**Fundamentally Correct but Flawed: An Analysis of the 2025 New York Mets Hitting**

**Philosophy**

Mika Mirabeau

Abstract

Frustrating is the first word that comes to mind when the 2025 New York Mets offense is mentioned. Fans have lamented a lack of hitting from many of the team's top players, including $765,000,000 superstar signing Juan Soto. In this paper, the author first will detail the offensive core, as well as the coaching staff responsible for the hitting philosophy the team currently uses. The author will then present statistics that show just how much potential this offensive core has using available data, such as Expected Weighted On-Base Average (xwOBA) and batted ball data from the first half of the 2025 season. The author then provides insight on why certain elements of said data might be flawed, such as the ignorance of Directional Splits in expected statistics. Next, they provide insight on how using different types of data, as well as potential changes in philosophy or coaching could dramatically change how the offensive core performs late into the season, by providing examples of how this would affect certain players. They conclude by discussing future methods of potentially improving the understanding of offensive production.

*Keywords:* Expected Weighted On-Base Average (xwOBA), Directional Splits, changes in philosophy

**Fundamentally Correct but Flawed: An Analysis of the 2025 New York Mets Hitting**

**Philosophy**

Through the first half of the 2025 MLB season, the New York Mets have experienced unprecedented amounts of success, achieving a record of 37-22 through June 1, 2025 (Baseball Reference, 2025). They have also experienced prolonged amounts of mediocrity, playing to a record of 19-22 after June 1, 2025, including a 7-game losing streak during this stretch. This is both because of long term injuries to prominent pitchers such as Griffin Canning, A.J. Minter, Danny Young, Max Kranick, Dedneil Nuñez and Paul Blackburn (MLB, 2025), as well as underperformance from key contributors in 2024, such as Mark Vientos, Francisco Alvarez and Jesse Winker (Baseball Reference, 2025). Despite the addition of superstar outfielder Juan Soto, the re-signing and return to form of first baseman Pete Alonso, as well as the steady production of shortstop Francisco Lindor, many believe that the Mets have a problem offensively, under the direction of hitting coach Eric Chavez. In this paper, the author will detail why they believe that this is the case, and provide insight on ways to improve it.

**What the Hitting Philosophy Has Done So Far**

The 2025 New York Mets offense has a very important tool on their side, and that is the affirmation of Baseball Savant. Baseball Savant keeps track of many different types of statistics, batted ball data and bat tracking. With these different elements from all over MLB, they assign percentile rankings to individuals, as well as teams. After assigning these percentile rankings, they associate the color blue with any ranking below average, darkening as it gets lower. They associate the color red with any ranking above average, darkening as it gets higher. These percentiles are used for many offensive statistics, including Strikeout Percentage (K%), Walk

Percentage (BB%) and Average Exit Velocity, which measures the average velocity that a baseball hit by a certain player leaves their bat.

Because Baseball Savant uses MLB's Statcast data, they have information on how hard every ball is hit and what launch angle it was hit at. Using these different pieces of data, each ball hit into play during an MLB game is assigned an Expected Batting Average (xBA), these previous metrics (MLB, 2025), while taking defense out of the equation. Over a larger sample, individual players/teams are assigned a different statistic based on Weighted On-Base Average (wOBA). Instead of assuming all hits are of the same value, wOBA assigns value to said balls hit into play, as well as unintentional walks. The higher wOBA a player has, the more valuable they are for their team. The new statistic Statcast uses is called Expected Weighted On-Base Average (xwOBA). Like xBA, it uses the batted ball data including exit velocity and launch angle to assign an expected wOBA to a player/team (MLB, 2025).

Baseball Savant features leaderboards for team-wide percentile rankings, per year since 2020, including xwOBA and wOBA. It does not however feature a differential tab between wOBA and xWOBA. On average, MLB wide wOBA and xWOBA tend to be quite similar over a large sample size, due to being based on the same types of value. Being able to view the differential between xwOBA and wOBA can indicate how lucky or unlucky a team is, based on if their collective wOBA outperforms their xWOBA, or if their wOBA lags behind it. Looking at the Mets the last four seasons (with 2025 still in progress, as of 07/21/2025), we see the following results (Baseball Savant, 2025).

**Table 1**

*Comparison of the New York Mets collective wOBA and xwOBA from 2022-2025*

| Year | wOBA | xwOBA | Differential |
|------|------|-------|--------------|
| 2022 | .326 | .321 | +.005 |
| 2023 | .315 | .322 | -.007 |
| 2024 | .320 | .325 | -.005 |
| 2025 | .320 | .346 | -.026 |

Viewing these results, there is a clear outlier in differential, which is 2025. Part of that can be dismissed because the season is not complete, however there are other elements on the leaderboard page that point to their xwOBA being accurate. These include their 45.5% Hard-Hit Percentage (MLB, 2025), which is Top 7% in MLB, their 10.4 Barrel Percentage (MLB, 2025), which is Top 10% in MLB, as well as their average exit velocity of 90.5 MPH, which is Top 7% in MLB. Using this data, it can be deduced that something is not right about this, as the team is hitting balls hard at the correct launch angle, but not getting results. One might ask if it is luck not being on their side. Further adding to the confusion, looking at the 2025 Season page for Advanced Batting on Baseball Reference, the Mets as a team are currently under the league average in strikeout percentage at 21.1%, compared to the league average 21.9%, while also being well above average in walk percentage, at 9.1% over the league average 8.5% (Baseball Reference, 2025). Clearly something is the matter, to see such a large difference in expected results and results.

**Flaws in xBA and xwOBA**

When looking at xBA and xWOBA, one might ask why there are certain players who outperform their xwOBA year-over-year. Players such as Jose Altuve (Baseball Savant, 2025), Alex Bregman (Baseball Savant, 2025)  and Nolan Arenado (Baseball Savant, 2025) regularly outperform their xwOBA more often than not. There is something missing here. Something that can explain why these particular players far outperform their xwOBA, and why the 2025 Mets are far underperforming theirs. When it comes to batted balls, on top of exit velocity and launch angle, there is a third factor on how a ball is hit. That factor is direction. Baseball Reference has a splits page for MLB as a whole over a season. Using that page, one can view the Batting Averages (AVG), On-Base Percentages (OBP), Slugging Percentages (SLG) and On-Base Plus Slugging (OPS) of balls hit in different directions, those being to a hitter's pull-side, up the middle, and to the opposite field, or oppo (Baseball Reference, 2025).

**Table 2**

*Statistics of balls hit in play to different directions in 2025*

| Direction | AVG | OBP | SLG | OPS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| LHB Pulled | .345 | .343 | .658 | 1.001 |
| LHB Middle | .322 | .318 | .498 | .816 |
| LHB Oppo | .294 | .289 | .431 | .721 |
| RHB Pulled | .421 | .419 | .764 | 1.182 |
| RHB Middle | .296 | .293 | .447 | .740 |
| RHB Oppo | .280 | .276 | .407 | .683 |

**The Flaws of Eric Chavez's Approach**

As shown in Table 2, for both left-handed and right-handed hitters, the optimal direction to hit is to the pull-side, towards right field for left-handers, or left field for right-handers. With this knowledge in mind, Baseball Savant has a leaderboard based on team-wide batted-ball data. Using this, one can find the Mets and find out what percentage of balls hit in play were hit in which direction, as well as if it was a ground ball, line drive or fly-ball. Doing this, the results are conclusive. The Mets have a Pull % of 37.4%, 22nd in MLB. They have a 37.5 Straight %, 6th in MLB, and they have an Oppo % of 25.1%, 12th in MLB. Limiting to pulled fly balls, the most likely hit to result in extra bases, the evidence is even more obvious. The Mets have a 17.2% Pull AIR %, 20th in MLB, a 19.5% Straight AIR %, 22nd in MLB, and a 20.3% Oppo AIR %, 6th in MLB.

This data allows one to come to the conclusion that the 2025 Mets are a team heavily favoring a hitting philosophy of hitting balls up the middle or to opposite field, and usually as hard line-drives. When looking at Mets hitting coach Eric Chavez's Baseball Reference page, his own career splits indicate that the majority of the balls he hit were ground balls up the middle. Chavez himself has noted that he wants to simplify his approach when it comes to hitting philosophy, disliking the large amounts of strikeouts and low Batting Averages across MLB, as well as the focus on exit velocity and launch angle (Smith, 2022). That said, the results on batted balls hit to the pull side for Chavez through his career directly contradict his philosophy. Chavez hit to a slashline (AVG/OBP/SLG/OPS) of .417/.414/.795/1.209 on balls hit to his pull side (Baseball Reference, 2025).

Seeing this, one might also wonder if the Mets' Pull AIR % on Baseball Savant's batted ball profile leaderboard, as well as their ranking in said leaderboard among all 30 MLB teams has dropped since Chavez assumed the position of hitting coach. Luckily, one is able to select the season that is used for batted ball profiles, allowing one to see these percentages for every season Chavez has held the position of hitting coach, as well as 2023, where Jeremy Barnes assumed head hitting coach duties for a season. Doing so, here are the results (Baseball Savant, 2025):

**Table 3**

*NYM's Pull AIR % and ranking of NYM in Pull AIR % in MLB per season*

| Year | Hitting Coach | Pull AIR % | Ranking in MLB |
|------|---------------|------------|----------------|
| 2022 | Eric Chavez   | 15.1%      | 28th           |
| 2023 | Jeremy Barnes | 18.3%      | 8th            |
| 2024 | Eric Chavez   | 18.1%      | 12th           |
| 2025 | Eric Chavez   | 17.2%      | 22nd           |

Using this data, one can directly see the effect that Chavez has had on the Mets hitting, not allowing them to unleash their true potential by helping them hit to the pull side more often. When Jeremy Barnes took over for Chavez in 2023, pulled fly balls increased by 3.2%, and have been steadily declining since then.

Knowing this information, the question must be asked. Of the 2025 Mets offense, how many have better batted ball results to the pull side? The answer is many, and here are some examples.

**Francisco Lindor**

Francisco Lindor has been a model of consistency since he donned a Mets uniform, generally hitting above average since he arrived in New York. That said, he is prone to slumps and tends to perform better hitting from his left side. Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Lindor hits to a 1.049 OPS pulling the ball as a RHB, and a 1.088 OPS pulling the ball as a LHB. All other directional OPS are under .873.

**Brandon Nimmo**

Reinventing himself as a power hitting left fielder, Nimmo has seen a strong increase in his home run potential since changing his personal philosophy, improving from 8 home runs in 2021 to 16 in 2022, then 24 in 2023. Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Nimmo hits to a 1.312 OPS pulling the ball. All other directional OPS are under .834.

**Juan Soto**

After signing a record breaking 15-year, $765,000,000 contract to remain in New York until the end of 2039. Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Soto hits to a .926 OPS pulling the ball. Soto is an outlier in this sample, hitting to a better OPS on balls up the middle, at 1.165.

**Pete Alonso**

Emerging from a down 2024, Pete Alonso has returned to the power hitting first baseman that everyone remembers. Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Alonso hits to a 1.329 OPS pulling the ball. All other directional OPS are under 1.063.

**Francisco Alvarez**

Alvarez is a case worth highlighting, as Eric Chavez has commented on his offensive play directly. In a Newsday article (Healey, 2024), Chavez described what he had been talking to Alvarez about.

> I've been trying to tell him for the past couple of weeks: He's a high-performance sports car, he needs to learn how to drive the sports car in second gear. Because he's got fourth gear, fifth gear and it goes. He just needs to learn how to pump the brakes a little bit and control all that horsepower. I told him: Listen, you hit 25 home runs last year. That's great. I looked at your year and I don't think it was very good. There's a lot of areas you could get better at.

One could compare Alvarez's 2023 season to Cal Raleigh in his first two MLB seasons. High power, with high strikeouts and low batting average. That said, Cal Raleigh in 2025 leads MLB in home runs (as of 07/21/2025) at 38, with a slashline of .255/.370/.613. Chavez's approach could be inhibiting that, as since Chavez has re-assumed his position as hitting coach, that power has disappeared. Due to lack of plate appearances, the 2024 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025) will be used over 2025. In 2024, Alvarez hit to a 1.247 OPS pulling the ball. All other directional OPS are under .774.

**Brett Baty**

Brett Baty is the member of this young Mets core who is beginning to come into his own this year. After mediocre seasons in 2023 and 2024, he is finally beginning to understand MLB Pitching, hitting to an OPS of .746 since May 1 (Fangraphs, 2025). Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Baty hits to a 1.038 OPS pulling the ball. Baty has also found major success to the opposite field, with a 1.081 OPS there. Up the middle however, he hits to an OPS of just .776.

**Mark Vientos**

Following a breakout season in 2024, including a monster postseason, things seem to be spiraling for Vientos in 2025. The once high power bat is hitting a paltry .221 with a .628 OPS, far from the .837 OPS he had in 2024. What might the difference be? Potentially having JD Martinez as his teammate.

Their relationship goes way back, as they both train at the same South Florida facility. Through 2024, Vientos was able to gain large amounts of insight from and watch Martinez (Puma, 2024), who happens to have a career slashline of .470/.467/.840/1.307 to the pull side. Of the 27 home runs Mark Vientos hit in 2024, only 10 were to the opposite field, while only one of his 22 doubles was an opposite field hit (Baseball Savant). Using the 2025 splits tab on his Baseball Reference page (Baseball Reference, 2025), Vientos hits to a 1.173 OPS pulling the ball. All other directional OPS are under .990.

**Changes May be Needed**

In this paper, the author presents a strong case as to why Eric Chavez could be doing more harm than good in his role as hitting coach. A change of philosophy that encourages pull hitting in the air is a potential way to improve offensive production. Whether that happens with Chavez retaining his position as hitting coach, or with a change in personnel remains to be seen. The 2025 New York Mets have all the tools to hit well and propel their team to more wins, however they need to be proactive in making these changes to their philosophy.

The author recognizes that many factors go into building a Major League team and that the criticism of coaching staff might be controversial, however they believe that the benefits of providing this insight may provide value to the team in the future.

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