

WHICH ARM SHOULD BE MY DOMINANT SWING ARM?

Is there a dominant arm in the softball swing, or do both arms contribute equally to the effort? I contend, from years of functioning as a swing coach in senior softball, that there is a dominant arm in the swing, and it's the hitter's front-side arm. This lead-arm role is much the same as found in the pro golf swing where the arm nearest the target is controlling the swing. The amazing Babe Ruth (a fervent golfer) was once quoted as saying: "my baseball swing is nearly the same as my golf swing, with the notable exceptions of plane and stride".

From viewing a multitude of *YouTube* softball instructional hitting videos, I discovered that many pro softball players also believed that the hitter's lead-arm is what powers the swing. The lead-arm is also the arm that provides the all-important leverage in the softball swing. A well leveraged swing will have the lead-arm nearly fully extended at contact with the back-arm in the slot position (tucked into rib cage), forming a triangle with the arms creating the proper launch angle for power.

I do understand that there remains a school of thought by some coaches who strongly insist that the top-hand/back-arm is the dominant limb during the swing. I believe this theory to be flawed and here's why. I've witnessed players using the top-hand dominance method for years and these swings actually end abruptly out in front of their body with a truncated follow-thru. The effect of a top-hand dominant swing is: reduced bat-speed, an abbreviated follow-thru, and killing both power and lift.

In a lead-arm dominant swing, the top-hand should take on a passive role until contact. Before contact the top-hand helps unweight the bat for the pulling lead-arm enabling a faster swing, while keeping the bat on the correct plane to the incoming pitch. The top-hand also assists the hands to the ball (while maintaining bat-lag) by applying force to the lead-hand until contact and then is released from the bat. However, the top-hand does play a major role in the explosive hand-action right at the point of contact.

Remember to keep the top-hand somewhat loose on the bat handle because too much tension will have a tendency for the hitter to release the wrists prematurely. Thus, a failure to not keep a loose grip with the top-hand can result in the bat being "casted" off your back shoulder, removing lag and losing power. The goal here is to create, maintain and release bat-lag for maximum power and bat-speed, using a lead-arm dominant swing.

Note that the accomplished hitter does apply a torquing action with both hands on the bat handle during the swing. This method has the effect of allowing the hands to move faster to the ball creating additional bat-speed. This technique produces a strong “rolling” wrist action. The torquing of the hands will “sling-shot” the bat-barrel to the incoming ball, producing a “snap” rather than a slow sweeping action with the bat.

I maintain it is more efficient to pull the bat around in a circle than to push the bat. By pulling the bat from the knob with the lead-arm allows the hitter to continue to accelerate the bat around their body. The lead-arm swing technique is controlled from the bat-knob creating a full-circular movement of the bat.

Inspect the supporting photo sequence attachment demonstrated by Brett Kreuger, and follow the circular-path of the bat-knob represented by the large bubbles.

Click on this link to re-visit all my hitting articles since 2011:

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Happy hitting..

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