

Playing for keeps: a history of early baseball

[History](#)



s Thesis Warren Goldstein discovers the very earliest origins of various modern controversies, during the game of baseball in the early decades. In his book he describes how in the late 1850s baseball was an organized club based on fraternal sport, which thrived in the cultures of respectable artisans, shopkeepers and clerks. Two decades later the game became an entertainment business, ran by the managers and owners of the club. For nearly a century the game became one of the most premier sport in America, playing for Keeps was an insightful account of the game. Warren Goldstein reconstructs an experience and culture of the earliest baseball while carefully reading baseball guides, sport press and a player manager Harry Wright.

The book is not what I expected it to be, it is more about the economy and sociological development of the game rather than it being more about the players. I understand it was an important step forward in understanding the game in its early start. The book is written in an academic style, as the intrinsic interest of baseball as a game propels forward, all in all I think the book is more of an aficionado.

Warren Goldstein writes this book as an historian, which I believe this subject would have been better covered by a sports writer. In the book Mr. Goldstein is really interested in changing the economics of the game and the struggle between the players and the management of the clubs. I do not read about particular players, games or teams and the different rules that changed in the 19th century, in other words the game is not discussed in-depth.

Purpose of the book

Warren Goldstein tries to describe in natural fit in baseball terms covering the history of baseball, until the National League came into being in 1876.

<https://assignbuster.com/playing-for-keeps-a-history-of-early-baseball/>

The author describes the early history of baseball following the development of the sport itself from an amateur recreation activity. The game then developed to a professional competition. In the early 1850s baseball was played only by clubs, who would frequently compete against each other, this being the earliest version of baseball. There was not an exact rule or reason why teams played with each other. Baseball then was a part-time activity played by all walks of life.

Eventually the game got a refined touch. Rules were created and players, played specific positions throughout the game, the greatest players were chosen and started representing clubs (Goldstein, 53). However if such players would not defect, money got into the equation, thus the game transited to a professional sport from an amateur recreation, making it inevitable gradually.

The author Warren Goldstein being a well-established and influential sports historian, he uses various sources to write his book and make his point. He employs press accounts, majorly that of Henry Chadwick, baseball guides and other New York Writers. Harry Wright a renowned manager and a player a correspondence of Henry Chadwick, together with the work of Melvin Adelman an eminent scholar in his " A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics in 1820 to 1870s.

Conclusion

The author's purpose for writing this specific book (Goldstein, 53) is to reveal the history of baseball in the United States from its very origin. As early as 19th century children played ball games and the bat, which was imported from England, to the formation of a more permanent professional foothold in 1876 as a National League.

<https://assignbuster.com/playing-for-keeps-a-history-of-early-baseball/>

Works cited

Goldstein, Warren. *Playing for Keeps: A History of Early Baseball*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009. Print