

The “Base-Out Model” of Baseball—the BOMB!

Barry Codell’s Diamond Metrics (“Diametrics”) seem the perfect mean between misleading traditional statistics and nonsensical sabermetrics--diametrically opposed to each.

The Base-Out Model works so beautifully because it is expressive of the game itself: the batter’s ceaseless attempt to accumulate bases into runs while avoiding outs is what we are rooting for constantly (or, of course, from the pitching side, pulling for the hurler’s effort to stop baserunners allowed, before they become runs, by recording outs).

Cub fans cheered opening day when Alfonso Soriano led off the game and the season with a home run off the Astros’ Roy Oswalt. Bill James’ Runs Created claimed Alfonso’s homer created four runs. Codell’s Runs Tallied says it tallied one.

Let’s, beyond fantasy, get real: that cheering was not because Soriano (or James) somehow “created” 4 runs to make the score 1-0, but for the fact that he tallied 1 run for his team by touching all 4 bases. Even Joe Reichler’s terminally flawed Runs Produced ($R + RBI - HR$) can reflect that Soriano produced a run. (*Even a broken clock . . .*)

Let’s now posit the following, a realistic rally following the tally: after Soriano’s blast, 3 straight singles (the third an RBI) and a 3-run homer, making the score 5-0. Codell computes and chronicles, naturally, 5 Runs Tallied, but James “creates” 11 (as Reichler “produces” 8)!

The ever-changing, never-ending algebraic Runs Created formula defies common sense. Its complexity is only exceeded by its inaccuracy. Like that other revered and loony linchpin of sabermetrics, OPS (see Codell’s E-BOP!), it is literally (and unfortunately) all over the place.

I will not, like so many others, become a counter of the counter-intuitive. I believe a solo homer still scores one run for a team. Further, I like to think that Babe Ruth actually hit 60 homers in 1927, and the fans who saw the Bambino hit number 60 off the Senators’ Tom Zachary that September day at the Stadium went to their graves or baseball heavens thinking they had seen history when Babe Ruth circled the bases for that unprecedented sixtieth time. None would know about the best-selling acclaim awaiting the Emperor SABR for “punishing with a publishing” a suspiciously unsuspecting baseball public, when that post-prescient tome The Year Babe Ruth Hit 104 Homers hit the fan suddenly in the sadly unforgettable 21st century.

And every once in a while, but more so lately, my Base-Out focus overtakes my modernly bad habit of sheepishly following the whole revisionist, “leveling the playing field,” projecting, retrojecting, soulless rhythm of SABR stat coercion.

How about consciously not considering era, ball parks, populations, etc. and, instead, putting all players on the same unlevel playing field that has created true baseball history--and fully enjoying the results? What if I choose not to publish Barry’s stats with any factors other than the facts of the bases, runs and outs that led to the scores, winners and losers of the games, which at last look, my pithy Pythagoreans, still stand?

Nothing has been so deceptively simple (well, perhaps, $E=mc^2$) as the Base-Out Model. It is not a “quaint counting statistic,” but instead the Absolute Recounter--for over 30 years so very right before elites’ and elitists’ eyes. And a true history of the game would finally include a correct history of Codell’s numbers, as well as all that fine SABR research.

Although the Base-Out Model does spectacularly well in accounting for runs, I did not engage the Barry Code formulae to enter into the “sabermetric shoot-outs” or to predict the future (predictions, those self-driven fantasies that even when realized are realized by the unpredictable), but rather to simply allow its components to unfold a true tale of baseball and its truest statistics.

The Barry Code, in the midst of the sabermetricians’ dubiously successful invasion of the game’s inner sanctum, stays determined to retain the original uncommon common sense that had already extraordinarily enhanced enjoyment of the beloved game: the Base-Out Model of Barry Codell.

“The Don”