



Base Running Techniques & Strategies to Score Runs



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GOALS

- Score!
- Get runners in scoring position.
- Train & Practice base running to be instinctive – *“Having a Softball Head”*
- Play the percentages but don’t be predictable (Patterns)
- Have a game plan. Be Prepared or be prepared to fail!

RUNNING TECHNIQUE KEYS

- Relaxed body; Relaxed hands.
- Body lean-line heel to head about 25 degrees
- Hands hip to hip; Cheek to cheek
- Elbows at about 90-120 degrees
- Heel to butt; Step over knee.
- Toes up. Run on forward balls of feet.
- Eyes up and forward
- Shoulders square
- Increase stride length one inch every step!
- Minimal touchdowns

BASERUNNING TECHNIQUES – BASIC

- Through 1st base. Imaginary 2nd 1st base
- Rounding 1st
- Circle home (prefer right foot to touch the inside edge of base on turn)
- Banana or question mark to first base
- Turn & check- face ball
- Lead off options
- Returns (dive backs not necessary)
- Tag-ups - different positions and bases
- Mental - positive & situational self-talk mandatory
- Run out every play
- Break up double plays
- Know where Umps are.
- On deck batter or scoring runner becomes coach at home.



BASERUNNING TECHNIQUES-ADVANCED

- Slide at 1st base - When and Why?
- Angles of blocking
- Helping the batter-runner.
- Assisting lead runners.
- Ins and outs of blocking getting in line with throws throws-to-home/to 3rd
- Pickles. What to do and look for?
- Delay steals to score or take the base (if given second take the base)
- Look for defensive contact whenever it can help
- Steal when you can beat her there (player decision)
- Read bat angles, strength of arms, etc
- Be aggressive always!
- Look for opportunities always
- Have a softball head-a street smart sense of what to do and when to do it!

SLIDING – BE SAFE & SAFE

- Bent leg - go fast
- Head first – skim the surface closed fist head away from ball (only use if necessary)
- Slide away - avoid defensive player either inside or outside (check player's glove)
- Slide by - bent leg with rollover typically at home on close play
- Pop-up Slide– underneath leg pushes up and throw chest forward
- Drill – circle the wagons. Basic but Fun!

SOME STRATEGIES

- Next base mentality. Always want more than one base!
- Never be an easy out.
- Ball behind go! (unless 1B up short infield)
- Use rocker step for deception at 1st
- Sprinters start at 2nd to see around pitcher and better vision on batter
- Use open sprinters (opposite foot) for whole field vision at 3rd
- Get in the game ~ Always look like you are stealing (What can I do to help my team?)
- On turns, face ball. No missed opportunities!
- Return to base only when necessary (not to early and definitely not late)
- Leave early, never late (except at 3rd where you never leave early)
- Use your eyes & brain (defensive awareness)
- Aggressive leads. As far as the defense allows (rule of thumb: go as far as the closest defensive player allows so that you can return safely or advance safely)



- Take advantage of weak throwing arms in outfield
- Base runner should make decisions to advance
- Less than 2 outs always tag only when you can advance; i.e. on foul fly ball or not on infield fly
- Slide away from bag to the inside or outside away from the tag when no play is on or when there is no coach to help
- It is best to slide straight into bag. Do this until the defensive player indicates a slide away is necessary
- Look for catcher miscues (not deliberate ones to catch you off guard)
- Straights and Angles of lead offs.
- Blocking Defensive players- When and How?
- On Big lead offs at an angle when do you advance on a pick off at 1B?
- Always tag at 3rd less than two outs. Always tag at 3rd if you can advance and on close decisions(if missed it is easy to score if caught difficult to return and score)

SITUATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Fake bunt late and steal
- Run and bunt or run and hits vs. hit and runs
- 1st and 3rd scenarios
- Any pickle between 3rd & home; runner at 1st goes to 3rd.
- Safety squeezes (decision on runner seeing air between ball & hand)
- Suicide squeeze (called by coach)
- Action plays and counts. (Ex. 2-1, 3-1 are good action plays because expecting a strike) (evaluate the pitcher's ability first)
- Helping succeeding and preceding runners. (Ex. At 3B, batter runner is rounding 1B the runner at 3rd can help batter runner be safe)
- On Sneaky bunts lead off with hips square to 2B while evaluating hit
- Sacrifice bunt use sprinters start at 1B or 2B slow to fast anticipating contact and picking up ball into a full sprint
- Delay the pickle tag to advance runners
- On a pickle, take the defensive player to the outside of the baseline farther away from home and your lead runner teammate
- Tag and steal 2nd on infield fly ball less than 2 outs with runner at 3rd with long throw and it is planned play. Interesting!

DRILLS

- Coach hit- baserunners @2nd and 1st or 1st, 2nd & 3rd, act like you are the only baserunner on the basepaths and react)
- Lives BP with base runners
- Signs every workout
- At 1st and 3rd fungo fly balls - work tags, leads, face balls, decisions
- Cross in front two lines drill. Good for offense and defense
- Runners at 2nd - fungo in front and behind (moving position of defensive players)

- Runners at 3rd – timing to go fungo hits (when at 3rd use pitcher or start in lead off w/o pitcher) Player has to know if she can score
- Texas leaguers - timing and positioning
- Shadow multiple runners at each base (good for technique training)
- Runners each base fungo hits use coaches
- Slide every practice
- Routines
- Resistance and Assistance bungees- skills belts
- Long WOW ankle and thigh take offs
- At 3B coach signals as moving down line and making last split second decisions
- Coach signals to align ball, runner and base

COACHING TIPS

- Let the players make decisions without recourse or penalty-discuss decision because they are accountable
- Train base running with counts, situations and signs
- Know the rules. All good coaches should have been umpires. Appeals need to be proper
- Plan what you will probably do ahead of time. Different scenarios. Know your line up and substitutes on game day (situations for pinch runners)
- More aggressive if you are the lesser team. Make it happen
- Game of outs! More behind the more precious each out becomes
- Play the percentages. Runner on 2nd no outs sacrifice bunt
- Good pitcher ~ pinch run early in the game ~ it may be your only chance
- Move runners as far as possible with as few outs as possible
- Counts affect strategy. Action plays ideal on 2-1, 3-1 count
- Take on a 3-1 or 3-0 count and runner on base? Not my choice!
- Steal early in the count
- Never make the 1st out at 3rd at home
- Coach floats down the baseline at 3rd to make better decisions for runner on balls in the outfield
- Keep a couple of trick plays in your back pocket
- Teach AGGRESSIVENESS! Look for opportunities always!!!

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