

Special Physics Department Colloquium

Wednesday,
September 16, 2009
4:30 pm
Robinson 253

Physics and Baseball: An Intersection of Passions

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I have been a physicist for all my professional life. I have been a baseball fan even longer. And in recent years, I have figured out that I can do both physics and baseball at the same time. It is truly like having your cake and eating it too.

In this talk, I will tell some of the ways that a physicist analyzes the game of baseball. In the course of doing so, I will address some interesting and practical questions from a physics perspective, such as: How does a baseball bat work? Why do aluminum bats outperform wood bats? Does corking the bat help? How much did that curve ball break? How do ball parks differ in the "carry" of a fly ball? Why are towering popups difficult to catch? What characteristics of a batted ball lead to a safe hit? My goal is that all will enjoy this talk, whether your interest is physics, baseball, or the intersection between them.

