

TOSH TIMES

TOSH Baseball Program Newsletter

Official sports medicine and sports performance provider to



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Adding to Your Baseball Skill Set: Hitting for Power and Increasing Your Running Speed

Thanks to Rocky Mountain School of Baseball, we've had a great summer of baseball. In July alone, I was able to witness great tournament and championship play every weekend of the month. To my knowledge RMSB is the first regional organization to host a full site Baseball Skills Challenge for every team and age group participating in the RMSB Tournament of Champions. The TOSH Skills Challenge was a lot of fun. Congratulations to the winning individuals and teams of the Inaugural TOSH Skills Challenge.

In our past few editions of the RMSB/TOSH newsletter, you may recall that I outlined the "The Five Key Tools of Baseball." I discussed 1) hitting for average, 2) fielding and 3) arm strength and next level qualities of a pitcher. Now, I'd like to address two of the tools that are easier to measure objectively: hitting for power and running speed.

HITTING FOR POWER

Many articles written by MLB scouts and reporters interviewing MLB scouts speak of grading power hitting mostly on a player's ability to hit the ball a long way. Players are certainly graded on number of homeruns hit and overall slugging percentage. However, the distance a player can hit it out of a given ballpark, and to which field, greatly influences a scouts 20/80 grading scale for hitting power.

Attention to detail is given to the game situation, batters count, speed of pitch, type of pitch, type of bat, bat speed to the ball, angle of ball off the bat, and trajectory of the ball flight off the ball leaving the park.

Most scouts will count measurable homeruns in games against quality pitching much higher than "longballs" against less-competitive pitching. At the same time 450 feet of travel is still an incredible show of power.

Players with power prowess will also be scouted in batting practice either pre-game or at team practices to see what their swings and "power shots" look like with BP pitching speed.

So, how does a hitter improve "power" in their swing? It's definitely not just about buying a more expensive bat.

Science teaches us quite a bit about what the human body can do to deliver power through a bat to a ball. Obviously, both body mass and strength have a lot to do with creating a power shot. But the truth is any player, regardless of their size, can optimize power potential. Things like stance, tracking the ball, load stretch, attacking aggressiveness, stride, hip sequence, weight transfer, positions of arms, linear direction of hand path through ball, grip tightness at the moment of



contact, exactness of bat-on-ball contact, and proper breathing, can all be motor controlled and practiced.

Having your swing properly analyzed using video analysis can show most of the flaws that limit power mechanics. We offer swing analysis at TOSH and I would be happy to work with you to improve your power potential.

RUNNING SPEED

The following table shows how baseball scouts objectively grade running speeds on the 20/80 scale.

	Tool is Called	Fastball Velocity	Batting Average	Homers	RHH to 1B	LHH to 1B	60 Yd Run
80	80	97	.320	40+	4.00	3.90	6.3
75		96	.310	35-40	4.05	3.95	6.4
70	Plus Plus	95	.300	30-35	4.10	4.00	6.5
65		94	.290	27-30	4.15	4.05	6.6
60	Plus	93	.280	23-27	4.20	4.10	6.7
55	Above Avg	92	.270	19-22	4.25	4.15	6.8
50	Average	90-91	.260	15-18	4.30	4.20	6.9-7.0
45	Below Avg	89	.250	12-15	4.35	4.25	7.1
40		88	.240	8-12	4.40	4.30	7.2
35		87	.230	5-8	4.45	4.35	7.3
30		86	.220	3-5	4.50	4.40	7.4

Kiley McDaniel; Scouting explained; 9/4/14; Fangraphs.com

There is a common consensus among baseball scouts that speed is genetic or “innate.” If a player has “speed” then the other tools can be worked on. A player that I used to train would often say “the legs feed the wolf.” This quote stuck with me, as has that player’s work ethic to get faster every time I trained him. As much as I believe that not everyone is born with the framework for high-level speed, I know that any athlete with the right mindset,

In our TOSH Sports Performance Training program, we have seen many genetically blessed athletes. In fact, I would say we have trained and/or learned from some of the fastest athletes in the world in their particular sports. These include world/team/event record holders, world champions and Olympic medalists. No doubt each of these special athletes were gifted with many physical attributes that aided

their speed, but in almost every case they came to TOSH to make improvements of those natural attributes.

Each of them was driven to use science and their own outstanding work ethic to become even better and surpass what was once thought impossible. I frequently supervise treadmill sessions on our “Super Treadmill” that teaches athletes to optimize their own speed potentials. It is thrilling to me to watch these hard-working athletes adapt their speed mechanics to increase their miles per hour speed and take tenths off of their timed events.

If you want to add speed to your game, please let us help you maximize your speed potential to enhance your overall baseball abilities. If a two-view hitting/pitching/throwing/fielding analysis would help you get to that next level then please give us a call at 801-314-2996. Please enjoy a fun and safe fall baseball season.

Michael S. Everett
TOSH Baseball Program Coordinator

Nutrition for Athletes

The Importance of Eating a Balanced Diet

As a young athlete it may be easy to overlook nutrition as an important part of your development, but the truth is, healthy eating can be just as important as the drills you do at practice that make you into a better athlete.

An athlete who eats fast food, candy, and soda day after day is more likely to get sick or injured and will not perform as well as an athlete that eats whole-grain foods, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and dairy products every day. Examples of whole grain foods include wheat bread, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, and oatmeal.

Next time you go to a sandwich shop after practice, try ordering your sandwich on whole wheat bread. Lean sources of protein include poultry, fish, seafood, beans, and low-fat dairy products. Try ordering a grilled chicken or fish sandwich instead of a cheeseburger.

Fruits and vegetables may not sound as tasty as a side of French fries, but it's very important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables every day. Fruits and vegetables contain a lot of different vitamins and minerals your body needs to stay healthy and grow

strong bones and muscles. Fruits and vegetables can be eaten as part of a meal or snack. Combine other healthy foods with them for an even more nutritious option. For example, apples with cheese, bananas with peanut butter, celery with nut butter and raisins, carrots with hummus, or a green smoothie.

Eating a variety of nutritious foods every day will help keep you healthy and provide you with the energy you need during practices and games to be your best.

If you are interested in having a dietitian talk to your team about nutrition, TOSH offers this service free of charge! Just call 801-314-4038 or email TOSHnutrition@imail.org to schedule a group nutrition class.

Claire Siekaniec
TOSH Sport Dietitian



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