

Strategy for Offense

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The purpose of this document is to discuss strategy for offense. Definitions are the most important part of any strategy. This document will name and define some terms that will be the basic objects for understanding goals and objectives and this language of terms will also provide meaning to tactics and their practice. In other words, strategy is what you are doing and why. Tactics are how you are doing what you are doing. We practice tactics, and we understand our practice because we understand our strategy.

Three Situation Types

My strategy for offense organizes all situations into three situation types. We start the definition by uniquely identifying each of the three situation types with a name. In choosing a name, we want to be sure it is unique. We can also incorporate some meaning into the name or add some aliases to help with the understanding. To begin I will name them with a number and include some aliases for meaning. In Situation One the aliases could be: Need a run; Sacrifice to Second; Break the Ice; or In Situation Two the aliases could be: Normal; Sacrifice to Third; Take the Extra Base; or In Situation Three the aliases could be: Can't afford an Out; No need to Sacrifice; Station to Station; Team Outs: Don't need any more runs; or

In all Situations

In all situations what you do depends on the gifts and skills of the offensive and defensive players. These three situation types help organize and communicate all the rest of the strategy and tactics. Since defense reacts to offense, they also help with organizing defensive strategy. Because pairs of teammates can be creative within these three boundaries, I have had teams that love this threefold breakdown. All the manager has to do is indentify the situation. To begin we will describe some common situations like man on first and nobody or one out. Then we will talk about nobody out and nobody on. Then we will talk about two out and man on first. Then we will talk about a hitter in the first and third situation.

Man on first, nobody or one out

Situation One

In Situation One, we sacrifice the runner to second, so we sacrifice on the first strike, second strike and even sometimes the third strike.

Situation Two

In Situation Two, we zone the pitch on the first strike (to zone: choose one of the four swing types and one of the five zones, and let your partner on base know which zone you have chosen.), sacrifice, or slap or bunt for a hit on the second strike, and hit away on the second or third strike.

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Situation Three

In Situation Three, we hit away. In situation three we are either way ahead or way behind in the score. So, we either can't afford an out, or we do not want to sacrifice.

Behind In situation three

If we can't afford an out, we want to force the pitcher to hit corners or get high strikes called to beat us. In other words, we want to zone the middle and lower part of the strike zone. We attack any pitch coming into this zone, and take any pitch that is leaving this zone.

Ahead in situation three

If the coach signals we do not need any more runs, why not be sportsmanlike making team outs to move the game along. With a large strike zone, make team outs by being aggressive.

Nobody out, nobody on, for Situations One, Two and Three

With nobody out and nobody on, in situation one we want to make the pitcher pitch and hit the ball through (not over) the infield. If we zone the pitch to make the pitcher pitch, we can almost know where the hit will go to get it through the holes in the infield. Before we get to the plate, we spend time watching the pitcher to see what pitches we want to take away from him and what strikes we want to give him when we zone. There will be more on zoning in all situations later. The main reason we want to hit the ball through the infield: more chances for getting on base if you do not hit the ball squarely like bloopers and high hoppers instead of fly balls and easy ground balls.

Two out man on first, for Situations One and Two

Two out man on first is the best time to steal (including putting the game in motion with a hit and run or run and hit). Of course we are talking about players having normal or better than average speed. The idea here is to know what to do ahead of time in this situation with these people. In Fastpitch, our favorite is to run and hit which puts the game in motion while allowing the hitter to zone a pitch. With the run and hit, the runner has to listen for contact. Since the catcher usually wants the pitch outside or even outside and high, we usually zone outside, which adds the possibility of both hitting behind the runner and clipping the catcher's mitt for an interference call. If the runner has a 75% chance, use a straight steal.

The First and Third Situation for Situations One and Two

In the first and third situation, the hitter should be focusing on getting a pitch to hit hard, but he should also know what the third baseman and shortstop are doing. The hitter and runners should be watching for a defensive mistake. For example: an easy

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opportunity to score would be when the third baseman and shortstop leave third base open or the shortstop and second baseman leave second open. In either case the two runners working together can advance one base either home or second. The hitter can help things in this situation by pulling the third baseman off third with a fake bunt. If the third baseman is not coming down, then the pitcher is covering on the third base side. In that case, Situation One you bunt and Situation Two you have a choice.

Summary: Strategy for Offense

The purpose of this document is to discuss strategy for offense. Definitions are the most important part of any strategy. This document will name and define some terms that will be the basic objects for understanding goals and objectives and this language of terms will also provide meaning to tactics and their practice. In other words, strategy is “what” you are doing and why. Tactics are “how” you are doing “what” you are doing. We practice tactics, and we understand our practice because we understand our strategy. The terms we have defined here are: Zoning and Situation Types One, Two and Three. These definitions and this understanding will also be used without mention in Strategy for Defense.