



TINCHERPITCHING.COM, LLC

**DECEMBER
2010**

*We prepare this newsletter because we
enjoy talking softball
And, seeing pitchers and players improve.
Please send it to friends who also enjoy
the sport.*

CABIN FEVER

Hitting/Pitching/Throwing practice in an
open-gym format

Denny will be available to offer assistance

**Everyone welcome.....bring your
friendsreserve now !!!**

A DAY AT THE EDGE IN ROANOKE

This time of year it is hard to get
practice time outdoors, so we just
wanted to provide an indoor place
where you can sharpen your skills
during your break from school.
Numbers are limited so you will have
plenty of space for throwing, pitching,
and plenty of time to hit.

**THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 30Th**

\$25 per student

Parent/coach invited to hang-out (no charge)

Choose your 2-hour block

9-11am; 11am-1pm; 1pm-3pm; 3pm-5pm

(Blocks are limited to 10 players)

Email Susan to SIGN UP TODAY !



Season Greetings !

We wish you and yours...

a Merry Christmas.... and...

a New Year of many 'K's' !!!

**IF YOUR HOLIDAY TRAVELS BRING YOU
TO OR THROUGH ROANOKE, VA...**

**PLAN ON MAKING A STOP at "The Edge"
FOR A PITCHING LESSON.**

Our schedule is flexible, DECEMBER 20TH - 31ST

JUST GIVE US A SHOUT AND WE'LL MAKE A PLAN.

SCHEDULE:

Roanoke lessons continue Monday and Thursday evenings.

January 7, 8, 9—Concord, NC

January 15th-University of Maryland

January 21, 22, 23 – Chester, VA

January 28, 29, 30 – Bristol, VA

February 18, 19, 20 – Chester, VA

TincherPitching@AOL.COM

540-960-1750

Developing a Balanced Pitcher

By Connie Clark, Head Coach

The University of Texas

I appreciate Denny asking me to contribute to his newsletter. I enjoy reading it monthly to gain insight about pitching and the great game of fast pitch softball.

One thing I am intrigued with when talking with colleagues is what pitchers should focus on when they make a jump to the collegiate level. There are varied opinions; however, it should be stressed that when developing a pitcher, a coach should take a “balanced” approach. At times we can get caught up in the physical mechanics and although they are extremely important, they are not the only key to success. Pitchers must develop their mental approach as well as fine tune their “deceptiveness.” The joy of working with pitchers is identifying strengths which are unique to their own physical and mental makeup. Each pitcher will also show “deceptive capabilities” which can create a thought in a hitter’s mind which may not be reality.

Having a simple approach to physical mechanics is the way to go. At times coaches can get obsessed with every detail of a pitcher’s motion and it will inhibit their growth potential. Pitchers have variances in body size, shape and in their level of flexibility. If you break down video of high level pitchers, they possess four key mechanical traits: Line of force, space/slot for their arm to travel, sequencing action of the arm (shoulder, elbow, wrist, fingers) and body position/posture. They may have different wind-ups/pre-motions and other style variances but those pieces make them who they are. Pitchers have idiosyncrasies which allow them to feel comfortable and rhythmical. As a coach help them develop the four key areas as well as allow freedom for their individual tendencies to shine.

The mental game goes above and beyond pitching and athletics. Athletes and coaches make statements about the mental game being the “difference maker” as they rise through levels of competition (college, pro) Talking with colleagues, it is evident; the game between the ears is where we devote a vast amount of our time. This has to do with the mental make-up of the young athlete we work with from this generation. Current athletes multi task and are challenged when asked to focus on one thing. This is neither negative nor positive, it is what it is. A solid mental game is about focus, determination, confidence, being consumed by the moment and controlling the controllable. These are the traits that contribute to a pitcher being an All American and more importantly, the traits which help a person deal with life’s toughest fate. Developing the mental game should be worked in to a practice plan as diligently as repetitions on a physical mechanic. Mental practice may include: 1. Taking “mental reps” which may entail a pitcher visualizing the perfect curve ball or she may envision giving up a hit, but focus on her process to reset and prepare for the next one. 2. Prepare a workout to focus only on non physical items for the day... Is your pitchers self talk between pitches positive? Is she using any strategies to be completely present and focused on the upcoming pitch? (deep breath, focal point, etc.)

3. Videotape a workout/game and edit it to show only reactions and emotions pre and post pitch.

By stressing the importance of the mental game, young pitchers will gain much more than becoming a better pitcher. They will become a better individual by being able to draw the analogy of living life one day at a time to throwing a pitch one pitch at a time.

Deceptive capability has nothing to do with a young athlete trying to bend or manipulate the rules in a given situation. It is about a hitter thinking she sees something from a pitcher, but in reality she is confused by what her eyes are relaying to her brain. Some pitchers have a knack for being extremely deceptive. This has to do with their physical mechanics as well as their ability to control the count by varying the pattern of pitch selection. Video analysis is critical when developing this area with your pitcher. Front (catcher view) and dominant hand side are the two areas to focus on. Analyze the four key mechanical traits discussed earlier. Are they consistent with their presentation regardless of the pitch they are throwing? Is their tempo/rhythm the same on each pitch? Are they showing the base coaches their grip? Do they tip pitches because of body position or other habits?

Balance is the goal in fully developing a pitcher. Time demands or the stress of getting ready for the next game may detour a coach from spending time on anything other than physical practice. Coaches who develop these three areas will reap the biggest rewards by seeing their pitchers reach their full potential.

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Meet **Natalie Tittume**.....

...3 time Olympic Medalist (2000,2004,2008) representing Australia.



Natalie and a fellow Australia Olympian started a company called...



With the support of experts and specialists in their fields, TLC Mentoring has developed a series of modular programs designed to engage, empower and enlighten participants about the potential they possess, both individually and collectively.

We met Natalie in Japan where she played professionally for several years and was Angela's catcher and good friend. Over the next few issues we will be featuring some writings from the TLC Blog, Some great stuff, we know you will enjoy and if you'd like to read more on your own...

Visit: <http://www.tlcmentoring.com.au/Index.aspx> ..then click on TLC Blog (upper right corner)

Awards vs Rewards

Every year awards nights come around. For athletes, coaches and administrators, they are an opportunity to be recognized or to recognize the efforts and achievements of others.

But what happens to that person who really wants to win, to be recognized for their hard work, effort and selfless acts when they happen 'not' to win?

Sometimes it can be a real disappointment, and the person may question why they were overlooked? Was it political? Was it the popular choice? Or was it simply that they weren't as good as they thought they were? This is where you really need to look beyond the actual award and look to the goals and standards you set for yourself during the year. It becomes a matter of weighing up personal achievements vs public achievements. This is where the enjoyment of everyone's achievements will start becoming a real celebration, and not self-disappointment and conversation of who should have won.

Let's face it, we all enjoy being recognized for our efforts; being told we are the best. But what if there were no awards nights? Would we look back on our achievements differently? Do we then start to believe that just because we might have won the award that we achieved everything we personally set out to do?

Awards are great, don't get me wrong, but self-reward last longer. It forces you to re-evaluate more often and challenges you to continue to improve and change every day, month or year.

The rewards that come from being part of a team far outweigh any individual awards on offer.

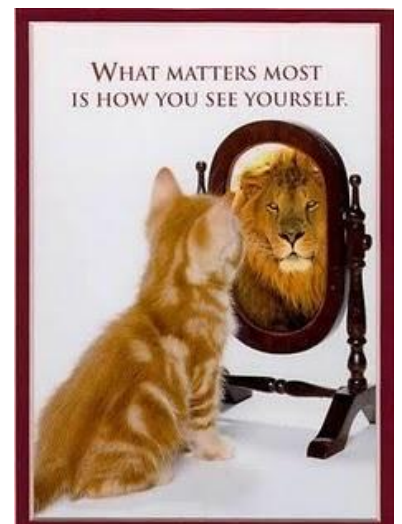
Ask any player, official or coach who has won an individual award, but whose team didn't realize their ultimate goal, and they would most often give it back to share the spoils of victory and success with their teammates.

That's all great to say, but you really need to believe it. We are all trained and are very good at saying the right things. We all learn the right answers, but do we know the right actions?

Start setting personal goals today and work towards achieving these.

Forget about the public victories because in reality, depending on the profile of your sport, they last the night and at most a few more days, then every year a faint reminder of who won the year before.

Remember to enjoy the achievements of others and concentrate on ticking your own boxes every day, month and year. Awards nights will become more about the sport and community than the awards. More importantly, you will be able to sit there quietly every year realistically assessing your performance and deciding how you will move forward to help the team and yourself succeed next year.



Highway Hi's ...

What a great month! We have to say hello to new friends...

Virginia Beach was so nice to us and lots of kids with so much potential. Had to go south to make new friends from the north...Delaware Storm and Brewster (New York) Rockets...we enjoyed sitting around the hotel talking softball with you!

Virginia Wesleyan College was great. Coaches Brandon and Jim are first class.

Richmond Ruckus: what hospitality!

Next stop, Richmond; Saw some exciting new talent and old friends. Some of these kids will be amazing if they keep learning the form.

Heading north, we always love the D.C. area. Saw a couple of kids develop right before our eyes.

Wow, love kids who soak it up like a sponge!

Practical Tips for Pitchers

(and the mechanical issues related to them)

By Denny Tincher

She Used to be a Great Pitcher...

Often parents bring me a new student and tell stories of how she **used to** strike out everyone, but she seems to have lost it. Yes, sometimes they lose some effectiveness, but most often everyone else grows up around her and catches up to her. It is not a matter of the pitcher losing it, but of her failing to improve with age. A couple of years ago I had watched a kid, who was not a pitcher, play several games and felt she would be amazing. She was far above the other kids in her age class. I watched her this year. She was playing exactly the same way and at the same level, but in a higher age class. She was simply average, at best, because she was still relying on the same old ways of doing things and the hope of getting better with age.

Related Mechanics

Assuming that you are going to get better just because you get older is why so many kids never reach the promise they show in earlier years. Many things in your form and motion should mature as you age. If this is not happening, it is time to ask serious questions about your approach. Don't just sit there and hope the magic will somehow return. It takes planning, practicing with a purpose, a clear understanding of where you want to go, uncompromising work ethic, and a timeline to keep you on track. Also, be sure you have an experienced instructor that understands, and shares, your commitment to reaching those goals. Success doesn't just happen. You must make it happen and, if you take your eyes off the prize for just a minute, people will start passing you.

THE COMPLETE PROGRAM

By **Robbie Hebert, CSCS**

Director of Sports Performance

Edge Sports Performance Center

3710 Tom Andrews Road Northwest

Roanoke, VA 24019

www.theedgesp.com

With 2010 wrapping up, and 2011 right around the corner, what better time to start your preparation for the upcoming season. So where do you start? Before you begin any training program lets take a look at what makes up the components of a beneficial program.

There 5 components that make up a complete program:

1- Flexibility

- Movements in softball require large amounts of flexibility.
- Increases in flexibility decrease the risk of injury and improves athletic performance.

2- Strength

Three parts specific to the demands of softball

1. Core strength (abdominals and legs)
2. General body strength
3. Shoulder and elbow (forearm) strengthening

3- Speed, Agility, and Explosiveness

- Improvement of speed and agility enhance defensive and base running skills
- Explosiveness helps improve offensive skills
- It is very important for pitchers to include lateral movements in their workouts

4- Nutrition

- Improves athletic performance and decreases the risk of injury

5- Rest

- Decreases the chance of muscle fatigue and risk of injury
- Work to rest ratio 2:1 (includes rest away from activity)

These are the essential parts to any strength and conditioning program. For information on a customized program please contact me at

Robbie@theedgesp.com.

Happy Holidays!!

January 15th, 2011 – Make plans now to attend...

Angela Tincher's Winter Pitching Sessions

at The Bubble- University of Maryland Campus

Session I (Fundamentals & Mechanics) Ages 9-12 -- 9:00am to 11:30am

Session II (Fine Tuning your Delivery) Ages 12 & up -- 11:30am – 2:00pm

Session III (Movement and Spins) Ages 12 & up -- 2:00-4:30pm

With Guest Instructor, Denny Tincher

For more information/registration visit: <http://terosssoftball.com/>

LET THE BUG LIVE!

By Suzy Willemsen

Willemsen Sports Training

Fairfax Station, VA

www.suzywillemsen.org

We've all heard this one before, "Squish the bug!" which refers to pivoting your back foot when swinging. But squishing the bug is definitely a movement that will diminish your power so I say "Let the bug live!!" First, it causes the center of gravity of the hitter to move backwards over the back leg therefore making it difficult to reach out in front for extension. The hitter in effect ends up pushing her front hip back to turn instead of allowing the back hip to be free so the energy she is generating can be unloaded into the ball. The bat head is supposed to move forward so it doesn't make sense to have our center of gravity and our momentum going in the opposite direction.

Second, the friction created between a hitter's cleats and the ground creates resistance so a hitter's hips aren't able to move as fast or explode as much as they could. In addition, where there is friction, there is energy and a hitter does not want to send energy back into the ground but into the ball! In fact to overcome such friction, some hitters like to imagine they are "kicking" with their back leg so there is little or no contact with the ground. By "kicking" your back foot forward you get a quicker hip turn and a more powerful swing since you are generating forward momentum blocked by a strong front leg thus creating a whip-like swing. The movement is very similar to Denny's leg snap with the pitchers.

Finally and most importantly squishing the bug breaks the kinetic sequence. But why? From the kinetic sequence we know that things should start from the ground with the feet, move to the hips, through the shoulders and then the energy is released by the hands. Squishing the bug is a movement initiated by the hips, in the middle of the sequence. Try wringing a towel out by holding the top still and wringing out the bottom. See how the towel twists gradually starting from the bottom moving up, like a nice kinetic pattern. Now hold the top and bottom still and have someone grab the middle of the towel and start twisting. See how the towel twists above and below the initial rotation at the same time, just like squishing the bug. The body gets locked together making it is impossible to separate the rotation of the hips and shoulders and such separation is crucial to having a powerful swing. Therefore the body parts rotate at the same time, making the hitter use their arms more and having a slower, spinning type of swing. (Yes, it looks like the player is lunging!)

Hopefully you can see the importance of pushing off the backside and the need for a weight transfer against a firm front side. It keeps the center of gravity around the spine and the energy moving towards the ball. It allows the hitter to overcome the friction between the cleats and ground so the hips can move much quicker. Pushing off helps to create an efficient kinetic sequence so the energy generated will be delivered into the ball instead of the ground, absorbed by the body or not generated at all. So I'll say it again---Let the Bug Live!

Next month I'll discuss the importance of a properly positioned back elbow and the problems that can arise when it is not where it should be.

Wishing you a joyful Holiday Season and a happy and prosperous New Year!

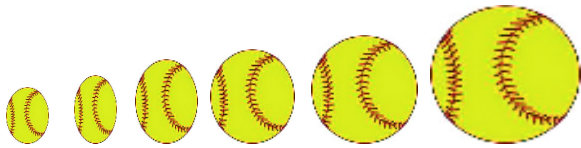
Suzy

Softball is like love...

First you learn the rules of the game, and then, you forget the rules and play from your heart.

TincherPitching@AOL.COM

540-960-1750



100 DAYS TO GREATNESS...

Someone once said,

“The difference between a dream and a goal is a plan”.

How do you help your daughter, your players, or your coaches develop individual plans?

Most of us just don't know where to start.



Let us bring 100 Days of Greatness to you...

Too often we simply do not know how to go about helping our players develop the structure they need to reach their potential.

That is why we are making our new training program available for your next player's clinic, coach's clinic, or travel organization.



A **3rd baseman** wants to be quicker to the ball, but has no concept of how to identify, and practice, the very specific components that allow that to happen, and then she don't know how to judge if her plan is working.

A **hitter** wants more line drives, but doesn't know how to design a very detailed program that helps her improve every single day.

A **pitcher** finds herself hitting a plateau and works harder, only to discover that she just gets more frustrated.

They each jump from team to team, go from weight-lifting to conditioning, play even more tournaments, and go to every clinic in the area hoping to find that secret that will be a breakthrough.

Our program, **100-Days to Greatness**, is a very simple concept that allows parents, coaches, and players to chart a course for each individual based on her specific needs. It requires some research, working closely with the player to identify her specific needs, and a good bit of energy and creativity from everyone. However, it allows you to become a partner in her goals, helping you work together in a more fun way, and giving you a method to judge when a change in course is needed.

Learn more about bringing this new training concept to your organization,
contact us at TincherPitching@aol.com

Be sure to “like” us on Facebook !!

Pray as if everything depends on God;

Work as though everything depends on you.

Who is Your Pitching Coach?

By Denny Tincher

Many years ago I sought advice from the coach of a well-known team regarding my daughter's pitching. He looked across the table at me and said, "Get her a pitching coach". When I tried to ask why I couldn't learn and grow and teach her, he was impatient and rather rude in saying I was wasting my time if we didn't get her a pitching coach. I have always gotten a little satisfaction out of the way things turned out for us.

So, who really is your pitching coach? I always tell parents the primary responsibility lies with them. I will teach them how the process works, but they need to be the one who is there every single day to evaluate form, help diagnose little problems, keep her enthused, and pay attention to details. I absolutely love working with pitchers and seeing them grow. I probably spend 90-percent of my waking hours thinking of how to do a better job. However, I realized early on that nobody would care as deeply about my own daughter's success as me.

I would lay awake nights thinking up new drills, drive around during the day trying to imagine a new way to overcome a problem, and always try to think about the next level and the things I needed to learn to be ready. We would go to college games and I would take lots of video of the pitchers, watch it over and over in slow motion, and try to see which things might apply to my daughter. When, on occasion we went to pitching clinics, the instructors would always focus on the bigger and stronger girls, so I would have to spend the next few days building her self-esteem and trying to think of ways to get this little girl powerful enough to go head-to-head with those who had obvious physical advantages.

Most of all, I wanted to know what made her tick. How was she unique? What might be her niche? Which specific pitches came most easily to her and what things in her personality and body would enable her to do something special with those pitches?

Do not be intimidated by the things you need to learn. Jump in there, try the drills, understand the process, ask the questions, go to a few pitching clinics alone and follow the instructor around with a notebook (I did it more than once for several reasons), and take responsibility for your pitcher's success.

As we learned together, Angela and I discovered some very unique ways to solve problems and I still use some of them. Today I often stumble upon solutions in the most unusual ways simply by continuing to experiment and keeping an open mind. And, I encourage parents to do the same. Recently, while working with a trainer on ways to find extra power in the body, we discovered something extremely interesting. Now, how to integrate it comfortably into the motion? The answer came from a young pitcher who took the concept home and began experimenting with her father. They not only found a way to make it work for her, but gave me an idea that is helping dozens of pitchers.

A good pitching instructor is an invaluable resource. Probably the second-best resource a pitcher can have. The most important is still someone in the family who believes in her and will go to any lengths to help reach the dreams that only the two of them can see for her. Don't be afraid to assume the primary role of training your pitcher. I spend much of our time training parents so they can continue the work at home. When they get involved, they bring the pitcher back better than before and we can begin working toward the next level.



Bat: \$100, Glove: \$60, Batting Gloves: \$20, Bases: \$29 each,
3 hours at the batting cage: \$75, Umpire: \$30.

The love of softball: PRICELESS.

I was going to change the prices on this when I found it as it seemed outdated....but then, I thought it was much funnier as it wasdon't we wish we could get a Stealth Bat for that ! ha-ha

THERE IS NOW A WAY WORK WITH DENNY VIA VIDEO...

“CHALKTALK”

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

If you are having trouble with a specific pitch, dealing with a problem with mechanics, or simply looking to improve a specific part of your pitching, we may be able to help through video analysis. This program is designed to work on very specific areas within the pitch, identify problems, help you maintain and improve your form between lessons, or allow new students to get feedback to see how we could help if we get together for instruction.

Simply video yourself pitching, close-up, from the open side, and email it to Denny at TincherPitching@aol.com (see instructions & pricing below) We only need to see the pitch a couple of times, as longer video takes much longer to upload and download. You will be surprised at how much information we can get from a single pitch, and those corrections will apply each time you throw that pitch.

You will receive your personal video analysis of the pitch you selected with special tips from Denny, usually within 24-hours. You will have his audio and visual notes within your video, an analysis of what he sees and how you need to work on it. He will point out specific problems, what you are doing well, and things you need to better develop. He may even include video of other pitchers who have made the suggested correction so you can visualize the objective.

You can take a look at the **Chalk Talk** videos by Denny on this [PowerChalk](http://www.powerchalk.com) website:

<http://www.powerchalk.com/?affcode=tincherpitching>

Fill in the free registration, then do a keyword search for TincherPitching.

ChalkTalk video services **are not intended to replace one-on-one lessons**, but certainly can enhance your practice time between visits, keeping you more focused on areas you need to work, eliminate problems when you know they are happening, but don't know what to do, and certainly to save on trips when you live across the country!

We hope you will give **ChalkTalks** with Denny a try.

VIDEO Instructions:

Have someone video you from the open side, close in...fingers to toes; and, again from behind, tight but able to see the catcher. Show one of the particular pitches you want us to examine; identify the type of pitch, and if you think that it was a good or bad pitch.

That will enable Denny to help you make corrections, help you understand what you are doing well, or both.

Pricing

\$39 per **ChalkTalk** Analysis

Or, 3 for \$100 -- these can be used over a six-month period or all at once for multiple pitches

Once we receive your video, you will receive a payment request through PayPal (a PayPal account is not required)
Major credit/debit cards are accepted.