



The Numbers Game: Baseball's Lifelong Fascination with Statistics

Alan Schwarz

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Most baseball fans, players and even team executives assume that the national pastime's infatuation with statistics is simply a by-product of the information age, a phenomenon that blossomed only after the arrival of Bill James and computers in the 1980s. They couldn't be more wrong.

In this award-winning book, Alan Schwarz - whom bestselling *Moneyball* author Michael Lewis calls "one of today's best baseball journalists" - provides the first-ever history of baseball statistics, showing how baseball and its numbers have been inseparable ever since the pastime's birth in 1845. He tells the history of this obsession through the lives of the people who felt it most: Henry Chadwick, the 19th-century writer who invented the first box score and harped endlessly about which statistics mattered and which did not; Allan Roth, Branch Rickey's right-hand numbers man with the late-1940s Brooklyn Dodgers; Earnshaw Cook, a scientist and Manhattan Project veteran who retired to pursue inventing the perfect baseball statistic; John Dewan, a former Strat-O-Matic maven who built STATS Inc. into a multimillion-dollar powerhouse for statistics over the Internet; and dozens more.

Schwarz paints a history not just of baseball statistics, but of the soul of the sport itself. Named as ESPN's 2004 Baseball Book of the Year, *The Numbers Game* will be an invaluable part of any fan's library and go down as one of the sport's classic books.

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