**Playing vs. Showcasing vs. Training:
What is the Right Mix?**

Coach Wolforth here with some very valuable direction about your choices for the summer...

A couple years ago while watching my son play college baseball, in Huntsville, TX I was asked a similar question no less than 6 times over my weekend stay.

Here is a composite, paraphrased version of the 6, eerily similar requests for clarity and direction:

*“Coach, we are just now making our plans for our son for the summer. We would really like your opinion on what our son should do. Should he go play/pitch in showcases and/or college collegiate leagues or should he dedicate his summer to train…possibly at a place like the Texas Baseball Ranch*®*…or BOTH….Train for a portion and play a portion of the summer? We are so torn…we can see rationale behind either direction. Can you possibly make sense of this for us? We are so afraid of getting it wrong.”*

Of course, we ALL know that the right decision for each and every athlete depends upon the individual athlete…but just saying ‘It depends’ isn’t very helpful. What exactly does this decision depend upon?

I’ve been doing what I do for 20+ years. Here is what I told ALL 6 and what I will tell you…what you should do depends PRECISELY upon how you answer the following questions:

If you are a HS sophomore: Remember these numbers: 80+; 60+ 25+ and No pain.

If you are a HS junior: 84+; 60+, 25+ and No pain

If you are a HS senior: 88+, 65+, 25+ and No Pain

If you are in College 90+, 65+, 20+ and No Pain.

Ok, now for what those numbers mean:

For a HS Sophomore:

If you are a HS sophomore, if you are throwing below 80 mph you absolutely DO NOT need to pitch in games this summer. Performance in games is not your primary constraint. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your velocity above 80 heading into the Fall of your junior year.

If you are a HS sophomore, if your game time strike percentage for the year is below 60% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your command above 60% strikes headed into the Fall of your junior year.

If you are a HS sophomore, if your swing and miss percentage for the year is below 25% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and improve the sharpness of your secondary stuff (curveball/ slider/ change up) headed into the Fall of your junior year.

If you are a HS sophomore, if you have regular reoccurring arm pain and discomfort you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get a healthy durable arm headed into the Fall of your junior year.

If you are above every number and have no arm pain…by all means go pitch and impress some people

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For a HS Junior:

If you are a HS junior, if you are throwing below 84 mph you absolutely DO NOT need to pitch in games this summer. Performance in games is not your primary constraint. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your velocity above 84 heading into the Fall of your senior year.

If you are a HS junior, if your game time strike percentage for the year is below 60% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your command above 60% strikes headed into the Fall of your senior year.

If you are a HS junior, if your swing and miss percentage for the year is below 25% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and improve the sharpness of your secondary stuff (curveball/ slider/ change up) headed into the Fall of your senior year.

If you are a HS junior, if you have regular reoccurring arm pain and discomfort you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get a healthy durable arm headed into the Fall of your senior year.

If you are above every number and have no arm pain…by all means go pitch and impress some people.

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For a HS Senior:

If you are a HS Senior, if you are throwing below 88 mph you absolutely DO NOT need to pitch in games this summer. Performance in games is not your primary constraint. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your velocity above 88 heading into the Fall of your freshman year in college .

If you are a HS Senior, if your game time strike percentage for the year is below 65% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your command above 60% strikes headed into the Fall of your freshman year in college.

If you are a HS Senior, if your swing and miss percentage for the year is below 25% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and improve the sharpness of your secondary stuff (curveball/ slider/ change up) headed into the Fall of you freshman year in college

If you are a HS Senior, if you have regular reoccurring arm pain and discomfort you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get a healthy durable arm headed into the Fall of your freshman year in college.

If you are above every number and have no arm pain…by all means go pitch and impress some people.

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For a College Pitcher:

If you are throwing below 90 mph you absolutely DO NOT need to pitch in games this summer. Performance in games is not your primary constraint. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your velocity above 90 heading into the Fall.

If your game time strike percentage for the year is below 65% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get your command above 65% strikes headed into the Fall.

If your swing and miss percentage for the year is below 20% you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and improve the sharpness of your secondary stuff (curveball/ slider/ change up) headed into the Fall.

If you have regular reoccurring arm pain and discomfort you absolutely SHOULD NOT pitch in games this summer. You need to take the dedicated time and train and get a healthy durable arm headed into the Fall.

If you are above every number and have no arm pain…by all means go pitch and impress some people.

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So that gives you some very honest, logical, strategic and seasoned advice on the direction you should take this summer.

If, after reading this and deciphering where you or your athlete fits in this assessment, you decide The Texas Baseball Ranch should be part of your summer… we’d love to have you join us for our “Extended Stay Summer Developmental” Program.