

New "Torpedo" Bats in Major League Baseball

March 2025

Baseball season has started, and the New York Yankees are already making history. They hit 15 home runs in their first three games, setting a new team record. Many believe their success comes from a new type of bat called the "torpedo" bat.

The torpedo bat looks different from regular bats because it is slightly wider somewhere in the middle of the bat instead of at the end. The Yankees studied their players' swings and adjusted the bat's design to give them a better chance of making solid contact with the ball.



The bat was created by a physicist named Aaron "Lenny" Leanhardt when he worked for the Yankees. He got the idea by listening to players who wanted better control over their swings. He adjusted the bat's weight and shape to make it easier to hit the ball. Leanhardt works for the Miami Marlins now, but other teams are starting to try out the torpedo bat too.

Even though the Yankees have been the most successful with these bats, they aren't the only team using them. Players from the Twins, Rays, and Orioles have also been seen using torpedo bats. Some teams, like the Braves, are even ordering them after seeing how well they worked for the Yankees.

Not everyone likes the new bats. Some pitchers feel that they give an unfair advantage. But as long as the bats follow MLB's rules, they are legal to use. If they help players hit more home runs, fans might see a lot more of them this season.

Comprehension Questions:

1. The Yankees adjusted the bat's design. What does "adjusted" mean?
 - a) They threw it away.
 - b) They hated it.
 - c) They used it without any changes.
 - d) They made changes to improve it.
2. Why do the Yankees' players like the torpedo bat?
 - a) It makes pitching easier.
 - b) It helps them run faster.
 - c) It helps them hit the ball better.
 - d) It is lighter than a regular bat.
3. Which of these statements is false?
 - a) The torpedo bat was designed to improve hitting.
 - b) The Yankees' success has made other teams interested in the bat.
 - c) The torpedo bat is illegal in Major League Baseball.
 - d) Some pitchers don't like the new bats.

4. Why might other teams start using the torpedo bat?
- They want to hit more home runs like the Yankees.
 - The Yankees are forcing them to use it.
 - It helps them throw the ball faster.
 - It is the only bat allowed in Major League Baseball.
5. What can we assume about Aaron Leanhardt?
- He understands both science and baseball.
 - He works for the US government.
 - He dislikes the torpedo bat.
 - He plays baseball for the Yankees.
6. What does the article suggest about the future of baseball?
- Home runs will no longer be exciting for fans.
 - The torpedo bat will be banned immediately.
 - More teams might start using torpedo bats.
 - Other teams will refuse to play against the Yankees.
7. Why does MLB allow the torpedo bat?
- It follows the league's rules.
 - The Yankees paid Major League Baseball to allow it.
 - All players voted for it.
 - It makes pitching easier.
8. What is a likely reason why other teams are ordering torpedo bats?
- They saw how successful the Yankees were with them.
 - They are required to use them.
 - They want to make their pitchers better.
 - They are being forced to use only one type of bat.
9. Why do some pitchers dislike the torpedo bat?
- It makes it harder for them to pitch the ball.
 - They think it gives hitters an unfair advantage.
 - It is heavier than regular bats.
 - It makes baseball games shorter.
10. What is the main idea of the article?
- The Yankees started the season very well.
 - Torpedo bats have an unusual shape because they are wider in the middle part.
 - Baseball is a very popular sport in the US.
 - A new type of bat is helping the Yankees and other teams hit more home runs.

Speaking and Writing Activities:

- Discuss these questions with a partner or a small group
 - Choose one topic and write a response to it. Show your writing to a classmate or teacher.
1. What sports are most popular in your country? Which sports do you enjoy watching or playing?
 2. How much do you know about baseball? Explain as many rules as you can.
 3. If you could invent a new piece of sports equipment to help players perform better, what would it be? How would it work?