



SOFTBALL SWING POSITIONS

That Limit Contact, Power and Efficiency

By Hitting Coach Ken Brooke

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“YOU CAN’T FIX THE ISSUES YOU NEVER KNEW YOU HAD”



*Ken is ahead of the curve when it comes to finding swing flaws. I think even a major leaguer could benefit from his analysis and instruction. **Ben Zobrist** (Cubs)*



*Ken knows how to break down the fundamentals of the Major League swing thru his video analysis. **Scott Coolbaugh** (MLB Hitting Coach)*



*Ken has done an amazing job breaking down and teaching the swing patterns of Major League hitters. **Alonzo Powell** (former MLB Hitting Coach).*



ABOUT COACH BROOKE

Coach Brooke played college baseball and is a former college head coach. He played major men's fastpitch and provided video swing analysis for the Chicago Bandits NPF team. He has worked camps with several Major League hitting coaches and players and the Texas Rangers have used his analysis photos for their hitting guide. He is certified by On Base University as a professional hitting expert using video analysis, functional movement screening and 3D sequence and posture training using K-motion vest.

THREE MEASURES OF HITTING

Power comes from the speed of each body part (the gears) and how well they work together in a synchronized chain (Kinematic Sequence). This is known as "Addition". In other words, this is how the body adds or transitions the forces together to ultimately accelerate the bat

Contact is a function of timing and bat path. Correct timing and a good bat path create a larger acceptable margin for error, therefore, allowing a player to make better or more consistent (squared up) contact each time.

Efficiency is the player's ability to adjust to speeds and locations of the pitch. By eliminating any extra moves that costs the hitter time and effort, it allows them to adapt to each pitch more successfully. Certain positions enable players to adjust efficiently to different speeds and locations of the pitch.

SOFTBALL SWING POSITIONS

COLLEGE PLAYERS VS PRO/OLYMPIC PLAYERS

SECTION 1

Negative and Positive Move (Pre-swing)

Sway vs Balanced Negative Move

Unstable Base vs Athletic, Stable Base

Casting Hands vs Staying Inside the Ball

Dead Hands vs Live and Independent Hands

Drifting vs Stay Back Rotation

Forward/Backward Stuck Posture vs Changing Posture

Flying Elbow vs Hands Equal to Elbow

SECTION 2

SWING SEQUENCE

Steep Approach vs Getting the Bat Flat Behind the Body

Push vs Connection

Dropping hands vs Forward Moving Hands

Hanging Back vs Weight Shift Forward

Losing Swing Space vs Maintaining Swing Space

Swinging Down vs Swinging Level or Slightly Up

Small Hit Zone vs Big Hit Zone

SECTION 3

Timing the Front Foot With the Pitch

Front Foot Down Late vs Front Foot Down On Time

BONUS SECTION

SECTION 1

NEGATIVE & POSITIVE MOVE

Negative move is any movement away from the pitcher and the furthest point back prior to moving forward. Positive move is the movement toward the pitcher ending at Toe Touch. *Keep in mind that prior to negative move, the best hitters are balanced with hands back and up.



Sway

vs



Balanced negative move

SWAY

Sway is when the hitter's negative move brings her weight over her back foot instead of against it. A sway over the back foot reduces the player's ability to make solid contact. It also hinders a player's timing and rhythm as she adjusts to the speed and location of the pitch.



Unstable Base



Stable, Athletic Base

UNSTABLE BASE

When a hitter's front foot touches the ground, she needs to be in a balanced, athletic position and feel the equal pressure on her feet and between her knees. Turning the front knee outward or lifting the back heel can both cause a hitter to lose the ability to efficiently adjust to speeds and locations.



CASTING HANDS

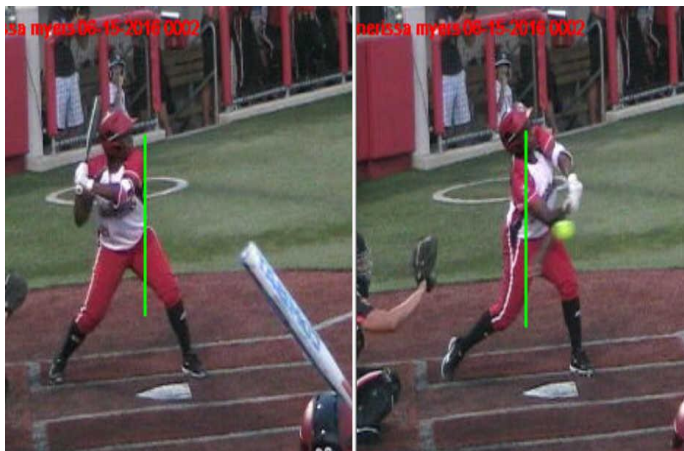
If the hands move outside the front elbow prior to heel plant position, it becomes difficult to adjust from inside to the outside pitch later in the swing. The hands should remain inside the front elbow for the first 1/3 of the swing.

Casting Hands vs **Staying Inside the Ball**



Dead Hands vs **Live & Independent Hands**

More often the best hitters' move or "stretch" their hands away from the head when beginning a positive move. When the hands are "live and independently moving," they are quicker to make the first move and adjust to locations. "Dead hands" drift with forward movement and can reduce power.



Drifting vs **Stay back rotation**

Hitting begins with a linear movement towards the pitcher, but when the hands start forward, the swing becomes rotational. Drifting weight towards the pitcher during rotation will reduce power.



Forward stuck Posture

vs



Changing Posture: Forward to backward



Backward Stuck posture

vs

Changing Posture: Forward to backward



As the hitter begins her negative move, she needs to have forward posture (inside eye ahead of the belt buckle). But as the positive move begins, the hitter's posture should begin changing from forward to backward (inside eye behind the belt buckle). Posture that doesn't go from forward to backward will reduce the ability to make solid contact as well as reduce power.



Flying Elbow

vs



Hands equal to elbow

FLYING ELBOW

At toe touch position, a hitter's rear elbow should not stick out behind the hands. This is called "flying elbow". Keeping the hands even or behind the elbow allows the player to "whip" the bat with both hands. Flying elbow causes a hitter to push her hands ahead of rotation, which reduces bat velocity.