The best hitters have A) technique, B) tremendous hand-eye coordination (enhanced by experience), C) a good bat and D) moderate strength.   We can address the first three at a different time since your question right now deals with the strength issue.

I suppose many would argue that strength is a key issue and that is why we have seen the development of "rotational" hitting mechanics in our sport.   The discussion which most gets on my nerves occurs when someone talks about how softball hitting is different than baseball and the difference is "all the best softball girls use rotational hitting mechanics."   If I had a nickel for every time I've heard that one!   Guess what?   Rotational hitting is a baseball concept.   It is traceable to Ted Williams.   It didn't develop in softball.   It cannot even remotely be called a "softball swing."

The fact is, if we are talking, in both baseball and softball, about swinging a stick at an object hurled in our direction, it amounts to fundamentally the same thing.   The acts of hitting in both sports are so similar that it defies reason to claim that the fundamental mechanic in one sport is completely different than it is in the other.   Yes, girls and boys have different physical make-ups.   Yes the softball arrives in the hitting zone with greater force than does the baseball, despite the slower pitch speed, thanks to the greater weight of the ball.   Yes, the spins are different, the size of the object to be struck is different.   The games are generally quite a bit different.   Yet the mechanics of propelling a lever with as great a force as possible just cannot be fundamentally different in the two sports.   99% of the action is identical.   So the fundamental mechanics must be identical.

The power with which the ball is struck in both sports is dependent upon bat speed and intertia of the lever machine at contact point.   You want to hit the ball hard, so swing the lever hard and use your body to form a heavy, strong machine.   In order to do that, you've got to have some strength in the key muscles, swing properly in a mechanical sense, and use your hips, back, legs and arms properly.

2) How do I build strength so the girls can drive the ball?

The pathway to strength is, obviously, exercise.   The muscles necessary to hit the ball are many and varied.   All need work.   Big biceps do not determine whether a girl can hit with power or not.   Core muscles (abdomen, etc.) and legs are probably the most important groups.   Any sort of exercise which strengthens the quadriceps, stomach and back muscles is going to help you hit.   All those speed and agility exercises you think you are doing exclusively for fielding and base-running purposes actually do matter for hitting as well.

There is an exercise we do which is ostensibly for fielding which I'll discuss here.   You place 4 cones in a square ten feet apart from each other.   Two girls, each holding a ball, stand on one side of the square, each next to a cone.   A third girl stands on the other side of the square and gets in a fielding ready position.   One girl rolls a ball to the cone opposite the fielder and the fielder shuffles across, feet moving heel to heel.   She fields the grounder, rolls the ball back to the thrower and then shuffles back to the other side where the other girl has rolled the ball to the other cone.   She continues performing this drill, back and forth, until a timer calls it "over," say after 30 seconds.   Then the girls switch positions and the fielder becomes one of the rollers.   We rotate the drill so that each kid gets at least 2 chances as a fielder.   If you've got the time, rotate more but you won't get through as many of these as you might think.

To make this drill fun, we turn it into a contest.   The teams of three compete to see which individuals and which groups can get the most number of fielding reps in each 30 second interval.   At the end of each turn, we ask how many and the fielder is required to keep count.   We have a contest to see which girl can field the most balls in 30 seconds and which team can get the most in a full rotation.

This exercise looks a lot easier than it is.   30 seconds generally has the fielder pretty tired.   Two rotations have the girls all red in the face, huffing and puffing.   Every once in a while I get carried away since I don't have to perform the drill often and do not have appreciation for how intense it is.   The result is the girls legs are wobbly and they're extremely tired.   One time we had a number of girls at practice which was not divisible by three.   I stood in as the third person, a roller, with one group.   When we got to the end of the drill, we asked each team to choose a member for one last try to see which group could get the highest number.   My team chose, you guessed it, me.   I wasn't going to lose to a bunch of girls!   So I pushed my body as hard as I could and won that little competition.   I was shocked how winded I was and how badly my quads burned for a good half an hour afterwards.   I was pretty useless for the duration of practice!

This exercise is great for speed and agility but more importantly, it helps build the quadriceps muscles while also strengthening one's core.   This drill along with the usual litany of speed agility stuff will make the legs, back and stomach stronger in terms of explosive force which is what we're after when we're at the plate.   Any other exercises you can come up with that build explosive strength in these muscles are good for hitting assuming you've also got good technique and the other important muscles are strong too.

In terms of the arms, more important than the biceps are the muscles in the back of the arm and in the wrists.   The triceps, back of the arm, can be worked many ways including push-ups or taking swings.   Similarly the forearm and wrist muscles also improve by doing these exercises.   The legs and core muscles are also strengthened by swings - dry, at the tee or whatever way you choose.   The trick when you take swings is to pay attention to mechanics - take proper swings.   Don't just swing the bat perfunctorily to get through 100 swings.

The forearms and wrists can also be strengthened by doing wrist curls and other exercises.   A device which aids hitters is the Marcy Wedge which isolates the wrist muscles in a curl exercise.   It costs about 40 bucks and lasts a long time.   We own one and I recommend getting one if you want to improve your hitting strength.   In lieu of the Wedge or in addition to it, using light dumbells is also a good way to improve strength.   We're not after huge rippling arms.   Light weights, 2 to 5 pounds, provide sufficient resistance for the task.   And rather than performing full curls which generally work the biceps, perform wrist curls and other exercises for the triceps.   Also those balls which you grip and squeeze can help develop the lower arm muscles necessary for swinging the bat well.

I discussed this briefly but I want to emphasize that the batting tee is a great place to work all these muscles too.   I'm not a huge fan of the parachute you attach to the bat or those weights which slide on because they alter your swing.   If you dry swing an ordinary bat 100 times, I would guess that you get at least as much benefit as swinging the bat with a chute or weight on it 80 times.   And dry swinging does not require you to alter your swing.   Instead you get to work proper swing mechanics and build motor memory while you strength train.

Another technique you can use involves a basketball.   Obviously a basketball weighs quite a bit more than a softball.   Yet, hitting one should not alter your swing.   You hit at it as if it were a softball and attempt to drive it.   We do this off the tee into a net but you can also do it using soft toss into a backstop.   I've seen a lot of heavy hitting teams work with basketballs and while I cannot directly attest to it making a difference, I think logic dictates that girls have to get their body weight into the swing in order to drive it.   It reinforces good swing mechanics.

I'm not going to go into swing mechanics here because Terry indicated that he is already familiar with Charlie Lau and his particulasr question involved issues of strength.   But I do want to say that any human being who uses proper swing mechanics can drive the ball regardless of strength.   That's because the most important aspect of your swing is your body's inertia.   Even a "90 pound weakling" can drive the ball if his or her mechanics are very good.   That's what I was trying to tell you when I mentioned the story about the little 11 year old girl.   And our specimen 6 foot 3 muscled Russian Adnonis will have trouble getting the ball past the pitcher if his swing stinks.

3) Should I try to teach the Lau method of hitting or continue to handle problems one at a time on a per girl basis?

There is a problem with handling problems one at a time or trying to improve a fundamentally poor overall swing mechanic.   The problem is that you will most likely end up with kids who can hit no better than they could before batting practice started.   What I would suggest you do is start with an overview of a proper swing.   For this, I don't care if you use a conventional linear hitting model, Charlie Lau or the rotational method.   But I do care that you use one of them and remain consistent about it.

Once you've chosen your poison, develop a very good understanding of what you want to teach.   Then break it down into stages.   And teach every kid the same way.   When you start to try to look at a kid's swing and then make alterations based on the model you use, you get a kid who is 90% wrong and maybe 10% right.   Save tweaking for only those kids who do 90% of everything right.   For those kids who do 90% wrong, try to wipe the slate clean and start it all over again.

Also, it bears mentioning that if you have any kids who go to batting clinics somewhat regularly, you don't want to start messing with their swings.   I've seen this done almost as many times as I've heard some genius talking about how linear is a baseball swing and rotational is a softball one.   The way it happens is some guy gets a little bit of knowledge and then starts coaching by using that knowledge.   A girl who is about 10 and learning linear hitting gets herself a coach who knows 5% of rotational mechanics and he starts tinkering with her swing.   The result is inevitably a tragedy.

So pick your poison and break it down into stages.   Then teach all the girls, excluding those who go to a coach, in the mechanics you have chosen beginning with the stance and proceeding through the follow-through.   I would prefer if you taught your team from the ground up even if it meant they still didn't find much success in games.   At least that way, perhaps the next year they would hit.   If you tweak their mechanics, chances are pretty good they won't hit better anyway.   At least if you teach the full motion, they'll have a foundation on which to build.

4) My girls refuse to take 100 swings per day at the tee.   What can I do about that.

Well, you can lead a horse to water ...   What I have seen coaches do in this regard is continue to reiterate the point whether the team obeys or not.   Don't get discouraged because nobody seems to be listening.   Just keep telling them what they ought to do if they want to get better.   Eventually somebody is going to listen to you.

In the meantime, if you feel your kids are not taking 100 swings on their own, make sure they take 150 at your practices, every practice.   If your pitching and fielding are pretty good and you are losing games because you have no offense, make sure they take plenty of swings in practice, work on mechanics and strength, and, perhaps most importantly, make sure they see some live pitching as often as possible.

All other things being equal, there is no substitute for facing live pitching.   Have your pitchers throw to batters whenever the opportunity arises.   Play lots of scrimmages and tournaments against myriad teams.   Keep the girls away from the Iron Mike overhand pitching machines many teams use because they ain't got nothing else.   Watching a ball released above the shoulder is not helping a softballer to pick it up out of a windmiller's hand.   Before you use a pitching machine, make sure it throws the ball from a point below your waist.   Don't have such a machine, fine, use the tee and soft toss instead.   There are no benefits to hitting off an overhand throwing machine.

In conclusion, mechanics are the key to driving the ball.   They're far more important than strength.   You should do some strength training.   However, it doesn't have to involve power lifting.   Some of the speed and agility stuff you should be doing anyways will help.   The girls should hit off the tee.   If they won't do it on their own, make them do it in practice.   It only takes about 15 minutes to take 100 swings.   If your kids do not have overall reasonably good hitting mechanics, take them to school starting with the ABCs.   Don't try to teach a little calculus to girls who can't do multiplication tables and aren't all that familiar with algebra.   Pick your swing mechanic and teach it from the ground up.   Break it into steps.   Then drill them on this as often as you practice.

Remember what Vince Lombardi once said, "practice does not make perfect, only perfect practice makes perfect."   So its mechanics, strength, repetition, live pitching.   That should get your girls to hit the ball better.