The Flytrap Defense

The following is the actual text of the manual given to the 1994 Oberlin College baseball players for the implementation of the Flytrap defense.

Basic Principles

1. PLAYER MUST be able to disassociate from the standard baseball defensive mode of thinking and FREE his or her mind to a NEW concept of defense.

2. PLAYER MUST understand that the defense WILL GIVE UP certain plays to be able to make other plays become easier.

3. DEFENSE is geared towards defending particular areas of field that are MOST DAMAGING when ball is hit into them. These areas, left uncovered by conventional baseball defense, are now covered.

4. DEFENSE is AMOEBA-LIKE. It will constantly change. There are new names for positions on the field. Players will change spots on field depending upon hitter and situation.

5. DEFENSE is geared towards making the OPPONENT ADJUST. Opposing hitters will see holes where there previously were none, likewise. BALLS THAT ARE HIT THAT USUALLY BRING GREAT GRATIFICATION, ARE NOW OUTS. This is a significant factor in the entire process.

6. DO NOT EXPECT MIRACLES. This defense is designed to limit our own errors, prevent the extra base hits, and create defensive enthusiasm for our team. THERE WILL BE BASE HITS. The TYPE of hit is what is important. There will be FEWER ERRORS, FEWER WALKS, and more catchable FLYBALLS.

7. The defense has a sound basis that is borrowed from virtually EVERY OTHER SPORT!! Football, basketball, lacrosse, soccer (in fact, all sports that are played on large surfaces that require coverage) incorporate “FLYTRAP” principles. It could be said that standard BASEBALL IS ARCHaic in its approach.

8. We BELIEVE, that the “FLYTRAP” can be FUN, EXCITING and CREATIVE. We EXPECT our players to attach to it and give it a full 100% effort.

Notes:

1. Alignments will vary, sometimes batter to batter. The “standard” flytrap alignment is detailed to the right:

2. Priorities are OUTS of batted balls. Stolen bases will be given up, (if necessary). Bunts are encouraged, etc. Changing the other team’s mode/approach is the important thing.

3. For positioning’s sake, the outfield is divided into 3 areas, each of which has 3 depths and sides:

   Leftfield: Yellow
    Depths: Deep, Middle, Shallow

   Centerfield: Red

   Rightfield: Blue
    Side: Right, Left

4. The POINT PERSON is responsible for bunts. He/she may be called upon to cover first base when a ground ball is hit (depending upon initial alignment). The POINT will often lob the ball over the plate, inducing long fly balls. He/she must have great control of the ball and not walk people. He/she is NOT a PITCHER in the traditional sense. The SAFETY plays at edge of grass a lot and covers the left side of field. He/she is very mobile and will go wherever necessary to get an out/make a play. The STUD is similar to SWEEPER. They will be two of our better ballplayers. ROVER covers much ground in ch “bloopers/flare” area. He/she can also get to infield coverage, at times. The GUARDS play the lines, looking for flares. The GAPERS play deep in the GAPS and take away doubles and triples. They are also responsible for deep YELLOW area coverage (formerly centerfield). Our players will not be position specific; there may be numerous changes of position as the game ensues. AS EACH BATTER approaches the plate, ALL FIELDERS WILL CHECK COACH CONNOLLY/DELORENO FOR SIGNAGE. THE POINT WILL BE OFF THE MOUND WHILE CHANGES ARE MADE.