

## EXPECTATIONS AND STRATEGIES

### DEFENSE

1. Set the tone on defense: shut down 1st 3 batters the first inning; shut down lead-off all other innings
2. good communication at all times
3. preplan every play
4. outfielders call infielders off of fly balls
5. proper back-ups at all times, even without runners on

### OFFENSE

1. score first
2. score back to back innings
3. batters circle
  - \* Concentrate on pitcher, imagine you are in the batter's box and swing at every pitch just as if you were the batter. Concentrate on the release point. Take one easy swing between pitches and game speed swing at every pitch.
  - \* You are responsible for telling any runner attempting to score at home plate whether to slide or stand up. Use large visual signals in addition to verbal signals. Be especially ready with runners on 2nd or 3rd.
4. batter
  - \* Before entering batter's box, check both 1st and 3rd base coaches to make sure they are ready and not speaking to runners. Then look to the 3rd based coach for your signs.
  - \* Before every pitch, look for signs.
  - \* On steal signs, swing (or bunt) at the pitch and miss (or pull your bat back), to protect runner UNLESS you also were given a sign.
  - \* Most often your stance should be even with or in front of home plate. You want to meet the ball before it has a chance to break.
  - \* Run hard on all hit balls, including fly balls. When running out a ground ball hit to an infielder or any close play, look at the base . . . always run as fast as you can and look directly at 1st base. Your first 3 steps out of the box are the most important . . drive hard.
  - \* If the pitcher is working too fast, step out of the box and break up her rhythm.
  - \* Good pitch selection
5. execute bunt plays

## 6. smart, aggressive baserunning

- \* When running to first base on an infield ball, be sure to run through the base, full speed, slow down 10 feet past 1st.
  - \* If you are not sure whether or not there will be a play at first, look to the 1st base coach. She will be directing you to run through first base or turn and look. Time is lost looking for the ball.
  - \* Once on first, make sure you know the # of outs, the # and positions of runner on base, and the sign. Keep your eyes on the ball. The first base coach is responsible for telling you of a pick off play.
  - \* Your lead off 1st base is directed by your quickness back to the base. A general guide is one body length plus one step.
  - \* When stealing a base, always slide and slide to the outfield side of bag.
  - \* When running on a sacrifice bunt, be sure the ball is on the ground before you leave for 2nd base. Halfway down to 2nd, glance at the play. If the throw is going to 2nd slide. A slide creates a more difficult call for the umpire. If the throw is going to 1st base, round 2nd and see if anyone is covering 3rd - if not continue to 3rd. Be wary of a throw behind you at second.
  - \* Watch runners ahead of you to know what to do.
  - \* Pick up coach at 3rd when running from 1st
  - \* When on second, assume you are going all the way home on a base hit. Listen to the 3rd base coach. The coach will signal stop, slide, or go.
  - \* When on 3rd, lead off into foul territory. Stay even or behind the 3rd baseman on your lead.
  - \* Slide whenever close.
  - \* Runners at third tag on all fly balls to outfield unless 2 outs.
  - \* When attempting to score at home plate, always assume slide. The "on deck" batter will give you the signal to stand up if no play is going to made
- ## 7. preplan every play

## PITCHERS

1. no wild pitches
2. get ahead of batters
3. higher ratio of k's to bb
4. field position well

## BEFORE THE GAME AND BENCH

### 1. study pitcher

- \* Does the pitcher throw the first pitch for a strike?
- \* Does the pitcher throw at least one strike during the first two pitches?
- \* From where is the ball actually released?
- \* Where in the strike zone does the pitcher throw most often?
- \* Is the catcher indicating where she would like to see each pitch thrown?
- \* On what count, in what situation, does the pitcher throw a change?

### 2. study infielders

- \* Which infielder has the weakest arm?
- \* How deep do the 1st and 3rd basemen play?
- \* Is the pitcher balanced, and ready to field after a pitch?
- \* To whom would you choose to bunt in a sacrifice bunt situation?
- \* Does the shortstop or 2nd baseman turn her back to the infield to tell to outfielders the # of outs, etc?
- \* Who covers 1st on a bunt?
- \* With a runner on 1st, the ball is bunted; is anyone covering 3rd?
- \* Which infielder is the most intelligent?

### 3. study outfielders

- \* Do any of the outfielders throw side arm?
- \* Which outfielder has the weakest arm? the strongest?
- \* Which outfielder is the laziest?
- \* Where does each outfielder catch the ball?
- \* Do any of the outfielders ever cover a base?
- \* How deep or shallow do they play?

### 4. study the catcher

- \* Does the catcher throw overhand or sidearm?
- \* Does she have a strong throw?
- \* Does she receive the ball in sitting or standing position during situation when she might throw?
- \* Does she like to throw to 1st and 3rd for pick-offs?
- \* How well does she play the bunt?

### 5. Knows count, outs, and score at all times

### 6. Tells defense when runners are stealing

### 7. All players on the bench should verbally encourage every teammate.

### 8. Watches how the umpire calls the game.