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MLB Coach Offers Video Analysis for Young Pitchers

By [Kyle Stack](#) [✉](#) [t](#) July 22, 2011 | 1:03 pm | Categories: [Fitness](#), [Technique](#)

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A new website dedicated to baseball pitching mechanics is seeking to correct all the flaws displayed by hurlers from the Little Leagues up to the pros.

Don Cooper, pitching coach for MLB's Chicago White Sox, recently created [DonCooperBaseball.com](#) with the intent of providing video analysis for pitchers, no matter their age. His plan might seem ambitious, but the former big league pitcher believes he can leverage his 33 years of professional experience to right the wrongs taught by coaches at various levels of the sport.

“There is a lot of what I feel is poor information being given out there by people who don't really have the background to be instructing [pitchers],” Cooper told Wired.com.

Cooper has based this opinion in part off what he sees from Little Leaguers, high schoolers and other levels of pitchers at the various Chicago and New York clinics he teaches at during the off season.

What he's seen sounds like an endless number of mechanical errors in hurlers of all ages: how a pitcher stands on the rubber, how he lands, what his arm action is like through delivery. Poor mechanics have repercussions beyond just giving up walks and hits.

"Once the mechanics aren't good," Cooper said, "that means the pitches won't be good and you probably aren't going to stay healthy."

He insists that pitch counts aren't as necessary to sustaining a pitcher's health, as is the ability to throw each pitch the mechanically appropriate way. Even a change-up (which has the same pitching motion as a fastball but comes in with slower velocity) can lead to injury if it's not throw with the proper mechanics. He's taken this approach with his White Sox staff, which has been well-regarded for its relatively low amount of injuries since Cooper took over full-time in 2003.

Cooper's plan to fix players' form hinges on having a pitcher send a video of himself performing three pitches each from side and front views. Cooper then breaks down the thrower's miscues and send him back a video displaying a side-by-side comparison — the pitcher's mistakes highlighted with lines, arrows and Cooper's audio overlay on one side, and a person chosen by Cooper performing mechanics the correct way. (Cooper said the latter will incorporate MLB pitchers.)

The video tutorial [costs \\$150](#) for the initial analysis, and \$100 for a follow-up.

Known around baseball circles for the positive reinforcement he offers players, Cooper will recommend throwing drills and programs to complement the mechanical advice imparted on each video. White Sox head athletic trainer Herm Schneider will also offer training and injury prevention recommendations to those seeking it.

Fundamentally speaking, Cooper considers initial balance, weight shift as the pitch is being delivered, and understanding how to land to finish a pitch as three of the biggest flaws he sees among pitchers, particularly with kids.

In fact, Cooper thinks that age group doesn't watch enough baseball. "They don't even know how to stand on the mound," he said.

Yet he's adamant that he will work with any pitcher interested in improving his craft. He'll also work with parents and coaches to reinforce his points. Cooper hopes his clients will stick with him for years; he said he'll go as far as to recommend successful high school players to his numerous contacts in the college ranks.

But what the pitchers he teaches need to prove is that they can clean up their mechanics.

"I'm doing this because I see a need for kids to get the correct [pitching mechanics] information," Cooper said. "I have the information."