

THE
National Pastime
A REVIEW OF BASEBALL HISTORY



National Pastime

Thomas S Owens



National Pastime:

Creating the National Pastime G. Edward White, 2014-04-10 At a time when many baseball fans wish for the game to return to a purer past G Edward White shows how seemingly irrational business decisions inspired in part by the self interest of the owners but also by their nostalgia for the game transformed baseball into the national pastime Not simply a professional sport baseball has been treated as a focus of childhood rituals and an emblem of American individuality and fair play throughout much of the twentieth century It started out however as a marginal urban sport associated with drinking and gambling White describes its progression to an almost mythic status as an idyllic game popular among people of all ages and classes He then recounts the owner s efforts often supported by the legal system to preserve this image Baseball grew up in the midst of urban industrialization during the Progressive Era and the emerging steel and concrete baseball parks encapsulated feelings of neighborliness and associations with the rural leisure of bygone times According to White these nostalgic themes together with personal financial concerns guided owners toward practices that in retrospect appear unfair to players and detrimental to the progress of the game Reserve clauses blacklisting and limiting franchise territories for example were meant to keep a consistent roster of players on a team build fan loyalty and maintain the game s local flavor These practices also violated anti trust laws and significantly restricted the economic power of the players Owners vigorously fought against innovations ranging from the night games and radio broadcasts to the inclusion of African American players Nonetheless the image of baseball as a spirited civic endeavor persisted even in the face of outright corruption as witnessed in the courts leniency toward the participants in the Black Sox scandal of 1919 White s story of baseball is intertwined with changes in technology and business in America and with changing attitudes toward race and ethnicity The time is fast approaching he concludes when we must consider whether baseball is still regarded as the national pastime and whether protecting its image is worth the effort

Remember When Tom Owens, 1996 This insider s view of America s favorite game begins in the late nineteenth century and continues to the present day

National Pastime Martin C. Babicz, Thomas W. Zeiler, 2017-10-13 From its modest beginnings in rural America to its current status as an entertainment industry in postindustrial America enjoyed worldwide by millions each season the linkages between baseball s evolution and our nation s history are undeniable Through war depression times of tumultuous upheaval and of great prosperity baseball has been held up as our national pastime the single greatest expression of America s values and ideals Combining a comprehensive history of the game with broader analyses of America s historical and cultural developments *National Pastime* encapsulates the values that have allowed it to endure hope tradition escape revolution While nostalgia scandal malaise and triumph are contained within the study of any American historical moment we see in this book that the tensions and developments within the game of baseball afford the best window into a deeper understanding of America s past its purpose and its principles

American National Pastimes - A History Mark Dyreson, Jaime Schultz, 2016-04-14 When the colonies that became the

USA were still dominions of the British Empire they began to imagine their sporting pastimes as finer recreations than even those enjoyed in the motherland From the war of independence and the creation of the republic to the twenty first century sporting pastimes have served as essential ingredients in forging nationhood in American history This collection gathers the work of an all star team of historians of American sport in order to explore the origins and meanings of the idea of national pastimes of a nation symbolized by its sports These wide ranging essays analyze the claims of particular sports to national pastime status from horse racing hunting and prize fighting in early American history to baseball basketball and football more than two centuries later These essays also investigate the legal political economic and culture patterns and the gender ethnic racial and class dynamics of national pastimes connecting sport to broader historical themes American National Pastimes chronicles how and why the USA has used sport to define and debate the contours of nation This book was published as a special issue of the International Journal of the History of Sport Remember When Thomas S Owens,2000-04-01 You are invited on a decade by decade stroll down baseball s memory lane This insider s view of America s favorite game begins in the late nineteenth century and continues to the present day revisiting the game s milestones mythic moments and personalities always with an emphasis on the human side of the sport and highlighted throughout with the extraordinary reminiscences of ordinary fans Remember When captures a rich and colorful sports tradition in one glorious volume **National Pastime** Barry Svrluga,2006 Major League Baseball returned to Washington D C in 2005 and created a bang that no one had anticipated The Washington Nationals enjoyed astonishing success from the get go by midseason they were in first place in the highly competitive National League East The team composed mainly of former Montreal Expos and managed by one of the best players in the history of the game the feisty outspoken Frank Robinson captured the attention of baseball fans not just in the nation s capital but throughout the country Barry Svrluga beat reporter for The Washington Post has followed the saga of the Nationals from the early intense wrangling over bringing the team to Washington to the surprising success of their first ever season Granted exclusive access to the team he brings the players to life in wonderful anecdotes about their lives on and off the field interviews fans from around the city and offers his own astute analyses of the team s ups and downs throughout the season A savvy observer of both Washington and Major League politicking he covers the conflicts that undermined the existence of a D C team for more than three decades including battles about financing the franchise and the building of a new stadium now scheduled to be completed in 2008 as well as bitter opposition from the neighboring Baltimore Orioles and others inside the baseball establishment *Baseball's First Inning* William J. Ryczek,2014-11-29 This history of America s pastime describes the evolution of baseball from early bat and ball games to its growth and acceptance in different regions of the country Such New York clubs as the Atlantics Excelsiors and Mutuals are a primary focus serving as examples of how the sport became more sophisticated and popular The author compares theories about many of baseball s inventors exploring the often fascinating stories of several of baseball s oldest founding myths The

impact of the Civil War on the sport is discussed and baseball's unsteady path to becoming America's national game is analyzed at length

Breaking Into Baseball Jean Hastings Ardell, 2005-03-03 While baseball is traditionally perceived as a game to be played enjoyed and reported from a masculine perspective it has long been beloved among women more so than any other spectator sport *Breaking into Baseball Women and the National Pastime* upends baseball's accepted history to at last reveal just how involved women are and have always been in the American game Through provocative interviews and deft research Jean Hastings Ardell devotes a detailed chapter to each of the seven ways women participate in the game from the stands as fans on the field as professionals or as amateur players behind the plate as umpires in the front office as executives in the press box as sportswriters and reporters or in the shadows as Baseball Annie's From these revelatory vantage points Ardell invites overdue appreciation for the affinity and talent women bring to baseball at all levels and shows us our national game anew From its ancient origins in spring fertility rituals through contemporary marketing efforts geared toward an ever increasing female fan base baseball has always had a feminine side and generations of women have sought and been sought after to participate in the sport even when doing so meant challenging the cultural mores of their era In that regard women have been breaking into baseball from the very beginning But recent decades have witnessed great strides in legitimizing women's roles on the diamond as players and umpires as well as in vital management and media roles In her thoughtfully organized and engagingly written survey Ardell offers a chance for sports enthusiasts and historians of both genders to better appreciate the storied and complex relationship women have so long shared with the game and to glimpse the future of women in baseball *Breaking into Baseball* is augmented by twenty four illustrations and a foreword from Ila Borders the first woman to play more than three seasons of men's professional baseball

[American National Pastimes - A History](#) Mark Dyreson, Jaime Schultz, 2016-04-14 When the colonies that became the USA were still dominions of the British Empire they began to imagine their sporting pastimes as finer recreations than even those enjoyed in the motherland From the war of independence and the creation of the republic to the twenty first century sporting pastimes have served as essential ingredients in forging nationhood in American history This collection gathers the work of an all star team of historians of American sport in order to explore the origins and meanings of the idea of national pastimes of a nation symbolized by its sports These wide ranging essays analyze the claims of particular sports to national pastime status from horse racing hunting and prize fighting in early American history to baseball basketball and football more than two centuries later These essays also investigate the legal political economic and culture patterns and the gender ethnic racial and class dynamics of national pastimes connecting sport to broader historical themes *American National Pastimes* chronicles how and why the USA has used sport to define and debate the contours of nation This book was published as a special issue of the *International Journal of the History of Sport*

Baseball in Blue and Gray George B. Kirsch, 2013-10-24 During the Civil War Americans from homefront to battlefield played baseball as never before While soldiers slaughtered each other over the

country's fate players and fans struggled over the form of the national pastime George Kirsch gives us a color commentary of the growth and transformation of baseball during the Civil War He shows that the game was a vital part of the lives of many a soldier and civilian and that baseball's popularity had everything to do with surging American nationalism By 1860 baseball was poised to emerge as the American sport Clubs in northeastern and a few southern cities played various forms of the game Newspapers published statistics and governing bodies set rules But the Civil War years proved crucial in securing the game's place in the American heart Soldiers with bats in their rucksacks spread baseball to training camps war prisons and even front lines As nationalist fervor heightened baseball became patriotic Fans honored it with the title of national pastime War metaphors were commonplace in sports reporting and charity games were scheduled Decades later Union general Abner Doubleday would be credited wrongly with baseball's invention The Civil War period also saw key developments in the sport itself including the spread of the New York style of play the advent of revised pitching rules and the growth of commercialism Kirsch recounts vivid stories of great players and describes soldiers playing ball to relieve boredom He introduces entrepreneurs who preached the gospel of baseball boosted female attendance and found new ways to make money We witness bitterly contested championships that enthralled whole cities We watch African Americans embracing baseball despite official exclusion And we see legends spring from the pens of early sportswriters Rich with anecdotes and surprising facts this narrative of baseball's coming of age reveals the remarkable extent to which America's national pastime is bound up with the country's defining event

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