

The Ducks' Objective

Before a coach enters the game he/she should always have a plan of attack. In our program we have five different objectives that we fill, if reached, will give us the best chance of winning the game.

The objectives are:

1. **Score First**
2. **Have a Big Inning**
3. **Extend the lead**
4. **Answer Back**
5. **Score in Four Separate Innings**

Now let's break down objective individually.

Score First- the first objective is to get the first run across the plate. Scoring first sends a few messages both to your team and to the opposition. It gives your team a shot of confidence. Success breeds success, therefore if you throw the first punch and land it; your team now has the momentum.

The position that benefits greatly from scoring first is on the mound. When a team can get their pitcher the first run, it will allow him to relax and take more risk. If the score is tied or if a team is behind, the pitcher will have an unnecessary sense of added pressure. This pressure comes from knowing that the next pitch could possibly give up a fatal run. Scoring first sends a signal to your pitcher and defense that your offense has shown up and is ready to play.

Scoring first sends a message to the other team's offense as well. It tells them they better have come prepared to swing the bats. This gives the opponent a sense of panic and urgency. This will cause tense bats and usually leads to mistakes both at the plate and in the field for the opposition.

As one can see, there are many advantages to scoring first in a baseball game.

Have a big inning- When a one looks at a box score, being a MLB box score down to a playground box score; one should scan for a big inning. Usually if one team has a big inning, the other team will not score that many runs the entire game. For example, if the Braves were to score 5 runs in the 4th, the Phillies would not score 5 runs the entire game. Reason being is momentum. A big inning is very uplifting for the offense and very depleting to a defense.

Extend the lead- we have a term in our program called jugular runs. When a team is ahead, yet never extends the lead, they are allowing the opponent to "stay in the game" both mentally and physically. When a team is up by two in the top of the 9th, and scores another two to increase the lead to four, the offense has just scored jugular runs. They have taken the wind out of the sails of the opposition.

Answer Back- When the opposition has had an inning in which they have scored, whether it is 1 run or 5 runs, it has gained momentum. A way that the opposition can keep the momentum is by not allowing your team to score in your next half inning. Therefore, answering back, even if it is just scoring 1 run in an inning that the opposition scored 5, is vital. It makes a statement. You're telling your opponent that even though you took one of their best blows, you're not going away.

Score in Four Separate Innings- A very obvious key to winning baseball games is scoring runs. Therefore, if you score in four separate innings you are guaranteeing to put up AT LEAST four runs on the board and more than likely answering back to your opposition. This gives your team confidence that your offense is clicking and also gives your pitcher and defense the confidence knowing that one run will not mean defeat.

In our program, these are our five objectives in a game. It does not take accomplishing all five to win a baseball game. Also, achieving all five does not guarantee victory. We feel that by achieving all five objectives it gives us the best chance of winning the game. We feel it would do the same for your team as well.