



# THE FASTPITCH IQ'S SOFTBALL PITCHING COACH'S PLAYBOOK

**7 Pitching Data Points Every Softball Coach Should Track —  
and How to Use Them to Protect Your Arms and Win More  
Games**

Presented by NextPlay Digital Sports | FastPitch IQ — Precision Analytics



## A Note Before You Read This

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This playbook was not written by a marketing team.

It was written by coaches who spent decades standing in dugouts and behind the circle, managing pitching staffs through long seasons and relentless tournament schedules, and making decisions that affected real athletes and real outcomes. We built FastPitch IQ because we lived every problem described in these pages — and we got tired of waiting for someone else to solve them.

What follows are the seven pitching data points we believe every softball coach should be tracking, why each one matters more than most coaches realize, and how to actually use them to make better decisions during live games — from the first pitch of the season to the final out of a tournament championship.

This is not a product brochure. It is a coaching resource. Use it that way.

And when you are ready to see how FastPitch IQ tracks all seven automatically — starting with your very first game — your 7-day free trial is waiting at the back of this playbook.

— *The NextPlay Digital Sports Coaching Team*

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## DATA POINT 1

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# Pitch Count — The Number Every Softball Coach Thinks They Know (But Often Doesn't)

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

Pitch count is the single most fundamental data point in softball pitcher management. Every coach knows this. And yet inaccurate pitch counts remain one of the most common and most costly problems in softball coaching at every level. It is not a knowledge problem. It is a tracking problem. During a live game, a head coach is simultaneously reading the opposing lineup, watching her pitcher's mechanics, managing the dugout, calling defensive adjustments, and processing dozens of other inputs in real time. Keeping an accurate running pitch count through all of that is genuinely difficult — and the consequences of getting it wrong range from a poor pitching decision in a close game to a compliance violation that affects player eligibility at the worst possible moment.

## What to Track

A reliable pitch count system must capture more than a running total. To be genuinely useful on the sideline, your pitch count data needs to update after every single pitch — not be estimated at the end of the inning. It needs to track counts by individual pitcher so that when a substitution happens, you know exactly where each arm stands immediately. And it needs to maintain a cumulative record across multiple games so that tournament workload decisions are based on actual documented data rather than reconstructed memory.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most immediate application is the pitching change decision. When you know your starter is at 87 pitches going into the fifth inning — not approximately 85, but exactly 87 — your decision about whether to leave her in or go to the bullpen is grounded in real information rather than a number you are not fully confident in. For travel ball coaches managing a pitching staff through a four-game tournament weekend, cumulative pitch count data across every game since Friday morning is what separates smart workload management from arm damage that shows up two weeks later in the middle of the regular season.

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## ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION



FastPitch IQ updates your pitch count automatically with every tap. The moment a pitch is recorded — three taps — your count is current. Not at the end of the inning. Immediately. That count carries forward across every game in your program, building a cumulative workload record for every pitcher on your roster that is accessible any time you need it.

## DATA POINT 2

# Pitch Sequence Log — What Actually Happened in Every At-Bat

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

Ask a softball coach after a game what pitch sequence her pitcher used against the opposing cleanup hitter in the third inning, and most will give you a general answer. Rise ball up, then a change-up away, then the drop ball low and in. Something like that. But something like that is not good enough when that same hitter comes up in the sixth inning with the tying run on base. The pitch sequence log is the most underutilized data point in softball coaching — not because coaches do not understand its value, but because capturing it accurately during a live game has always required a level of attention that most coaching staffs simply cannot sustain while also managing the game.

## What to Track

A complete pitch sequence log captures every pitch in every at-bat — pitch type, location, and result — in the exact order it was thrown. This means you know not just that a hitter struck out, but that she struck out swinging at a drop ball in the dirt after two rise balls up in the zone. That sequence is a coaching asset. It tells you what works against this specific hitter, when it works, and what the setup pitch needs to be to make the out pitch land where you need it.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most powerful application is the second and third at-bat against the same hitter. When your pitcher retired their leadoff batter in the first inning on a change-up after two rise balls, that sequence is now your starting point for every subsequent at-bat. You are not guessing. You are not asking your assistant what she remembers from three innings ago. You are looking at an exact record of what just worked — and using it to make a sharper decision before the hitter even steps into the box.

### ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION

Every pitch scored in FastPitch IQ is automatically logged as part of that at-bat's complete sequence. By the time the hitter makes an out or reaches base, the full sequence is already recorded — pitch type, location, result, in order. That log is available immediately for the next at-bat against the same hitter and carries forward into every subsequent game in your program's history.

### DATA POINT 3

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# Spray Charts — Where the Ball Goes When It Gets Hit

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

A spray chart is a visual map of every ball put in play during a game — where it was hit, on what pitch, and what happened as a result. In college and professional softball, spray charts inform defensive positioning decisions before a hitter ever steps into the box. In high school and travel ball coaching, they are one of the most powerful in-game tactical tools available — and one of the least used, simply because building them manually during a live game while also coaching has never been realistic. When you know a hitter has driven two consecutive rise balls to the left-center gap, you have information that changes how your pitcher attacks her and where your outfielders need to be before the next pitch.

## What to Track

A useful spray chart maps every ball in play by field location — pull side, center, opposite field — combined with the pitch type and zone location that produced that contact. Over the course of a game, this data builds a visual picture of where contact is happening and what pitches are being hit — giving both the pitching coach and the defensive coach real-time information they can actually act on before the next at-bat.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most immediate application is defensive positioning. When your spray chart shows that the opposing three-hitter has hit every ball to the right side in her first two at-bats, you have a data-backed reason to shift your second baseman toward the gap before her third at-bat. That shift is not a gut feeling — it is a decision made with information that built itself during the game without requiring any extra work from your staff. For travel ball coaches building scouting reports across a tournament weekend, the spray chart data from the morning game becomes your advance preparation for the rematch in the afternoon bracket.

### ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION

FastPitch IQ builds your spray chart automatically with every ball-in-play entry. A nine-tap ball-in-play sequence captures pitch type, location, and where the ball was hit — and the spray chart updates instantly. By the third inning of any game, you already have a visual picture of where contact is happening and what pitches are producing it.

## DATA POINT 4

# Performance by Count — The Pitching Metric Most Softball Coaches Overlook

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

Every at-bat in softball has a count dynamic — the balance of balls and strikes that shifts momentum and leverage with each pitch. Experienced coaches understand this intuitively. What they often lack is the documented data to see their pitcher's performance patterns within specific counts across a full game or an entire season. A pitcher who is dominant in pitcher's counts — 0-2, 1-2 — but struggles in hitter's counts — 2-0, 3-1 — has a specific and addressable problem. A pitcher who almost never gets to two-strike counts against left-handed hitters has a different and equally specific problem. Performance by count data makes both of those patterns visible in a way that watching the game alone never can.

## What to Track

Performance by count tracks how your pitcher performs — pitch selection, location, and outcome — within each count situation across an at-bat. The most actionable situations to track are two-strike performance, which tells you how effective your pitcher is at finishing at-bats; hitter's count performance, which reveals how she responds under pressure when the count is in the hitter's favor; and first-pitch outcomes, which frequently predict the trajectory of the entire at-bat that follows.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most direct application is pitch selection guidance in specific counts. If your data shows that your pitcher's change-up is significantly more effective in 1-2 counts than in 0-2 counts, you have a specific and evidence-backed recommendation to make the next time she reaches that situation. For pitching development conversations, performance-by-count data gives you the specificity that general feedback cannot provide — you can show your pitcher exactly what her results look like in 2-0 versus 0-0 situations, and that concrete evidence makes the feedback land differently and stick much more effectively.

### ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION

Because FastPitch IQ logs every pitch with its type, location, count, and result, performance-by-count data is generated automatically as you score the game. You do not have to build a separate tracking system or remember to record anything extra. The data is already there — organized, accurate, and ready to use the moment you need it.

## DATA POINT 5

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# Out Pitch Tracking — What Actually Gets Softball Hitters Out

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

Every softball pitcher has pitches that get hitters out more consistently than others. Most coaches know in a general sense what their pitcher's best out pitch is. What they often lack is the specific documented data to know when that pitch works most effectively, against which types of hitters, in which count situations, at which point in the game, and at what point in the season it may be losing effectiveness. Out pitch tracking answers all of those questions with real data — and the answers change how you use your pitcher's full arsenal in the at-bats that carry the most weight.

## What to Track

Out pitch tracking captures every pitch that results in an out — its type, location, the count it was thrown in, the handedness of the hitter, and where in the game it occurred. Over time, this data builds a precise picture of not just what your pitcher's most effective out pitch is, but exactly how and when to deploy it for maximum effectiveness against specific types of hitters in specific situations.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most immediate application is at-bat planning against hitters your pitcher has already faced in the game. When you know your pitcher has generated three outs on the drop ball against right-handed hitters and zero outs on that pitch against left-handed hitters in today's game, you have specific intelligence to bring to the next matchup before she even takes the sign. For pitching development, out pitch data reveals which pitches need refinement for specific matchup scenarios and which are ready to be trusted in the highest-pressure situations of the game.

### ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION

FastPitch IQ logs every out pitch automatically as part of the pitch-by-pitch scoring sequence. Your out pitch data builds itself during the game — organized by pitch type, location, count, and hitter handedness — and is available for review the moment the inning ends and the next one begins.

## DATA POINT 6

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# Workload Management — The Long Game Behind Every Pitching Decision

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

Single-game pitch counts tell you where your pitcher stands today. Workload management data tells you where she stands across the entire season — and that longer view is what protects arms, prevents the fatigue-related performance drops that cost games in the back half of a tournament, and keeps your best pitchers healthy and available when the games matter most. A pitcher who threw 110 pitches on Friday looks fundamentally different on Sunday morning than a pitcher who threw 75 on Friday — even if both say their arm feels fine during warmups. Coaches who manage workload with documented data across a full week or a full tournament make better pitching decisions than coaches who are managing only the game that is directly in front of them.

## What to Track

Effective workload management tracks cumulative pitch counts across rolling time windows — the last three days, the last seven days, the last two weeks — alongside rest days between outings and any performance trend changes as workload accumulates over time. This layered data makes it possible to see fatigue building before it shows up in results — which is always better for the athlete and the program than recognizing it after the performance has already fallen apart.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The primary application is tournament roster management. When you are heading into a Sunday semifinal and trying to decide which arm to give the ball to, cumulative workload data from the entire weekend gives you a complete and accurate picture of where every pitcher on your staff stands — not just who threw yesterday, but how many total pitches each arm has absorbed since Friday and how many hours of rest each has had between outings. For high school coaches managing a two-pitcher rotation through a long regular season into postseason play, workload tracking across the full season makes arm protection a documented practice rather than an afterthought.

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## ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION



Because FastPitch IQ maintains a complete pitching history for every pitcher in your program, workload data across any time window is always available. Before any game, you can see each pitcher's cumulative counts, rest days between outings, and performance trends — organized clearly and accessible in seconds from your phone.

## DATA POINT 7

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# Scouting Reports — Turning Your Own Game Data Into a Competitive Advantage

## Why It Matters More Than You Think

The best scouting report on an opposing pitcher or lineup is not something you find on a stat website or hear secondhand from another coach in the parking lot. It is the data you personally collected the last time you faced them — the pitch sequences that got their best hitters out, the spray chart patterns that show exactly where they make contact, the performance-by-count tendencies that reveal how their pitcher responds under pressure when the game is close. Most coaches have some version of this information somewhere in their history. The problem is that it lives in scorebooks, partial notes, and memory — none of which are organized in a way that makes them practically useful as a preparation tool before the rematch.

## What to Track

An effective scouting report draws from your own documented game data to capture hitter tendencies — what pitches they hit, where they hit them, and in which count situations they are most dangerous — alongside pitcher tendencies for teams whose pitching you have seen before. This data does not require a dedicated advance scout, a second staff member, or any extra work on game day. It requires accurate pitch-by-pitch data collection and a system that makes that data retrievable and actionable when you need to prepare for the next matchup.

## How Coaches Use It to Win Games

The most powerful application is tournament bracket preparation. When your team faces an opponent in a Saturday semifinal that you played against in Friday's opening round, your FastPitch IQ data from that first game is already your complete scouting report. You know which hitters made contact on which pitches and where the ball went. You know what their pitcher went to in two-strike counts and how she attacked left-handed hitters. Walking into that rematch with organized, accurate, game-documented data is a different kind of preparation than walking in on memory and general impressions — and in a tournament semifinal, that difference changes outcomes.

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## ■ THE FASTPITCH IQ SOLUTION



Because every game scored in FastPitch IQ is stored in your program's complete history, scouting report data builds automatically every time you play. The spray charts, sequence logs, and performance-by-count data from every previous matchup against a specific opponent are always accessible — organized and ready to use as your preparation foundation the next time you face them.

## Bringing It All Together

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Seven data points. Each one individually valuable. Together, they represent a complete picture of pitching intelligence that changes how you manage your circle, protect your arms, and prepare for the games that define your season.

The softball coaches who collect this data accurately — and who have it accessible in real time during live games — make better decisions than the coaches who are working from memory, rough counts, and general impressions. That is not a technology argument. It is a coaching argument.

The tools have not always existed to collect all of this data practically during a live softball game. They do now.



## READY TO SEE IT IN ACTION?

FastPitch IQ by NextPlay Digital Sports tracks all seven of these data points automatically — starting with your very first game.

3 taps to score a pitch. 9 taps for ball in play. First game in under 3 minutes.  
No tablets. No scrolling. No tech skills required.

Built by coaches with 25+ years of experience who lived every problem in this playbook  
—  
and decided to build the solution they always wished they had.

### ■ START YOUR 7-DAY FREE TRIAL

No credit card required. No commitment. Better pitching data starting with your next game.

■ [www.nextplaydigitalsports.com/fastpitch-iq](http://www.nextplaydigitalsports.com/fastpitch-iq)



## Questions Before You Start?

A real coach on our team reads every message and responds personally. No chatbots. No ticket systems. Just coaches talking to coaches.

**Email:** [nextplaydigitalsports@gmail.com](mailto:nextplaydigitalsports@gmail.com)

**Call or Text:** 740.418.2631

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