

After lamenting the number of wild pitches he was inflicting on me the other night, Pat started fussing about how many wild pitches were on the card of closers in strat – he got several off of my relievers, and mentioned how Britton seemed almost unusable in tight situations because of it. Well, people have to learn not to say that kind of thing around me.

Once I realized that the ML Stats that Mike Parker distributed had wild pitches and balks, I gave it a little thought and whipped out my 2016 results (yes, you know I keep stats on everything – you’re dealing with someone who took advanced statistics in college as an elective to prop up my GPA so as not to endanger my scholarship).

Thinking about this a little, how do we use closers in our game? We often bring them in when there are men on base, more so than starting them at the beginning of an inning only as so many MLB managers do. I often see them hitting the backstop as they bounce those sliders in the dirt that those hitters won’t stop swinging at. If we have guys on base when we bring relievers in more times than not, I would expect our numbers could be a little inflated.

Looking at the 2016 Jabberwocky pitching staff, my pitchers committed three balks in 1,430 innings. In real life, these same pitchers committed two balks in 1,482 innings. Depending on your point of view, this is pretty close or strat balks are overstated by 62%. Being specific, Ian Kennedy replicated his one balk on the year and Luis Garcia doubled his total. Close, but inconclusive.

This brings us to the wild pitches. I broke it out as wild pitches per nine innings so that I had a bigger statistical figure. My team had 55 total wild pitches, 0.35 per nine innings. These same pitchers in real life had 60 wild pitches, 0.36 per nine. That’s pretty good. It’s an overall though, as more missed than hit – only Casilla, Diekman and Garcia matched their number perfectly. Shane Greene (1 in real life) and Jon Niese (2) were my only pitchers with no wild pitches; while I had three with eight each, tying for the most. They were Danny Duffy (11 in real life), Tim Hudson (5) and Ian Kennedy (5).

It’s very possible that we’re slightly skewed towards relievers with the 20 since we so often have men on base, but it’s just harder statistically to get any closer overall than strat is doing it. We’ll see how it goes once I finish my 2017 games.