

# So You Want to Be a Consistent Pitcher Like Some of the Top Professionals?

**By Baseball Performance Coach, Bill Mooney, of the BioForce Baseball Academy**

After “how can I gain more velocity on my fastball”, the next question I get most as a pitching coach is how to become a more consistent pitcher.

We’ve all seen it. Regardless of age or level of play, the pitcher is lights out one game, the next he can’t find the plate.

Now velocity is one of the first ways to get attention from coaches, scouts, fans, and just about anyone who is a fan of baseball.

But let’s face it, consistency is why they pay the guys in the big leagues the big bucks.

## ***Is Consistency Genetic?***

Well, like most athletic activities, there is some natural ability involved. However, your consistency with your delivery can be improved.

How?

Through smart work, planning, and the proper drills.

Notice I didn’t say hard work.

I’m more in favor of smart work. Make the most of your time.

I’ve got a friend who is a professional golf instructor. We’ve had lengthy talks about instruction and what successful athletes do to prepare and compete at the highest level.

The one thing that stands out in my head about our conversation is how focused the professional golfer is while training. My friend Todd said the difference in a professional golfer and an amateur is the structured practice and the focus on each swing.

Todd estimates that during a bucket of 100 golf balls, the professional is focused on about 95 percent of those balls. What that means is that about 95 of the 100

golf swings the professional golfer takes, he is swinging with a purpose. He is trying to accomplish something. Not just swinging the golf club for the heck of it.

Now look at the professional pitcher. In season, the pitcher has his outing. Throwing around 100 pitches let's say. Before his next start, the professional pitcher will throw one or two bullpens working on his pitches, location, speed, movement, and a host of other things. He will also work on flat ground drills during the week, again, working on something specific. Maybe his curve is struggling; maybe the change-up is a little flat. When all is said and done, there will be a few hundred throws in any given week. I'll bet the same 95% focus of the professional golfer applies to the professional pitcher.

***You've got to ask yourself, am I totally focused with each and every throw?***

I'll bet not.

I see it all the time. Most guys are thinking and talking about the latest movie that came out, what's for dinner, a girlfriend, whatever pops into his mind while they are throwing. I'll ask any given pitcher what they are working on during a session and inevitably, they say, "I'm warming up." That's not gonna get you to the next level and have a consistent pitching delivery.

***You've got to warm up to throw, not throw to warm up!***

Use your warm up time to get your body loose, warm, and prepared to throw. Don't use your throwing to warm you up. That's where you'll do some damage to your joints.

You can look at just about any professional athlete and you'll see them get their body well prepared before they get going with there activity.

***Do You Have A Practice Plan?***

This is another big area I see most pitchers fail.

They don't have a plan to practice. Not sure why. It takes a little effort to plan. It takes discipline to execute that plan.

Doing drills and practice can be boring at times. This is what separates the high performers from the average performers. The high performers work through the tedious stuff because they know it will make them better and they have a burning desire to be the best.

A good friend and my mentor once told me that it's not always the best athlete that rises to the top, it's the best prepared athlete that is successful.

You will need a set of drills, or teaches that will help you get better and also stay on track.

That's where I see a big downfall with a lot of amateur athletes do the drills, get to a comfort zone and are pitching well.

They stop doing their drills that got them there. I think they believe, I found it, I won't lose it, I'm invincible.

Then they start having problems. They have a bad outing or two. Their curve isn't working well. They try to change their grip. The coach wants them to change their delivery. Still no improvement.

All the while, if they had kept doing what got them there, they would have stayed at that high level for a long time.

### **How Smart Are You Willing to Work?**

Now I know I said to work smart. It does take sweat to get you to the next level too.

I've got a couple of high school student pitchers that are brothers. These guys are both great pitchers. And I say pitchers. They don't throw 100 miles per hour, but they have incredibly efficient deliveries, smooth as you are going to see.

How did they do it? Well, they believe in our pitching principles and they practice them every day. And I mean every day.

They get up in the morning and do 100 towel drills each before school. That's 100 pitching deliveries every day. They may mix in some drills with those, meaning not the full delivery, but they are working on it every day.

While the kids they are competing against are still sleeping or spending time text messaging their friends, these guys are working on getting better.

If you ask them, it really doesn't take that long to get 100 towel drills done. I suppose they do about 20, switch, and then do another 20 and so on. How long can that take? I'll bet they are done in about 15 to 20 minutes.

Is it worth a college scholarship or even a lucrative pro contract to spend 15 to 20 minutes a day to work on your delivery?

## ***Your Body is the Engine that Throws the Ball***

I probably should have started this special report talking about how your body plays into the pitching delivery and contributes to consistency.

It's pretty simple. If your body does not have the flexibility, strength, endurance, power and explosiveness that it needs for a great delivery, then you have no chance to be able to pitch the ball when and where you want it, game after game.

We'll explore your body and your delivery in another article, but you need to know that proper training, at any age, is critical to the pitcher's success.

### **The Post Game Show**

Developing a consistent delivery is pretty simple, it's just not easy to do or else everyone would be doing it.

It takes persistence, patience, and planning.

Work smart by using your time wisely. Base your pitching on a set of principles, not someone else's style. Plan your drills based on those principles. To be consistent, you need to be consistent with your training. Day in and day out.

You'll also need to spend time properly training your body. Find your weaknesses in your body and make them your strengths.

Train like a champion!

*Bill Mooney*

### ***About the Author***

**Bill Mooney** is the owner and lead instructor at the BioForce Baseball Academy in Beaverton Oregon. Here's what a couple of former Major League Pitchers and Pitching Coaches say about Bill Mooney and BioForce Baseball.

*“Bill Mooney is one of few pitching coaches in the nation who has been Certified by The National Pitching Association and Functional Fitness, Inc. I have found that Bill is one of the finest young pitching coaches in the country today. His knowledge and*

*instruction are the most up-to-date and progressive you'll find. With his knowledge, teaching skills and background Bill does an outstanding job helping pitchers perform at their peak and remain healthy."*

### **Dr. Tom House**

Performance expert. Former Major League Pitcher. Former Major League pitching coach. Current coach and mentor to many star major league pitchers such as Randy Johnson. Co-founder of the National Pitching Association

*"As a former major league pitcher, pitching coach and former coordinator of pitching for the Montreal Expos/Washington Nationals, I am always searching for information and instruction that can help me improve. Most would guess that the best, most informative teachings come out of the professional game, but it has been my experience that the instructors who have dealt with hundreds of kids from all ages really have seen what works and doesn't work. Such is the case for Bill Mooney and BioForce Baseball Academy. Having watched him interact and teach what we know today to be right, I would not hesitate to allow him to work with our pitchers. To place that trust in someone is the highest compliment I can pay to a fellow pitching coach. Without question, Bill Mooney is an outstanding coach and one worth learning from and training with."*

### **Brent Strom**

Former major league pitcher and former pitching coach for the Houston Astros and Kansas City Royals

To find out more about Bill and BioForce, go to the website [www.bioforcebaseball.com](http://www.bioforcebaseball.com). To contact Bill, you can email him at [support@bioforcebaseball.com](mailto:support@bioforcebaseball.com).