

THE 10TH INNING

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"A great hitter isn't born, he's made. He's made out of practice, fault correction and confidence."
- Rogers Hornsby, HOF 1942

COACHES CORNER

SWING SEQUENCE - A hitting absolute; Swing sequence is about the connectivity between a hitter's back heel, back knee and back hip. Like a lot of movement in sports, hitting starts from the ground up.

When a hitter engages his back heel, or screws his foot into the ground, it starts a kinetic chain of movement between a hitter's back heel, knee, and hip. It's a great illustration of how physics and science is applicable in the game. Taking swing sequence further, a hitter's back hip and/or belt buckle serves as a compass, it's a directional tool. It takes a hitter to the baseball. And in true kinetic sequence fashion, hitter's hands follow the hip and a hitter's barrel follows the hands. The barrel is, in essence, along for the ride and will go wherever the hands and hip take it. So on an inside pitch, a hitter's compass or belt buckle needs to be facing the pitcher (Image A). Get to this point and the hands and barrel have an alley to get to the baseball. Don't get there and that alley doesn't exist. The hip stops, the hands stop, the barrel stops and the hitter gets jammed.

Likewise, consider a pitch on the outer half. If a hitter's compass, belt buckle or directional tool points at the pitcher he went to far and pulls off the baseball. His compass/buckle should be facing the opposite field middle infielder at contact (Image B), not the pitcher.

IMAGE A

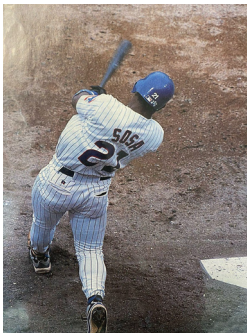


IMAGE B



So the take away for young hitters when talking about the swing sequence absolute is this: Your back hip and/or belt buckle is your guide and it will take you to the baseball, but it starts from the ground up with the back heel.



SAL BANDO, JR.

Author

Sal breaks down 20+ years of his coaching experience and has packed it into our monthly newsletter, *The 10th Inning*. Exclusive interviews, coaching tips, rule clarifications, and game insights, are only some of the topics he covers each issue. Additionally, Sal is an RT Elite coach and has been the head baseball coach for Marquette High School Hilltoppers since 2011.

THE INTERVIEW

Myles Smith, one of RT Elite's coaches, recently sat down with *The 10th Inning* to talk baseball and life. Myles is originally from Michigan, where he was a top player in the state in high school. He went on to play Division 1 ball at the University of Missouri. After one year in Columbia, he transferred to Miami Dade Junior College, a national power at the NJCAA level. He was drafted by the Boston Red Sox in the 4th round and played three years in their farm system before being traded to the Arizona Diamondbacks, where he spent another four years. The game eventually took him to Franklin, WI, where he finished his playing career with the Milwaukee Milkmen, earning the American Association's Pitcher of the Year award in 2021.

What do you enjoy most about coaching?

I enjoy watching players develop into promising young ball players. The look of accomplishment they get when something they've been working on finally starts to click, and players see positive results from all the hard work they've put in.



If you can give advice to a prep player that wants to play in college, what would it be?

Enjoy the journey! Don't worry about the results immediately; if you put in the hours working on the right things, success and numbers will come. Always have a thirst for knowledge and be willing to ask questions, so you understand. Also, you can always learn something new by watching others and seeing what makes them successful and if it could work for you.

What do you love most about the game?

I love the places this game can take you and the experiences you enjoy. Also, nothing beats the friendship and brotherhood you form with the guys you take the field with every day. Sometimes, you see them more than your own family, and they become family themselves.

Who had the biggest influence on you in your career and why?

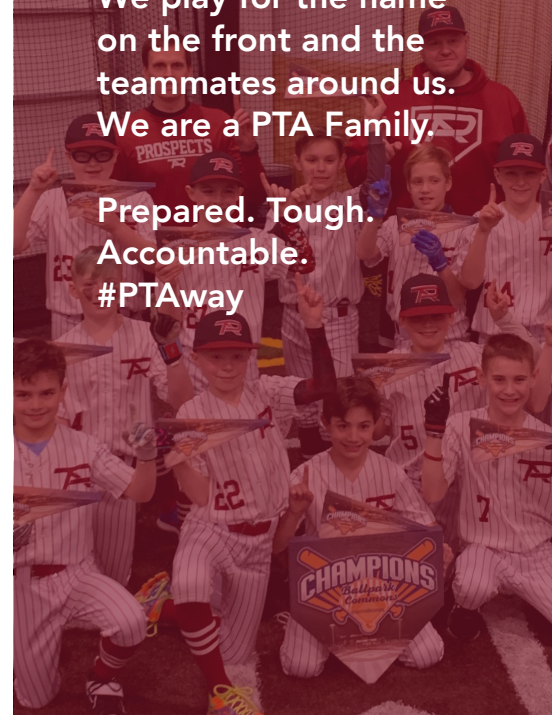
My father had the biggest influence on my career, from waking up before the sun helping me practice, and spending hours on the field hitting and throwing BP. But most importantly, my father encouraged me to step outside my comfort zone and embrace challenges and competition to see where I was skill-wise and what I needed to do to improve my game.



ABOUT PTA

At PTA, we train to develop and create leaders on and off the field. By focusing on the importance of academics and character, PTA players, staff, and organization are second to none. We play for the name on the front and the teammates around us. We are a PTA Family.

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