

Sunday, March 13, 2005

### Run scoring in 2005?

Klutts, who's becoming a frequent commenter around these parts (I encourage it!), mentions in response to my last post I was surprised to learn that the A's were 2nd in the AL in most times scoring 3 or fewer runs with 71 last year (KC was 1st with 84). The hitting is again looking a bit spotty this ST. If the A's are to have any chance, Crosby and Swisher will have to put up pretty good nos. unfortunately, I wouldn't bet on it. An interesting thing about the A's in-game scoring droughts is that they managed to finish right in the middle of the pack by runs scored, at fifteenth overall, in between the Cubs and the Astros. This might imply that the hitting was inconsistent more than it was bad: if they're about an average offensive team, but score very few runs many times, they must also quite often score many runs.

Luckily for us, Baseball Prospectus keeps stats on records by run differential, runs scored, and runs allowed. A table!

Runs scoredFrequency 03 115 218 335 416 517 614 712 89 99 102 112 121 133 141 151 161 171

Grouped into sensible ranges:

Runs rangeFrequency 0-371 4-647 7-930 10+12

The A's scored what might be termed "a lot" of runs (7+) 42 times in 2004. How many times did the teams immediately around them in the runs rankings do this? The Cubs bashed opposing pitching for seven or more runs 46 times, while the Astros did it 45 times, so the A's aren't necessarily picking up garbage runs in blowouts any more than other teams are.

Where the A's appear to be getting their "extra" runs from is actually within that "few runs" category. Oakland was actually tied for the fewest times shut out in 2004, with Boston, Houston, and San Diego. Notice that they scored three runs over eleven times as often as they were shutout. The Cubs, on the other hand, had 12 shutouts to 24 three-run games while the Astros had just 18 three-run games. In fact, the A's scored exactly three runs more than any other team in the league. They lost almost two-thirds of those games, though, which is precisely their losing percentage in games in which they plated just two men.

Maybe what all of this means is that Oakland scored more on their bad offensive days than most teams did? If so, it didn't mean much for their winning percentage.

Getting back to Klutts, though: Bobby Crosby had a disappointing year with the stick, certainly regressing from his excellent 2003 in Sacramento. PECOTA still thinks he's ok, though: his weighted mean projection puts him adding almost ten VORP over last year, despite a playing-time projection that's probably conservative (I see no reason to expect him to lose 60 AB's or so from last year, as the projection has him doing).

Swisher's PECOTA isn't online, so I guess I have to wait until I can pick up the BP book at the post office tomorrow to find out what they have to say about him.

Not that PECOTA is the end-all in terms of projections, but just as Klutts says he wouldn't bet on the pair of youngsters putting up good numbers, I wouldn't bet against it happening.

Posted by jason in Baseball, Oakland A's at 23:21