



In baseball, once a player or coach moves on to a different organization, that usually spells the end of the player/coach relationship. When Rick Peterson's cell phone rang one June day, he was surprised to hear Scott Kazmir's voice. Kazmir, the former Mets prospect who was traded to the Tampa Bay Rays reached out to his former pitching coach for help to regain his delivery that allowed him to dominate the 2008 season. Just a few weeks later, Peterson's phone rang again. This time, it was Mark Mulder looking for Peterson's assistance following major shoulder surgery. Why would two pitchers reach out to their former pitching coach? More importantly, why would the Tampa Bay Rays endorse the deal? The simple answer is that Rick Peterson's methodology works. The implications of his methodology are starting to reach more than just Major Leaguers.

The Methodology Summarized

Peterson's style as an Instructor of Pitching is exceptionally thorough. It led to the creation of what he calls *The Peak Performance Triangle*. The triangle shows the areas of importance—conditioning, pitching skills, and performance behaviors. Peterson believes that each area intersects with the other. "They all relate and need each other. In order to avoid injury and achieve his peak performance, a pitcher must be conditioned to perform the act of throwing a baseball at least 100 times a game," Peterson said. "But, he also has to have the skills to do it properly each time which means having the mental toughness to focus on each pitch." That latter point is often ignored in professional sports, but as seen in so many cases, a pitcher must have mental toughness in order to achieve sustained success.

At the heart of Peterson's program is biomechanics. Biomechanics is defined as the science of the internal and external forces acting on the human body and the effects produced by these

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forces. For pitchers, biomechanics is paramount for sustained health considering the violent nature of pitching. Peterson believes that all pitchers should have a biomechanical analysis in order to spot red warning flags in their deliveries. Peterson prefers to utilize the analysis standards developed by the famed Dr. James Andrews of the American Sports Medicine Institute (ASMI). Peterson brought over 80 pitchers to the lab while coaching and it's one of the main reasons his pitchers have stayed healthy while under his tutelage.

Select [Read More](#) to see more about Scott Kazmir and Mark Mulder working with Rick Peterson

Kazmir Reaches Out

In nine starts to begin the 2009 season, it was evident that something was wrong with Scott Kazmir. He had a 7.69 ERA, a 1.95 WHIP, and had given been touched up by opposing hitters to the tune of .302/.382/.504. The Rays placed him on the disabled list with a strained quadriceps. However, there was a bit more to it as Kazmir struggled with his delivery for the second half of the 2008 season and into the post season. His early season struggles showed some decreased velocity (his fastball averaged 88 MPH during last start before landing on the disabled list) and a complete lack of control. Kazmir turned to his former pitching coach for help. But, first, Peterson wanted to make sure that the Tampa Bay Rays were on the same page. "It was important to me that the Rays organization was onboard with this. They not only approved it, but they endorsed it", says Peterson.

Step one was to get Scott Kazmir to Alabama to visit ASMI for a biomechanical evaluation. "The first step was to have Scott return to lab. We had a baseline from 2004 when he came with me with the Mets. We did a comparison which is model of 3P Sports program. When got the analysis back, a few measurements were now out of range. So we individualized his routine to get him back into his good habits", explains Peterson. In other words, Kazmir's delivery had changed at some point, causing him to lose velocity, lose the strike zone, and, most importantly, cause health issues.

Once the analysis was complete, Peterson and Kazmir got together in New Jersey at a high school baseball field. There, Peterson went back to basics, doing shadow drills (going through the delivery without a baseball) and long toss. They were to meet in the New York City the following day for session two. "I thought we'd meet at a park, but then I thought if someone recognized us. Could you imagine someone seeing Scott and I having a catch in the park?" Peterson asks with a laugh.

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“Scott had some flexibility issues in his lower extremities so we ended up in a Yoga studio. Then, we went outside and long-tossed from 300 feet with our eyes closed. With your eyes closed, you feel the movements of your body better. After, we went through routines of how to throw a changeup. Scott needs his changeup and needs to throw it often. The difference was immediate. Scott even said he felt his power again”, describes Peterson.

With those workouts and armed with his Peterson routine, Scott Kazmir went back to the Rays. The difference was noticeable. Suddenly, he was back to throwing in the mid-90's. Peterson describes a conversation with Rays' General Manager Andrew Friedman, “Andrew was stunned. He said Scott gain three miles per hour on his fastball in his first bullpen back.”

Yes, the velocity is back as well as well as a plan when pitching. In his last start against the Blue Jays, Kazmir's fastball averaged 93 miles per hour. He also threw 15 changeups which is 11 more than he did during his final start before going on the disabled list. His stuff is back, his delivery is more consistent. The results are coming.

Since working with Peterson, Kazmir has made 11 starts. In those 11 starts, he has thrown 60.1 innings, allowed 61 hits, 34 runs, 21 walks, and 56 strikeouts with a 5.07 ERA and a 1.359 WHIP. More importantly, he has started to dominate hitters again as opposing hitters have hit just .239/.313/.374. He's still working his way back, but his last three starts (against Toronto, Texas, and Toronto again), he is 2-0, having thrown 19.2 innings, allowing 14 hits, 6 walks, 7 runs, and 21 strikeouts.

Mulder Calls

When a baseball fan hears that Mark Mulder called Rick Peterson for help, they may just attribute that to being a rumor. Of the famed Oakland A's big three, Mulder was characterized as the one least enamored with Peterson's program. His success under Peterson's watch as a young pitcher was evident as he had a 49-25 record with a 3.51 ERA. As a 21 year old, Mulder finished second in the Cy Young Award voting and won 21 games. He went on to have a consistent three seasons when Peterson left for New York, but he had major shoulder surgery in 2007 and struggled to comeback in 2008. While needing time to continue his rehabilitation and still not ready to throw, Mulder reached out to Peterson.

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“With Mark, the process is a bit different. He’s coming off of major surgery and he altered his delivery for so long to compensate for that pain. He is literally going through the process of learning how to pitch all over again”, explains Peterson. The two continue to work together as Mulder has spent some time working with Peterson in New Jersey, continuing his work at home, and then coming back for more one-on-one time with Peterson. The program is individualized to Mulder, using his baseline analysis from his days in Oakland as a comparison to what his delivery is like now.

The results are coming.

“There are times when Mark throws a bullpen and he is electric. It’s now a matter of consistency. Scott wasn’t out of his habits for too long. Mark has a longer road to go. He’s almost there. When he’s ready, I am confident that he will get back to a high level of performance.”

The fact that Kazmir and Mulder have returned to Peterson says quite a bit about Peterson’s program. In a result driven world, the results are clear. Mark Mulder is close to coming back in top form from major surgery only after working with Peterson. Scott Kazmir regained his velocity in a matter of days when working with Peterson. His last three starts have been so positive that the Los Angeles Angels, a team in first place and with serious World Series aspirations, [traded three prospects to Tampa Bay for his services](#) in order to bolster their rotation for the playoffs. Clearly, Rick Peterson’s program, the basis of his 3P Sports Pitching Program, gets results.

3P Sports

The work Coach Peterson has done recently comes at the same time his 3P Sports Peak Performance Pitching Program continues to gain momentum within the amateur pitching market. You can learn more at the [Live Preview](#) , or visit www.3PSports.com .

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