

ERAA Raptor Rec Program Pitching Philosophy

Learning and properly executing the fastpitch windmill motion is one of the most difficult challenges a player will have at the youth level. Becoming a good pitcher requires proper instruction, athletic ability, and a lot of practice outside of league clinics, practices and games. Having said this, one of the goals of the Raptor Rec program is to develop pitchers. We intend to do this using the following framework:

Before the season begins, and at times during the season, the league will offer clinics in which the pitching motion and beginner drills will be taught. Unless a girl wishing to pitch is already practicing with a private pitching instructor she is expected to attend a majority of these clinics. The clinics are extremely important as they are led by coaches experienced with the windmill motion, whereas not all team coaches may have experience in this area.

Once outdoor team practices begin, girls that have attended the clinics will be given opportunities as available to practice pitching. Girls are expected to practice outside of team practices.

Once games begin the team coach will decide which girls will pitch. Per league rules, teams are required to rotate pitchers such that no girl can pitch a second inning until after the 3rd inning. After the 3rd inning a coach may pitch whomever they want. As one of ERAA's goals is to develop pitchers it is hoped that each team will successfully develop multiple pitchers, however it must be noted that coaches are not required to pitch every girl that desires to pitch.

During games, the girl that will pitch in the next inning will (if number of players allows) not play in the field but will spend the inning warming up and preparing to pitch. If a girl is to pitch a second inning later in the game it is not required that they sit out and warm up.

Coaches will "work with" those pitchers who have met clinic attendance requirements. There is usually not enough time during games or practices to work with everyone on pitching. "Work with" does not mean that a player will pitch in the game or that they will pitch the same amount of innings as every other pitcher. "Work with" does mean that girls will be given time during games and practices to pitch. Coaches will try to get every eligible pitcher to throw with a coach every game because we believe this is as important as game pitching. When a pitcher demonstrates that they can:

- a. consistently get the ball to the catcher at full league distance and;
- b. two-thirds of the time, within a catchable area of the catcher

they will get a chance to pitch in the game rotation. Until that time, they will continue to practice on the side. If they struggle in game situations, a girl may move out of the rotation and spend more time on the side to improve their skills. Coaches should try to discuss the girls progress with their parent so that parents can work with their daughter at home. Unless a girl can get it close to the plate most of the time she may not pitch much in games. Pitching in the game is something earned through practice and demonstrating pitching skill.

If a parent has questions in regards to this policy or their daughter's progress or playing time they should speak with the team coach. If they have additional questions or concerns they should be directed to the league director.