

THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

THE COACHES' SOURCE FOR AMATEUR BASEBALL

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The Making of a Complete Pitcher

C-ing is believing and is the source of pitching

By E. D. DUKE DICKERSON, MIKE BUTCHER, PAUL HARTZELL, AND MARK LEITER / SPECIAL TO THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

Five acclaimed experts on the craft of pitching have come together to make their voices heard on the state of pitching in baseball. Their insight into the source of becoming an elite pitcher is inspiring as the game confronts a crossroads on how to keep pitchers healthy and performing well.

For nearly a generation, velocity has been viewed by aspiring young pitchers as the Holy Grail, the ticket to the paradise of pitching. The unfortunate thing is that many of these young pitchers and “their keepers” forget one thing, and that one thing is the genesis of this art, perhaps the most important thing in achieving optimal pitching success: How to pitch!!!

Somewhere along the way, the art of pitching was lost in the shadows to breaking the sound barrier with velocity. A textbook example of putting the cart before the horse! In today's era, the premise, the basic DNA of how to pitch, has become nothing more than a

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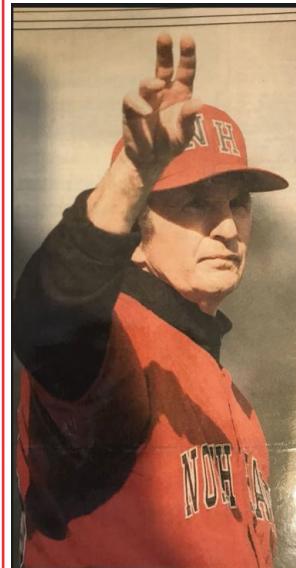


Former MLB Pitcher Mark Leiter teaches pitching at Leiter Advantage Pitching Instruction in New Jersey.

Coach Bob DeMayo

For 63 years, this legendary Connecticut high school coach impacted so many lives

By FRANK LAMONACA
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR



Courtesy of Bette DeMayo

Bob DeMayo was the baseball coach at North Haven High School in North Haven, Conn. for 63 years. Yes indeed - 63 years.

When he retired at age 89, he had accumulated 937 wins, five state championships, and 19 league titles. His all-time legendary coaching career impacted so many. Before he passed this last July, his former players came together to share and celebrate the stories and lessons he gave them in a book titled *Bob*

DeMayo: Coach for a Season, Teacher for Life, compiled by Nancy Shohet West.

One of those former players he had an immense influence on was Frank LaMonaca. While Frank would go on to play college baseball, as well as find great success in business traveling the world, he always comes back to remember the impact that Coach DeMayo had on him. Here is an excerpt Frank contributed to the book:

“In many ways, coaching athletes and teaching students have much in common — you impart information, you look for a response, you provide feedback, repeat. But for the best coaches and the best teachers...the ones who leave a mark, the ones you never forget...it’s more.” (Michael Lewis - Coach: Lessons on the Game of Life).

The best coaches, as with the best teachers, don’t pull their punches in giving you feedback – that tough feedback you need to get better. They tell you the truth, whether you want to hear it or not. They don’t just say, “Hey, kick it up a notch” – they make you... uncomfortable.

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From the Publisher

There is no doubt that there is a great re-sorting of college athletics happening. There is great interest, great excitement, great amounts of money, as well as constant roster and coaching changes, and constant decisions based purely on the business aspect. These impact so many coaches and players and families.

While college sports has always been intensely competitive and has always had conflicts with the idealized student-athlete model, the current climate has created more questions than answers.

In particular for coaches, the practice of having to recruit your team non-stop seems like an unsustainable enterprise. Coaches recruit players out of high school, then basically have to re-recruit them every single year they are on campus. When that doesn't work, each summer, coaches have to pull off an entire recruiting class in one month out of the transfer portal.

On the flip side, the players are moving around from school-to-school at a dizzying rate.

There are pros and cons of this current model, but it does beg a question that should be answered: If the college athletics system was being built from scratch, is this healthiest model for both coaches and players alike?

Mark A. Woodworth

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The Competitors Brain

By LOREN FOXX
EDITOR/THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

We sometimes lose sight of what is significant, and what is important.

For those who have seen the movie *Field of Dreams* – if you’re a baseball fan, or even if you are not a baseball fan, but just a fan of living life, you can find something relevant in that movie. If you haven’t watched it in a while – it came out in 1989 – there is a scene where Ray Kinsella, who is the protagonist in the movie, is talking to a former major league player. Ray has somehow gone back in time to 1972 and is talking to a doctor in Chisholm, Minn. named Dr. Archibald Graham. Dr. Graham had played for the New York Giants 50 years before, in 1922, and he has significance in Major League Baseball because he played in one game, one-half inning, and did not come to bat.

Ray Kinsella is told to go visit Dr. Graham and when Ray, played by Kevin Costner, asks him what it was like to have played just that one-half inning in a major league game, Dr. Graham says, “It was like coming this close to your dream, and watching it brush past you like a stranger in the crowd. At the time, you don’t think much of it. We just don’t recognize life’s most significant moments while they’re happening. Back then I thought, ‘Well, there’ll be other days.’ I didn’t realize that that was the only day.”

What is Significant

And then he says, “I want to ask you a question: What is so interesting about a half-an-inning that would make you come all the way from Iowa to come talk to me 50 years after it happened?”

You have a man who is a doctor in a small town in Minnesota who has influenced thousands of lives for the better. He looked back at something that happened 50 years ago as a little bit of an inflection point. If he had gotten a chance to play, or get a base hit, what would his outcome have been? He might have stayed in Major League Baseball or played for the rest of his life. But Dr. Graham looks at Ray and says, “If I had only gotten to be a doctor for five minutes, now that would have been a tragedy.”

The inflection point for him was whether he was going to stick with his dream of playing baseball, or move on. Ultimately, the impact that he made on the lives of many in the small town he lived in, far outweighed the impact that he would have had as a professional baseball player.

It’s up to all of us to realize on a day-to-day basis what are you doing, or what is significant in your life, that you might be missing or looking past that might be significant to you and others.

Amateur Baseball Podcast Recommendations

Baseball Outside the Box Podcast

Interviews with high school and college coaches.

Hosted by Pete Caliendo

D3P: A Division III Baseball Podcast

Covering Division III baseball around the country.

Hosted by father and son duo Eric and Wyatt Rudolf

The Impact of Coach DeMayo

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This isn’t a job parents are made for – a parent is too close to the subject, there’s too much at stake, they’re too vested in their child to make them... uncomfortable.

I can only speak for myself on the value of honest feedback from a coach, so I’ll tell you one story:

It’s spring 1975, senior year, and Coach DeMayo decides it’s time to make me... uncomfortable.

After a dismal pre-season, where I had gone “0 for March,” Bob put his arm around me and walked me up to home plate and I thought, here it comes, the Coach DeMayo pep talk. Well, there was no pep talk – just a calm, whispered, direct, honest, wake-up call – “No one has a job yet... you earn your spot, every day, every year.” And that was the last thought he left with me as I stepped into the batter’s box.

Two pitches later, after finally getting my first hit, angrily staring in from second base, I can see the smile, and see the nod, and hear the words – “That’s more like it!”

After three years together as player and coach, Bob knew I had a tendency to become complacent from time-to-time – what teenager doesn’t. He also knew I took pride in results, and that

perhaps what was needed at that moment wasn’t a gentle pep talk from a benevolent dictator, but rather a swift kick in the pants from someone who cares.

What Coach had done, quietly and effectively, was remind me that when I put on that uniform, I had an obligation: to the team, to him, to myself. All he ever asked was “know your job, do your job.” It worked, I was back, and I was no longer... uncomfortable... and I went on to lead the league in hitting.

As with Michael Lewis (speaking of his coach), I never asked Bob if he’d read the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goeth, and I wouldn’t be surprised if he had, but the words fit:

“If you treat a man as he is, he will remain as he is. But if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will become what he ought to be and could be.”

I am not where I am today without Bob DeMayo coaching me – in the game that I loved and in the life I envisioned. He taught me self-respect, sacrifice, endurance, courage – and that whether we like it or not, personal growth comes with being, at times... uncomfortable. And for that I am forever grateful.

Frank LaMonaca (North Haven HS Varsity Baseball, '73-'75)



Podcast

The Competitor's Brain

Hosted by
Loren Foxx

We take years of experience in sports psychology, including working with greats in the business like Ken Ravizza, Brian Cain, and Dr. Rob Gilbert, and assemble the highlights into an easy-to-digest three minute podcast.



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Six C's to Becoming a Complete Pitcher

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second thought, forgotten... dust in the wind. Why would you expect anything different? The revenue generated by athletic instruction in the youth space in the US is expected to exceed \$50-billion... the same GDP of the country of Jordan. Chaaa-ching!

Throw in the rising epidemic of arm injuries, e.g., UCL, labrum, etc., surgical repairs, rehabilitation, these are not particularly favorable outcomes, especially for young pitchers. A specific study found that approximately 27% of elite high school pitchers who participated in showcase events went on to have UCL reconstructive surgery. In a recent study published at the National Institute of Health (NIH), a total of 13,894 pitchers met inclusion criteria and were found to have a diagnosis of UCL injury. Most injuries (64.6%) occurred in young pitchers aged <20 years. For the math impaired, that is two out of three young pitchers under the age of 20-years-old. And let us not forget the labrum!

Health care costs for pitching injuries, specifically UCL and labrum, account for over \$100 billion, and the non-measured mental meltdown and emotional fallout of these young players is felt for decades. Tell a young pitcher he will never pitch again. However, at the end of the day, it's not about playing the odds with a young person's dreams, rather... show me the money! Two industries... over \$150-billion cost and thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, dreams destroyed. Youth athletic training (and dream building) is the latest gold rush.

So here's the rub. Like any shiny new toy and the age-appropriate guidelines clearly displayed on the box, "these guidelines and directions for assembly" are often disregarded in favor of "let's play now." Inevitably, the lack of time (and patience) required to learn how and why it works, gives favor to the excitement of "break it out of the box and let's play with it now" mentality.

This common mistake of "not reading the directions and age appropriateness," as we all know and have experienced, will most often lead to the frustration and/or disappointment and the next step for the shiny new toy... Facebook Market Place, Ebay or soccer.

Matt Davis, a scout with the Boston Red Sox best summed it up in saying, "There are over 15,000 right-handed pitchers today in America who throw the ball 92+ mph." These young pitchers may not know how to pitch, however, they can wing it 92+ mph. Matt's observation (and so true)... "What makes any one of these guys any different, any better, than the other?"

The answer... work ethic, mental aptitude/approach, mechanics, coachability, "performance and production," etc., all critical variables in the assessment and evaluation process. One thing that may put this concept into perspective is the MLB draft.

If the MLB draft has 600 selections each year, and every single draft pick was a 92+ mph right-handed pitcher, that would translate to .04%, i.e., less than one-half of one percent of all 92+ RHPs, i.e., 15,000, in the US today. You stand a better chance of being bitten by a shark! Do the math... listen to the music, as pitching and playing the piano have a lot in common.

Regarding the latter, important aspects of learning piano include regular, patient practice, understanding music theory and scales/chords, developing ear training and sight-reading skills, learning proper hand technique and posture, and acquiring a suitable instrument and learning resources. Consistent, mindful practice tailored to your level, along with a good teacher and/or resources, is key to building muscle memory and musicality... to "learning" how to play the piano.

Pitching is no different. Mechanics, patient practice, understanding the geometric aspect and physics of pitching, learning grips, balance, posture, arm action, optimal acceleration and deceleration,

Duke Dickerson, former collegiate record setting pitcher at Virginia Tech helped guide the Hokies to two NCAA Division 1 Super Regionals. Following his collegiate career, he signed with and played in the Toronto Blue Jays organization. Dickerson later served as field staff with the New York Yankees organization. He is currently pitching coordinator at Capital University (Columbus, OH), Special Advisor to the Board of Managing Directors with the Solingen Alligators Baseball Club of the German Bundesliga, and an American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA) Ambassador.



ation, release points, finish, etc., along with a good teacher and resources... building muscle memory through repetition, etc.

At the end of the day, just because a person has a piano doesn't mean they are a piano player, just as velocity does not define a pitcher. Velocity is the dessert that follows the meal!

Whether it is the piano or pitching... it takes time. Chop sticks or Beethoven's 5th? Being an efficient and effective pitcher, or an Ebby Calvin "Nuke" LaLoosh? Not to sound like a broken record, however, music and pitching, like life, are similar in nature in that, what you put into is what you get out of it.

The Repetitions of a Pitcher

Young pitchers in many cases have not been taught or worked on the monotonous pain-staking repetitions in all aspects of pitching that are required to become an efficient and effective pitcher. Pause and play again... this includes fundamentals, technique and proper mechanics. Writing a check for \$5,000 does not make the pitcher.

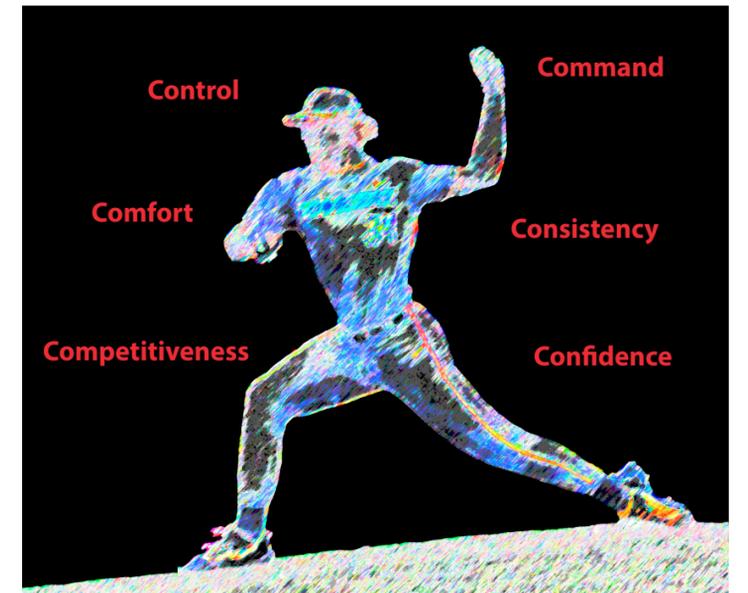
The directions that come with pitching, with becoming an efficient and effective pitcher, rival that of post-graduate training. They are not easy, it takes time, countless repetitions, a healthy dose of failure (which proves critical in the learning process), and patience. Rome wasn't built overnight, nor will a pitcher be. Too much involved and too much out of the control of the pitcher and/or the "pitcher's keepers."

The Clinician's Guide to Baseball Pitching Biomechanics (nih.gov) is a must-read clinical study written by Alek Z Diffendaffer, MS, Glenn Fleisig, PhD, et al, of the famed American Sports Medicine Institute in Birmingham, Alabama, the Mecca of pitching mechanics. The study explains in detail the urgent need to return to



Mark Leiter wore an MLB jersey for 11-seasons. A right-handed pitcher for eight different teams, including the Detroit Tigers, San Francisco Giants, and Philadelphia Phillies. As part of a famous baseball family, i.e., The Land of Leiter, his brother Al, his son, NY Yankee pitcher Mark Leiter Jr., and Texas Ranger nephew Jack, represent the first time in MLB history two brothers who played in MLB both have sons in the league. Today, Leiter owns and operates Leiter Advantage, one of the top pitching schools in the U.S.

the basics of pitching... the mechanics. Based on science, the facts... a good understanding of proper pitching mechanics is critical to develop and prescribe a sport-specific strength and conditioning program aimed at preventing injury, increasing performance, and increasing health and longevity.



Pitching and the Investment of Time

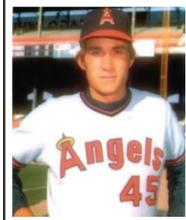
Anatomy, physiology, psychology, and perhaps the most important variable that our "must have it now society" calls for... time. Time is money, and the investment of time for a pitcher's proper development is of critical importance, as this investment to his craft will play a pivotal role in his outcome... his success or failure.

Time is a young pitcher's currency. Short-term gains generally lead to long-term losses, whereas short-term losses typically give way to long-term gains. Band-aids or sutures. Short-term gain... or long-term gain? Ray Kinsella said, "Go the distance." Learn the "soup to nuts" of pitching. Time. Take the time to learn how to pitch. He who has the time, who can, will "invest that time," and has the will and the way, will stand the best chance of getting a check from Topps one day.

Pitching is a rather simple process, as it is determined by hitting. Hall of Fame pitcher Warren Spahn is credited with the saying "Hitting is timing, and pitching is 'screwing up' a hitters timing." It truly is that simple. Spahn, Koufax, Gibson, Ryan, Seaver, Carlton, Santana, Kershaw, etc., all of the greats, would echo that same sentiment, that same process. Period.

Greg Maddux and Art of Pitching

The definition of a successful pitcher may be best defined by one of the greatest pitchers of a generation... perhaps of all time, Greg Maddux. He had an exceptionally low career walk rate of 4.9%, and was the only pitcher in MLB history to record more than 300



Paul Hartzell pitched a total of six years with the California Angels, Minnesota Twins, Baltimore Orioles, and Milwaukee Brewers. A swingman, starting 77 of the 170 games, he completed 22 games, while posting 12 saves, a statistical combination difficult to imagine in today's game. In his maiden season, Hartzell was 7-4 with an ERA of 2.77, ranking him seventh, and among the top five league leaders in fewest home runs and fewest walks allowed per nine innings in the American League. Today, Hartzell has joined Mustard (mustard-baseball.com), an organization dedicated to pitching mechanics and player development, co-founded by legendary pitching coach, Tom House.

wins and 3,000 strikeouts with fewer than 1,000 walks. He issued just 999 walks in his entire career. He also holds the record for the most starts (236) without issuing a single walk. Absolutely, insane! If a young pitcher wants to be motivated, add Greg Maddux to your Rolodex! Do you want a pitcher... a role model? Look no further than Greg Maddux.

A Maddux fastball in the pinnacle of his Hall of Fame career was 89-90-mph with extraordinary run in on the hands of a hitter. His 78-80mph change-up, i.e., 10-mph variance in velocity, dropped dead at the tip of the plate (of which 34% of all MLB hitters would swing over for strikes)... and his 83-84-mph slider/slurve/sweeper thrown with surgical precision low and away had a such a devastating bite, it would leave hitters scratching their heads. Maddux defines a pitcher... the art of pitching.

A 90-95 mph fastball, with a destination unknown, does not define a pitcher... rather a thrower, and a potential candidate to join the accelerating A-list of ulnar collateral (UCL), and/or labrum issues, etc. that appear to be at near epidemic proportions. Why?

In addition to the required fundamentals, technique, posture and mechanics required to be an efficient and effective pitcher, young pitchers need to understand the simple physics (and math) required to be an efficient and effective pitcher, and once that epiphany has been experienced, that "ta-da moment" occurs, the birth of a pitcher begins.

The Pitcher's Direction

The objective? With disrupting a hitter's timing the primary objective, the secondary objective is using the tools of nature to achieve success. With a 9.25-inch orb in the hand, a pitcher's objective is to "chuck" that horsehide with the greatest accuracy possible to identified coordinates, i.e., "control and command," determined by the "control tower, i.e., pitching coach, catcher, both." Hit the target!

This process is executed from a platform that is 24-inch wide (rubber) on a 10-inch high "launch pad" (pitching mound), 60-foot 6-inches away from a 17-foot wide target, aka, home plate. The principle that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points was first articulated by the world's first pitching coach, Greek mathematician and physicist Archimedes, and this process serves as the cornerstone of pitching and pitching mechanics. Point A, i.e., the mound, to point B, i.e., the target, i.e., homeplate, in the most efficient and effective manner. Throw in a little Galileo inertia, and Einstein magic potion of energy (velocity) equals mass (weight) plus speed (arm speed) squared, i.e., $E=M+C^2$, and voila, you have the making of a pitcher!

The more confusion around the simplicity of Archimedes magic formula, Galileo's uniform motion in a straight-line theory, and Einstein's velocity theory, the more challenging the objective will be to meet. Target acquisition, balance, acceleration, deceleration, release point and finish. Point A to point B using physics and geometry as a roadmap. As the great Japanese pitching coach Mr. Miyagi said, "Wax on, wax off." Keep it simple!

The issue this brilliant panel of former pitchers and authors sees is embedding into the minds of these young pitchers (and their keepers), the work, commitment to excellence, the determination, dedication and desire to plan and prepare...to read the directions, to follow the directions of this shiny new toy.

The Remarkable Billy Wagner

Billy Wagner, a recent (and deserving) addition to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, serves as a model for most developing pitchers. With Maddux defining what good looks like, Wagner, is the epitome of the "how, why, when and where" in a becoming a pitcher.

In high school, Billy Wagner stood 5-foot-5 and hit the scales at 135 pounds. His fastball was clocked in the sub-80s... maybe. Wagner was considered too small for a pitcher, which led him to a small, very small college opportunity in Virginia at Ferrum College. (NOTE...Billy, you know Bob Humphreys desperately wanted you at Virginia Tech, right?)

En route to reaching 5-foot 10-inches and 185 pounds during his professional career, Wagner's Hall of Fame plaque was the result of an exceptional work ethic, mental toughness, and a relentless commitment to planning and preparing. These traits were forged from his childhood and helped him overcome physical limitations to become one of the most dominant left-handed relief pitchers in history.

Wagner's intensity was evident from a young age, as he spent countless hours in his backyard replicating the perfect pitching motion. He was dedicated to his craft, meticulous about his pitching mechanics, which were critical to his ability to consistently flirt with 100 mph while in the limelight of baseball's cathedrals, despite his smaller size. Even after retiring, Wagner emphasized that his delivery was not luck, but a blueprint, the leitbild for elite performance achieved through precise and intentional practice. Rinse and repeat... Billy Wagner was meticulous about his pitching mechanics.

Mentally "there," beyond his physical gifts, Wagner possessed immense mental preparation. As a closer, he understood that he was "one pitch away from scrutiny" and thrived under that pressure. In his own words, his physical talent was important, but his mental readiness is what made the difference. Machiavelli would have been proud! Rinse and repeat... Wagner possessed immense mental preparation and readiness and had no mercy on those who stood 60-feet, 6-inches away.

Wagner overcame obstacles by embracing challenges. He defied expectations and never stopped working. He has stated his success came from refusing to give up and working hard, ignoring outside critics. The Hall of Famer was driven by perseverance, grit... and the pursuit of perfection, and perhaps the greatest pearl of wisdom in the Billy Wagner story was his ability to let go of failure.

Baseball is, and always will be a game of failure, and if a pitcher is unable to let it go, to forget about the last hitter, last inning... or even the last game, regardless if it is a win or a loss, coughing up a game winning home run or issuing a free pass to allow the winning run to score, the failure of letting go will consume the player like flesh eating bacteria!

The Pitching Solution

So, what is the solution to becoming a complete pitcher? Whereas velocity obviously plays a role, it is clear that velocity, whether you are throwing a baseball or driving a Formula 1 race car, can lead to unfavorable outcome, i.e., crashing. If a pitcher or driver is uncomfortable, unable to control and command the baseball/car and remain consistent in doing so lap after lap, pitch after pitch, kaboom... the crash happens.

The complete pitcher has arrived when competitiveness, comfort, control, command, consistency and confidence are experienced. C-ing is believing. Without the 5 "C's," efficiency and effectiveness, the complete pitcher is forbidden fruit, and the risk of failure, or in more positive terms, the chances of success, are severely limited.

In the simplest terms, a competitive pitcher, with comfort, control, command, consistency and confidence serving as the foundation on which to build a pitcher, with hard work, dedication and commitment to the craft embraced... velocity, movement/run, and the all-important mental aspect of pitching will be explored and experienced throughout the process, and at that time, the one-in-15,000 odds of playing in college are extraordinarily favorable, and the prospects/possibilities of getting a check from Topps are more probable.

Competitiveness, comfort, control, command, consistency and confidence... What you put into it is what you will get out of it. And what is *it*? The complete pitcher.

Mike Butcher, former relief pitcher with the California Angels and a highly successful MLB pitching coach who spent 14 seasons with three different teams (Tampa Bay Rays, Los Angeles Angels and Arizona Diamondbacks) before retiring in 2019. Butcher was known for his tough, intimidating approach on the mound, a characteristic he carried from his upbringing to his pitching and coaching style. Today, he and his wife are the owners of The Pizza Butcher in Gilbert, Ariz. (thepizzabutcher.com). The best pizza on the planet! Let him know you read this article, and you may get a discount!



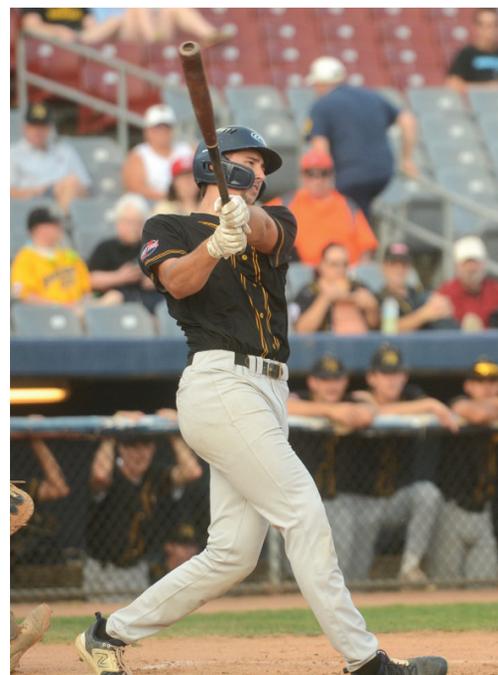
Baseball's newest dynasty resides in Norwich, Connecticut

By **JIMMY ZANOR**
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR/THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

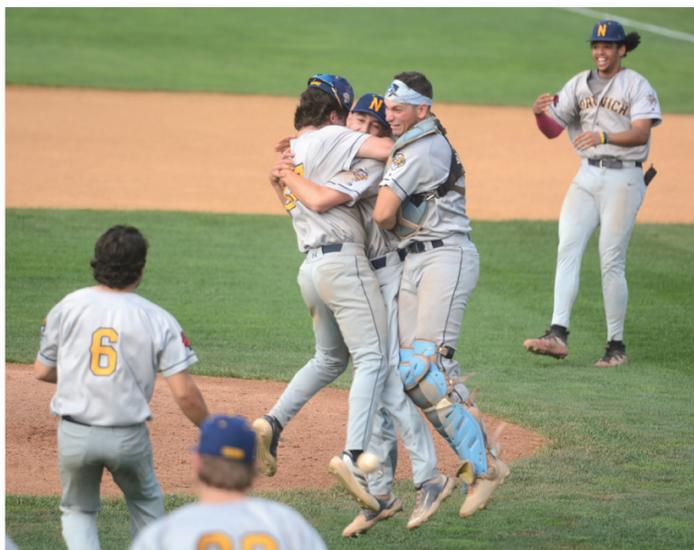
The Norwich Sea Unicorns captured its third consecutive Futures Collegiate Baseball League championship with a decisive 13-4 victory over the New Britain Bees on Saturday, August 16 before 3,589 fans at New Britain Stadium.

The Sea Unicorns, who joined the Futures League in 2021, became the first team in league history to win three straight championships.

“Three in a row, that’s crazy,” Sea Unicorns designated hitter Bryce Detwiler said. “You can’t really ask for much more than winning three championships in a row. I’m just happy to be a part of it.”



New Britain Bees outfielder Cam Righi went 6-for-15 with a double, triple and three RBIs in the FCBL championship series. A recent graduate of Wethersfield High School (Conn.), Righi was selected Connecticut’s Gatorade Player of the Year this past season.



Norwich Sea Unicorns players, from left, Charlie Walsh, pitcher Matt Wootton, and catcher Clay Hartje leap for joy after winning the FCBL title at New Britain Stadium.

Detwiler, who will be a freshman at UConn in the fall, was selected the postseason Most Valuable Player. He went 8-for-21 with a home run and 6 RBIs in five games. He also had a walk-off hit in the 12th inning of the Sea Unicorns’ 5-4 come-from-behind win in Game 2 of the series.

After the first two games of this intra-state best-of-three series ended in thrilling walk-off fashion, the Sea Unicorns rolled to its historic three-peat by exploding for eight runs in the eighth inning.

“That was the mindset all day, to get to their bullpen early,” Norwich Sea Unicorns manager Kyle Dembrowski said. “I can’t say enough about these guys. It’s such a resilient club. Every effort down the stretch and in the playoffs was gutsy.”

Trailing 4-1 in the top of the fifth, Norwich rallied for four runs to take the lead for good.

Chase Chaplin (Yale), Gavin O’Brien (UMass), Connor Scanlan (Fairfield) and Detwiler each had two hits apiece for the Sea Unicorns.

The Sea Unicorns pitching corps in the championship game included Cooper Maher (Northeastern), Sean Connolly (Stonehill), Justin Gouin (Hartford), Frank Spirito (UConn) and Matt Wootton (Eastern Conn.).

Cam Righi (UConn), George Slauson (Saint Anselm), Brennan Stauble (Southern Conn.), Easton Masse (Boston College), and Julius Rosado (Rutgers) each had two hits for New Britain.

Righi, who graduated from Wethersfield High School in June, was selected Connecticut’s Gatorade Player of the Year. Righi went 6-for-15 with a double, triple and three RBIs in the championship series. The outfielder is headed to UConn.

After finishing the season with sub .500 records, the Sea Unicorns and Bees eliminated the top two seeds, the Worcester Bravehearts and the Vermont Lake Monsters in the semifinals.

The Sea Unicorns were the first four seed in league history to knock out the top seed in the playoffs.

“It was an amazing summer,” said Dembrowski, who is an assistant coach at Holy Cross. “I’m just incredibly proud of these guys. We (coaching staff) just found ways to make guys as effective as possible. If you go look at the box scores for these playoff games, it’s a lot more than nine guys. It’s a whole team effort.”



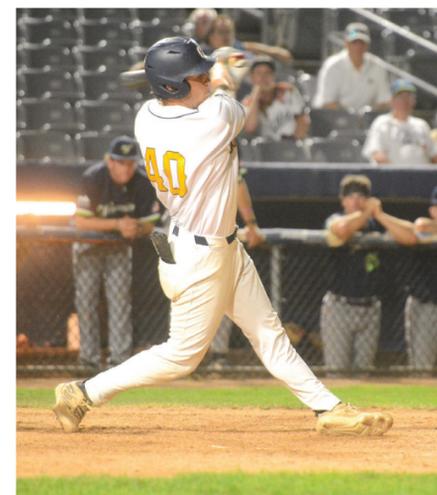
Norwich Sea Unicorns manager Kyle Dembrowski and playoff MVP Bryce Detwiler accept the FCBL championship trophy from Futures League commissioner Joe Paolucci.

Game 2

The Norwich Sea Unicorns evened the Futures Collegiate Baseball League championship series with a thrilling 5-4 extra-innings victory over the New Britain Bees before 2,197 fans at Dodd Stadium in Norwich.

The Sea Unicorns rallied from an early 4-0 deficit, tying it with two runs in the bottom of the ninth and then winning Game 2 of this best-of-three series on Detwiler’s broken bat single in the bottom of the 12th inning.

“I’m just happy I could pull through for my team,” Detwiler said. “We’ve been in extra innings for the past three games. We lost the first one in New Britain so we had to come back stronger than ever.”



Norwich Sea Unicorns’ Bryce Detwiler (UConn) was selected the FCBL postseason Most Valuable Player. Detwiler went 8-for-21 with a home run and 6 RBIs in their five playoff games.

New Britain took a 4-2 lead into the bottom of the ninth and was three outs away from winning its first Futures League title. Norwich, however, kept its historic three-peat hopes alive with a stunning rally and a clutch single from O’Brien.

Game 1

Righi delivered a bases loaded single in the bottom of the 10th inning to lift the Bees to a 1-0 victory over the two-time defending champion Norwich Sea Unicorns in the finals opener Wednesday night at New Britain Stadium.

Norwich got a terrific pitching performance from Brendan Grady (Trinity). The lefthander took a no-hitter into the seventh inning. After a pair of groundouts, Masse broke up Grady’s no-hit bid with a single to center field.

The Wisdom of Skip Bertman



STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

The LSU Tigers reached the championship game of the College World Series more than any other team in the 90's, including five College World Series titles. The LSU tigers posted a perfect 17-0 record in the final round Of NCAA postseason play. Players, coaches and fans alike all know the success is due to Skip Bertman's unyielding devotion to excellence.

EXCELLENCE

Thanks for allowing me an opportunity to help you and your team achieve excellence. I've been on baseball fields for over 35 years trying to do a few simple things: Get more hits, throw more strikes, catch more balls, score more runs than the other guy. But as you know, achieving excellence isn't easy. It requires motivation and teaching real teamwork. Making your team fully aware that a great team is more than just a collection of great players.

To build that awareness, that very real sense of teamwork, we need to start with your ability to inspire a sense of team and motivate your players. Real teamwork and true motivation — those are the tools you need to be excellent and succeed to win often and to win the big one. I'd like to show you how I put those tools to work to create some championship teams.

BUILDING CHAMPIONS AROUND EXCELLENCE

I believe building championship teams starts long before taking the practice field because champions do more than just score more runs or more points than their opponents. To make champions, you've got to build their entire lives - their bodies, their hearts, their minds - around excellence. And that's why I start with a very clear, very strong mission statement that applies to my players' lives. You and your team should have a mission statement too.

LSU BASEBALL MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement is this: Excellence, both off and on the field. Perfecting any skill starts with an attitude of excellence. Here's a lesson you can teach your team: Excellence is quite simply the continuous, relentless, never-ending commitment to improve. Excellence is the gradual result of always trying to get better. It comes from the Latin word "excel," which means to rise up,

Excellence is getting to the field earlier, training harder/ practicing longer, working smarter and preparing more than others care to or expect to. To achieve excellence, you have to believe and make your players believe in the value of every available moment of every day and in the quality of each teammate. Excellence doesn't come with any amount of expected effort. Excellence means making a special effort, doing more than is asked — expecting more of one's self.

DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC OF EXCELLENCE

Here's the defining characteristic of excellence, and you have to try to instill it in your team as I try to do with mine. Excellence is not a sometimes thing. You don't achieve excellence through a series of afternoon practices. Excellence is an all-the-time thing. You can't just do things right some of the time. A near-miss isn't almost right. Doggone it, it's wrong!

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD AND EXCELLENT

In America we spend a great amount of time and money to achieve the very small difference between very good and excellent because excellence is the highest standard by which we measure human achievement. Excellence is a habit. Winning is a habit. So, unfortunately, are losing and mediocrity. And like all habits, they affect our lives.

THE SECRET TO A LIFE OF EXCELLENCE

If there is a secret to excellence, it's this point — and you should make it perfectly clear to your players. Excellence-seekers aren't 20% better in any single area. They're 1% better in 20 different areas. And the first rule of our program is: Good enough never is. We seek excellence both on and off the field.

MIKE BIANCO TESTIMONIAL:

"One thing that he does different in that strive for excellence is that he's just relentless in his approach to practice, that it's never enough. It doesn't matter what time it is, there's things that got to be done and things that got to be done a certain way, from making sure that the field's clean when the opposing team comes in to take batting practice, to the way you take batting practice and the way the team runs on and off the field. There is nothing too small in his mind."

REVIEW

- Start your program with a mission statement
- Make your team fully aware that a great team's more than just a collection of great players
- Excellence is quite simply the continuous, relentless, never-ending commitment to improve. Excellence is the gradual result of always trying to get better
- Excellence is an all-time thing.
- Good enough never is

Skip's Corner

The Baseball Collegian is proud to present the **wisdom of coaching legend Skip Bertman** for coaches and players to help take their game to the same championship level as he did in his coaching career at LSU and Miami.

Learn the Game

What is your Baseball IQ?

For baseball coaches, every game brings measurable progress. However, game time isn't the time for trial-and-error learning. The 6-Tool app features interactive player quizzes with questions and videos to help players improve their baseball IQ, as well as help coaches quickly identify and address players' knowledge of the game.

Here is a sample test:

A) When is it an appropriate time for the 1B to not be concerned with holding a runner on 1B?

1. Bases Loaded up 3 runs with no outs
2. Bases Loaded up 3 Runs with 2 outs
3. Runner on 1st up 8 in last inning
4. Runners at 1st and 2nd with 1 out down by 3 runs
5. Runners at 1st and 2nd with 2 outs

B) As a hitter, you just pulled a towering fly-ball way foul on a fastball in and off the plate. Which of the following statements would be a reasonable consideration?

1. He should choke up
2. He may throw something slow and/or away next pitch
3. I should move up in the batters box
4. Stay back
5. Think line drive the other way

C) A Baserunner gets hit by a live batted ball. Respond with the most correct answers based on the following statements:

1. If the runner is standing on a base when he gets hit by a ground ball, he is safe.
2. The runner is first to touch the ball, but was stealing on the pitch and never saw the ball. He is safe.
3. If the pitcher deflects the ball prior to the runner getting hit, he is safe.
4. If the umpire makes the judgement that no infielder had a chance to field the ball (In a shift situation, for example), the basrunner is safe.
5. If the ball is deflected by a fielder first, even if the basrunner intentionally touches the ball, he is safe because the fielder touched it first.

D) You are the first baseman. Under what circumstance(s) should you charge towards home when you see the batter square to bunt?

1. No one on base, lefty bunting
2. Speedy runner on first, less than two outs
3. Runners on first and second, no one out
4. When your team is ahead by more than 3



E) Rank the following situations based on when it's best to attempt a steal of third base:

1. Out out, runners at first and second down 2 runs
2. Nobody out, runner at second, down 1 run
3. Two outs, runner at second, tie game
4. One out, runner at second, tie game

F) As a hitter, which of the following should you be thinking about when in the box?

1. "Don't Strike out"
2. "Don't take a bad swing"
3. "Swing as hard as I can"
4. None of the above

G) A ball is bunted between the third baseman and pitcher, and is fielded by the third baseman. What should the pitcher do following the play?

1. Duck down and try to avoid being hit by the throw.
2. Go to third base to make sure there is no advancement by the runner.
3. Go back to the mound as a reference point to take yourself out of the play.

Answer key:

A) 1-5 B) 2,4,5 C) 4,5 D) 1-3 E) 1,4,2,3 F) 4 G) 2

The advertisement for the 6-Tool app features a central image of a baseball player in a grey uniform running on a field. To the left, a smartphone displays the app's interface, showing a quiz question: 'What should the 1B do?' with options like 'Run the batter back towards home', 'Throw the ball home', 'Step on First Base', and 'Hold out your arms to call time'. The app's logo '6-Tool' is in the top left corner. A yellow banner at the top reads 'TEACH YOUR TEAM THROUGH INTERACTIVE QUIZZES'. A yellow box on the right says 'The Baseball IQ App'. Below that, a list of features is titled '6Tool Puts You in Control' and includes points like 'Get an accurate read on what each player knows' and 'Create custom questions that fit your team's strategy'. A yellow box at the bottom right asks 'Are you tired of losing close games due to mental mistakes on the field?'. At the bottom, a yellow banner says 'Amplify development off the field' and 'Know your role in every situation'. The website '6-TOOL.COM' is at the bottom center.



Cape Cod League

Champion: Bourne Braves

Pat Sorenti Most Valuable Player
 BFC Whitehouse Outstanding Pitcher
 Russ Ford Outstanding Relief Pitcher
 Robert A. McNeece Outstanding Pro Prospect
 John J. Claffey New England Top Prospect
 Star of Stars - MVP of Playoffs
 Daniel J. Silva Sportsmanship Award
 Manny Robello 10th Player Award
 Thurman Munson Award (Batting Champion)
 Manager of the Year
 Commissioner's Cup -Organizational Excellence

Maika Niu (CF)
 Tyler Pitzer (P)
 Steele Murdock (P)
 Jarren Advincula (2B)
 Kyle Kipp (P)
 Jon LeGrande (OF)
 Daniel Jackson (C)
 Jake Schaffner (IF)
 Aiden Robbins (OF)
 Kelly Nicholson

Falmouth Commodores
 Y-D Red Sox
 Orleans Firebirds
 Cotuit Kettleers
 Brewster Whitecaps
 Bourne Braves
 Chatham Anglers
 Hyannis Harbor Hawks
 Harwich Mariners
 Orleans Firebirds
 Wareham Gatemen

Marshall
 South Carolina
 UC San Diego
 Cal Berkeley
 Boston College
 St. John's
 Georgia
 North Dakota St.
 Seton Hall



NECBL

Champion: Keane SwampBats

2025 Rick Ligi Most Valuable Player
 2025 Stephen Strasburg Top Pro Prospect
 2025 Rookie of the Year
 Robin Roberts Best Starting Pitcher
 Joe Nathan Top Relief Pitcher
 Batting Champion
 Sportsman of the Year
 The Christopher Ashmos 10th Player Award
 2025 Defensive Player of the Year Award
 2025 Most Improved Player Award

Jack Herring (OF)
 Leighton Harris (LHP)
 Matthew Bolton (OF)
 Finbar O'Brien (P)
 Andrew Wertz (P)
 Ty Mainolfi (IF)
 Anthony Brotz (IF)
 Ripken Reese (C)
 Michael Torres (CF)
 Randy Seymour (SS)

Keene SwampBats
 Newport Gulls
 Newport Gulls
 Newport Gulls
 Valley Blue Sox
 Keene SwampBats
 Upper Valley Nighthawks
 Keene SwampBats
 Mystic Schooners
 Newport Gulls

East Carolina
 Kentucky
 Binghamton
 Gonzaga
 Salve Regina
 Boston College
 Marist
 Kent State
 Miami
 Michigan State



Futures League

Champion: Norwich Sea Unicorns

Most Valuable Player
 Pitcher of the Year
 Top Pro Prospect-Position Player
 Top Pro Prospect-Pitcher
 Relief Pitcher of the Year
 Defensive Player of the Year
 Manager of the Year

Shaun McMillan
 John Delgado
 Shaun McMillan
 Garret Garbinski
 Evan Mello
 Cole Patterson
 Luke Beckstein

Vermont Lake Monsters
 Vermont Lake Monsters
 Vermont Lake Monsters
 New Britain Bees
 New Britain Bees
 Nashua Silver Knights
 Worcester Bravehearts

St. John's
 Stevenson
 St. John's
 UConn
 Wheaton
 American Intern.



Alaska League

Champion: Mat-Su Miners

Player of the Year
 Top Prospects

Silver Slugger
 Gold Glove
 Coach of the Year

Carter Geffre
 Ridge Erickson
 Carter Geffre
 Carter Geffre
 Greg Pierantoni
 Tyler LeBrun

Mat-Su Miners
 Mat-Su Miners
 Mat-Su Miners
 Mat-Su Miners
 Mat-Su Miners
 Mat-Su Miners

Iowa
 BYU
 Iowa
 Iowa
 Pomona



Northwoods League

Champion: Green Bay Rockers

Most Valuable Player
 Pitcher of the Year
 Manager of the Year
 Co-Coach of the Year

Ethan Surowiec (3B)
 Isaac Milburn (LHP)
 Todd Reid
 Caleb Berry
 Logan Lawrence

Duluth Huskies
 Madison Mallards
 Traverse City Pit Spitters
 Traverse City Pit Spitters
 St. Cloud Rox

Mississippi
 Purdue



Coastal Plain League

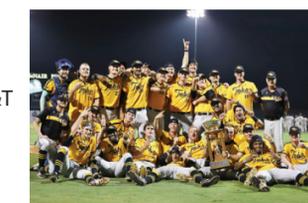
Champion: Wilson Tobs

Tucci Hitter of the Year
 Trackman Starting Pitcher of the Year
 Trackman Reliever of the Year
 CPL Sportsmanship Award
 Coach of the Year
 Organization of the Year

Carlos Pena
 Drew Harrison
 Casey O'Dell
 AJ Jones
 DJ Russ

Peninsula Pilots
 Boone Bigfoots
 Wilson Tobs
 Wilson Tobs
 Forest City Owls
 Macon Bacon

Indiana State
 Pearl River CC
 Florida Southern
 North Carolina A&T



Appalachian League

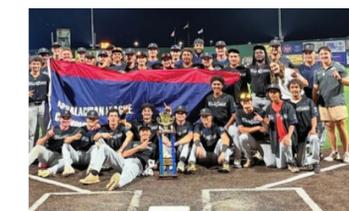
Champion: Bluefield Ridge Runners

Player of the Year
 Pitcher of the Year
 Manager of the Year
 Executive of the Year
 Organization of the Year

Kam Durnin
 Freddy Beruvides
 Rick Adair
 Patrick Ennis

Kingsport Axmen
 Greeneville Flyboys
 Kingsport Axmen
 Johnson City Doughboys
 Burlington Sock Puppets

Wichita State
 Virginia





Great Lakes League

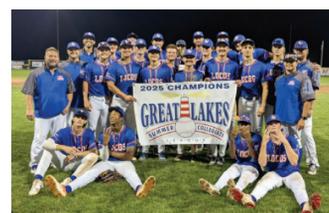
Champion: Lima Locos

Gary Henschen Player of the Year
 Lou Laslo Pitcher of the Year
 Tony Lucadella Top Pitcher Prospect of the Year
 Ron Miller Top Pro Prospect of the Year
 Joe Carbone Manager of the Year

Harrison Engskov
 Michael Bilo
 Jake Michalak
 Cole Crafton
 Kyle Peets

Flag City Sluggers
 Hamilton Joes
 Lima Locos
 Lima Locos
 Xenia Scouts

Arkansas State
 Wright State
 Ohio State
 Illinois



California Collegiate League

Champion: Conejo Oaks

Most Outstanding Player
 Most Outstanding Pitcher

Tyler Holley
 Gabe Howard

Conejo Oaks
 Conejo Oaks

Cal State Fullerton
 Oregon



Valley League

Champion: Strasburg Express

Player of the Year South
 Player of the Year North
 Pitcher of the Year South

Wyatt Campbell
 Landon Beaver
 Parker Munday
 Cannon Feazell
 Connor Hensley
 Brian Sutphin
 Phil Betterly

Staunton Braves
 Staunton Braves
 Staunton Braves
 Harrisonburg Turks
 Purcellville Cannons
 Staunton Braves
 Strasburg Express

Florida Southern
 Ala.-Birmingham
 Akron
 Clemson
 Rollins



Prospect League

Champion: Cape Catfish

Mike Schmidt Player of the Year
 ArmCare.com Pitcher of the Year
 Roland Hemond Pro Prospect of the Year
 Galen Woods Fireman of the Year
 Manager of the Year

Wally Diaz (1B)
 Samuel Guadamuz
 Wally Diaz (1B)
 Parker Primeaux
 Jack Dahm

REX Baseball
 REX Baseball
 REX Baseball
 Illinois Valley Pistol Shrimp
 Clinton LumberKings

Okla. Wesleyan
 Akron
 Okla. Wesleyan
 McNeese State



Florida Collegiate Summer League

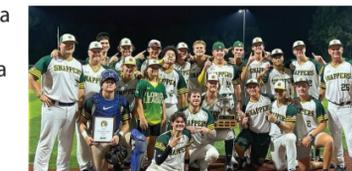
Champion: Orlando Snappers

Pitcher of the Year
 Player of the Year
 Reliever of the Year
 David Eckstein Sportsmanship Award

Ryland Bozenhard
 Dawson Mock
 Kaiden Lopez
 Blake Fields

Sanford River Rats
 Sanford River Rats
 Sanford River Rats
 Orlando Snappers

South Alabama
 South Florida
 C. Cent. Florida
 Houston



Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League

Champion: Big Train

Most Outstanding Hitter
 Most Outstanding Pitcher

Emilio Gonzalez
 Drew Bellis

Big Train
 Big Train

Florida Atlantic
 Central Florida



West Coast League

Champion: Birmingham Bells

Most Valuable Player
 Pitcher of the Year
 Top Prospect
 Coach of the Year

Josh Schleichardt
 Gio de Graauw
 Blake Ketelsen
 Ed Knaggs

Portland Pickles
 Kelowna Falcons
 Corvallis Knights
 Bellingham Bells

Oregon
 Newman
 Stanford





American Legion World Series

August 15-19, 2025 - Shelby, North Carolina

Chesapeake (Va.) beat League City (TX), 5-0, to win the American Legion World Series.

Team	Record
Greece, N.Y.	0-3
Rockport, Ind.	1-2
Chesapeake, Va.	4-1
Lincoln, Neb.	1-2
Asheville, N.C.	2-1
Portland, Ore.	2-2
Bossier City, La.	2-2
League City, Texas	3-2



REGIONALS

Northeast Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Fitton Field - Shrewsbury, Mass.

Greece (N.Y.) beat Waterford (Conn.), 7-5, to win regional

Cumberland, R.I.
Greece, N.Y.
St. Johnsbury, Vt.
Farmington, Maine
Bedford, N.H.
Fall River, Mass.
Waterford, Conn.
Shrewsbury, Mass.

Mid-Atlantic Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Joe Cannon Stadium - Ridge, Md.

Chesapeake (Va.) beat Cherry Hill (N.J.), 10-6, to win regional

Cherry Hill, N.J.
Wheeling, W. Va.
New Castle, Del.
Chesapeake, Va.
Bristol, Pa.
Cecil County, Md.
Hazelton, Pa.
St. Mary's, Md.



Southeast Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - McCrary Park - Asheboro, N.C.

Asheville (N.C.) beat Troy (Ala.), 7-6, to win regional

Caguas, Puerto Rico
Richland, S.C.
Owensboro, Ky.
Jacksonville, Fla.
Florence, S.C.
Asheville, N.C.
Troy, Ala.
Randolph County, N.C.

Mid-South Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Ronsick Field - Washington, Mo.

Bossier City (La.) beat Columbia (Tenn.), 5-3, to win regional

Mountain Home, Ark.
Columbia, Tenn.
Pontotoc, Miss.
Bossier City, La.
Ada, Okla.
Moberly, Mo.
Pittsburg, Kan.
Washington, Mo.

Great Lakes Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Lee Pfund Stadium Carol Stream, Ill.

Rockport (Ind.) beat Cedar Rapids (Iowa), 13-6, to win regional

Rockport, Ind.
Midland, Mich.
De Pere, Wis.
Beverly, Ohio
Appleton, Wis.
Danville, Ill.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Carol Stream, Ill.

Central Plains Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Starion Bank Field - Fargo, N.D.

Lincoln (Neb.) beat Fargo (N.D.), 6-3, to win regional

Lincoln, Neb.
Harrisburg, S.D.
Elkhorn, Neb.
Shakopee, Minn.
Grand Rapid, Minn.
West Fargo, N.D.
Yankton, S.D.
Fargo, N.D.

Northwest Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - Dehler Park - Billings, Mont.

Portland (Ore.) beat Idaho Falls (Idaho), 13-5, to win regional

Anchorage, Alaska
Gillette, Wyo.
Yakima, Wash.
Portland, Ore.
Ft. Collins, Colo.
Missoula, Mont.
Idaho Falls, Idaho
Billings, Mont.

Western Tournament

August 6-10, 2025 - FEBA Fields - Fairfield, Calif.

League City (Texas) beat Petaluma (Calif.), 9-1, to win regional

Eldorado, N.M.
Las Vegas, Nev.
Honolulu, Hawaii
League City, Texas
Hyrum, Utah
Petaluma, Calif.
Tucson, Ariz.
Fairfield, Calif.



TEAM USA

Collegiate National Team

45th USA vs. Japan Collegiate All-Star Championship Series

July 8	Japan 6, USA 1	Es Con Field (Hokkaido, Japan)
July 9	Japan 8, USA 1	Es Con Field (Hokkaido, Japan)
July 11	Japan 2, USA 0	Hard Off Eco (Niigata, Japan)
July 11/12	Japan 6, USA 5	Hard Off Eco (Niigata, Japan)
July 13	Japan 6, USA 5	Jingu Stadium (Tokyo, Japan)

Name	Pos.	B/T	Yr.	School	Hometown
Eric Becker	INF/OF	L/R	So.	Virginia	Thiells, N.Y.
Tyler Bell	INF	S/R	Fr.	Kentucky	Frankfort, Ill.
Drew Burruss	OF	R/R	So.	Georgia Tech	Perry, Ga.
Roch Cholowsky	INF	R/R	So.	UCLA	Chandler, Ariz.
Jason DeCaro	RHP	R/R	So.	UNC	East Northport, N.Y.
Jacob Dudan	RHP	R/R	So.	NC State	Huntersville, N.C.
Gabe Gaeckle	RHP	R/R	So.	Arkansas	Aptos, Calif.
Cole Gibler	LHP	L/L	Fr.	Arkansas	Blue Springs, Mo.
AJ Gracia	OF	L/L	So.	Virginia	Monroe Township, N.J.
Ryder Helfrick	C	R/R	So.	Arkansas	Discovery Bay, Calif.
Ethan Kleinschmit	LHP	L/L	So.	Oregon State	Mt. Angel, Ore.
Vahn Lackey	C	R/R	So.	Georgia Tech	Suwanee, Ga.
Mulivai Levu	INF	L/R	So.	UCLA	Huntington Beach, Calif.
Ryan Lynch	RHP	R/R	Fr.	UNC	Moorestown, N.J.
Ryan Marohn	LHP	L/L	So.	NC State	Youngsville, N.C.
Ryan McPherson	RHP	R/R	Fr.	Mississippi State	Hollywood, Fla.
Lucas Moore	OF	L/R	So.	Louisville	Cincinnati, Ohio
Blake Morningstar	RHP	R/R	So.	Wake Forest	Wyalusing, Pa.
Ethan Norby	LHP	R/L	So.	ECU	Kernersville, N.C.
Ricky Ojeda	LHP	L/L	So.	UC Irvine	Valencia, Calif.
Liam Peterson	RHP	R/R	So.	Florida	Palm Harbor, Fla.
Ace Reese	INF/OF	L/R	Fr.	Mississippi State	Canton, Texas
Chris Rembert	INF	R/R	Fr.	Auburn	Pensacola, Fla.
Brett Renfrow	RHP	R/R	So.	Virginia Tech	Manassas, Va.
Zion Rose	OF	R/R	So.	Louisville	Chicago, Ill.
Dax Whitney	RHP	R/R	Fr.	Oregon State	Blackfoot, Idaho

Coaches - Stars

Andy Stankiewicz	Manager	USC
Rusty Filter	Pitching Coach	Santa Clara
Don Wakamatsu	Bench/Hitting Coach	Oakland Ballers
Omar Johnson	First Base Coach	Jackson State
Bill Mosiello	Third Base Coach	TCU
Carlos Muñoz	Bullpen Coach	

Coaches-Stripes

Jonathan Hernandez	Manager	Bethune-Cookman
LaTroy Hawkins	Pitching Coach	
Dan Hartleb	Bench/Hitting Coach	Illinois
Michael Choice	First Base Coach	Baltimore Orioles
Dave Tollett	Third Base Coach	Florida Gulf Coast
Butch Chaffin	Assistant Coach	

Event	Dates
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL INVITATIONAL	APRIL 9-12
NCAA DIVISION II BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS	MAY 30-JUNE 7
17U NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	JUNE 10-13
10U FUTURES INVITATIONAL	JUNE 12-15
13U NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	JUNE 16-20
11U FUTURES INVITATIONAL	JUNE 19-22
12U NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING CAMP	JUNE 23-27
16U NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	JUNE 24-JUNE 27
COLLEGIATE NATIONAL TEAM: STARS VS STRIPES	JUNE 27-JULY 3
15U NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	JUNE 29-JULY 3
14U NATIONAL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS	JULY 6-12
18U NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING CAMP - PHASE I	JULY 18-22
NIKE RBI MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL	JULY 25-28
16U/17U NATIONAL TEAM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	JULY 24-27
13U/14U ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	JULY 31-AUGUST 3
15U/16U NATIONAL TEAM IDENTIFICATION SERIES	AUGUST 7-10
12U/14U NATIONAL TEAM IDENTIFICATION SERIES	AUGUST 14-17
11U/13U NATIONAL TEAM IDENTIFICATION SERIES	AUGUST 21-24
18U NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING CAMP - PHASE	AUGUST 25-28
18U NATIONAL TEAM TRAINING	AUGUST 29-31



TEAM USA

18U National Team

Sept. 4	Team USA 9, Panama 0	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan
Sept. 6	Team USA 4, Chinese Taipei 0	Nishizaki Stadium / Itoman City, Japan
Sept. 7	Team USA 9, Germany 3	Nishizaki Stadium / Itoman City, Japan
Sept. 7	Team USA 10, China 0	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan
Sept. 8	Team USA 11, Australia 1	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan
Sept. 11	Japan 6, Team USA 2 (F/8)	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan
Sept. 12	Team USA 1, Korea 0	Nishizaki Stadium / Itoman City, Japan
Sept. 13	Team USA 7, Puerto Rico 0	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan
Sept. 14	Team USA 2, Japan 0	Okinawa Cellular Stadium / Okinawa, Japan

Team USA wins the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) U-18 Baseball World Cup.

Name	Pos.	B/T	Yr.	School	Hometown
Carson Bolemon	LHP	R/L	2026	Southside Christian	Greenville, S.C.
Coleman Borthwick	UTIL	R/R	2026	South Walton	Freeport, Fla.
Will Brick	C	R/R	2027	Christian Brothers	Memphis, Tenn.
James Clark	INF	L/R	2026	St. John Bosco	Santa Ana, Calif.
Andrew Costello	C	R/R	2026	Cathedral Prep	Erie, Pa.
Brody Crane	RHP	R/R	2026	Neosho	Neosho, Mo.
Grady Emerson	INF	L/R	2026	Fort Worth Christian	Argyle, Texas
Jared Grindlinger	LHP	L/L	2027	Huntington Beach	Huntington Beach, Calif.
Jaden Jackson	INF	L/R	2026	St. John Bosco	Redondo Beach, Calif.
Cole Koeninger	UTIL	R/R	2026	Keller	Keller, Texas
Jorvorskie Lane Jr.	OF	R/R	2026	Grapevine	Grapevine, Texas
Jacob Lombard	INF	R/R	2026	Gulliver Schools	Miami, Fla.
Anthony Murphy	OF	R/R	2026	Corona	Corona, Calif.
Trey Rangel	RHP	R/R	2026	The Colony	The Colony, Texas
Gio Rojas	UTIL	R/L	2026	Stoneman Douglas	Coral Springs, Fla.
Aiden Ruiz	INF	S/R	2026	Stony Brook School	Queens, N.Y.
CJ Sampson	INF	L/R	2026	Tomball	Tomball, Texas
Brody Schumaker	INF	L/R	2026	Santa Margarita Catholic	Ladera Ranch, Calif.
Matthew Sharman	RHP	R/R	2026	Etowah	Woodstock, Ga.
Kaden Waechter	RHP	R/R	2026	Tampa Jesuit	St. Petersburg, Fla.

Coaches

Rick Eckstein	Manager
Brad Penny	Pitching Coach
David Eckstein	Assistant Coach
Steve Stone	Assistant Coach



Play Baseball in College!

By GIULIO GALLAROTTI
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR/THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

Play baseball in college.

In my four decades as a college professor, I have created greater bonds with athletes than I have with my students in class.

I am a former athlete and coach, but professionally, I am a teacher and professor at an elite private university. I have been involved with several teams doing everything from being an official faculty mentor, to unofficially working and traveling with the players and coaches. Primarily, I have worked very closely with the baseball team for over 15 years.

I am grateful for these experiences as we spend a great deal of time together, individually and as a group. These players and teams have enriched my life.

There is an ongoing discussion about whether college sports are beneficial to students in their lives. From my experience, I can tell you that the answer is a resounding YES. Here are several reasons that sports are so integral for the learning experience of athletes.

1. Sports are fun

Sports are a form of recreation that can benefit you in every possible way, psychologically and physically. If they can experience that sort of recreation in a structured way, it's all the better.

2. Friendships

There are few activities in college that create the kind of bonds that occur on sports teams. People remember very few of their classmates, but they remember all of their teammates. Competing together for a common goal creates the kind of bonds that last a lifetime. There are few greater social experiences.



3. Skills

I believe coaches are every bit as much educators as professors in the classroom. For people that have some sort of future in sports, even if it's coaching their children in Little League, the skills they will learn playing sports will serve them in very important ways throughout their lives. Of course, if they are looking for some sort of career in sports, whether it's playing or coaching, such skills are absolutely crucial.

4. Be a Better Student

Athletes have told me that they actually do better academically during the season than during the off-season. The logic is simple: In season, they have more structured time because they have to play and go to practice. Structured time leads to better study habits and better academic performance. In the off-season, their time

is unstructured which works against academic performance. Of course, athletes could very well structure their time in the off-season, but having a sports commitment *forces* you to structure your time. Moreover, each team functions as an emotional support group which is essential for students, especially when they struggle for academic or personal reasons.

5. Get a Job

I have been teaching business courses for quite a while. Recruiters from the business world, and even the organizational world, value athletes as future employees. Athletes possess essential business skills: they are tough, they follow instructions, they work well in teams. If parents think job prospects will be more limited because of playing sports, they are dead wrong. In fact, job prospects are greater if for those who take part in sports, assuming they take their studies seriously.



6. The Illusion of Trade-offs

People believe that there is a zero-sum relationship between studying and playing sports: If you do one, you cannot do the other. They are dead wrong. There are enough hours in the day to excel as an athlete and excel as a student. No one studies all day long, and rather than sitting on the couch or playing video games, they can take part in some sort of athletic activity. I have been teaching at schools whose philosophy is that athletes can also be scholars: the Scholar-Athlete Model. Many of the athletes that I've been associated with have gone on to splendid careers in all walks of life.

So for those wondering about the value of playing baseball in college, if a player has the skills to play, they should not think twice: Do it.

Giulio Gallarotti was the Faculty Advisor to the Wesleyan baseball team for 16 years. His presence with the team year-round, including on its annual spring trip to Arizona, was a key component of the integration of academics and athletics for the student-athletes.

He is a Professor of Government at Wesleyan University and Columbia University. He has been a visiting professor at the University of Rome, and has published numerous books and articles.

Giulio received his B.A. from Hunter College, and his PhD from Columbia University. A standout intercollegiate tennis player, he played tournament tennis in the northeastern United States.

Where Are They From?

MLB ALCS Playoff Rosters

It is often forgotten that those major league players we see on our TV actually came from somewhere. They were starring on fields just down the street from all of us before they became the stars that we see today.

Particularly with players under the microscope of the playoffs, it is informative to see where they came from.

Of the 104 players in the American League Championship Series in 2025, half of them played in college, while the rest were pretty evenly split between high school and international signings.

Interestingly, 20 of the 52 players from college rosters played at cold weather schools.

MLB ALCS Players - Where They Signed From			
Team	College	High	
		School	International
Toronto Blue Jays	17	3	6
Seattle Mariners	10	6	10
Milwaukee Brewers	13	7	6
Los Angeles Dodgers	12	6	8
Total	52	22	30

Los Angeles Dodgers

College (12)

P	Anthony Banda	San Jacinto JC	Texas
P	Ben Casparius	UConn	Conn.
P	Jack Dreyer	Iowa	Iowa
P	Emmet Sheehan	Boston College	Mass.
P	Blake Treinen	South Dakota St.	S.D.
P	Alex Vesia	Cal State East Bay	Calif.
P	Justin Wroblewski	Oklahoma State	Okla.
C	Will Smith	Louisville	Ky.
IF	Tommy Edman	Stanford	Calif.
IF	Max Muncy	Baylor	Texas
OF	Alex Call	Ball State	Ind.
OF	Justin Dean	Lenoir-Rhyne	N.C.

High School (6)

P	Tyler Glasnow	Hart HS	Calif.
P	Clayton Kershaw	Highland Park HS	Texas
P	Blake Snell	Shorewood HS	Wash.
C	Ben Rortvedt	Verona Area HS	Wash.
IF	Mookie Betts	John Overton HS	Tenn.
IF	Freddie Freeman	El Modena HS	Calif.

International (8)

P	Roki Sasaki	Japan
P	Yoshinobu Yamamoto	Japan
IF	Enrique Hernandez	Puerto Rico
IF	Hyeseong Kim	Korea
IF	Miguel Rojas	Venezuela
OF	Teoscar Hernandez	Dominican Republic
OF	Andy Pages	Cuba
P/DH	Shohei Ohtani	Japan

Milwaukee Brewers

College (13)

P	Grant Anderson	McNeese State	La.
P	Aaron Ashby	Crowder JC	Mo.
P	Robert Gasser	Houston	Texas
P	Jared Koenig	Cal State Monterey Bay	Calif.
P	Trevor Megill	Loyola Marymount	Calif.
P	Jacob Misiorowski	Crowder JC	Mo.
P	Chad Patrick	Purdue Northwest	Ind.
IF	Caleb Durbin	Washington St. Louis	Mo.
IF	Joey Ortiz	New Mexico State	N.M.
IF	Andrew Vaughn	California	Calif.
OF	Isaac Collins	Creighton	Neb.
OF	Sal Frelick	Boston College	Mass.
OF	Brandon Lockridge	Troy	Ala.

High School (7)

P	Tobias Myers	Winter Haven HS	Fla.
P	Quinn Priester	Cary-Grove HS	Ill.
C	Danny Jansen	Appleton West HS	Wisc.
IF	Jake Bauers	Marina HS	Calif.
IF	Brice Turang	Santiago HS	Calif.
OF	Blake Perkins	Verrado HS	Ariz.
DH	Christian Yelich	Westlake HS	Calif.

International (6)

P	Freddy Peralta	Dominican Republic
P	José Quintana	Colombia
P	Abner Uribe	Dominican Republic
C	William Contreras	Venezuela
IF	Andruw Monasterio	Venezuela
OF	Jackson Chourio	Venezuela

Toronto Blue Jays

College (17)

P	Chris Bassitt	Akron	Ohio
P	Shane Bieber	UC-Santa Barbara	Calif.
P	Mason Fluharty	Liberty	Va.
P	Kevin Gausman	LSU	La.
P	Jeff Hoffman	East Carolina	N.C.
P	Eric Lauer	Kent State	Ohio
P	Brendon Little	State Coll of Florida	Fla.
P	Max Scherzer	Missouri	Mo.
P	Louis Varland	Concordia-St. Paul	Minn.
P	Trey Yesavage	East Carolina	N.C.
C	Tyler Heineman	UCLA	Calif.
IF	Ernie Clement	Virginia	Va.
OF	Isiah Kiner-Falefa	Mid-Pacific Institute	Hawaii
OF	Nathan Lukes	Sacramento State	Calif.
OF	George Springer	UConn	Conn.
OF	Myles Straw	St. John's River JC	Fla.
OF	Daulton Varsho	Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Wisc.

High School (3)

IF	Addison Barger	King's HS	Fla.
P	Braydon Fisher	Clear Falls HS	Texas
OF	Davis Schneider	Eastern HS	N.J.

International (6)

P	Seranthony Dominguez	Dominican Republic
P	Yariel Rodgriguez	Cuba
C	Alejandro Kirk	Mexico
IF	Anders Gimenez	Venezuela
IF	Vladimir Guerrero, Jr.	Dominican Republic
OF	Anthony Santander	Venezuela

Seattle Mariners

College (10)

P	Matt Brash	Niagara	N.Y.
P	Logan Gilbert	Stetson	Fla.
P	Emerson Hancock	Georgia	Ga.
P	George Kirby	Elon	N.C.
P	Bryce Miller	Texas A&M	Tex.
P	Bryan Woo	Cal Poly	Calif.
C	Mitch Garver	New Mexico	N.M.
C	Cal Raleigh	Florida State	Fla.
UT	Miles Mastrobuoni	Nevada	Nev.
OF	Dominic Canzone	Ohio State	Ohio

High School (6)

P	Caleb Ferguson	West Jefferson HS	Ohio
P	Luke Jackson	Calvary Christian	Fla.
P	Gabe Speier	Dos Pueblos HS	Calif.
C	Harry Ford	North Cobb HS	Ga.
IF	JP Crawford	Lakewood HS	Calif.
IF	Josh Naylor	St. Joan of Arc	Canada

International (10)

P	Eduward Bazardo	Venezuela
P	Luis Castillo	Dominican Republic
P	Andres Munoz	Mexico
P	Carlos Vargas	Dominican Republic
IF	Jorge Polanco	Dominican Republic
IF	Leo Rivas	Venezuela
IF	Eugenio Suarez	Venezuela
OF	Randy Arozarena	Cuba
OF	Victor Robles	Dominican Republic
OF	Julio Rodriguez	Dominican Republic

THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN PITCHING PROJECT



A Non-Partisan Resource on Pitching

THE INTENT OF THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN PITCHING PROJECT is to inform coaches and players and parents of some of the many theories on being a successful pitcher.

Most every concept has advocates with very strong opinions on either side of the argument. Too often, a theory is chosen based on popularity, conventional wisdom, or because someone famous does it that way, as opposed to one's own analysis. With so many contradicting theories, it is essential to have an understanding of all of the possible options before deciding which one to commit to.

These pitching theories are presented without judgment, without confirmation bias, with no preconceptions, and without dogma or commercialism. In turn, the strong hope is that people are inspired to do the work to make up their own mind based on as much information as possible – and in turn, do what makes most sense to them.

Last month, the discussion was about keeping your arm healthy. This month, the discussion turns to throwing curveballs.

Q. What age should you learn to throw curveballs?

General Belief:

• **Ages 12-16 (or when you start to shave)** Dr. James Andrews

Curveballs between ages 12-16. Change-ups between ages 7-13. (andrewsinstitute.com)

• **Not Too Early** American Sports Medicine Institute

Throwing curveballs has been suggested as a risk factor, but the existing research does not support this concern. However, an adolescent pitcher may not have enough physical development, neuromuscular control, and proper coaching instruction to throw a curveball with good mechanics. Throwing curveballs too early may be counter-productive, leading to arm fatigue as well as limiting the youth's ability to master fastball mechanics. (asmi.org)

• **When Young** Brian Cammarota

To say curveballs are safe is misleading; they are safer only if the pitcher has nearly flawless mechanics. Many young pitchers have poor mechanics when throwing a fastball, and throwing a curveball greatly increases the chances for poor mechanics, especially when pitchers are fatigued. Young pitchers are more likely to alter their mechanics to create a better curveball. This will increase forces on young arms that are not fully developed leading to a host of upper extremity injuries. (philly.com)

Other Philosophies:

• **Inhibits other pitches** Kyle Boddy

Teaching the changeup early means trying to improve the changeup early. The drive to become "Hamels-esque" in 11U means that you could be missing out on what originally gave Cole Hamels the ability to throw a fastball 92-94 MPH. (drivelinebaseball.com)

THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN



PITCHING PROJECT

Contrasting Philosophies:

• **Curveballs are less stressful than fastballs, including in youth pitchers**

Curveballs in Youth Pitchers: A Review of the Current Literature

by Trent M. Tamate and Alexander C. Garber

Pitch type, specifically curveballs, remains one of the most controversial potential risk factors for arm pain/injury. The idea that throwing curveballs can be detrimental to a young pitcher's arm has long been accepted by the baseball and sports medicine communities. However, both the American Sports Medicine Institute and Pitch Smart, a collaboration between USA Baseball and MLB, acknowledge that existing research does not support this widely held belief. Despite the lack of evidence, both organizations continue to recommend that pitchers refrain from learning to throw curveballs until they reach maturity. This itself is an arbitrary threshold that has been described as anywhere from 13-14 years old to when boys start shaving...

Curveballs are associated with greater forearm supination. It has been proposed that this particular forearm positioning leads to more injuries at the elbow. However, in a cadaveric study assessing strain with valgus loading on the anterior and posterior bundles of the UCL, only minimal differences were found with changes in forearm rotation. These findings contradict the assertion that the increased forearm supination seen with curveballs elevates the risk of UCL injury...

Biomechanical studies evaluating different pitch types have not demonstrated higher stresses on the throwing arm with curveballs. In fact, the majority of studies concluded that fastballs place the greatest amount of stress on a pitcher's arm. Indicating that the curveball is less harmful than the first pitched learned by all young throwers...

Although evidence has been mixed, observational studies to this point have largely been unable to find a significant increase in arm pain/injury associated with throwing curveballs...

Studies that have found an association between curveballs and arm pain/injury are typically confounded. Pitchers who learn to throw curveballs, especially at younger ages, tend to be more skilled. These pitchers are often bigger athletes, who throw faster. Furthermore, pitchers of this caliber throw more often, accruing large pitch volumes. All of these factors are independently associated with an increased risk of arm pain/injury...

Conclusion

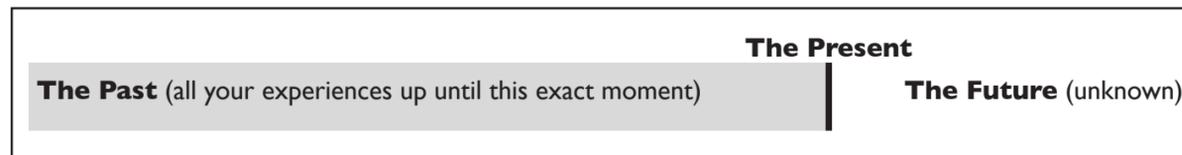
Longstanding taboos against teaching curveballs to pitchers before puberty remains ingrained in youth baseball. This is despite a deficiency of convincing evidence in both biomechanical and epidemiological research showing increased harm. Larger studies with improved control of confounding variables may eventually reveal curveballs to be the dangerous pitch that many believe it to be. However, at present, the sports medicine community has no good evidence to recommend against its use.



A Game Plan for Playing in the Moment

By MARK WOODWORTH
EDITOR/THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

Too often people take what happened in the past, and presume it will happen again the future. In turn, they skip over the present moment.



The present moment is the only time when fear and doubt and physical tension does not exist. To get into the present moment, a player must envision the next pitch (the future), then direct his attention to what is most important while the next pitch is occurring (the present).

The result is getting out of your head and into your body. Pre-pitch routines, especially a breath, can remind the player to come back to the present moment.

If you really, really, really want to play baseball well, then...

In the beginning,, to be a baseball player who reaches their potential, you must start with this concept: You really, really, really have to want to play baseball well. If this is not the case, your game will be lacking and then you'll always get what you get, and you can't get upset.

If you really want to play baseball well, then:

- **You must play and practice in the moment.**

It is well agreed that thinking about what happened in your last at-bat, or about a school test tomorrow, makes playing baseball difficult.

- **To do that, you must pay attention (have focus) and not have any gaps between what you think is happening, and what is really happening.**

Paying attention is taken for granted, but being in the moment is essentially simply paying attention to what is really happening - not just what you *think* is happening, but what is *really* happening.

- **What to pay attention to? To how things feel and your senses.**

It is a physical game, and paying attention to the physical world is essential. There is a distinction though: For practices, it is fine to pay attention to the physical aspect of how things feel. But in games, it doesn't matter how you feel - it's how you sense the world around you: the ball, the bat, your body and the field. Basically, get out of your head, and into the game.

- **But, we get distracted all the time.**

There are so many distractions in baseball, that is very hard to stay focused in the moment. Distractions cover everything from opponents, umpires, teammates, the score, your batting average, errors, strikeouts, great plays, great hits, the crowd, the weather.

- **So, create a plan:**

- 1) **Dream big! Choose a brilliant future;**

- 2) **Choose what to feel and pay attention to in order to make it happen.**

There is your overall plan where you ask yourself these questions: What is your reason/purpose for playing baseball? What kind of team do you want? What kind of player do you want to be? There is also your game plan, where you ask yourself what you specifically want to do on this pitch (hit a liner in the gap; throw a slider low and away on the black).

Then, you choose what to pay attention to in order to achieve it: I want to be all-state! Then I have to lift more, fix my load, have better pitch selection. I want to hit a liner in the gap! I have to look for a fastball belt/thigh and attack with my swing.

- **Then, trust your plan and let it happen. Remember to recognize distractions and come back to your plan.**

Once you have your plan, direct your attention to action. You must get out of your thoughts, and just let the action happen. Notice when distractions try to pull you away, and then come back to your plan (this might be the absolute most important mental game skill).

- **After a play, get feedback but without judgment.**

Don't beat yourself up, or celebrate too long. We all know the game is too humbling for that. The key is to evaluate, but without the judgments of "That was good," and "That was bad." Instead, a late swing is not bad and makes you a bad person, it just is a late swing. Only then can you move on and pay attention to the moment on the next play.

Then, and only then will there be the possibility to **play in the moment**, with confidence, relaxation, competitiveness and greatness.

THE BASEBALL COLLEGIAN

Choose Joy

"I choose joy, man. I choose to elevate others. I was a happy guy. I enjoyed playing. And I didn't like seeing people down, man. When we were in a baseball locker room, these are my guys. I'm spending more time with them than with my family. I want them to feel good about things. I want them to be happy. I think it's an attitude. It's how you choose to look at it."
-- Jeff Francoeur, former Major League player

Jeff Francoeur was known for being a great teammate during his big-league career, the kind of guy who brought a positive spirit into the clubhouse on a daily basis.

Now, Francoeur does naturally have a positive personality, but as he explained in a story in *The Athletic* recently, sometimes he had to work at it.



"There were numerous days I came to the park and there's no doubt I was in a bad mood or like, 'This sucks, I don't want to do this.' And I said I can either choose to be like this, and let's be honest, who the heck wants to be around that? I didn't want to be around that. Or I can choose to put a smile on my face, turn this around and be positive and be a guy that people want to be around in the clubhouse and the coaches want you out there."

Regardless of your line of work, or even if you're retired, you can be a positive influence on the people you come in contact with today. We all have our days where we're tired, or grumpy, or whatever it might be, but we have a choice as to whether or not we allow that to impact how we interact with others.

Today, choose to be a good teammate. Choose joy.
Win Your Day!

Contact MLB.com writer Steve Gilbert at winyourday@gmail.com to sign up for his daily inspirational emails.

