



SIGNALS

March 2005

The Baseball Training Newsletter From Pinkman Baseball Academy



John and Ruth Ann enjoy a moment with the President...story page 5

Name Change

You may have noticed that we answer the phone differently these days. During the early winter we changed our corporate name from Pinkman Pitching to Pinkman Baseball Academy. Any time you change a name there is a business risk. However, our name needed to reflect that we teach so much more now than pitching.

We tried to find names that didn't use the family name. John was the proponent of that idea. But our "focus groups" (conversations over coffee with friends) kept saying that "Pinkman" has become a brand for quality, support, and commitment to teaching.

The final straw was when John was talking with a student at an off site clinic. The student told John the he (the student) had just been to "Pinkman" for a few lessons with Pat. Well that did it... the family name will stick!

John is Off to Spring Training with the Nationals

John will join the Nats and friend Brent Strom for a mini clinic for minor league pitchers in early March. The Nats train in Viera, FL, just north of Melbourne and south of Cape Canaveral. We will fill you in when John returns.

Registration for In-Season Personal Pitching Program Begins Now

Details on website
www.PinkmanBaseball.com

Our Year in Review or... What Have We Done for YOU Lately?

I hope you know how committed we are to bringing the finest instruction and the latest technology to our school. As you know, baseball is resistant to change. But baseball is clearly divided into old school and new school camps. We believe that you can honor old school values and the traditions of the game while embracing new school technologies.

One of our great passions is learning. Continued education is mandatory in almost all professions. Ours should be no exception. When you attend an academy or participate on a team you should be confident in the fact that the instructors and coaches continue to learn and invest in the most current education available.

So here is our report to you. Here's what we've done for you lately.

Rotational Hitting Program.

As we do in our pitching program, we researched the best hitting instructors in the country. This led us to Mike Epstein. We began slowly to integrate hitting into our program primarily with students who were already in our pitching programs. That has grown substantially. We now offer a wide variety of private and small group hitting classes. Check them out!!

Suzy Williamson joins staff

Hitting instructor Suzy Willemsen came to us this year pleading for us to teach rotational hitting to softball players. After meeting and seeing the passion Suzy brings to the game it was clear that we only could do that if she joined

our staff. With Suzy we bring a breath of fresh air into softball hitting instruction with the power of rotational hitting. Now girls don't have to stop at first base!

Annual visits to the American Baseball Coaches Clinic

Each year we travel to this national Coaches conference. John, as you may know, writes the "Best in Show" column for Collegiate Baseball News. Each year he searches the 300 plus booths for the latest training aids and technology. No doubt you've seen our "new toys" each January.

John's Florida Pre Draft Work

Last June John traveled to Florida and spent 3 weeks working with and training pro prospect Joe Bauserman. With daily meetings with professional baseball scouts and regional cross checkers John learned firsthand the impact that the book "Money Ball" had and will continue to have on the draft. Working with Joe's agent Steve Hammonds gave us a valuable education.

Omaha - College World Series

John, Jeff, and Pat were in Omaha for the entire CWS. Not only did they share time with great college coaches, but they were invited to work with the University of Texas team prior to the Championship game. You can see three great interviews with World Series Pitching coaches on www.PitchingTv.Com

Nationals Coach Visits Us

Director of Pitching Development Brent Strom spent 3 days with us this past fall. He came with a new plan and methods to teach pitchers to throw faster. We have incorporated his advice into our lessons.

Mike Epstein visits last November

Although Mike's schedule would not allow for a special hitting clinic for students he met with John and Pat to plan a new hitting program for 2005.

Research at The National Institutes of Health

Our friend Gordon Alderink is a professor of Physical Therapy and the pitching coach at Grand Valley College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grand Valley also was the runner up in the 2005 NCAA Division II World Series. This winter Gordy asked us to join him in a research project at the NIH Biomechanical Lab. We trained 7 \$25,000 digital cameras on an advanced pitching subject (Gordy) to collect and process throwing motion images. We incorporated the new velocity improvement techniques that we have been teaching at the academy since last fall. The data is now being studied and a report may be available this summer.

John Travels to ASMI

The American Sports Medicine Institute (ASMI) is world renowned. For 23 years Dr. Jim Andrews has conducted The Injuries in Baseball Conference, an intensive clinic for over 450 Orthopedic Surgeons, physical therapists, trainers, medical and athletic staffs from more than a dozen MLB teams and a very few baseball coaches. The coaches generally include Tom House, Bill Thurston, Dick Mills, and one of the Pinkmans. This year marked our 6th visit to the conference. Our orthopedic consultant Dr. Ray Thal and John attended. Dr. Thal was a keynote speaker and John is writing a feature article that will appear in Collegiate Baseball News. You know don't know what learning is until you enjoy your continental breakfast (7:30am) while watching a dissection of the rotator cuff muscle!

John Meets with Brent Strom in Tucson, AZ

In January John was invited to the Tucson home of Nationals Pitching Coach, Brent Strom. They spent 2 days sharing the latest training information. Brent gave John a tour of the Tucson spring training facilities of the Rockies, White Sox and Diamondbacks.

Well that's a lot of time, effort and money. And it's all on your behalf!

The Rotational Hitting Program Continues to Draw New Sluggers

This winter's rotational hitting program drew many boys and girls of all ages. We are so pleased with the progress all players are making. This style of hitting is completely changing players' experiences in the batter's box.

Rotational hitting may be new to you. We recognize that it is difficult for players to trust a style that is so different from their former swing. It is no secret that players who take our hitting classes have been to many other training schools. We understand that so many recreational and old school coaches do not accept and quite frankly ridicule rotational hitting as if it were something new. Rotational hitting or "the major league swing" has been around since Babe Ruth copied it from Shoeless Joe Jackson. If you take the time to study the video, it is the predominate style used in college and pro ball. The high school or linear swing has been popular since the early seventies.

Amazingly, just as we found with the scientifically based changes in pitching that we

have taught over the last 10 years, many self described linear or swing down hitters don't in fact do what they think they do. Freeze frame and slow motion images reveal they in fact use the rotational or swing up method. Pictures at 1/4000th of a second do not lie!

With devaluation of the batting average in the game changing publication of Money Ball and stats like Suzuki's 2005 all time record of 262 hits (240 of them being singles) but only scoring 101 runs, the 17th best total in the league, we hope coaches will come to understand that there is more than one baseball **AND SOFTBALL** swing. Hits don't win games, runs do. It takes a minute to comprehend that Money Ball statement.

Be comforted in the fact the each week more and more players are showing up for new training. They are tired of years of training that has not produced results. Coaches like Jeff, Pat, Suzy Willemsen and our friend Chuck Hoyle are producing results. You will see more and more players using the rotational swing. How will you recognize them? Just Listen!

If you are not satisfied with how you are hitting, if you are on your 5th or 6th batting coach and seem to be on a merry-go-round... **STOP**. It's not working. You should expect better results if you put in the effort and get professional training.

If you are satisfied with hitting ground balls, this program is not for you. Although that would please our pitchers!

Please stop in and look at videos of professional and local hitters. Learn in detail about rotational hitting. Talk to one of us about the possibilities of you becoming a great hitter. Together with Mike Epstein we plan to intensify the hitting program in 2005. Join us on 2nd, 3rd and see you at home!

Real Life Happens

John Pinkman

We often talk about our belief that baseball prepares you for a meaningful life. We talk about how your experience in the game trains you to accept responsibility. Recently Patrick was having coffee at a crowded Starbucks in Reston when a man seated next to him fell to the floor in an apparent heart attack. Pat wasted no time. He and another Good Samaritan immediately began CPR until the EMT's arrived.

Pat stood by hoping for the best as the EMT's worked on the man in his mid 50's for quite awhile to stabilize him prior to transport. Tragically the man died later that night. Regardless of the outcome we are so proud of Pat for instantly recognizing his responsibility and immediately taking action. The upsetting emotions of these types of tragic incidents rarely leave our memories. However we can find comfort in the fact that lessons learned on the field, the athletic values we try to embrace, the wins, the losses, the joys and the sorrows are the compassionate dues we pay while growing up. For when the real game is played, when life is at risk, we can be confident that we have learned to take action and assume responsibility.

PRO SHOP ITEMS

As the season approaches, so does the need for new equipment. As you know we pride ourselves on carrying professional grade equipment. Here are some of the newest Pro Shop items that will be on sale for the upcoming season.

NEW DEMARINI BIG BARREL BATS:

Bats with -3 weight differential -- \$220

Bats with -5 weight differential -- \$180

Bats with -8.5 weight differential -- \$170

LITTLE LEAGUE BATS:

F2 Bats with -10 weight differential -- \$180

Vexxum Bats with -13.5 weight differential -- \$150

UNDER ARMOUR BATTING GLOVES:

Adult Sizes -- \$25

Youth Sizes -- \$20

We currently have black gloves in stock; if you would like other colors we can special order them. The other colors are

Blk/wht, Blk/blu, Blk/grn, Blk/red, Blk/mrn

COACH DAVE'S DIGITAL PITCH COUNTER: \$45

FLEX BAR WRIST AND ARM TRAINER:

Red youth Size Bar -- \$14

Green Junior Size Bar -- \$17

We have a good variety of Akadema gloves ranging from \$105 - \$160. For an extra \$30 you can have your glove personalized* with your first and last name, number, or favorite nickname. Give us a call if you have any questions about any of the pro shop items. If we do not have what you want in stock we can order any item and depending on inventory have it delivered within a week or two.

***Personalized gloves may take 4-6 weeks for delivery**



You may have seen this and other pictures (like the one on page 1) at Battery Park. Thanks to the generosity of our good friend and baseball Dad, Dr. Mike Towarnicky (New Bern, NC), John and Ruth Ann attended several Inaugural events including this benefit ball where we met many interesting and exciting celebrities. John is shown here with Gen. Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It was an evening neither of us will forget! NOW – we MUST come clean....the gentleman in the picture on page 1 is NOT the President. He is an impersonator – and a VERY GOOD ONE AT THAT! But the gentleman in the picture with John above IS the real Gen. Myers. Thanks, Mike and Laura for a wonderful time!