

A photograph of baseball player Tommy Pham in a white uniform with red accents, swinging a bat during a game. He is wearing a red helmet and is captured in the middle of his swing. The background shows a blurred crowd of spectators in a stadium.

Tommy Pham Before and After

by Chris OLeary

Before

Ground Out to Short Stop

2010.07.24

Game 2





















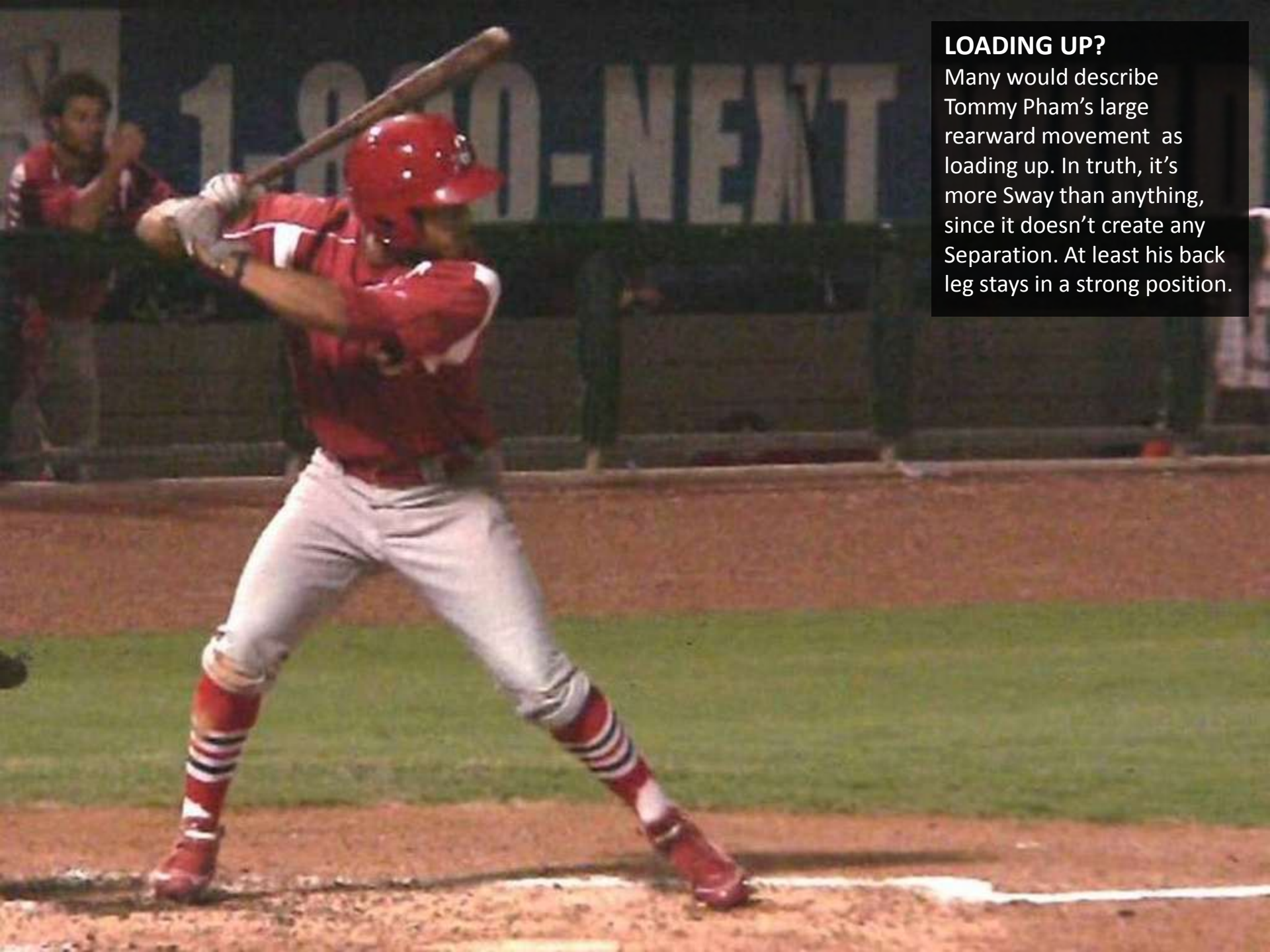












LOADING UP?

Many would describe Tommy Pham's large rearward movement as loading up. In truth, it's more Sway than anything, since it doesn't create any Separation. At least his back leg stays in a strong position.















LEAKY HANDS

Tommy Pham doesn't demonstrate any loading during this clip. Instead, his back elbow, back shoulder, and hands all move forward at the same time.





TOE TOUCH

At Toe Touch, Tommy Pham is rolling onto the inside of his back foot. His back elbow and hands are also dropping at the same time.

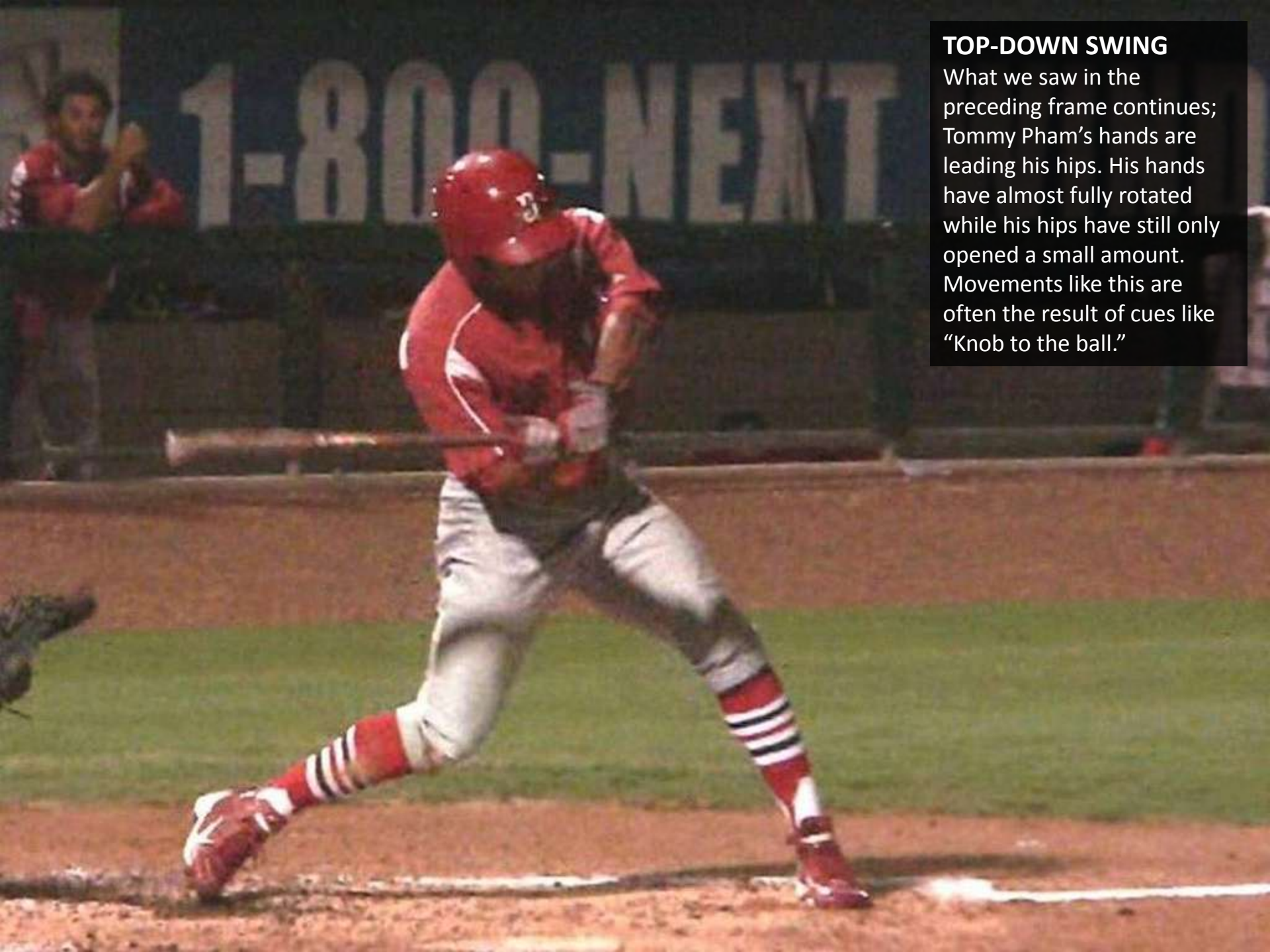






FOOT PLANT

At foot plant, Tommy Pham's upper body looks relatively good. The problem is that his hips are largely closed while his hands have rotated a significant distance around toward the ball. In fact, this feels like a textbook Charley Lau swing, given the large linear move combined with keeping the hips closed into Foot Plant.

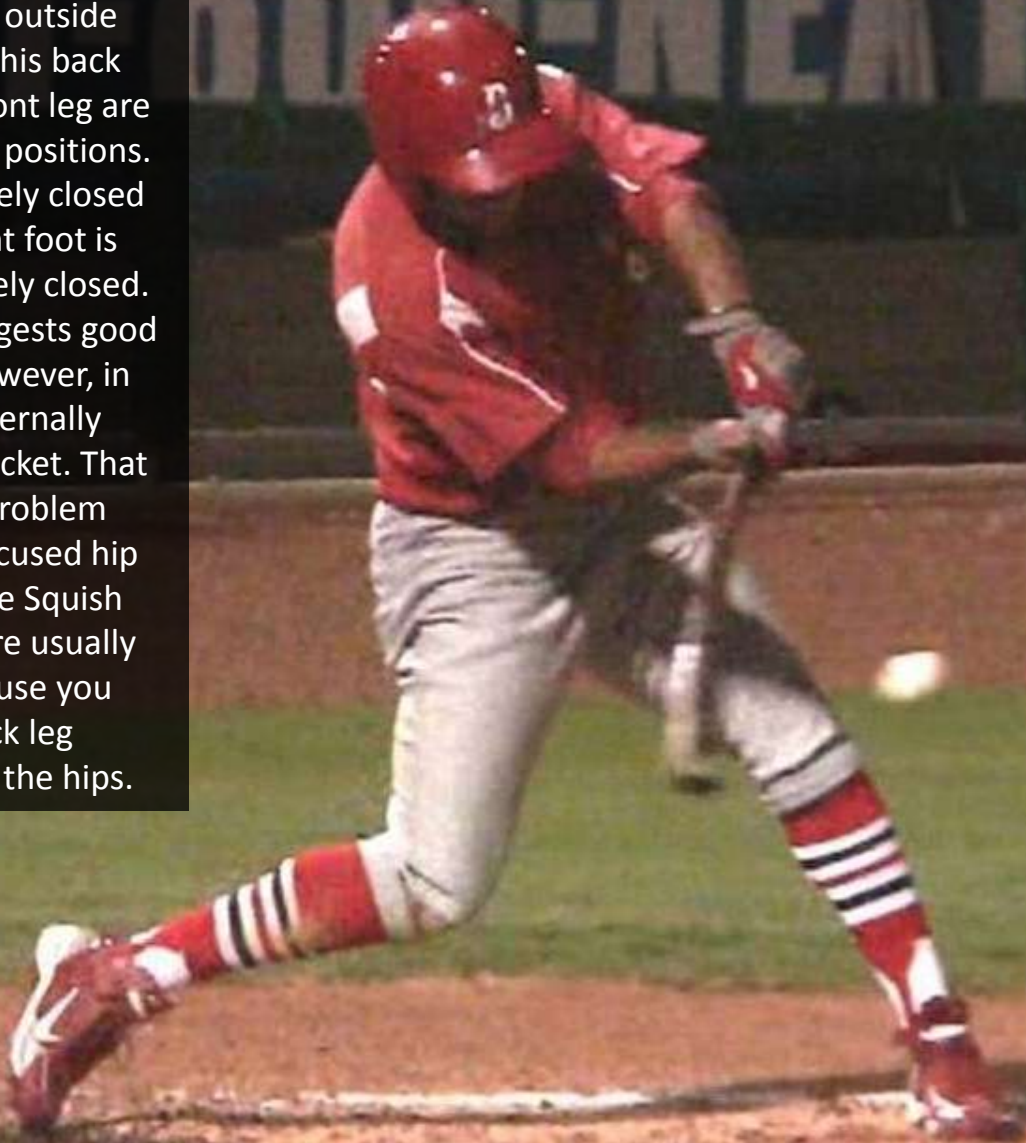


TOP-DOWN SWING

What we saw in the preceding frame continues; Tommy Pham's hands are leading his hips. His hands have almost fully rotated while his hips have still only opened a small amount. Movements like this are often the result of cues like "Knob to the ball."

POINT OF CONTACT

Tommy Pham's upper body is in a pretty normal position, though he is trying to pull an outside pitch. However, his back leg, hips, and front leg are in contradictory positions. His hips are largely closed because his front foot is almost completely closed. His back leg suggests good hip rotation. However, in truth it's just internally rotating in its socket. That points out the problem with back leg focused hip rotation cues like Squish The Bug; they are usually ineffective because you can turn the back leg without turning the hips.



EXTENSION

The problem with this frame is that Tommy Pham is extending too early. Instead of showing evidence of whipping the barrel, his hands are pushing forward through the Point Of Contact.





1-800-NEXT WIND











Double to Right Field Corner

2010.07.24

Game 1





1-800-NEXT WINN



1-800-NEXT





VERY SPREAD OUT

Tommy Pham starts out spread out and then takes a relatively long stride on top of that.







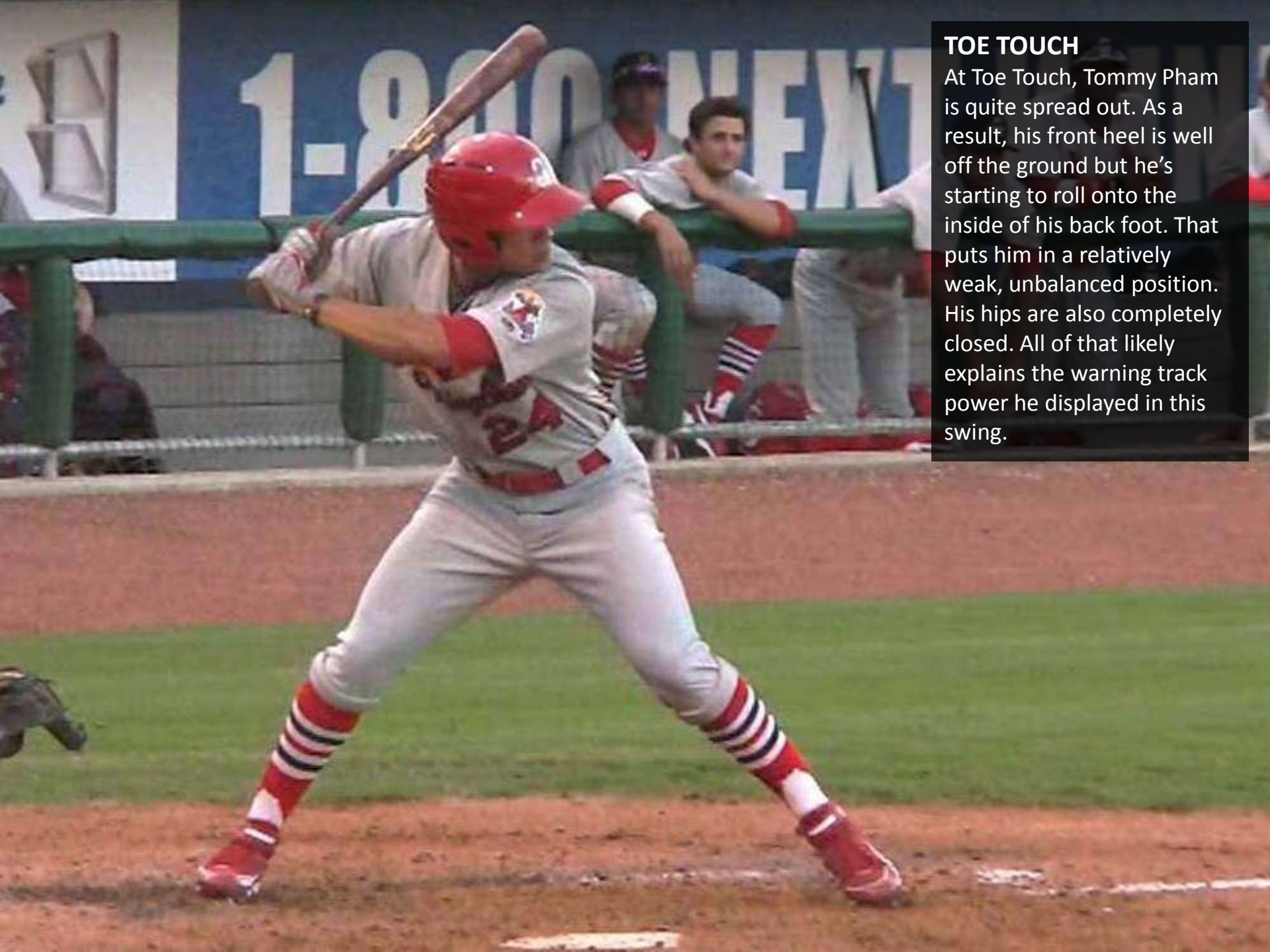


TWO ITEMS OF CONCERN

While this swing produced a successful result, I see two problems.

First, Tommy Pham's stride seems longer than his body can handle. I say that in large part because it seems to lock up his hips.

Second, there's no evidence of Loading. Tommy Pham's hands move forward with the rest of his body.



TOE TOUCH

At Toe Touch, Tommy Pham is quite spread out. As a result, his front heel is well off the ground but he's starting to roll onto the inside of his back foot. That puts him in a relatively weak, unbalanced position. His hips are also completely closed. All of that likely explains the warning track power he displayed in this swing.



HANDS LEAKING FORWARD

As he goes from Toe Touch into Foot Plant, Tommy Pham's hands leak forward. His back elbow and his hands also drop at the same time.



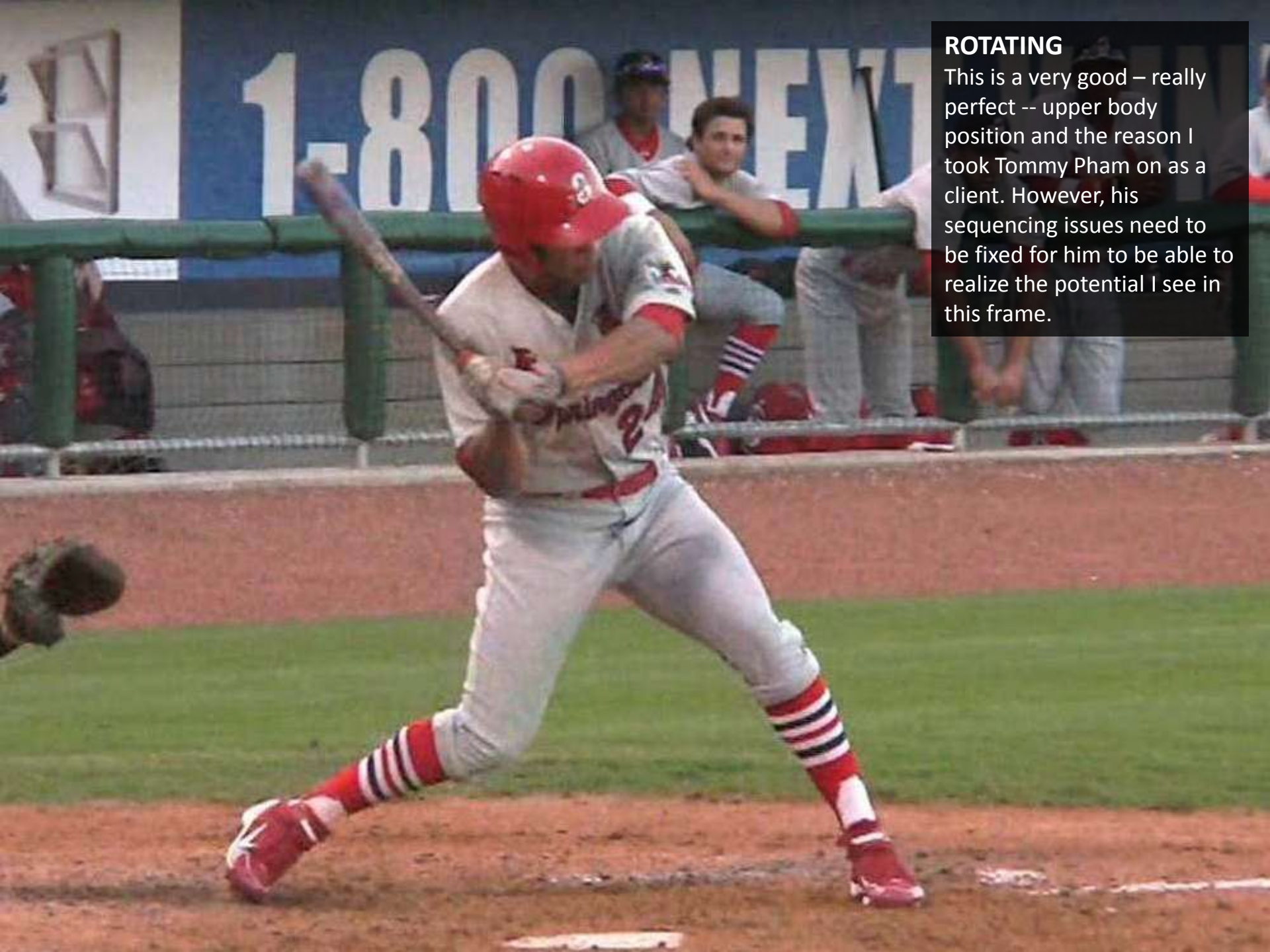
FRONT FOOT CONTACT

At Front Foot Contact, Tommy Pham's shoulders starting to rotate. However, his shoulders rotate much more than his hips. Part of the problem is his closed front foot, although it's just as likely that his long stride is locking up his hips. He continues to roll onto the inside of his back foot, which isn't going to help the rotation of his hips.



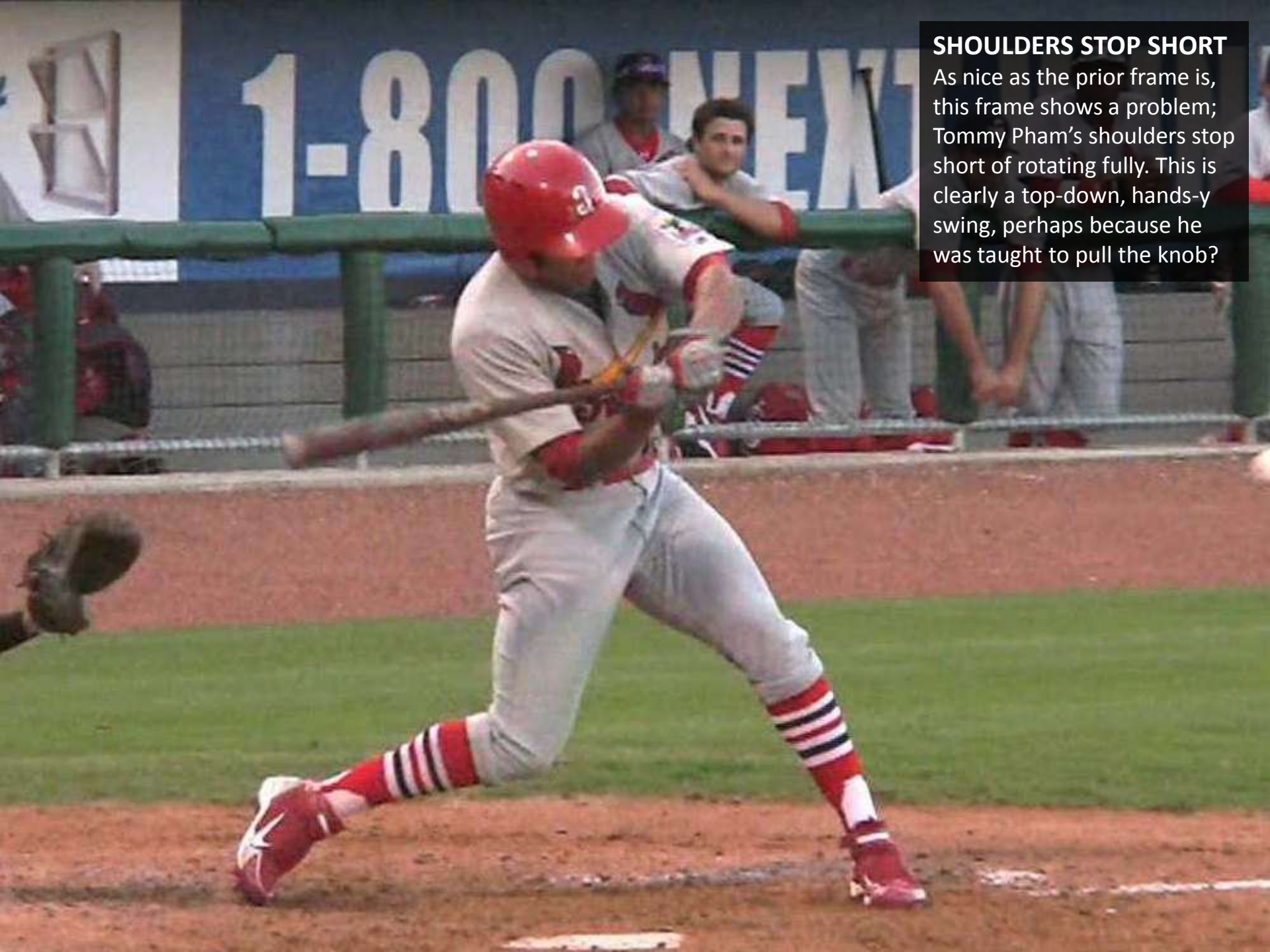
FOOT PLANT

Notice how far forward Tommy Pham's hands have drifted at Foot Plant. Also, his hips have opened a bit, but are still relatively closed. Part of the problem is that his front foot is closed and pointing straight ahead.



ROTATING

This is a very good – really perfect -- upper body position and the reason I took Tommy Pham on as a client. However, his sequencing issues need to be fixed for him to be able to realize the potential I see in this frame.



SHOULDERS STOP SHORT
As nice as the prior frame is, this frame shows a problem; Tommy Pham's shoulders stop short of rotating fully. This is clearly a top-down, hands-y swing, perhaps because he was taught to pull the knob?

POINT OF CONTACT

Tommy Pham is demonstrating a pretty good position at contact, with good angles. The problem is that his hands are still moving forward though contact, resulting in sub-optimal Whip. His Front foot is also very closed, which helps to explain why his hips haven't rotated fully. However, part of the problem is that his back leg is again just internally rotating in its socket, not turning his hips.

















After

First Home Run
Home Run to Left Center Field
2015.09.16









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WATCH HIS HANDS

As his front foot leaves the ground, Tommy Pham's hands are at their lowest point. As he strides, his hands, rather than leaning down, instead lift up. This increases the efficiency of his swing by creating Separation.















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HEEL PLANT

Only at Heel Plant do Tommy Pham's hands start to drop. Also, While his stride is still quite long, and he still rolls onto the inside of his back foot to a degree, notice how the toe of Tommy Pham stays firmly planted in the ground. As a result, his hips are able to fire more powerfully than before. However, you have to wonder whether Tommy Pham is (still) leaving some power on the table, which means he could swing a bit easier, and hit for AVG, while still hitting for power.









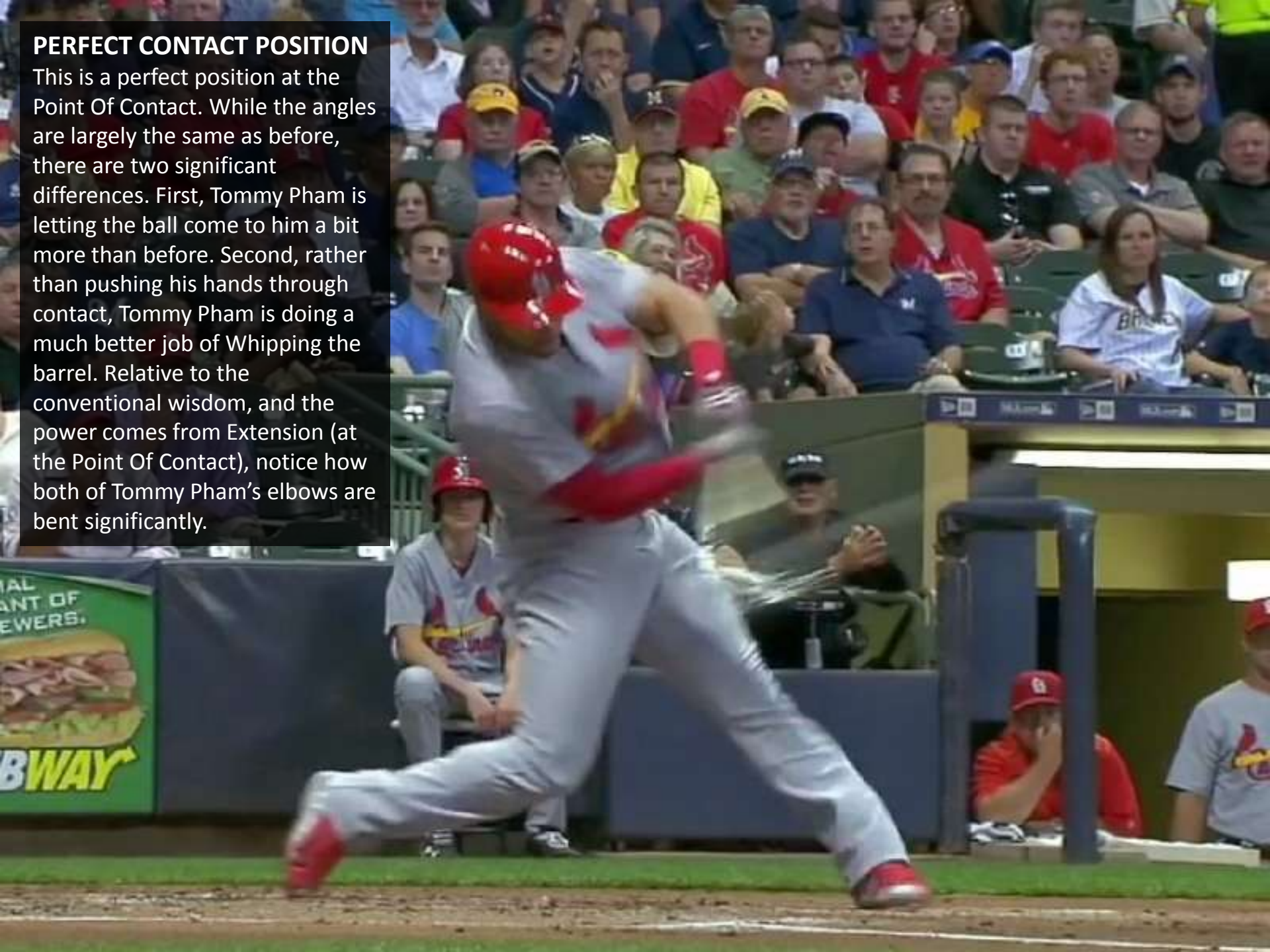
FRONT FOOT OPENING

While he pushed back on me on how closed the front foot should be at contact, you can see that Tommy Pham's front foot is more open than before. As a result, he gets significantly more hip rotation into the Point Of Contact.



PERFECT CONTACT POSITION

This is a perfect position at the Point Of Contact. While the angles are largely the same as before, there are two significant differences. First, Tommy Pham is letting the ball come to him a bit more than before. Second, rather than pushing his hands through contact, Tommy Pham is doing a much better job of Whipping the barrel. Relative to the conventional wisdom, and the power comes from Extension (at the Point Of Contact), notice how both of Tommy Pham's elbows are bent significantly.





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