

## Questions of the Month

### ■ 1. JILL FROM CALIFORNIA

**Jill:** "I am constantly striving to keep up with the progress of hitters and determine the best pitch to call given a hitter's potential and/or game situation. How do I learn to become an effective 'pitch caller'?"

**Coach Candrea:** "Calling pitches is like anything in the game, the more you study hitters and experience calling pitches – the better you will get. There is no magical solution to being effective against good hitters. The pitcher must first utilize their strengths to attack the presumed weaknesses of hitters. Game situation can be a factor if your outcome wants to be a groundball, throw to your defense, and even a walk to a great hitter with a base open. Utilize the resources that are available by visiting with pitching coaches and even catchers that have played the game at a high level to discuss identifying hitters' weaknesses. The foundation of calling a game is to keep the hitters off balance, disturb their timing and change planes."

### ■ 2. JAVIER FROM NEVADA

**Javier:** "How do I keep outfielders focus in the game when there's no action for them?"

**Coach Candrea:** "It is not just outfielders that have problems staying focused during each pitch of a seven inning game. I use a 'hoola hoop' theory when describing the concentration factor in our game. When the pitcher takes the sign, our position players must step into the imaginary hoola hoop and take their focus to the hitter. Once the play or pitch has been completed, we allow them to step out of the hoola hoop and relax their mind. In reality, we are teaching them to go from a broad focus to a fine focus. The game is a series of pitches that require a time for focus and concentration and a time to relax your mind. Remember, softball is a game of relaxed skills!"

### ■ 3. ALBERT FROM TEXAS

**Albert:** "What is a good drill to stop a player from dropping her shoulders?"

**Coach Candrea:** "I am assuming that you are speaking about a hitter? In hitting, the majority of hitters that 'drop' their shoulder are a result of posture and weight transfer. Hitters would like to always be in an attacking posture as they arrive at the hitting position. This requires a positive move towards the pitcher and proper sequencing of the rotational phase of hitting. I know we covered this in one of our past articles. Very hard question to describe in writing and very easy to show with film!"

### ■ 4. CLINT FROM NORTH CAROLINA

**Clint:** "Last year I was asked to take over head coaching duties for a travel team. Having accepted I decided in the best interest of the team was to not make a lot of changes so I could get comfortable with the girls and assistant coaches. We went on and had a great season. During the season though it was obvious that one of the assistant coaches was more interested in his daughter than the team as a whole. Having tried to address this issue it has caused some animosity and I feel the coaching staff will not be effective unless this issue is resolved. Any suggestions on how to handle this would be appreciated."

(Continue to Page 2 to read Coach Candrea's answer.)

## Questions of the Month (Continued)

**Coach Candrea:** “I would suggest a conversation be held to identify the duties and responsibilities of the coaching staff. In the interest of the team, every player has equal importance and our goal is to develop every player to their full potential. If someone does not have the same goals in player development, it sends a mixed message and will eventually hurt the team. Either they get on board and meet the expectations of coaching or you make a change!”

I hope you find my thoughts on your questions helpful this month. If you want more information, I suggest reading more in the [Responsible Sports Coaching](#) section. I will be answering more questions from you next month, so keep submitting me this great feedback. [Submit your question](#) to be answered next month!

- Coach Candrea