

Coaches: Make the Offense Fun not Boring

Fastpitch to me is a great game where the fundamentals are taught and perfected along with using a lot of strategy to win the game. Sorry to be brutally honest but I cannot watch baseball a lot because the game is so slow. I like an aggressive team, one that takes advantage of the other team's defense. Hit, bunt, slap, steal when the defense gives you the chance. I know they changed the shift rule now but before it was crazy not to bunt to third when no defensive players were even close to that position.

Softball is normally a fast game with a lot of exciting plays created by using strategy. It has changed to more of a homerun game in some cases especially in Division I.

Many youth softball teams/coaches are thinking that they can play the home run game.

A bigger percentage of youth players cannot play the home run type game. The coaches need to realize that the DI home run hitters spend a lot of time in the weight room and in practice perfecting that type of game. How many youth players/teams can do that? There are natural hitters who can hit a home run but what about the rest?

Teaching the swing with the uppercut to youth players is risky. Again, coaches may have some kids who can adapt to it. How many are naturals and do they spend time in the weight room to gain the strength needed. How many do that on your teams? When you watch the home run teams on TV you are watching maybe around 5% of the players in the Nation. If even that.

Numerous coaches have told my former hitting coach that they have had more strikeouts this year than any other year. She asked how they were teaching the swing. Their response was that they have a former baseball player teaching hitting. Coaches need to know their team and who has that potential, who doesn't and adapt.

I am asking coaches to really assess your team. Determine who has the body build, strength and mental determination to do what they need to do

to be a home run hitter. Then also use the strategy of the game to win the game.

That is the strength and the fun of watching fastpitch. The excitement of what will they do next. Will they steal, bunt, hit and run, double steal and on and on. That is fun for the players, coaches and the fans who watch that type of game.

Coach to the strengths of your players. Know who can do what skill better than the others, some can steal-some cannot. Some can hit homeruns-some cannot. The objective of the game is to win so put them in the position to do that. Coaches learn to read the defense and beat that defense by having the options of:

- hitting for power
- hitting for a basehit
- hitting to the opposite field
- hitting to the open area
- bunting
- sacrifice bunting
- bunting for a basehit
- bunting to a specific area
- fake bunts
- slapping
- hard slapping into the ground
- stealing
- delay stealing
- aggressively breaking of the bases that makes the defense really nervous
- taking extra bases
- ability to do various types of slides
- hit and runs
- and more

Teach every player to do these and know which can do them consistently and in clutch situations. This is fastpitch softball and it is so much fun when the players practice hard and execute in a game.

Practice does make perfect! P

Play less, practice more!
Practice with a purpose!