

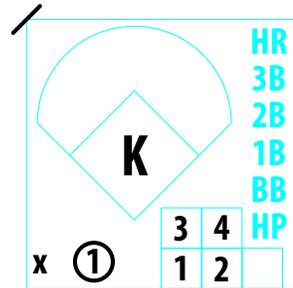
# GUIDE TO SCORING BASEBALL – SIXTH INNING

CHRISTOPHER SWINGLEY

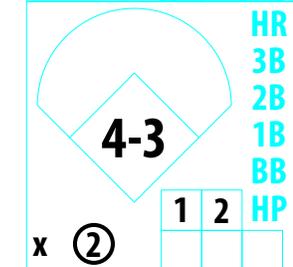
2-JUNE-2005

## TOP OF THE SIXTH

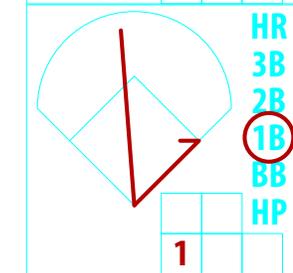
The inning starts with the score still Cubs 2, Cardinals 1. The lower part of the Cubs order is up, starting with Gary Gaetti. He's 2 for 2 in the game with two singles. This inning he takes two balls, then two strikes, fouls the fifth pitch off, and finally strikes out swinging. The balls, strikes and the foul ball are indicated as shown on the right. Since it was a swinging strikeout, we write a normal **K** in his box, and draw a circled **1** to indicate the first out of the inning.



The next batter is Micky Morandini, who is 0 for 1 with a walk, hitting a fly ball caught in leftfield to end the first inning. Mercker starts him off with two strikes, he fouls off the third pitch to stay alive, and then grounds to the second baseman Deshields, who throws over to McGwire at first for the second out of the inning. The play is scored **4-3**, and we draw a circled **2** in his box for the second out.



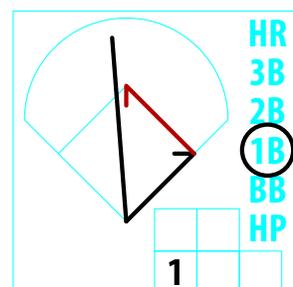
At this point Mercker has thrown at least 93 pitches (remember we don't know exactly what happened at the top of the last inning to Jose Hernandez), and he's still getting batters out. Knowing the pitch count for some pitchers can be useful while watching a game because you can often predict not only how much longer a pitcher is likely to be in the game, but also what sort of mistakes he may make. Despite his high pitch count, to this point Mercker still has enough stuff to get batters to swing and miss, and he's keeping the ball down.



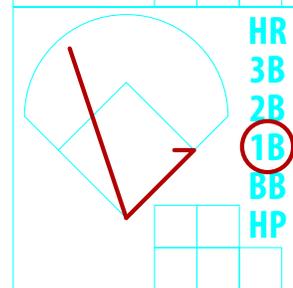
But he's tiring. The next batter, Scott Servais is 1 for 2 with a single in the fourth inning. He takes a first pitch ball from Mercker and then lines a base hit into center field. We draw a line showing his progress to first base, draw the path of the ball from home plate to center field, and circle the **1B** in the right side of his at-bat to indicate a single.

*gaetti, morandini and servais*

Next up is the pitcher, Steve Trachsel, 0 for 2 with a strikeout in the fourth inning. In this inning he swings at Mercker's first offering and gets a hit into leftcenter field. He jogs to first with a single. On the play Servais gets to second base. In Trachsel's box, we draw his single just like the single that Servais got except for the location of the hit. Since Servais moved from first to second on the play, we draw a line from first to second and add a little tail at second base in Servais' box.



Mercker starts to look like he's in trouble. He was pitching well to the first two batters, but he's left two pitches up and over the plate, and now the eighth and ninth hitters for the Cardinals are on base. Cardinals manager Tony LaRussa decides to leave Mercker in the game to face Lance Johnson with two outs. With Mercker due up first in the bottom of the inning, it makes sense for LaRussa to leave him in since LaRussa will be pinch hitting for the lead off batter anyway. If he replaces Mercker now, that pitcher would only face one batter and then be replaced in the lineup in the bottom half of the inning. Even so, Mercker is on a very short leash.



*cubs sixth, trachsel*

ball outs. In the fourth inning, his fly ball out ended the inning with the bases loaded. He'd like to drive in at least one run this inning to get back the run the Cardinals got on McGwire's home run. He gets a first pitch strike from Mercker, and grounds out to the second baseman. The play is scored **4-3**, and we put a circled **3** in his box for the third out, as well as a slash mark in the lower right corner of his box to indicate the end of this inning. If you're looking at your scorecard, we've moved back up to the first row in the sixth inning column because Johnson is the lead off batter for the Cubs. There should be four empty boxes between Johnson's failed at-bat at the top of the scorecard and Gaetti's first out in the inning. If you're not sure how the at-bats fit together, you should consult the complete scoring for this game.

For the Cubs in the sixth inning, they got **0** runs on **2** hits, there were no errors and two men leffjon base. Mercker got **1** strikeout and didn't walk any batters. These totals are written in the little boxes at the bottom of the sixth inning column.

### BOTTOM OF THE SIXTH

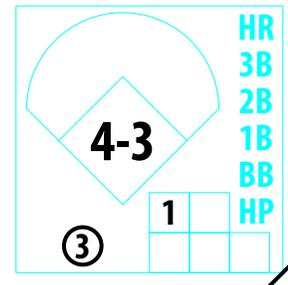
Bottom of the sixth and in LaRussa's strange lineup, the pitcher's spot is up. With the Cubs leading 2 - 1 and Trachsel pitching well, LaRussa replaces Mercker with pinch hitter J. D. Drew. For those that don't remember, Drew was draffed by the Philadelphia Phillies in 1997. But he and his agent Scott Boras thought they could get a better deal (more than \$8 million) than the one offered by the Phillies, so Drew sat out an entire season. After the Phillies right to negotiate expired he went back into the draff and the Cardinals draffed him. He was offered, and accepted far less than what the Phillies had offered a year earlier. This moment in the game marks his Major League debut.

So the pitcher goes out, and in the next spot on the scorecard, we write **J.D. Drew's** name. He's coming in as a pinch hitter, so we write **PH** in the upper leffjcorner of the position box. It's the sixth inning, so we put a **6** in the upper leffjcorner of the inning box. As you can see in the image on the right, we'll be putting his defensive position below these numbers. In the top of the seventh, Drew will replace Ron Gant in leffjfield. Sometimes, the announcers will indicate that the manager is making a *double switch*, and will explain where the batter will play in the next half inning. In a double switch, the pitcher is replaced with a position player in the lineup, and the new pitcher will move into the spot in the batting order where the fielder was. So the next pitcher for the Cardinals will be fiffh in the lineup, since he will replace Gant.

Normally you don't know what the pinch hitter will be doing in the next inning so you have to watch (or listen) carefully at the beginning of the next half inning to see if the pinch hitter replaces someone in the field, or if the pinch hitter doesn't play defense. In that case, we leave the lower half of the position and inning boxes empty, and the pitcher will go into that spot in the lineup.

Since Drew will replace Gant in the lineup, we put a **7** in the bottom of the position box, and a **7** in the bottom of the inning box (because he'll start in leffj field in the seventh inning).

In the at-bat box, we indicate the substitution by drawing a vertical line along

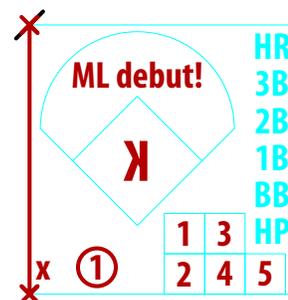


**(4 empty boxes)**

*cubs sixth, johnson*

Mercker, Kent	1	1
Drew, JD	ph/7	6/7

*drew substitution*



*cardinals sixth, drew*

the left side of the box, and put a little **x** above and below the line. This is a visual aid to help keep track of who the at-bats belong to. Since this is Drew's Major League debut, I wrote that in the box too.

Drew does well in his first at-bat, taking the count full and then fouling off the sixth pitch before taking a called third strike. We draw a backwards **N** to indicate the called third strike, and draw a **1** with a circle around it to indicate the first out of the inning.

The catcher Eli Marrero steps in, after flying out to left field to end the third inning. This time around he works the count full, and instead of getting a called strike like Drew did, the umpire calls Trachsel's sixth pitch a ball. Marrero trots to first with a walk. We circle **BB** on the right of his box to indicate the walk, and draw a line along the base paths from home to first with a little tail to indicate he is on first.

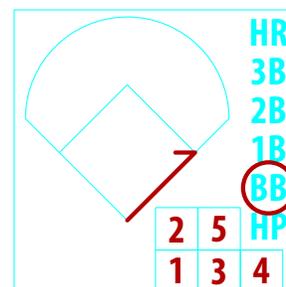
Delino Deshields comes up to bat, and we move back to the top of the scorecard. In the image for this at-bat, Deshields' at-bat is below Marrero's, even though on the scorecard it's at the top. It's not clear from my scorecard exactly what happened during this at-bat, but this time the Cubs pitcher makes a mistake on the mound and Marrero is moved from first to second on a balk. Two balks in one game! In Marrero's box, we draw a line from first to second, and write **BK** above the base paths to show he moved to second on a balk.

After three pitches, and with two strikes on him, Deshields hits a long drive to deep left-center field. He only makes it to first on the play, but the slow Marrero has plenty of time to make it home. As it turns out, the balk figures heavily in the game, allowing Marrero to go from second to home. Cubs and Cardinals tied 2 - 2.

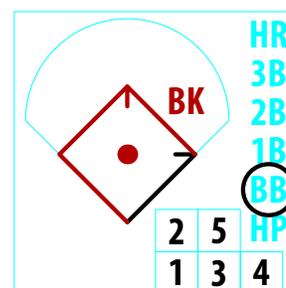
In Marrero's box, we draw a line from second to home, and put a circle in the middle of the diamond to indicate the run scored. In Deshields' box, he's credited with a single and an RBI. The single is marked by circling the **1B** on the right side of the box, and a dot in the lower left corner indicates the RBI. We also draw a line from home to where the ball was recovered, and indicate his progress along the bases to first.

One run in, one man on base, one out. Tatis stands in for 2 with two strikeouts. This time up, he swings at the first pitch and drives it into left field where Glenallen Hill waits and then makes the catch. Deshields on first tags up and bluffs a run toward second. Seeing Deshields moving, Hill bobbles, then drops the ball in left field. By the time he's picked it up again, Deshields makes it to second easily. An error is charged to Hill, and we indicate this by writing **E7** above the base paths in Deshields' box.

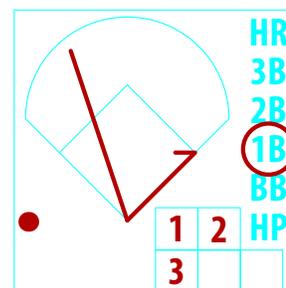
According to the rules, an error is charged to any player who makes a mistake that "prolongs the time at bat of a batter or which prolongs the life of a runner, or which permits a runner to advance one or more bases." The rules continue for several pages on the specific situations where an error should be charged, but in general, if a play should have been made with ordinary effort but wasn't, it's an error.



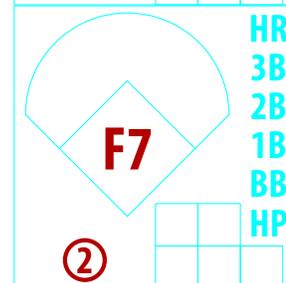
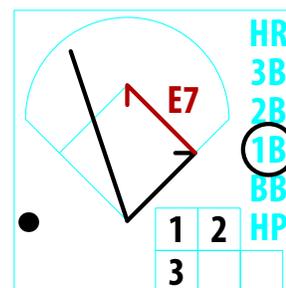
cardinals sixth, marrero



(back to the top)



cardinals sixth, deshields



cardinals sixth, tatis

Errors like the one that allows Deshields to advance from first to second are pretty easy to call because it was easy to see Hill's mistake, and the error accounts for the advancement along the base paths. The difficult calls are on ground balls where the batter makes it to first and the fielder *might* have been able to get the runner. If it would have required a spectacular play to record the out, the play should be scored as a single. But on plays that could have been made with ordinary effort, the batter does not get a hit and the fielder is charged with an error.

The next batter is Mark McGwire, who is 1 for 2 with a ground out to the shortstop, and a record-breaking home run in the game. The Cubs manager Jim Riggleman doesn't take any chances, especially since first base is open and the next batter, Ray Lankford is 0 - 2 with two strikeouts in the game so far. Catcher Servais signals a intentional pass, stands up, and takes four pitches about six feet from the plate. McGwire jogs to first base with an intentional walk.

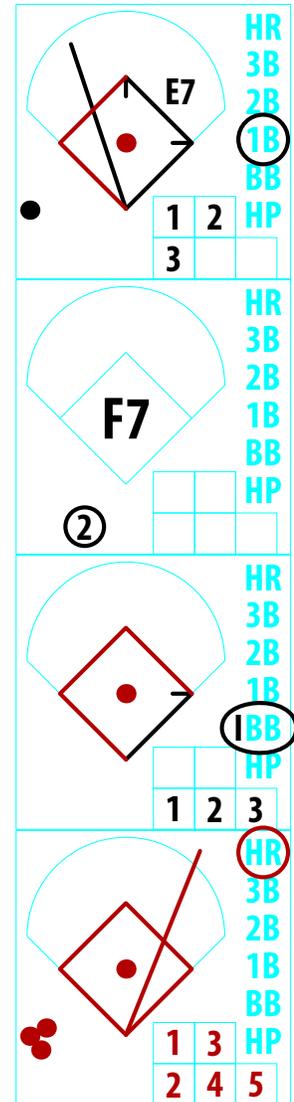
Intentional walks are a separate statistic for pitchers in the final scoring of the game, and it's important to distinguish them because they don't represent bad pitching on the part of the pitcher. They are a managerial strategy that attempts to minimize the damage a single player can cause. Anyone who watched Barry Bonds in the 2003 and 2004 seasons is very familiar with this strategy. To score the intentional walk, we draw an **I** in front of the **BB** on the right side of McGwire's box and then circle the **IBB** to indicate the walk was intentional. We also draw a line from home from first to indicate McGwire is now on first base.

Next up is Ray Lankford. He's probably upset that Trachsel walked McGwire to get to him. After working the count full, Trachsel has to throw a pitch over the plate or risk walking the bases loaded. He does, and Lankford doesn't miss it, slamming the pitch to deep right center field for a three-run home run! Lankford is vindicated, and the Cub strategy badly misfires.

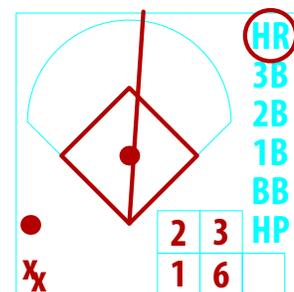
On the home run, Deshields scores from second, so we draw a line from second to home, and put a circle in the middle of the diamond in his at-bat box to indicate the run he scored. McGwire scored from first, so we draw a line around the base paths and put a dot in his box too. For Lankford, we draw a line from home to where the ball went over the wall in right center field, draw a line all the way around the base paths, put a dot in the center of his box, and draw three dots in the lower left side of his at-bat box to indicate the three runs he batted in (Deshields, McGwire, and himself). We also circle the **HR** on the right.

The crowd at Busch Stadium is going wild – first McGwire breaks the season home run record, and now their team has taken the lead in the game on a three run homer after intentionally walking him the next time he's up to bat. Ron Gant is the batter. Trachsel gets ahead of him 1 - 2, Gant fouls off the next two pitches, then takes a ball. Gant drives the seventh pitch of the at-bat over the fences in center field for another home run. Now the score is 5 - 2, Cardinals.

You can see the order of the pitches from the balls, strikes and foul ball **x**'s in Gant's at-bat box. For the home run we draw a line from home plate to where the ball went over the fence, draw his path around the bases back to home, put a dot in the middle of the diamond for the run, and a dot in the lower left for his RBI. Finally, we circle the **HR** for the home run.



cardinals sixth, lankford



cardinals sixth, gant

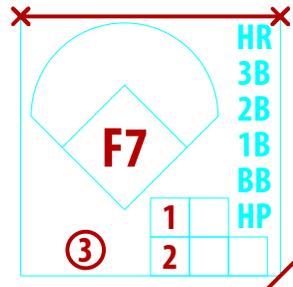
Cubs manager Jim Riggleman decides that Trachsel has had enough. After getting the first out, he's given up a single and two home runs. The Cubs need to limit the damage, and so they go to their bullpen. Replacing Trachsel will be Terry Mullholland. At this point both starting pitchers are out of the game. Cardinals pitcher Mercker was replaced when J.D. Drew came in to pinch hit for him at the beginning of this half of the inning, and now the Cubs pitcher will be replaced with Mullholland. Unlike the Drew substitution, the Cubs aren't switching the position in the lineup that the pitcher will hit in, so this isn't a double switch.

Steve Trachsel	1
Terry Mullholland	6 2/3

*mullholland substitution*

We make two notations to indicate this change. First, we write **Terry Mullholland's** name below starting pitcher Steve Trachsel in the pitcher section in the lower left side of the scorecard. Because it's the sixth inning, with two men already out, we indicate the inning as **6 2/3**. In the newspaper box score for this game you may see 5.2 listed for the number of innings Trachsel worked. The number after the decimal point is a base 3 number, meaning 0.1 is one third of an inning and 0.2 is two thirds. On my scorecard I wrote out **6 2/3**, but you could also put **6.2** for the inning Mullholland starts.

The other notation is to draw a solid line at the top of the at-bat box of the first hitter to face the new pitcher. I put two **x's** on either side of the line to make the line more obvious. This line is necessary because some pitchers only come in to face on batter, but if they fail to get an out, they and their replacement will be listed as starting in the same third of the inning. Pitcher replacements get a horizontal line at the top of the at-bat box, hitter replacements get a vertical line on the left of their at-bat box.



*cardinals sixth, mabry*

After the pitching change, Mabry steps in, 0 for 2 on the day. After two pitches, Mullholland gets Mabry to hit a fly ball into leftfield. Glenallen Hill makes the catch, and the third out of the inning. **F7**.

This inning the Cardinals scored **5** runs on **3** hits, there was **1** Cub error in the inning, and **0** men left on base. Trachsel got **1** strikeout and gave up **2** walks.

### END OF THE SIXTH

It's the end of the sixth inning, Cardinals leading 6 - 2. Both of the starting pitchers are out of the game, so it's time to discuss the statistics that are normally kept for pitchers. A pitcher's "line" is usually composed of innings pitched, batters faced, earned runs, runs, hits, strikeouts and walks. All of these statistics can easily be counted by looking at the at-bat boxes of the opposing team above the line separating the starting pitcher from the first reliever. Post-game statistics include *Earned Run Average* or ERA, and whether the pitcher won or lost the game. The final relief pitcher may also be granted a *Save*, but we'll consider that when the game is over.

Earned runs are those runs that are the responsibility of the pitcher, without the influence of any errors during the pitcher's time on the mound. In this half inning, Glenallen Hill committed an error that allowed Deshields to go from first to second. We may argue that this contributed to McGwire also getting on base with a free pass, but since Deshields would have scored on Lankford's home

run no matter where he was on the base paths, this run is an earned run. So, in this game, all of the runs Trachsel gave up are earned runs. So his line is: 5 2/3 innings pitched, 6 runs all earned, 5 hits, 6 strikeouts and 2 walks.

A couple notes on earned runs. The easiest way to decide whether an error contributed to a run not being earned is to just replay the inning, but score the play with the error (and all subsequent plays) as though the error didn't happen. For example, if the first batter in an inning reaches on a throwing error by the shortstop, this play should have resulted in the first out of the inning and no one on base. If the next two batters get out, and the third batter hits a home run, both runs are unearned because the second two outs *should have* been outs two and three. It's not the pitcher's fault that those runs scored, it's the fielder's error that allowed them to come in. The other quirk with earned runs is that when a pitcher is replaced with men on base and those runners score, the runs are charged to the original pitcher, not the reliever.

ERA is a measure of how many runs a pitcher could be expected to give up if he pitched nine straight innings. It is calculated as: earned runs / innings pitched  $\times 9$ ). So for this game, Trachsel's ERA is  $6 / 5.67 \times 9 = 9.54$ . Not a very good outing.

Mercker is also out of the game. J.D. Drew replaced him in a double switch, so he has to come out of the game at the top of the next inning. He pitched 6 innings, gave up 2 earned runs, 8 hits, struck out 2 and walked 3. His ERA is 3.00.

We'll consider who is the winning and losing pitcher at the end of the game, but because Trachsel came out of the game with his team losing, he can't be the winning pitcher. Should the Cubs come back to win, one of the relievers would get the win. Trachsel's best case is to get a no-decision. Mercker pitched more than the minimum 5 complete innings, and his team is winning as he leaves the game (remember his replacement hasn't come into the game yet, so despite being pinch hit for, it's still his game to win or lose), so he would get the win if the Cardinals hold their lead to the end of the game. Since he's leaving as the winning pitcher, his worst case is a no-decision.

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