

DELAYED DOUBLE STEAL

COACHES: Here's another variation on the double steal which involves a delay.

PURPOSE

To execute this play, there must be runners at 1st and 3rd bases. The whole purpose is to try and squeeze home a run, when the defence makes a play on the runner advancing from 1st to 2nd base.

WHEN TO USE

The play works best with less than two out and good runners at the corner bases, especially at 3rd. The chances of success are enhanced if the defence has to anticipate a sacrifice bunt as well.

EXECUTION

The play is normally executed by running a straight steal with the 1st base runner, then delaying the steal of home until the catcher throws to 2nd base. Hence the name, Delayed Double Steal.

1ST BASE RUNNER: Must get a good jump on the pitch, then go hard into 2nd base with a slide.

3RD BASE RUNNER: Must get a good, but safe lead off the base, then watch for a fake throw to 2nd, or a quick throw back to the pitcher. The ball must be in the air to 2nd base before committing to go home.

VARIATION

A variation of the play goes like this. In a very close game, when the runner on 3rd represents the tying or winning run, the 1st base runner intentionally gets caught in a run-down. Then the 3rd base runner steals home while the defence is pre-occupied with the play at 2nd base. This is worth trying when there are 2 outs and a weak hitter at bat.

This is a very common play in competitive softball and difficult to defend with consistency. It deserves considerable practice time and can be an effective strategy for any team.