

PITCHING PATTERNS

The key to successful hitting is balance and timing and the most effective way to upset balance and timing is by using "*pitching patterns*". Every pitch should have a purpose. Patterns allow the catcher to apply that purpose, do the unexpected and use the pitcher's best pitch for strikes and outs.

DEFINITION

A PITCHING PATTERN IS A SERIES OF FOUR OR FIVE PITCHES, DESIGNED TO;

- A) TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE BATTER'S WEAKNESS, OR**
- B) UPSET THE BATTER'S BALANCE AND TIMING, AND**
- C) DECREASE THE CHANCES OF THE BATTER HITTING THE BALL SAFELY.**

Pitching patterns expand the four basic rules covered earlier, by using the full range of pitching skills the pitcher brings to the game. These skills fall into one of four categories, called *VARIABLES*.

The idea of Pitching Patterns is to use the four variables of pitching available, to the extent the pitcher is able to apply them. These variables are;

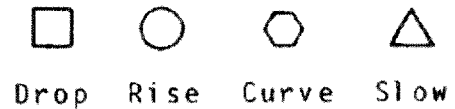
1. CONTROL - The pitcher can throw to different locations in and around the strike zone, to keep the batter guessing.
2. STUFF - The pitcher can throw different pitches, making the ball move in different directions.
3. SPEED - The pitcher can be more effective, by changing speeds on successive pitches to upset the batter's timing.
4. RHYTHM - The pitcher can change the pace of pitching, the time between pitches and the time on the mound to keep the batter off balance.

Following are some examples of pitching patterns that apply the four basic strategy rules, enhanced by using the idea of pitching variables.

SAMPLE PITCHING PATTERNS

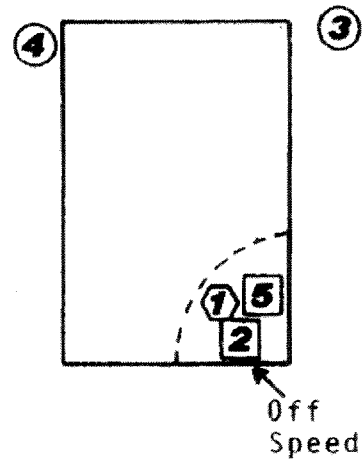
These three examples illustrate the idea of Pitching Patterns. Note how they apply the four Basic Strategy Rules, using the four *PITCHING VARIABLES* just described.

S Y M B O L S



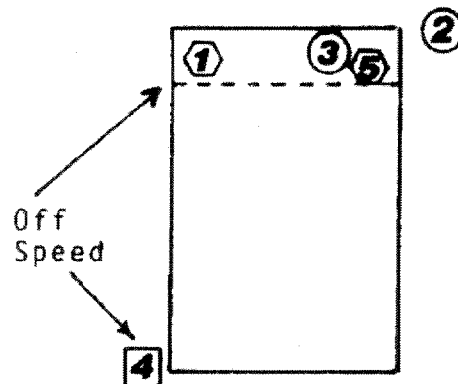
- 1) This pattern is designed for use against a weakness low and inside

Different pitches - 3
Variables used - 7



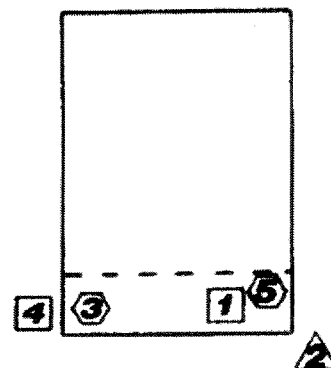
- 2) The pattern shown here is effective against a weakness up high.

Different pitches - 3
Variables used - 8



- 3) Here we are pitching against a weakness low, Using only low pitches.

Different Pitches - 3
Variables used - 8



Once you understand the basic idea, you will be able to formulate a pattern for any batter.