

Statistical analysis debunks the old adage 'Pitching is 75 percent of the game'

September 29 2011



Baseball is America's pastime. Credit: Image courtesy of Evan Krape, University of Delaware

Baseball legend Connie Mack famously said pitching is 75 percent of the game. He was wrong -- a new analysis by a University of Delaware professor finds it's just 25 percent.

This October, the *Journal of [Quantitative Analysis in Sports](#)* will feature the article: An Estimate of How Hitting, Pitching, Fielding, and Base-stealing Impact Team Winning Percentages in Baseball. In it, University of Delaware Professor Charles (Charlie) Pavitt defines the perfect "formula" for MLB teams to use to build the ultimate [winning team](#).

Pavitt found hitting accounts for more than 45% of teams' winning records, fielding for 25% and pitching for 25%. And, the impact of

stolen bases is greatly overestimated.

He crunched hitting, pitching, fielding and base-stealing records for every MLB team over a 48-year period from 1951-1998 with a method no other researcher has used in this area. In statistical parlance, he used a conceptual decomposition of offense and defense into its component parts and then analyzed recombinations of the parts in intuitively meaningful ways.

He also found something many MLB teams don't know: the ability to steal bases is just not that important to the overall winning record of a professional baseball team.

As major league baseball's playoffs kick off and "Moneyball" plays in movie theatres nationwide, Pavitt is available for interviews.

Provided by University of Delaware

Citation: Statistical analysis debunks the old adage 'Pitching is 75 percent of the game' (2011, September 29) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-statistical-analysis-debunks-adage-pitching.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.