

[PDF] Fantasyland: A Sportswriter's Obsessive Bid To Win The World's Most Ruthless Fantasy Baseball

Sam Walker - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Fantasyland: A Sportswriter's

Author: Sam Walker

Released: 2007-02-27

Language:

Pages: 368

ISBN: 0143038435

ISBN13: 978-0143038436

ASIN: 0143038435



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Description:

From Publishers Weekly When Walker, a senior writer for the *Wall Street Journal*, enters his first fantasy baseball tournament, he aims high: Tout Wars, a competition for guys who make a career out of analyzing stats to find the best Major League hitters and pitchers. He figures that because he can get to the ballparks in his journalistic capacity and talk to the players and coaches, he'll be in a better position to judge the intangibles and pull one over the pure numbers crunchers. But even with the help of a young research assistant and a NASA scientist, things quickly head south. This hilarious diary of the 2004 season includes several encounters with the players Walker has picked;

from Jacque Jones's struggle to refute predictions of mediocrity to David Ortiz's razzing Walker for trading him away. Along the way there are mini-profiles of the Tout Wars competition, as well as explorations of the origins of fantasy baseball (predating even the famed Rotisserie League) and the shaky relationship between dedicated statistical analysts and Major League executives. Readers might even pick up a few tips on how to draft their teams this spring, but the real fun is in watching Walker's well-laid plans unravel.

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From *Starred Review* Fantasy sports leagues are ubiquitous. For the uninitiated, fantasy games comprise a competition among individuals based on statistics of players they select in a real sport--in this case, baseball. Walker, a *Wall Street Journal* sportswriter, initially avoided contact with fantasy baseball--too geeky--but after burning out on such real-life baseball subjects as steroid scandals, labor strife, and contract negotiations, he decided to write about the game's fantasy side after all. He wangled himself a spot in one of the most prestigious fantasy leagues and decided to research in person the team he would pick. The result was a tour of a dozen spring-training sites in Florida and Arizona during which he spoke to players, coaches, general managers, and trainers. And, of course, he availed himself of the fantasy traditionalist's potpourri of statistical reports, online sites, and daily box scores. It's all great fun, written with humor and a twinkling eye directed at the lunacy of it all; but fantasy baseball and its attendant statistical reliance has spawned an internecine baseball war between old-school traditionalists (most scouts, for example) and the numbers people, many of whom have fantasy backgrounds. In offering a fascinating analysis of this underlying conflict within the sport, Walker gives his account of fantasy fanaticism an unexpected and satisfying depth.

Fantasyland has a chance to be the *Moneyball* of 2006. *Wes Lukowsky*

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