

Collegiate Baseball

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Fastest Paths Around Bases Studied

Noted math experts explain optimal routes that can be achieved on extra base hits.

By **DAVIDE CAROZZA, STEWART JOHNSON & FRANK MORGAN**
Special To Collegiate Baseball

WILLIAMSTOWN, Mass. — What's the fastest path around the bases?

You can do better than the standard "banana" path, which follows the baseline maybe halfway and then veers a bit to the right to come at first base from a better angle to continue towards second.

Using a very simple model, we obtain the optimal path (figure 1 on page 3).

You start out heading about 25° right of the base line and run with acceleration of constant maximum

About The Authors

This work stemmed from a Williams College undergraduate colloquium talk by Davide Carozza advised by Frank Morgan.

Stewart Johnson, who was in the audience, discovered the remarkably simple critical condition and computed the fastest path of figure 1 (see page 3).

This account is based on their mathematical paper, "Baserunner's optimal path" (*The Mathematical Intelligencer*, November, 2009, www.springerlink.com/content/t7q081384758kl5l)

magnitude A, as illustrated by the vectors decorating the path.

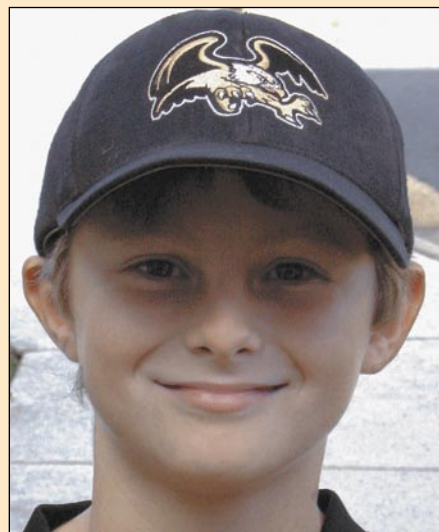
You slow down a bit coming into first, hit a local maximum speed as you cross second, and start the final acceleration home a bit before

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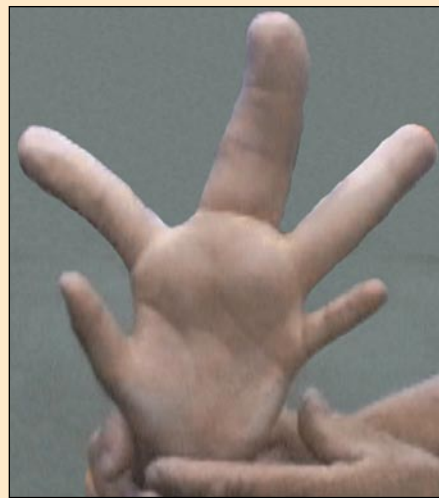


The quickest way to second base, third, home, explained by number crunchers.

Company Comes Through With Unique Gloves



Dylan Rosnick (above) suffers from rare Proteus Syndrome which causes mutations (below).



BATTLING LIFE'S PROBLEMS

Young Virginia boy loves game of baseball but suffers from Proteus Syndrome which has caused fingers to be different sizes on both hands.

By **JOHN PINKMAN**
Special To Collegiate Baseball

ALDFIE, Va. — This is a story about an amazing boy who loves to play baseball and a glove maker with a big heart.

During the past summer, I was teaching a day camp when I met an remarkable group of little boys.

I know I'm getting old because one boy in the camp was the son of a player I had in T-Ball. They were not the usual "I want to blend into the fence" camp kids.

They laughed, giggled and kidded their teammates in a remarkably friendly and genuine friendship. They also listened intently.

I noticed one particular 11 year old boy with a smile that went from ear to ear.

Dylan Rosnick always had a smile, on or off the field, always happy in a very outgoing way.

He made you feel good just being around him. I also noticed that he had an unusual way of throwing, like he was

See **GLOVE COMPANY HELPS YOUNG**, Page 2

H.S. Federation Studies National Championships For Sports, Including Baseball

President of H.S. Federation likes idea, but in reality, it would be difficult, massive undertaking.

By **LOU PAVLOVICH, JR.**
Editor/Collegiate Baseball

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — The National Federation of State High School Associations has always held a firm stance that they would not consider national championships in any sport.

In an about face, its board of directors said they are looking into the possibility of holding national championships in a small number of individual sports as soon as the 2010/11 academic year.

Those non-team sports are expected to be tennis and golf with the possibility of cross country.

If these national championships become a success, then expanding into such a format for team sports would be next logical step except for the sport of football which has been taken off the table.

And that might mean baseball will have a national high school championship if numerous obstacles are worked out.



DAVE KEILITZ
...Many Hurdles To Overcome

In many states, you have multiple levels that champions are awarded state titles. California has sectional champions and does not have true state champions. So determining the best team in that state would be extremely time consuming.

While most states crown their

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INSIDE COLLEGIATE BASEBALL

Web Site: www.baseballnews.com

Science And Baseball Study
Brown University researchers explain one facet of how outfielders can track fly balls down/Page 6

Top H.S. Players In California
Special rundown presented by Iran Novick is compiled from coaches across state/Page 10

2010 Power Showcase Winner
Arizona's Travis Flores belts 8 home runs in championship round to capture world title/Page 11

Glove Company Helps Young Boy With One-Of-A-Kind Mitts

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throwing a change up all the time.

I asked my son Jeff what was the problem since he had worked with the boy and his team quite a bit in the past two years.

Jeff asked me if I saw his glove hand. "No", I said, "not up close".

I watched closely as he came into the dugout for a break.

I could not believe what I saw.

His glove hand was very different.

His middle three fingers were twice as large as mine while his pinky and thumb were the size of a normal 10 year old.

His throwing hand also had a couple of very large fingers as well.

So large he could not grip the ball without fingers extending way off the ball.

Batting proved to be difficult in the same manner.

I found out that Dylan has a rare condition called Proteus Syndrome.

It is so rare that worldwide only 700 people have been diagnosed.

The condition attacked his hands, which just kept growing.

Surgery removed his growth plates and stopped the growth, but that is all that can be done for now.

He may in the future at maturity have a finger reduction procedure.

It was so sad.

I was instantly struck with the problems that he must have endured just being a little boy, never mind playing baseball.

He wouldn't let me stay in that thought for long.

His beaming smile, his relations with the other boys, presented a reality of nothing abnormal in any sense of the word.

I watched the other boys to see if they treated him differently. And they didn't in any way.

Instantly, I found myself the only one in that dugout who seemed to feel awkward or over compensating to be nice.

I was the only one who saw the elephant in the room.

Everyone else just saw their friend. It was beautiful.

Dylan plays with a team of extraordinary boys with parents who want the best that the athletic experience offers.

They all play for fun. They all play for each other, for their team.

To the boys, getting better and improving their baseball skills was fun.

Dylan has a twin brother, Ryan, who is not afflicted with Proteus Syndrome.

Dylan's hands prevent him from playing on the team during games.

So he travels with the squad, supports his brother and his friends from the bench.

Think of how hard that would be for most of us.

I saw this once with my sons.

Jeff's career at Delaware ended with shoulder capsule reduction surgery, as his younger brother Pat's college career at Virginia Tech was thriving.

Jeff never wavered, complained, or showed anything but total love and support for his kid brother. It had to hurt, but he never showed it.

They are best friends to this day, always have, always will.

This is the best the sports can do for us.

A word about Dylan's team, the



DYLAN ROSNICK

Eagles, which always found a place for Dylan.

They began in the spring of 2008 as 8 year olds with a 1-15 record.

That alone could give understandable cause to dissolve the travel team for grander horizons.

But they stayed together and found us, or should I say my son Jeff Pinkman.

They all worked very hard and committed to learning good fundamentals and "advanced skills" such as catching ground balls, throwing the ball straight, and hitting the ball out of the infield. It worked.

Meanwhile they were all having fun and becoming better friends because they were learning to play better.

In the fall of 2008, they improved to 12-2, and in the summer of 2009, 22-2.

Last fall, the USSSA ranked them No. 1 in both Virginia and the USA as 10 year olds.

As I watched Dylan play during that camp week, he understandably struggled with his glove.

As many of us would place one index finger outside the back of the glove, he had two, and they were almost as long as the fingers on the glove.

I knew someone who could help though.

I emailed Joe Gilligan, President of Akadema Gloves, a family effort in New Jersey that has flourished in the sports equipment business.

Many years ago, I had selected one of their gloves as a Best In Show product at the ABCA convention.

Since then, Akadema has been a leader in glove design innovation, quality, and integrity.

It is an exceptional product line with great people standing behind their work.

I asked if Akadema could design a one-of-a-kind glove for Dylan.

I fully realized the difficult scope of what I was asking. Immediately Joe responded as I thought he would. "Absolutely," he replied.

They would do anything they could.

I cautioned Joe that this project would be difficult due to the complex design expectation. Joe never wavered.

His sincerity and commitment to this boy was remarkable.

I sent Joe an outline and pictures of Dylan's hand.

I hope I'm not betraying any confidence, but here are quotes from follow up emails with Gilligan.

"Making this glove is one of the many things I like about my job — bringing the joy of the game to a child. Making a boy happy who loves this wonderful game of baseball is 'food for my soul.'"

The next thing you know, two gorgeous gloves showed up for Dylan at our Academy, one black and one tan.

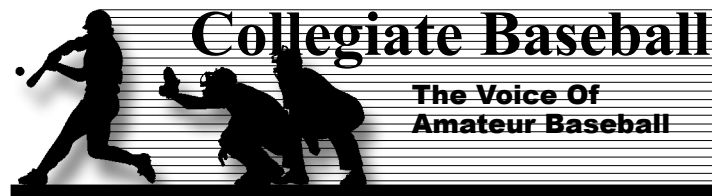
Each had his name embroidered on it — just like the pros!

Joe wrote back after seeing this picture, "These pictures really give me joy to look at a young person's face and see the smile from heaven."

I recently spoke to John Rosnick, Dylan's father, who told me of the weekend after Dylan got his gloves. "You couldn't believe how happy he was.

"We were at an out of town tournament, and he ran around showing everyone his new gloves, even people he didn't know. These gloves have made such a difference in his baseball life."

I have seen a lot and heard a lot of baseball stories in my day. This is one of the best!



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Publisher: Lou Pavlovich (Call 623-4530)
Editor: Lou Pavlovich, Jr. (Call 623-4530 to report stories)
Advertising Director: Diane Pavlovich (Call 623-4530)
Subscription Department: (Call 623-4530)
Fax Machine: (Call 624-5501)
E-Mail: editor@baseballnews.com
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LSU Leads In Attendance

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Louisiana St. University led all NCAA Division I schools in average and total home attendance in 2009, according to the NCAA.

LSU averaged 9,611 fans over 41 home dates last season and brought in a total attendance number of 394,068.

The Tigers averaged more than 1,700 more than No. 2 Arkansas which brought in 7,906 per game last season over 31 home dates.

In average home attendance, the top five schools in the nation all came from the Southeastern Conference: 1. LSU (9,611), 2. Arkansas (7,906), 3. Mississippi (7,003), 4. South Carolina (6,805) and Mississippi St. (6,301).

The following are average home attendance leaders for 2009 followed by total home attendance leaders:

Team	Dates	Attend.	Avg.
1. LSU	41	394,068	9,611
2. Arkansas	31	245,092	7,906
3. Mississippi	39	273,111	7,003
4. South Carolina	34	231,360	6,805
5. Mississippi St.	25	157,530	6,301

6. Texas	35	217,637	6,218
7. Clemson	36	170,156	4,727
8. Florida St.	39	184,227	4,724
9. Texas A&M	35	142,660	4,076
10. Alabama	29	116,294	4,010
11. Wichita St.	36	138,204	3,839
12. Rice	32	106,203	3,319
13. Arizona St.	39	125,082	3,207
14. Southern Miss.	36	114,559	3,182
15. East Carolina	38	120,846	3,180
16. Hawaii	31	92,687	2,990
17. Florida	40	119,252	2,981
18. Tulane	34	99,882	2,938
19. Georgia	32	93,360	2,918
20. Nebraska	27	78,627	2,912
21. Baylor	31	90,261	2,912
22. Texas Tech	20	49,569	2,478

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20. Baylor	31	90,261	2,912
21. North Carolina	42	82,586	1,966