

Coaching 3rd Base & Developing and Offensive Game Plan

Here are some thoughts that will help you develop a solid game plan.

Developing YOUR Strategy!

What Style of play do you are you good at coaching? What are your team's strengths? What are your opponents' weaknesses? What are the weather conditions? All of these should play a role in the style of play you will use in the games. Whether you want to play a lot of "Small Ball" or let the Big Boppers hit the ball and stay out of the way. All three things should play into your strategy for any given game.

What do I know about my opponents?

How many runs might we need to score to win this game? If they have a dominant pitcher, we know we may not be able to score a lot of runs so we probably need to try to play for one run an inning to start the game. If they have average pitching, we might can expect that we could put up a lot of runs. How is their catcher and steal defense? Can they field the bunt well? What kind of offense do they have? Do they have a line-up full of great hitters and speed? If so, we may want to play for a few big innings. If they do not have a great line-up, we may try to play for one run per inning.

What are the Weather Conditions?

Is it RAINING? Take more pitches than normal. Try to draw more throws from the other team. If it is slippery be careful rounding bases and stepping on home plate. Make sure to hit the corner of the bases. Is the WIND blowing IN? If so, look for pitches lower in the zone to hit. Look to steal more often and look to bunt more often. Get your BIG BOY OR BIG GIRL PANTS ON and be ready to help generate some runs. Is the WIND blowing OUT? Look to hit pitches up in the zone more than often. If you have a good hitting team, let them hit the ball. Stay out of the way and don't run them out of the inning. If it's COLD take more pitches than normal. Be more aggressive on the bases than normal. Find the player with the most clothes on and try to get the ball to them.

When to Steal?

How well does the shortstop cover the steal? What kind of arm does the catcher have? Does the pitcher throw a lot of changeups and drop balls? If so, you should look to steal more often. How far the SS plays from the bag will play a big part in deciding if you should steal. Do they consistently get to the bag late?

How to beat a dominant pitcher?

Make the other players on the team beat you. We are going to take more chances and will be much more aggressive on the bases. If we can stretch a single into a double, we are going to go for it. We will look to steal more often and do anything we can to put pressure on the defense. I would also look to drop more bunts down and shorten up on our swings.

Coaching the 3rd runner trying to go from 1st to 3rd.

If a runner on 1st is going to try to get to THIRD BASE, they can make the decision if it's in front of them (CF or LF). If the ball is in Right Field, they should look to pick-up the coach about 20-30 feet from SECOND BASE.

Should I send them home? Important things to consider.

How many outs are there? The more outs the more likely I am to send the runner home on a play that might be close. I NEVER want to make the first out at home. Where are we in the batting order? If I have my best hitters coming up, I would be less likely to try to send them home. If I have the bottom half of

Coaching 3rd Base & Developing and Offensive Game Plan

the order up, I will be more aggressive. How good is their pitching? The better the pitching the more aggressive we will be.

Give yourself more time to decide!

When trying to decide to come down the line in front of the runner coming home. This will buy you a second or two before you must make that decision. If I know I am sending the runner I will do that close to third base. The players know if I am coming down the line with them, I have not decided.

Passed Ball with Runner on Third Base

Let the players decide here. It takes me as a 3rd Base Coach a half second to a full second to decide to send or not to send. It then takes the runner a second to respond to what I said. You will save about a second if you let them decide. I would remind them with 0 outs you are not going unless you're sure. 1 out you need to be sure but might take a chance. With 2 outs you are assuming you are going on any passed ball. Again, the level of the pitcher will also play into the decisions.