

# THE LONG SWING & ARM CASTING CURE

When baseball is no longer fun, it's no longer a game.

-Joe DiMaggio



## A SHORT YET POWERFUL SWING IS A SCIENCE!

**The thing about a loop in a swing that scouts hate them but pitchers love them. The funny thing is they both are very good at spotting them!**

So there I was-40 games into the summer baseball season in the Valley League and my batting averaged dropped from .320 to .285.

I was struggling and looking for answers. So what did I do? I looked at some footage. You know what I found?

I had gotten away from my natural stroke which was a short compact swing. Over the course of the summer my swing became long. In the past, I found myself guilty of the opposite.

I used to focus on having my swing so short and compact that I was forcing my upper half to do all the work. There was no separation so I was unable to pull the hands through the zone with my hips.



Now I was erring on the other side. For me I was simply pulling my shoulder early which was forcing my bat to drag. Fortunately I was only breaking 1 of 3 laws when it comes to executing a short compact yet powerful swing.

Here are the five most basic reasons why a loop develops in a swing as you start casting your hands and bat-head.

## **BARRING THE LEAD ARM**

First of all, if you find that your lead arm is barring before your swing, congratulate yourself!

Why?

Because you're demonstrating a very important movement in generating power, while having the ability to stay back on pitches that you are out in front of during an at-bat.

Barring your arm isn't entirely bad, the trick is to keep it from initiating that loop.

One obvious symptom of barring your arm is the "locking" of the elbow.

During the separation process of the swing, there needs to be a certain level of flexion within the elbow. The moment it becomes locked, your swing will be susceptible to developing a serious loop which will do nothing but elongate the whole process. A great way to keep from barring is to first get some video footage of your swing, and define how it feels when you bar your arm and compare it to when you don't.

For some hitters this may be a habit that will take some conscious effort to correct. Another thing you can do is take some dry swings next to a wall or fence. What this will do is force your hands to stay inside the wall or fence so that "staying short" will be ingrained into your swing while attempting to stay inside the ball.

For most hitters, this drill alone will solve this specific problem.

## BAT DRAG

The bat drags when you have lost your effective torque. The energy you are attempting to cultivate with your swing from your upper body, core, and lower-half is leaking in one area or another.

This happens when a hitter is struggling to hit a higher velocity or when they are ahead of a secondary pitch. The point is their timing is off. There are three basic points where this energy can leak. These points are as follows.

## THE 3 LEAKING POINTS

### THE FRONT FOOT

As the rotational phase of the swing begins- it's important to be aware of the behavior of your front foot. What the front-foot does, the hips will do, and the hips are where over 80% of your power is generated!

The foot, like the hips, need to stay closed until it is no longer able stay closed because of the explosion of your swing. A great note is to keep it closed until after the stride or until after contact has been made with the front foot.

### THE HIPS

The hips open too early when either the foot is leaking or when your timing is off. The hips need to stay closed and **coiled**. The moment your hips open up too early, your swing's power begins leaking and is unable to pull the hands through the zone.



### Good bye Bat speed!

### THE UPPER-HALF

If you're trying to pull the ball with too much authority or you're rolling over an off-speed pitch, the upper-half begins to open up and this not only puts the nail in the coffin for a breaking down of your swing, you lose your ability to keep your eyes on the ball effectively.

Your back-side will also begin to drop and your ability to stay through the zone for as long as possible becomes.....well.....impossible.

So how are we going to take out the loop and cure the casting of the lead arm while keeping a short compact swing that still generates pop?

Let's start here.

# ACTION STEPS

- 1. Keep flexion in your lead arm.** Keep it from locking by viewing footage and familiarizing how it feels to get separation yet keep flexion.
- 2. Follow this up with 3 sets of 10 dry swings next to a wall or fens.** 100 swings should be enough to get the muscle memory down to where you can do this instinctually and at game speed.
- 3. Remind yourself of the three key checkpoints** where your power can leak from if your mechanics begin to break down.

🏆 **The foot**

🏆 **The hips**

🏆 **The shoulders**

Keep an eye on these three check points and bat drag, arm casting, and that stubborn loop will cease to cause any more problems!

Now go get to work!

## ARE YOU DRAGGING?



### Where is your leakage?

As the rotational phase of the swing begins it's important to be aware of the behavior of your front foot. What the foot does, the hips do and the hips are where over 80% of your power is generated!