pitching, but particularly if the pitcher relies on timing, and keeping the landing and snap close together- resulting in a snap down (ex. Cat Osterman or Brandice Balschmiter) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG4flor1hy4>
 - Snap Point and force
 - This is especially important if the pitcher lands, then snaps behind (ex. Danielle Lawrie)
 - Examples- snap points in front and behind
- Accuracy
 - Pitching Line on the drive
 - Keeping the arm circle in one plane- from drive to release
 - Keeping release point consistent and back
 - No matter what type of pitcher you are, if you reach out too much you will lose both power and accuracy
- Movement
 - Spin
 - Generating movement relies on getting spin on the ball- this occurs at the very end of the pitch
 - Timing
 - The timing of the pitch should not change dramatically on pitches with

spin- there may be a slight shift in weight distribution on release, but this shift should be kept to a minimum

- Release point
 - The release point should be kept back on all pitches, with similar timing to the fastball
 - This is true even on drops, though the release point may be slightly later than the fastball
- Wrist movement
 - Sharp- Movement must be quick and decisive in order to get late, tight break
 - Tight- do not let the arm or wrist extend until after release, and keep the movement small

- Consistency
 - The pitching motion needs to be sustainable- the pitcher must be able to do it many times, over the period of an entire season
 - What does this mean?
 - Work WITH your pitcher's individual strengths, and work ON their weaknesses to ensure they are getting the most out of their pitching motion.
 - Develop a motion that feels comfortable, and that assimilates the points outlined above- velocity, accuracy, and movement
 - Be sure the motion you work on with your pitchers is one they can learn to repeat with CONSISTENCY- they must be able to repeat the same arm speed, leg drive, timing, and wrist movement again and again- otherwise they will never reach their full potential
 - Consistency will also help with achieving velocity, accuracy, and movement at a higher level.

Questions