

# Advanced stats can help ID fantasy's elite

**BY KYLE STACK**  
Special to amNewYork

You don't need a mathematics degree to understand how certain baseball statistics can predict a player's fantasy value. Here is a handful of simple peripheral stats that determine player production, all of which can be found updated regularly at fangraphs.com:

**BB/K: Walk-to-strikeout ratio**

The ultimate test of plate patience. **Albert Pujols, Dustin Pedroia and Chipper Jones** dot last year's top 10, so all types of hitters excel in this category. The walks invite more on-base opportunities, which permit more chances for steals and runs. A lower strikeout rate results in additional hits because more at-bats end up with a ball in play. **Look for at least a 0.70 ratio.**

**LD%: Line drive percentage**

Line drives don't directly indicate home run power, but they reveal how forcefully a batter is striking the ball. These types of batted balls have the greatest odds of resulting in a hit. Of the top 20 players in line drive

percentage in 2009, 10 hit .300-plus and six more broke .280. **Look for at least 18 percent.**

**HR/FB: Home run per fly ball ratio**

A certain amount of luck goes into hitting a home run, but the best sluggers take advantage of their fly balls by backing them with substantial power. Understand that hitting lots of flies isn't necessarily enough. Seven of last year's top 20 in HR/FB produced a fly ball percentage (number of batted balls that resulted in a fly) of less than 40 percent, including **Alex Rodriguez**. **Look for at least 15 percent.**

**GB%: Ground ball percentage**

Pitchers want to keep batted balls on the ground so they don't go into the bleachers. The concept is simple enough, but it takes special command to keep pitches down in the strike zone, eliciting grounders. Five of last year's 10 Cy Young finalists, including NL Cy Young winner **Tim Lincecum**, ranked in the top 20. **Look for at least 42 percent.**

**HR/9: Home runs per nine innings**

The clearest example of who represents pitching's elite; seven of last year's Cy Young finalists comprised the top 17 in HR/9 by minimizing big mistakes. Take away instant runs, and top pitchers will slow down offenses by fanning hitters, inducing ground balls and benefiting from good defensive plays. **Look for 1.00 or lower.**



**1.80**

Albert Pujols' MLB-leading BB/K in 2009

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