

by Julie Mais  
Editor



## Mastering the fundamentals

*At the beginning of each softball practice and before each game, coach would have us form two lines about two feet apart, and we would pair off with a teammate.*

Kneeling with my right knee down and left leg in front forming a right angle, I'd lay my glove to the side. Picking up the neon yellow softball with my right hand, I'd raise it up and out in front of me and hold my right wrist with my left, so only my hand could move. Next I'd flick my wrist sending the ball to my partner. She'd do the same.

After a few minutes of this back and forth, one line would scoot back a few feet. This time we'd engage our elbow to toss the ball. Moving back further, yet still on the ground, I would grab my glove and use a full rotation of my shoulder and torso to throw the ball. Eventually the group would stand and continue to warm up with the sound of softballs snapping into the receivers' gloves.

This warm-up discipline essentially broke down the action of throwing a softball — one of the fundamentals needing to be mastered in order to successfully play the game. It seemed elementary at the time, but practicing the motion over and over again helped to hone the skill and improve agility.

I first learned of fundamentals at a young age growing up playing sports. While my youthful excitement wanted to learn the fun trick plays, it was ingrained in me from coaches throughout the years that improving my skills all starts with the fundamentals. You have to be able to do the basics and build a foundation in order to grow and improve.

### Back to basics


This issue, "Back to Basics," is all about the fundamentals of raising Angus cattle. We get the privilege of sharing with you stories of those who have done just that as

we celebrate and recognize historic Angus herds. These breeders have been continuously raising Angus cattle for more than 50 years.

Turn to Heritage Herds on page 62 to read about Angus families who have stood the test of time not by following fads but by



making sound business decisions and creating a sustainable business to pass on to the next generation.

On behalf of the *Angus Journal* team, we congratulate all Historic Angus Herds. 

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Julie'.

[jmais@angus.org](mailto:jmais@angus.org)

