

AN ANALYSIS OF RICK ANKIEL'S PITCHING MOTION & MECHANICS

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General Comments About Rick Ankiel

- Very strong first part of 2000 season but then lost ability to throw strikes during playoff game with Atlanta Braves.
 - Threw pitches over catcher's head and into backstop.
- Gave up pitching in Spring of 2005.
- Has had arm problems.
 - Tendonitis in 2002
 - Tommy John surgery in 2003.

Comments About Rick Ankiel's Pitching Motion And Mechanics

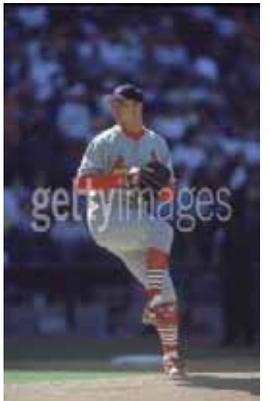
- Head not level during delivery.
- Shows sign of inconsistencies in motion.
 - Different degrees of shoulder reverse rotation at the same point.
 - Will cause lateral inconsistency due to rushing.
- Very awkward when striding to the plate.
- Lots of reverse rotation.
 - Appears to stride toward plate while reverse rotated.
 - It's almost as if he is falling backwards toward the plate.
- Seems to be throwing too hard.
- Vertical inconsistency is a sign that he is thinking.



1. 1



2. 1



3. 1



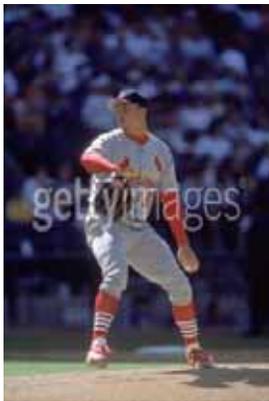
4. 1



2



5. 1



6. 1



2



7. 1



8. 1



9. 1



10. 1



11. 1

Looking back over his glove-side shoulder. Striding toward the plate with the shoulders closed 20 to 30 degrees. Back arched somewhat.



12. 1



13. 1



14. 1

Very awkward position. Back arched significantly. Head tilted. He is looking back over his shoulder due to the fact that he is moving forward while still being reverse-rotated. It's almost as if he is falling backwards toward the plate. Shoulders still closed 20 to 30 degrees. Notice different amounts of reverse rotation in frames 13.1 and 14.1, which could cause problems with rushing and inconsistency (left and right).

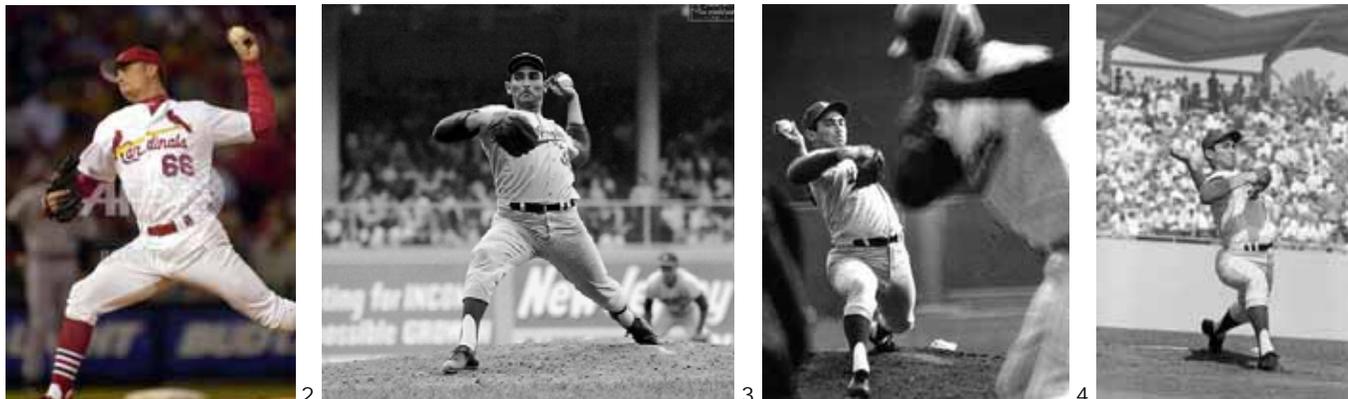


15. 1

2

Glove foot planted. Head is tilted toward 3B. Lands with foot flat and knee bent approximately 120 degrees. Hips are rotating significantly and shoulders are just about to start rotating. Notice that his rear end is significantly to the 3B side of his glove-side lower leg and his knee looks like it is to the 1B side of his glove-side foot. Shoulders are level.

Contrast with pictures of Sandy Koufax, another power pitcher, at the same point in his delivery. Koufax has head level and glove-side elbow up. Koufax isn't arching back as much. Ankiel has started pulling glove-side arm back while Koufax hasn't yet.



16. 1

2

3

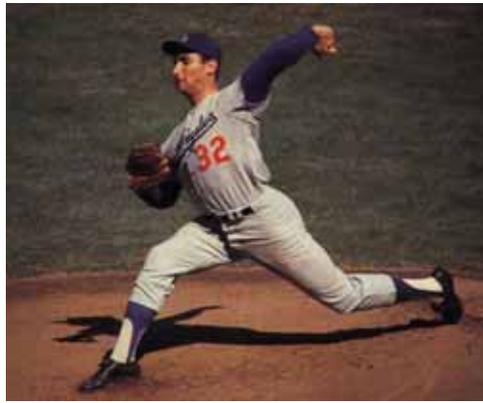
4

Knees are at similar angles, arms are in similar positions, and backs are both arched. Koufax has head level and glove-side shoulder is more closed. Koufax has elbow higher, which will introduce a more pure vertical rotation. Ankiel may be rushing while Koufax seems to be doing a better job of staying back. Ankiel has shoulders level or front shoulder down while Koufax has back shoulder down.



Both are starting to tilt shoulders. Koufax's glove-side elbow is higher than Ankiel's. Koufax's elbow is in line with his shoulders while Ankiel's elbow is slightly behind his body.





19. 1 2

Ankiel is pulling his pitching arm along with his shoulder (leading with his shoulder), places tons of strain on his UCL and likely explaining why he needed Tommy John surgery. Koufax is leading with his elbow (elbow is in line with shoulders). Koufax has similar shoulder tilt but more level head. Ankiel may be straightening glove-side leg more than Koufax at the same point.



20. 1



21. 1



22. 1

Forearm supinated in the above frame 22.1 and below frames 23.1 and 23.3, which would help to explain his elbow problems.



23. 1



2



3



4

Glove-side leg stiff during follow-through.



24. 1