

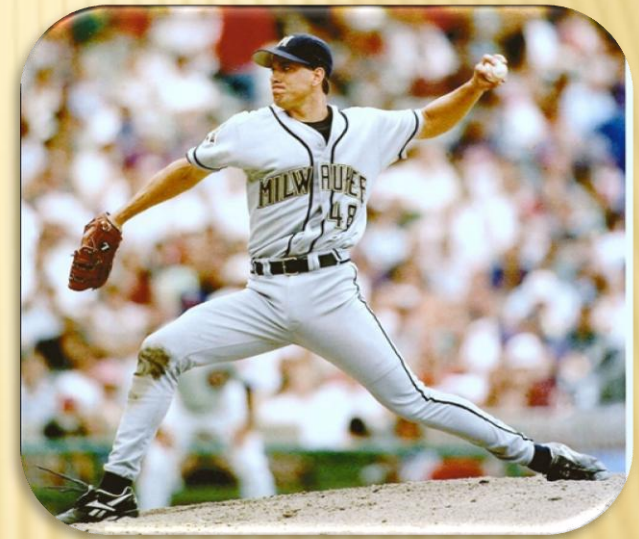
DEVELOPING THE OFF-SPEED PITCH

CHANGE UP

CURVE BALL

SLIDER

CUTTER



BRAD WOODALL

www.woodalltraining.com brad@woodalltraining.com

DEVELOPING THE OFF-SPEED PITCH

- ✘ How to Throw Them
- ✘ How to Develop Them
- ✘ How to Keep Them
- ✘ How to Throw Them in Games



THE CHANGE UP....

- ✘ The Grip- Modified Circle Change
 - ✘ 2-Seam FB with Middle & Ring Finger..thumb underneath ball in same position as FB
 - ✘ Value “Feel” & Command over Spin and Movement
 - ✘ Firm or Soft Grip on Ball?? Try both to see which works
- ✘ The Release
 - ✘ Extension, Extension, Extension
 - ✘ “Reach out to catcher’s feet”
 - ✘ Pronate rather than “crank” or turn the ball over
- ✘ The Rotation
 - ✘ Similar but just off of FB spin...
 - ✘ Stay away from Sidespin...unless pitcher throws from sidearm slot
- ✘ The Approach
 - ✘ Stay aggressive and extend to target!!!
 - ✘ It is only effective if it has FB arm speed but change up characteristics
 - ✘ Let the Grip to the work...just throw a FB with a Change Up Grip!!



THE CURVE BALL

- ✘ The Grip
 - ✘ Too Many Grips to Count (Most Common)
 - ✘ Generally- Find a seam for Middle Finger & Thumb
- ✘ The Release- CB is a Whole Different Monster
 - ✘ Fingers on top and pull down (Finish at Opposite Hip)
 - ✘ The “Hammer Effect” or Thumb Up
 - ✘ Arm stroke same until arm gets up
- ✘ The Rotation
 - ✘ Two plane movement vs 12-6
 - ✘ Spin angle will vary based upon arm slot
 - ✘ Side note...try not to change arm slot to accommodate CB
- ✘ The Approach
 - ✘ Tight Spin focus rather than Result or Break (Need Spin for Curve Ball to work)
 - ✘ Location is as important as “break” ...applies to all pitches
 - ✘ Pitcher should focus on hand speed to create the spin



THE SLIDER

- ✘ The Grip
 - ✘ Find a Seam to Pull Down upon
 - ✘ Try to find a different grip for CB vs SL
- ✘ The Release
 - ✘ Stay behind ball and pull down
 - ✘ Stay away from “twisting” or getting around the ball
 - ✘ Ball is released off of index finger rather than middle finger
 - ✘ Stay on top of the ball- Common mistake is to have fingers underneath ball
- ✘ The Rotation
 - ✘ Corkscrew spin....look for the “dot” on the ball
 - ✘ Short, quick movement...goal is to have a look of a FB but with a “tilt”
- ✘ The Approach
 - ✘ Create an angle and let the spin do the work
 - ✘ One location to practice...keep it simple



THE CUTTER

- ✘ The Grip
 - ✘ Four Seem FB with an emphasis on Middle Finger
 - ✘ Release pressure slightly on index finger
- ✘ The Release
 - ✘ Cutter is more of a feel/feedback pitch vs mechanical
 - ✘ Again, do not twist...it is merely a variant of a FB
- ✘ The Rotation
 - ✘ Still has backspin, but the “dot” is tilted
- ✘ The Approach
 - ✘ Cutter is just a FB that “Changes Lanes”
 - ✘ Inside location should be up toward hands rather than below hands
 - ✘ Create an angle and let the ball keep moving that way
 - ✘ Again...One location to practice...keep it simple



HOW TO DEVELOP THE OFF-SPEED PITCH

- ✘ Focus on “Building” these pitches rather than just throwing them off of mound
- ✘ 20-40-60-60 Workout
 - ✘ 20 ft- Flip Drill (suggested 20 throws)
 - ✘ Stand facing partner, set hand position (L-shaped arm slot), and flip the off-speed pitch to partner without moving feet
 - ✘ Feel the ball off of fingers
 - ✘ Create correct release and spin
 - ✘ Lying down version of flip drill (old Basketball drill)
 - ✘ 40 ft- Sideways Release
 - ✘ Sideways, add stride, focus on location and release
 - ✘ 60 ft- Pitching on flat ground
 - ✘ 60% effort working on adding Pitching Mechanics to Pitches
 - ✘ 60 ft- Throwing off of slope
 - ✘ No pitching mechanics- Set Position, step and throw from slope
- ✘ Focus on 1 Off Speed pitch at a time...keep it simple



HOW TO MAINTAIN THE OFF SPEED PITCH

- ✘ Change Ups
 - ✘ “Fish Day” (all change ups) Shuffle to Throw Rotation Ball (ball w/strip of tape to show spin)
- ✘ Curve Ball
 - ✘ Wrong Foot Stride Back of Mound Hockey Puck Drill
- ✘ Incorporate Change Ups & Breaking Balls into Throwing Practice
 - ✘ After long toss, go to 60’ and throw a set of each pitch (min. 10)
- ✘ Bullpen Strategies
 - ✘ Build in a Curve Ball or a Change Up Bullpen Day
 - ✘ Long Set of Off-Speed ending w/ Combos
- ✘ Back to the Basics on a Regular Basis



It Takes Work to Maintain Off-Speed Pitches...they don't just show up when you need them, you have to develop and maintain them!!!

STRATEGIES FOR OFF-SPEED PITCH SUCCESS



- ✘ Find them in Pre-Game Bullpen
 - ✘ Minimum of 7-8 of each prior to game
 - ✘ Relief Pitchers- Throw between innings
 - ✘ Shuffle throw Change Drill in pre-inning warm up or 40m release drill b/w innings
- ✘ Off-Speed must be set up with FB to be effective.
 - ✘ The 4-in-a-row Rule (with exceptions)
 - ✘ If you throw 4 sliders, 2 will be good, one will be a ball, and you will hang one...so use off-speed pitches off of the FB to be successful
 - ✘ Stay away from “every other” or “2-strike” pattern
 - ✘ When learning to incorporate new off-speed pitches into game, set expectations and throw in low risk situations (1-2 or 0-2 counts where the pitcher feels comfortable staying aggressive without being forced to throw for a strike.

CONCLUSION

Final Thoughts....

KEEP THINGS SIMPLE

- ✘ We only need 2 great pitches to be successful!!
- ✘ Very few pitchers can throw numerous off-speed pitches well

Questions....

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK THIS SEASON!!

BRAD WOODALL
WOODALL TRAINING BASEBALL ACADEMY
www.woodalltraining.com
brad@woodalltraining.com
608-213-6261

